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Commission

Territorial Cooperation

in Europe

A Historical Perspective

Regional and
Urban Policy

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Territorial Cooperation

in Europe
A Historical Perspective

by Birte Wassenberg and Bernard Reitel,
in cooperation with Jean and Jean Peyrony Rubió

Foreword



 CORINA CREȚU
European Commissioner
for Regional Policy

2015 marks the 25th anniversary of Interreg, the European Union instrument to promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation.

Interreg as a financial instrument was introduced in 1990 primarily to compensate for the introduction of the Single Market and soften the blow for border regions, which, everyone thought, would suffer most from the abolition of economic borders. Much has been achieved by the Interreg community since then.

But Europe has a longer history of cross-border cooperation. Right after the Second World War, institutional cooperation started on the borders between the Netherlands and Germany and between France, Luxembourg and Germany. The forefathers of these initiatives understood well that first reconciliation and then trust-building were going to be essential elements of a peaceful and prosperous Europe. Their 'euroregion' approach proved very successful and with the support of legal provisions adopted by the Council of Europe, it became possible for local and regional authorities to work autonomously across borders.

The European Union too understood the importance of territorial cooperation. Innovative actions in the 1980s led to the development of a full-blown cross-border cooperation instrument. Europe has never looked back since then — we are now in the fifth phase of Interreg and we see that many achievements can be celebrated.



The Union has also re-inforced the legal framework for working across borders: the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation was born in 2006 to enable public authorities across borders to create joint legal bodies to deliver specific services or implement cooperation projects.

As the new Commissioner for Regional Policy, I am keen to explore what more can be done for border communities across Europe. Citizens and businesses in these regions sometimes still face unnecessary complications when they engage in cross-border activities. There are still many obstacles, often of a legal or administrative nature, which put an additional burden on cross-border activities. I want to take stock of this and make concrete proposals during my mandate.

This publication is the European Commission's way to pay tribute to all those visionary individuals who have understood over the years that working with each other across borders makes us stronger. I want to extend my warmest congratulations to all those who, either with Interreg, or through other initiatives and projects, have contributed to a more united Europe, where differences are respected and where diversity is an asset.

Happy birthday Interreg!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be 'Crete'.

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Preface



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Territorial cooperation is a policy that was formalised relatively recently in the integration of Europe. Territorial cooperation describes partnerships established between the regional or local authorities of one European state on the one hand and the equivalent authorities in one or more other European states on the other hand with a view to developing joint initiatives or addressing problems they regard as comparable. Territorial cooperation has since 2007 become one of the goals of the European Union's (EU) regional policy, emphasising the importance accorded to relations between territorial players across national frontiers. The semantic switch from cross-border cooperation to territorial cooperation also emphasises the increasing complexity of these relations and the fact that the EU envisages partnerships on different scales, both at the local network level and across transnational areas of various sizes. More specifically, we shall be using the expression 'cross-border cooperation' to describe relations between authorities in close proximity to each other in adjacent territories on either side of a border. Territorial cooperation has developed over the past 25 years as a result of

intensifying cross-border cooperation, successive enlargements and the downgrading of national borders within the EU. On a scientific level, the study of these neighbourly relations that have developed since the Second World War across national borders in Europe remains relatively rare to this day.

Whereas, since the 1970s, several scientific disciplines have taken an interest in territorial cooperation, this has often been from a specific case-study perspective, examining a cross-border region taken in isolation, without necessarily establishing a link with the process of European integration and without offering comparisons with other cross-border areas. Undoubtedly, this area of research is a complex one: each example of territorial cooperation in Europe is a priori unique and depends on the historical, economic, political and social context of the territories concerned, and on the relationships between the local players. At the same time, however, a study of the ways in which these areas are linked to one another and cooperate on a local and regional scale is needed so that we can understand the logic that drives increased integration in Europe. Territorial cooperation is in fact an essential tool for understanding that the goal is not merely to cooperate with one's neighbour(s). In seeking at one and the same time to respond to social needs, to make people's daily lives easier and better, to solve problems stemming from differences between national territories (legal systems and cultural practices) and to develop attractive and competitive regions, public stakeholders invent common arrangements that transcend national frontiers. Territorial cooperation is thus a cornerstone of a united Europe that is close to its citizens, which is a priority goal for ensuring the future of the EU.

This work has two principal objectives. Firstly, it seeks to provide a key to understanding the complexity, richness and diversity of the examples of territorial cooperation in Europe and illustrating their role in the process of European integration. For 25 years, the EU has supported these examples of cooperation with financial, technical and human resources. It has also helped to create links between these cross-border regions, the impetus for regional integration and the process of European integration at the community level. This publication will

help to make the link between the history of the EU and the ‘microhistories’ of the local and regional territories involved in territorial cooperation in Europe clear and comprehensible. The interaction between the emergence of cross-border regions and European regional policy and their influence on one another since the Interreg programme was initiated in 1990 will be systematically illustrated at the EU level with maps and explanatory articles.

Secondly, this work forms part of a wider project, which is the production of a critical dictionary of cross-border cooperation in Europe. This project derives from a cycle of research conducted in 2008 to 2010 by the *Frontières, acteurs et représentations d'Europe* (FARE) historians' centre at the University of Strasbourg (since 2014 the Raymond Poidevin Centre, the European Dynamics mixed research unit (UMR)) and the Euro-Institute at Kehl. Six titles, under the rubric *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière* (Living and researching cross-border cooperation), published between 2009 and 2014 by Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart ⁽¹⁾, arose from the conferences forming part of this cycle. This work has identified an important lacuna: despite the surveys carried out by several researchers on cross-border regions, there is a lack of a generalised approach to this theme of cross-border cooperation at the European level, in the context of the 28 Member States of the EU and the 47 member states of the Council of Europe. In fact, there is no working tool enabling either stakeholders or researchers to find clear information on theoretical aspects or terminology, or a succinct description of cross-border regions in Europe. As a result, the idea has arisen of compiling an analytical dictionary of cross-border cooperation

in Europe, after the fashion of the recently published dictionaries on the EU. This dictionary will comprise two distinct parts: a first theoretical and conceptual part will be dedicated to the terminology and tools of cross-border cooperation, and a second geographical part will present an inventory of European cross-border regions in the EU. The project will be led by Birte Wassenberg, Professor of Contemporary History at the Institut d'études politiques (IEP) in Strasbourg, in cooperation with Bernard Reitel, Professor of Geography at the University of Artois, and will be carried out under the Transborder European Institute Network (TEIN), which, under the leadership of the Euro-Institute at Kehl, unites 12 European training organisations and universities with the aim of providing training resources on cross-border questions at the EU level, in partnership with the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) and the Mission opérationnelle transfrontalière (MOT).

This publication on the 25 years of territorial cooperation in Europe is the fruit of the collective labour of three partners: two researchers (Birte Wassenberg and Bernard Reitel) and the MOT, through its director, Jean Peyrony, and its geographer-cartographer, Jean Rubió. In addition, the documentary research was carried out by Anna Quadflieg, one of Birte Wassenberg's PhD students. This work will be regarded as one of the bases for developing this dictionary. We are most grateful to Nathalie Verschelde at the DG for Regional and Urban Policy, who made this cooperation possible through her dynamism, her spirit of innovation and her openness to the world of the university.

1 Birte Wassenberg (ed.), *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (volume 1): les régions frontalières françaises*, Stuttgart, Steiner Verlag, 2009; Birte Wassenberg & Joachim Beck (eds.), *Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit leben und erforschen (Band 2): Governance in deutschen Grenzregionen*, Stuttgart, Steiner Verlag, 2011; *Living and researching cross-border cooperation (volume 3): the European dimension*, Stuttgart, Steiner Verlag, 2011; *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (volume 4): les régions frontalières sensibles*, Stuttgart, Steiner Verlag, 2011; *Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit leben und erforschen (Band 5): Integration und (trans-) regionale Identitäten*, Stuttgart, Steiner Verlag, 2013; *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (volume 6): vers une cohésion territoriale?* Stuttgart, Steiner Verlag, 2014 (in press).

General introduction

The first forms of cross-border cooperation to have taken place between European borderland regions separated by a national border developed gradually from the late 1950s onwards. Pioneer regions in this respect include the German-Dutch region named Euregio, around Gronau, created in 1958; the Franco-German-Swiss Upper Rhine region, the origins of which date back to the creation of the Regio Basiliensis in Basel in 1963; and the Franco-German-Luxembourgish region named SaarLorLux, which has existed since 1968. The starting point for this cooperation coincides incontestably with the creation of the Common Market of the Six in 1957, and equally falls within the period of Franco-German reconciliation, which was crowned by the signing of the Élysée Treaty in 1963⁽¹⁾.

However, these cross-border cooperation forums and working communities came into being independently of both European integration, which developed at the interstate level, and the evolution of bilateral relations. Cross-border cooperation is a partnership between local and regional stakeholders separated by a national frontier, whose actions have repercussions at the local and the regional level on both sides of that frontier. It takes place in the framework of international relations but involves local and regional stakeholders, who are geographically close, with the explicit or implicit agreement of the nations concerned. Cross-border cooperation can therefore be seen as a way of recreating proximity, since borders usually appear to be elements that separate and distance.

As a delimitation of sovereignty, the *border* introduces a particular obstacle to cooperation. Several definitions have been proposed, corresponding to differing conceptions, but generally speaking these converge on the idea that the border represents an object of separation that reveals the existence of legal, political, economic

or cultural differences⁽²⁾. The term *cooperation* does not in itself pose any problems, being defined as ‘the action of participating in a common task’⁽³⁾. Analysts make a distinction, however, between different ways of putting cross-border cooperation into practice: concerted action, harmonisation and integration. *Cooperation* thus refers not only to joint activities but also to all the formal and informal mechanisms of concerted action between stakeholders at frontiers. The adjective *cross-border*, for its part, conveys the idea of crossing or going over the border and applies a priori to any movement or relationship across a political boundary between two states. The cross-border concept is linked to the idea of proximity: cross-border relations are established between spatial units belonging to two neighbouring regions, separated by a national boundary⁽⁴⁾. Finally, the term *cross-border cooperation* was not officially recognised until 1980, by the Council of Europe Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation, amongst a whole palette of concepts such as cooperation between border regions or concerted action across borders⁽⁵⁾.

The border lies at the centre of the aim of cooperation, which is to put the frontier in perspective, to surmount it or to weaken it in material, functional and symbolic terms⁽⁶⁾. There are three dimensions of the frontier that are particularly important in understanding cross-border cooperation: its political dimension, of course, together with its cultural dimension and its physical nature (natural frontier).

Political frontiers separate the territories of different national governments. They are mostly drawn precisely by convention, and put

1 WASSEMBERG, B., *Vers une eurorégion? La coopération transfrontalière franco-germano-suisse dans l'espace du Rhin supérieur de 1975 à 2000*, Brussels, Peter Lang, 2007.

2 ANDERSON, M. & BORT, E., *The frontiers of the European Union*, Chippenham, Palgrave, 2001, p. 13.

3 LEVRAT, N., *Le droit applicable aux accords de coopération transfrontalière entre collectivités publiques infra-étatiques*, Geneva, Paris, PUF, 1994, p. 2.

4 REITEL, B., *Une première approche des dynamiques urbaines dans le Rhin supérieur*, Strasbourg, 1996, p. 201.

5 Council of Europe, *European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities*, Madrid, 1980.

6 RATTI, R. & REICHMAN, S. (eds.), *Theory and practice of transborder cooperation*, Basel, Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1993, p. 241.

in material form by posts or markers. These national frontiers demarcate nation states, which have, since the 19th century, been regarded as entities in which the exclusive power of the State over a territory is legitimised by the existence of an identified population. The international order therefore rests on the triptych of state, nation and territory⁽⁷⁾. The national territory is divided into hierarchically nested administrative areas, each of which has its own distinct competencies⁽⁸⁾. A political frontier delimits not only territories but also politico-administrative systems, each characterised by a specific organisation of power and an original allocation of competencies, and implicitly indicates the area over which national sovereignty is exercised. The different constituent parts of the national territory are imbued with this form of organisation⁽⁹⁾, which is what makes cross-border cooperation particularly delicate. Moreover, one has to know the history of how the frontier came about to understand certain antagonisms. Some states have been set up in opposition to a neighbouring state; the border is then emblematic of tensions and pressures. That is especially the case where a war has taken place between neighbouring states. Crossing the national frontier involves in many cases a journey into a country that was an enemy during the war, bringing back memories of wounding and destruction. For a long time after conflict has ceased, the memory of the living frontier remains, especially among the older generations. The presence of these political frontiers thus makes it difficult for a common integrated space to emerge. The task for supporters of cooperation is thus above all to facilitate dialogue among stakeholders and to make these frontiers permeable, but without doing away with them.

Unlike the political frontiers that we have just described, cultural frontiers, sometimes referred to as normative, fluctuate and often

indicate transition and gradation more than delimitation⁽¹⁰⁾. The definition of a normative frontier takes account of its function as a tool, in that 'the frontier is a geographical instrument of differentiation and ultimately, therefore, of spatial organisation'⁽¹¹⁾. Cultural frontiers correspond to limits of cultural influence, which may vary with time. Thus a linguistic frontier is characterised by an isogloss, a line that separates two zones in which two languages regarded as different one from another are spoken. This presupposes that both languages are homogeneous and that the break between the two languages is quite abrupt, which is far from the case. Languages are marked by continua or transitions. States, however, have tried to adjust linguistic (and cultural) frontiers to match their political frontiers, but not entirely successfully⁽¹²⁾. Moreover, political frontiers delimit institutions characterised by the existence of norms, rules, approaches and practices. Switzerland is a highly original case in this respect. Despite the linguistic diversity of the country, its people live in a federal state marked by its system of direct democracy and the importance accorded to referendums and local autonomy. This distinguishes the Swiss from the populations of neighbouring states, with whom they often share a common language. In fact, the superimposition of both a political frontier and a cultural frontier is also profoundly linked to the relations maintained with the adjoining national territory. The distancing is in certain cases reinforced by a discourse that exacerbates differences whereas, in a global context, cultural proximity appears much more evident. The objective of cross-border cooperation is not to abolish administrative or cultural frontiers. Instead, it provides a learning and linking function, which often requires an intercultural approach. It consists of learning more about the other's system, through understanding one's neighbour's language and political and administrative organisation.

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- 7 TAYLOR, P., *The state as container: territoriality in the modern world-system*, in: *Progress in Human Geography*, 18, 2, 1994, pp. 151-162.
- 8 ANTE, U., *Politische Geographie*, Braunschweig, 1981, pp. 62-65.
- 9 RICQ, C., *Manuel de coopération transfrontalière en Europe*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, 2006, p. 9.

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- 10 BROMBERGER, C., MOREL, A. (eds.), *Limites floues, frontières vives*, Paris, Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2000, p. 5.
- 11 GUICHONNET, P., RAFFESTIN, C., *Géographie des frontières*, Paris, 1974, PUF, p. 7.
- 12 SIGUAN, M., *L'Europe des langues*, Brussels, Mardaga, 1996.



Customs post on the border between Belgium and France

Lastly, natural frontiers are frontiers that states have established along physical barriers, adding to the impression of separation and distancing — both real and symbolic. Examples of such barriers are mountains or rivers⁽¹³⁾. To get across these natural elements requires technical solutions, which can both be costly and call for complicated agreements stemming from delicate negotiations, such as building bridges or tunnels. A natural frontier is an obstacle that can hinder cooperation, but in some cases it can also give rise to a partnership between states that want to strengthen relations with one another and implement joint projects.

13 LAPRADELLE, P., *La frontière*, Paris, Éditions internationales, 1928, p. 175.

The erection of political frontiers has encouraged states to develop a policy of 'congruence' aimed at expressing all that differentiates them from their neighbours, whether culturally, legally or economically, in a single border line. Each state thus constructs a 'semic system'⁽¹⁴⁾ that is specific to itself and distinct from that of its neighbours, so that the frontier serves also to reveal the most basic differences. Europe is marked not only by its great diversity of states but also by a great variety of dyads (borders between two contiguous states). Each dyad has its own specificities, and one of the

14 RAFFESTIN, C., *Pour une géographie du pouvoir*, Paris, Librairie technique, 1980.



Villach, frontier post between Austria and Slovenia

challenges of cross-border cooperation is to construct a framework that takes cognisance of these characteristics.

The priority for cross-border cooperation is to weaken or eliminate the negative effects created by frontiers. In fact, despite the physical and psychological destruction caused by the Second World War, political and economic changes and territorial reorganisations, frontiers have become part of many people's daily lives as factors they cannot ignore. Crossing the border remains a necessity for local people in numerous frontier regions in Europe. The differences that exist between national systems offer many opportunities, and these are all the more significant for people in the absence of obstacles

to mobility at frontiers. The fact of living near the border is not a sign of immobility, but rather of movement.

However, this border situation is also a source of tension. Various discontinuities can present an obstacle to crossing a national frontier. Cross-border cooperation is not a simple partnership between local authorities: it is a means not only of surmounting natural, political and cultural frontiers, but also of overcoming psychological frontiers and reducing their capacity to separate. Its goal is to soothe relations in regions that sometimes have suffered in both world wars. At the same time, it tries to make it easier for people to run their daily lives and to offer solutions to the problems of contiguity. The context of the 1960s was also one of peace (in western Europe) and an increase in international exchanges, which resulted in a strong growth in movement across borders. Cross-border initiatives also enable new relationships of trust to be established, benefiting cooperation between neighbouring states. As a consequence, European integration and cross-border cooperation have the same objective: to safeguard peace in Europe and bring the peoples of Europe closer together.

The supporters of cross-border cooperation have made it abundantly clear that we must 'overcome national frontiers in order to heal the scars of history'. This quotation is often used to explain the *raison d'être* of cross-border cooperation, of which it has become a kind of motto. It has been attributed to one or another personality from the cross-border world, depending on who is quoting it. Thus the Swiss attribute it to that ardent partisan of regionalism, Denis de Rougemont, whilst the Germans credit Karl Ahrens, the German parliamentarian and President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. However, the true originator of this quotation is Alfred Mozer, member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), Secretary to the Commissioner for Agriculture in the first European Commission in 1958. He was responsible for setting up the first cross-border Euregio, along the German-Dutch border, and later became the first president of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) in 1972. Alfred Mozer thus took part in the first



Italian visa for the Schengen area

stages of European integration and cross-border cooperation. As far as he was concerned, these two processes could not fail to be complementary. What they had in common was not to ignore national frontiers but not to exacerbate them either — ‘frontiers are the scars of history. We must not forget them. But we should not cultivate them’⁽¹⁵⁾. However, on examining them more closely, we see that certain fundamental differences between the process of European integration and that of cross-border cooperation deserve to be emphasised, before demonstrating that a link has been established between them, notably by means of European regional policy.

Firstly, the pioneers of cross-border cooperation did not, at least initially, have the same goal as the pioneers of European integration, who for their part aimed from the beginning to establish an ‘ever closer union among the peoples of Europe’, in the terms of the Schuman Declaration of 1950. When the first cross-border regions embarked upon their cooperation initiatives in the 1960s, they had an approach that was both simpler and more pragmatic, in that they were looking for practical solutions to border problems that arose when a national frontier was crossed in everyday life. It should also

be emphasised that the stakeholders concerned have not been the same and they have not been involved at the same level: the process of European integration developed between the Member States of the European Economic Community (EEC) and, from 1992, of the EU. It is a process of interstate cooperation with a supranational dimension, in which the principal actors are the Member States. Cross-border cooperation, for its part, places public stakeholders acting at the local or regional level (regions, towns and cities, local authority associations, etc.) or private stakeholders (associations, businesses, frontier workers, chambers of commerce, etc.) at the centre of the action.

Secondly, European integration and cross-border cooperation do not use the same tools. The distinguishing feature of the functionalist Community method, developed by the founding fathers of Europe, especially Jean Monnet, is its supranational dimension, which is binding on the Member States. European integration is accompanied by Community law, which takes precedence over domestic law and makes it possible to implement European policies consistently and uniformly across all Member States in areas of Community competence. The instruments employed in cross-border cooperation have to comply with national legal frameworks, which results in the existence of a great variety of measures and often complex forms; numerous bilateral and multilateral agreements take account of the limits of competence of the infra-national public authorities in each country involved in the cooperation project. There is no single or obvious method of cross-border cooperation. Its richness in fact lies in all these multiple approaches, which differ from one region to another and demonstrate the stakeholders’ great ability to keep inventing measures capable of adapting to continually evolving needs. Cross-border engineering enables ingenious and appropriate solutions to be put forward for each particular case, where classic national ways of doing things prove to be ineffective.



15 MOZER, A., ‘Entwicklungspolitik zu Hause’, in: SCHÖNDUBE, C. *Entwicklungsregionen in der EWG. Ursache und Ausmaß der wirtschaftlichen Benachteiligung*, Bonn, Osang Verlag, 1973, pp. 14-25.

Thirdly, European integration and cross-border cooperation have evolved in fundamentally different ways. The process of European integration has a unique history, which has taken place in stages, involves a vast area comprising many countries, and began — if one goes back over the history of the European Community — with the announcement of the Schuman Plan on 9 May 1950, which resulted in the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952 and then the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957. Since the 1960s, this process of European integration has taken the form of both a strengthening of the institutions and spatial expansion. In 1992, the Treaty of Maastricht gave rise to the European Union (EU), which since 2013 has consisted of 28 Member States. Today, the EU is involved in almost all policy areas: an internal market allows free movement of goods, services, people and capital; a common currency links 19 Member States, which together make up the Eurozone; there is also close cooperation in the areas of home affairs and justice; while the common foreign and security policy features in the European treaties⁽¹⁶⁾. Part of this harmonised Europe may be encountered in numerous aspects of daily life: today, Europeans use the same standardised light bulbs and consume milk that complies with the same food-safety regulations. All European universities offer equivalent master's degrees. There are also numerous markers of European identity⁽¹⁷⁾: a European flag, a European anthem, a European cultural heritage, Eurovision, a European football championship, etc. Not all of these elements derive from or are necessarily limited to the EU, but they are nevertheless often perceived by citizens as symbols of a united Europe. In this respect, cross-border cooperation does not appear to be unique. It seems to be marked by three characteristics: singularity, diversity and complexity. Each cross-border region is unique in terms of its history and its distinctive geographical and political features. There is therefore

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- 16 For a closer analysis, see *L'expérience européenne. 50 ans de construction européenne 1957-2007, Des historiens en dialogue*, texts collected by BOSSUAT, G., BUSSIÈRE, E., FRANK, R., LOTH, W., VARSORI, A., Brussels, Bruylant, 2010.
- 17 FRANK, R., *Les identités européennes au XX^e siècle. Diversités, convergences et solidarités*, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004.

not a single history of cross-border cooperation but rather as many histories as there are border regions. That also results in a diversity of stakeholders, forms and dynamics of cross-border cooperation in Europe. A specific system of stakeholders is involved in each region, steering the development of cross-border relations in its own distinctive way. In some cases, it is the trade unions in particular that push for cooperation; in another region, it is business people; whereas in yet another it is local and regional politicians who show initiative. Moreover, this specificity and diversity are reflected in the innumerable forms taken by cooperation (legal, political and institutional), which are put into practice in contexts that depend on the cross-border region in question, and which result from different interstate agreements (such as the Karlsruhe Agreement for cooperation between France, Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland; and the Bayonne Agreement for cooperation between France and Spain). Finally, the complexity of cross-border cooperation stems from the first two characteristics: each cross-border region requires an in-depth analysis to determine its situation and development and the diversity of its stakeholders and forms of cooperation.

A link between these two processes began to be established in the mid-1980s, particularly with the project of creating a single market within the EEC. It was in order to facilitate the implementation of this project that, following the reform of regional policy in 1988, the European Commission assigned a role to cross-border regions in the task of European integration. They were to be model areas or 'laboratory' areas for European integration. In 1990, the Commission introduced the Community initiative programme known as Interreg to support cross-border cooperation, which from that time on gained in strength. Thanks to the financial support provided by the European Commission through its various regional policy instruments, cross-border cooperation played an active role in the achievement of the Single Market in 1993. Since the 1990s, a direct link has been established between border regions and European integration. Cross-border cooperation is recognised as a factor of European unity, essential for both economic growth and territorial cohesion in the EU. This integrative function of cross-border cooperation was strengthened yet further

in numerous border regions following the establishment of monetary union and the introduction of the euro. The disappearance of currencies and rates of exchange has facilitated mobility inside the EU, and in the end it is in these border regions that the successes and failures of European economic integration can best be seen and felt. The growing importance of cross-border cooperation in the process of European integration led to the introduction in 2007 of a new objective in European regional policy: territorial cooperation. This comprises both cross-border cooperation (local cooperation between neighbouring regions separated by a frontier), trans-national cooperation (cooperation over large areas) and interregional cooperation (networked cooperation on a pan-European scale).

The link between European integration and cross-border cooperation intensified with the geopolitical upheaval Europe experienced after 1989. A new pan-European dimension (east-west) opened up in cross-border cooperation, giving it a role to play in the reunification of the European continent. The first euroregions spanning territories of the East and the West were created in the early 1990s with a view to paving the way for the accession of the countries of central and eastern Europe to the EU. The European Commission supported cross-border cooperation with the candidate countries by introducing financial aid through the Phare programme. Furthermore, cross-border cooperation is increasingly seen as a factor able to contribute to stability and security in Europe and has thus become an important element in the management of relations at the EU's external borders (the Tacis programme). The new geopolitical equilibrium that developed after the dismantling of the Iron Curtain and replaced the order deriving from the Cold War depends on 'neighbourhood' relations at the frontiers with certain states that are not members of the EU. Border regions play a part in the Commission's strategy to ensure 'democratic stability' in Europe, both within the borders of the EU and on its periphery.

The link between cross-border cooperation and European integration has been made by political scientists. Thus, in the early 1990s, several approaches to 'the Europe of the regions' in political science

emphasised the role of the regions within the framework of European integration, since they seemed to represent the 'ideal' level of governance for establishing a reunited Europe that was close to the people⁽¹⁸⁾. That was particularly important for border regions, which, from their former status as outlying, peripheral and disadvantaged areas, became central players in the process of European reunification. The effects of integration became measurable on a large scale and were representative of the way the entire Community territory was evolving. Marie-Thérèse Bitsch was the first historian to stress this role that border regions have played in European integration since 1945, during a symposium on 'The regional phenomenon in European integration' in Strasbourg in 2002⁽¹⁹⁾. The contribution of the regional phenomenon to the process of European integration can be seen not only in questions of mobility but also in the more sensitive and difficult to measure issues of European identity. In border regions or, better still, euroregions, citizens have been called 'model Europeans' simply because they experience Europe in their everyday lives: they regularly cross the border and maintain constant exchanges with their neighbours⁽²⁰⁾. Since the 1990s, research on cross-border cooperation has been regarded as complementary to studies on the role of stakeholders in the work of European integration⁽²¹⁾.



- 18 See HRBEK, R. and WEYAND, S. (eds.), *Das Europa der Regionen, Fakten, Probleme, Perspektiven*, Munich, Beck, 1994; BULLMANN, U. (ed.), *Die Politik der dritten Ebene, Regionen im Europa der Union*, Baden-Baden, Nomos, 1994; KOHLER-KOCH, B., *Interaktive Politik in Europa: Regionen im Netzwerk der Integration*, Opladen, Leske & Budrich, 1998; LANGE, N., *Zwischen Regionalismus und europäischer Integration*, Baden-Baden, Nomos, 1998.
- 19 Several communications addressed the subject of cross-border cooperation, see BITSCH, M.-T. (ed.), *Le fait régional et la construction européenne*, Brussels, Bruylant, 2003.
- 20 WASSENBERG, B., 'Coopération franco-germano-suisse et identité régionale (1963-2007). L'identité régionale favorise-t-elle la coopération transfrontalière dans l'espace rhénan?', in: LIBERA, M. & WASSENBERG, B. (eds.), *L'Europe au cœur, études en l'honneur de Marie-Thérèse Bitsch*, Brussels, Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 141-163.
- 21 KAISER, W., LEUCHT, B., RASMUSSEN, M. (eds.), *The History of the European Union. Origins of a trans- and supranational policy 1950-1972*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2009.

These scientific studies are a good point of departure for learning about cross-border cooperation in Europe, but they are not sufficient to give an understanding of the phenomenon in its entirety. In fact, bearing in mind the multiplicity and complexity of neighbouring areas, there has as yet been no examination of the totality of subjects and geographical areas. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of territorial cooperation in Europe (Interreg), this work represents an additional step towards a better understanding of the evolution of European cross-border cooperation as a whole and its links with European integration. It approaches cross-border cooperation from two different angles: from the 'centralised' point of view of the EU on one hand, and from the 'decentralised' point of view of the cross-border regions in the EU Member States on the other.

The first part thus deals with the EU and its policies of cooperation across its internal borders (those between the Member States) and its external borders (those between a Member State and a state that is not a member of the EU). Our aim is to answer several questions: what is the general approach of EU regional policy and how does it mesh with the policies followed by other European organisations? What, more precisely, are the EU's policies on cooperation and what instruments support cross-border cooperation in Europe? How has this corpus built up over time and what spatial configurations have resulted from it? Does territorial cooperation contribute to the emergence of a European territory? The second part consists of a succinct presentation of the instances of territorial cooperation taking place in the 28 EU Member States. The objective is to see the cross-border territorialities that have taken shape. When and how has cross-border cooperation developed in each EU Member State? What are the goals of cross-border cooperation? Finally, which stakeholders are involved, what form does cooperation take and what scales of cooperation have emerged? This analysis will consequently provide an understanding of territorial cooperation both in Europe as a whole and at the level of the national territories.



1

The European Union and
its policies of cooperation
across its internal and
external borders

From the 1990s onwards, the EEC and then the EU have engaged in cross-border cooperation, but from the very beginning their policies have been framed in a broader perspective than that of the Member States alone. A number of instruments have been put in place. A programme of support for cross-border cooperation — Interreg — was set up in 1990 in the context of regional policy. Thanks to the financial support it has provided, this programme has not only strengthened cooperation at local level but, with effect from 1997, has also encouraged cooperation frameworks in areas covering parts of several countries. Moreover, with the establishment of macroregions around geographical areas regarded as challenging (the Baltic Sea, the Danube, the Adriatic and the Alps) since 2006, it has been possible to develop strategies with a geopolitical dimension. Finally, the EU has provided itself with foreign policy tools with the creation of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) in 2006 and the neighbourhood policy in 2007. In parallel, a legal tool for territorial cooperation was also established in 2007: the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). This all demonstrates that territorial cooperation has diversified and that neighbourhood approaches have become more complex. ‘Internal borders’ and ‘external borders’ have been treated differently. The former separate the adjoining territories of Member States, whereas the latter delimit a Member State from a non-EU country. This difference implies that the EU and its Member States distinguish between a ‘European territory’ and the territory that surrounds it. However, this distinction is not valid in the case of certain countries, such as Switzerland or Norway, which may not be members of the EU yet still take part in Interreg programmes, as a result of their geographical location and their integration in certain common policies (the Schengen area, bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU, etc.). Neighbourhood policy, for its part, deals with cooperation on a different scale. Cross-border neighbourhood cooperation is envisaged between Europe, regarded as an identified entity, and two geopolitical groups: Russia and the states that emerged from the break-up of the USSR on the one hand, and the countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean on the other.

In this first part, we shall first be examining the various territorial configurations taken by Europe’s regional groupings (the EU, the Council of Europe, the Schengen area and the Eurozone), and then we shall turn our attention to cooperation forums and cross-border working communities seen from a historical perspective, before analysing the development of the Interreg programmes. The last two topics will be macroregional cooperation (including maritime strategies) and cross-border cooperation, from the perspective of enlargement and neighbourhood policy.

A series of original maps provides an all-round vision of territorial cooperation, organised into the various categories mentioned. The maps aim to show the existence of cooperation frameworks by placing them in both a historical and a geographical context. In other words we are seeking to show how cooperation areas have changed over time, taking into account their different scales. The aim is to showcase the recognised frameworks of institutional cooperation and not partnerships between institutions or stakeholders. These frameworks do not always exhibit a great degree of stability over time and it is by no means rare for some of them to disappear. Our portrayal is intended to be as exhaustive as possible but it is a difficult task in the absence of a single inventory of these frameworks.

We have developed a key to the types of cross-border cooperation, providing an overview of the whole of Europe. It relies on two main features: the scale of cooperation and the differences between urban and rural cooperation. Three scales have been chosen (see the table below): local, regional⁽¹⁾ and supraregional. The idea is, first of all, to define what distinguishes the local scale (an extremely small territory and very close proximity between stakeholders) from the regional scales. In practice, differences in the size of the areas and in the proximity between stakeholders also have implications for

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1 The word ‘region’ is to be understood here in its German sense (a territory at a lower level than that of the Länder, as in the euroregions on the German border created with the support of the AEBR), and not in the French sense (a political entity at the NUTS 2 level, as in the euroregions on France’s borders with Italy or Spain).

Scale	Spatial aspects	Description	Examples
Local	'Urban'	Cooperation between two or more contiguous urban municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frankfurt (Oder)-Střebice • Eurode Kerkrade-Herzogenrath • Longwy European Development Pole (PED)
	'Rural'	Cooperation between contiguous municipal/ intermunicipal bodies, in sparsely built-up areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyrenees-Cerdanya • Mont Blanc Area
Regional	Cross-border metropolis	Cooperation between contiguous territories (NUTS 3 or NUTS 4) with a monocentric or polycentric metropolitan structure (leadership, strategic guidance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basel Trinational Eurodistrict • Meuse-Rhine • Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis
	Non-metropolitan	Cooperation between contiguous territories (NUTS 3 or NUTS 4) without a metropolitan structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Euregio • Catalan Cross-border Area Eurodistrict
Supraregional	Metropolitan dimension	Cooperation between contiguous territories (NUTS 2, or perhaps NUTS 3) with a metropolitan dimension (leadership, strategic guidance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Region • Upper Rhine
	Non-metropolitan dimension		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channel Arc

the actions. Secondly, we distinguish the regional scale from the supra-regional scale. In the former case, the area involved is generally smaller; the territory concerned matches the definition of a region focused around a large urban agglomeration. In the latter case, the area is certainly larger but, more importantly, it appears to be marked by greater complexity shown by the existence of a polycentric network of towns and cities and a mixture of stakeholders acting at different levels. Generally speaking, it encompasses several cross-border regions as defined above. When a cross-border area is identified consisting of intermeshing cross-border regions falling within the former definition, it essentially exists at a supra-regional scale. The difference in geographical organisation is linked to the form of cross-border governance: where there is a single city, its dominance facilitates the emergence of a leading centre

or hub, whereas in a polycentric configuration, it is more difficult for a dominant hub to emerge. Some element of subjectivity remains in distinguishing between these two types of region.

The second key feature rests on the distinction between territories strongly marked by urban areas and those classed as rural. The difference lies between densely populated areas featuring one or more cities, and more sparsely inhabited areas of small villages and towns.

1.1 Regional groupings in Europe: areas of varying shape

After the end of the Second World War, the process of European integration was initiated by elected pro-European politicians at the Hague Congress in 1948. The goal was to preserve peace in Europe by bringing about a rapprochement among the peoples of Europe. Creating a 'borderless Europe' was regarded as a *sine qua non* for achieving this goal, and territorial cooperation between local and regional communities would be one of the means used to do so. The first step in this process of European integration was the creation of European organisations, two of which were in particular to focus on territorial cooperation — the Council of Europe, founded on 5 May 1949 in Strasbourg by 10 European countries ⁽¹⁾ and which currently has 47 member states, that is to say a 'greater Europe', extending as far as the countries of the Caucasus and including all European states (with the exception of Belarus and Kosovo), with Turkey, Russia, the European microstates, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland among their number; followed by the European Economic Community (EEC), established by the six founding countries ⁽²⁾ on 25 June 1957 in Rome, which became the European Union (EU) in 1992 and currently comprises 28 Member States ⁽³⁾.

For the Council of Europe, a borderless Europe means gathering together a collection of countries around defence of the fundamental values of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. It was also the first European organisation to talk about cross-border cooperation. In 1957, the Council of Europe founded the Conference of Local Authorities of Europe, providing for regular meetings of local representatives. Cross-border cooperation was one of the principal topics of debate at the Conference, leading to the drafting of a first intergovernmental agreement allowing local and regional authorities



- 1 The three Benelux countries, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom.
- 2 The three Benelux countries, Germany, France and Italy.
- 3 The states that have subsequently acceded are: Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom in 1973; Greece in 1980; Spain and Portugal in 1986; Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1995; the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia in 2004; Bulgaria and Romania in 2007; and Croatia in 2013.

in Europe to put their relations with their cross-border neighbours on a formal footing, in accordance with their respective national legal systems. The European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation was adopted on 21 May 1980 in Madrid, and has subsequently been amended by three additional protocols in 1995, 1998 and 2009. The last of these provided for the creation of a proper legal instrument, the Euroregional Co-operation Grouping (ECG), in order to facilitate cross-border cooperation between border regions in Council of Europe member states. There is therefore a close link within this body between territorial cooperation and the principle of local and regional democracy. The European Charter of Local Self-Government, adopted in 1985, provides a legal framework enabling the member states of the Council of Europe to allow local authorities to manage cross-border cooperation independently. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, founded in 1994 as a representative body for cities and regions, pays particular attention to ensuring that local and regional democracy remains a fundamental principle in the way local and regional authorities work, and maintains that true cross-border governance should be established at the level of Greater Europe. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Council of Europe was the first European organisation to include the countries of central and eastern Europe in its membership and later, in the mid-1990s, to throw membership open to the former Yugoslav and Soviet republics that had become independent states, including Russia. Territorial cooperation thus became a factor in promoting democratic stability in Europe, since it encouraged recognition of the new member states' borders. The Council of Europe has committed itself to territorial cooperation, which it regards as a factor of democratic security. Border regions thus acquired a geopolitical stabilising role, encouraged by the Council of Europe.

The EEC took an interest in territorial cooperation somewhat later, and with different objectives in mind. A regional policy was adopted in 1975 with the creation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), but it was not until after the adoption of the Single European Act in 1987 that the EEC began to engage with



Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France

cross-border cooperation, within the framework of the European integration process. In effect, the Single European Act provided for the creation of a single European market by 1993, and the European Commission realised that border regions were sensitive areas in the context of implementing that market. Following the reform of regional policy and the creation of the Structural Funds in 1988, the Commission began financing cross-border cooperation in Europe from 1990 onwards by means of a specific programme of support: the Interreg Community Initiative Programme (CIP). As far as the EEC was concerned, the principal issue was to create a Europe that guaranteed free movement, one where economic flows and the mobility of persons would not be hindered by barriers at borders. Border regions then became a focus of attention since it was within these areas that the effects of downgrading borders would be most tangible. The territorial integration of these microareas thus became a daily occurrence. In the early 1990s, these border regions became, for the EEC, both proving grounds and models for a borderless Europe. The European Commission supported cross-border cooperation in order to mitigate the undesirable effects of border opening and to promote economic integration, through the creation of new cross-border transport links, research networks, etc. The EU enhanced the role of the European regions as active contributors to the process of integration, notably with the introduction of two new factors after the adoption of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992: firstly the principle

of subsidiarity, enshrined in Article 3b of the Treaty (now Article 5 of the Treaty of Lisbon), the application of which would result from then on in 'multilevel' European governance, involving also the local and regional levels; and secondly the Committee of the Regions, which was established in 1994 as a representative body for local and regional authorities within the EU. From the 1990s onwards, therefore, the EU expected that local authorities would play an ever more significant role in the process of European integration, as confirmed by the constant growth in the financial resources made available for the various regional policy programming periods, of which the Interreg initiative was a particular beneficiary. In any event, the development of economic potential in border regions gradually became a priority for the EU. In 2007, after the Treaty of Lisbon was adopted, territorial cohesion became a goal of the Union, and since then it has been a priority for European regional policy. Territorial cooperation forms an integral part of regional policy as its third objective, alongside the objectives of convergence and of regional competitiveness and employment. As a result, cross-border regions, now explicitly mentioned in Article 174 of the Treaty, are no longer just proving grounds for the single market but are also expected to play a role in the construction of an integrated social and economic space. This direction that the EU has taken means that border regions can no longer be simply regarded as economic areas but should also be seen as political players that must necessarily



30th anniversary of the Schengen agreement (Luxembourg), Jean-Claude Juncker on the podium, 2015

be involved in integration policy. That is why the EU has followed the example of the Council of Europe and created a legal instrument for cooperation between local stakeholders in Community regions. The European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), established under a 2006 regulation and taking effect in 2007, makes it possible to set up common legal structures. Finally, after the adoption of the European neighbourhood policy (ENP) in 2004, the EU, like the Council of Europe, is able to make use of cross-border cooperation as a means of stabilising its external borders. The European Neighbourhood and Partnership instrument (ENPI), which became operational in 2007, makes funds available for cooperation between border regions on both the internal and the external borders of the EU. The establishment of good neighbourhood relations is expected to contribute to the stability of European territory by creating a 'united space of security' in Europe. The objectives of the Council of Europe and of the EU now coincide on this point. In the end, the increasing importance of Europe's border regions for European integration has, overall, caused the cross-border cooperation strategies of the Council of Europe and the EU to coalesce.

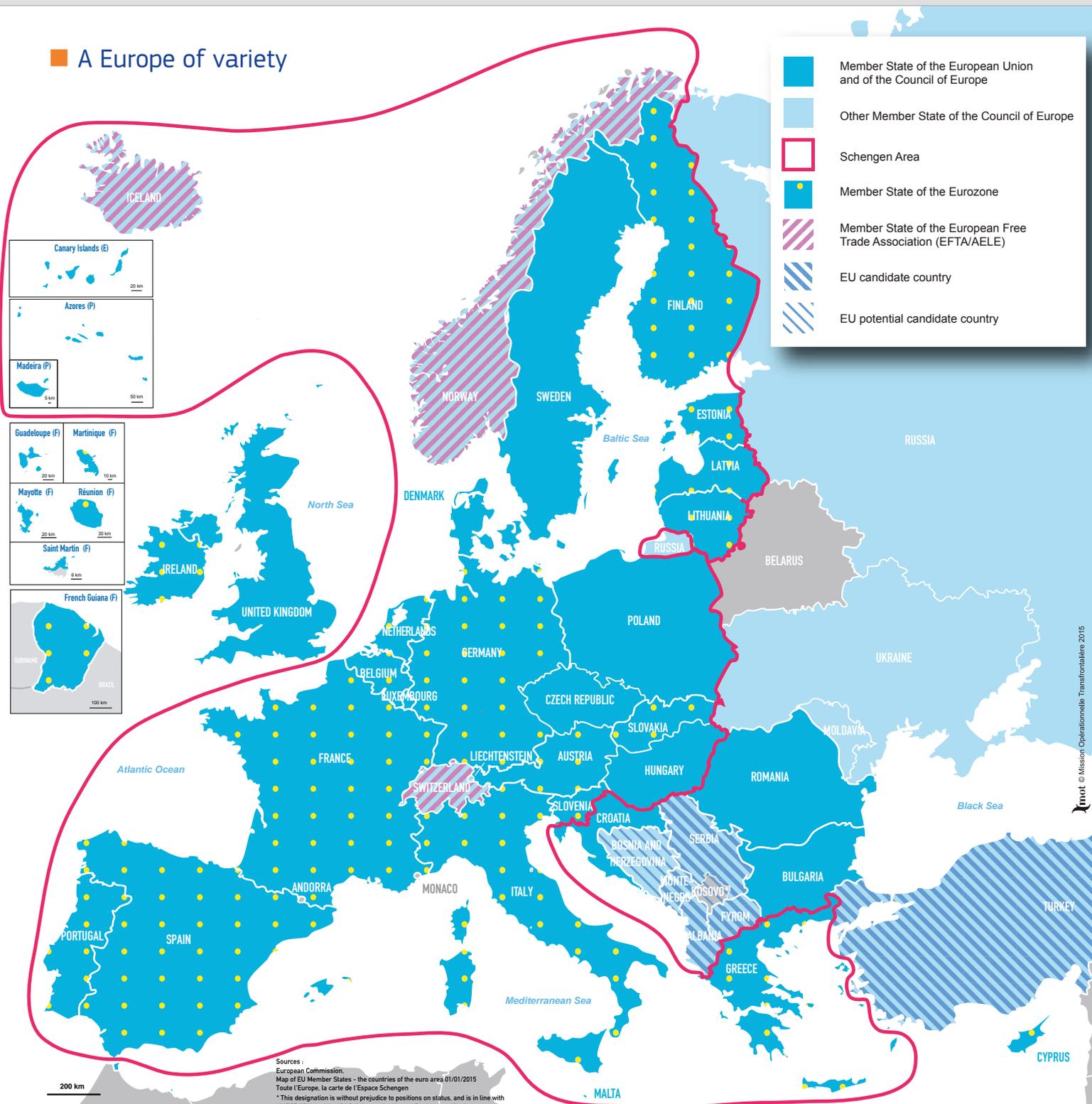
More recently, and in step with the EEC's single market project of 1987, which was intended to remove barriers to the movement of goods, persons, services and capital in Europe, certain European Community countries also looked forward to the disappearance

of border controls for travellers. The first agreements were signed on 14 June 1985 by Germany, France and the three Benelux countries at Schengen, Luxembourg. In 1990 they gave rise to a convention, which entered into force on 26 March 1995, to which 26 states have now gradually acceded; some of these (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) are not members of the EU ⁽⁴⁾. Finally, a European monetary community began to be created in 1987 after the adoption of the Single European Act, although not all the EEC Member States took part. The first phase of monetary union took place in 1992, with the adoption of the Treaty of Maastricht and the implementation of the free movement of capital. After the Danish referendum on this treaty rejected monetary union, Denmark and Sweden negotiated an opt-out, with the result that by the third phase of monetary union in 2002 only 11 countries had joined the euro area: the three Benelux countries, Germany, Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Austria, Portugal and Finland. This area with no monetary frontiers has since been joined by other countries: Greece, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta, Slovakia and the three Baltic States. In 2015 the euro area numbers 19 countries, with a total population of more than 320 million people.

As a result, Europe today is a structure of varying shape, but its borders reveal several types of integration, of which territorial cooperation is one of the most successful.

4 Apart from the five founder members and these four countries, the following are members of the Schengen area: the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

A Europe of variety



- Member State of the European Union and of the Council of Europe
- Other Member State of the Council of Europe
- Schengen Area
- Member State of the Eurozone
- Member State of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA/AELE)
- EU candidate country
- EU potential candidate country

Canary Islands (E) 20 km

Azores (P) 50 km

Madeira (P) 50 km

Guadeloupe (F) 20 km

Martinique (F) 10 km

Mayotte (F) 20 km

Réunion (F) 30 km

Saint Martin (F) 6 km

French Guiana (F) 100 km

Sources :
 European Commission.
 Map of EU Member States - the countries of the euro area 01/01/2015
 Toute l'Europe, la carte de l'Espace Schengen
 * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with
 UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

1.2 Cross-border cooperation forums and working communities

After the Second World War, neighbourhood relations, in the sense of links between stakeholders on either side of a border and in relatively close geographical proximity in Europe, took a variety of forms. Sometimes they developed in the context of multilateral cooperation within European organisations, whereas in other cases they emerged under bilateral agreements between two neighbouring states. They soon came to be forged at the infra-national level as well, as a result of a more informal kind of cooperation between local and regional stakeholders on either side of a national frontier. We therefore have to distinguish between two different ways in which these neighbourhood relations have evolved: cross-border cooperation forums on the one hand and working communities on the other.

Cross-border cooperation forums have mostly been established at the inter-country level. They bring together two or more adjoining states with a view to managing shared problems and coordinating relations, but also with the aim of establishing cooperation. In some cases, this can even lead to a process of cross-border integration. The first forum of this type emerged during the interwar period, with the creation of the Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union in 1921. With this instance of cooperation as a basis, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands established a customs union in September 1944, which was ratified in 1947 and finally came into effect on 1 January 1948. This union was far more than a cooperation forum, in that the three countries entered into finely detailed economic cooperation, with the establishment of a tariff community that culminated in 1958 in a treaty bringing about the economic union of Benelux. This involved the elimination of import duties for internal trade and a common external tariff vis-à-vis third countries. By 1960, implementation of the treaty involved establishing the free movement of goods, capital, services and people. Cooperation in Benelux was later changed to take account of the ways in which the EEC and then the EU were becoming more integrated. These involved the Schengen agreements signed in 1985 with France and Germany on the elimination of controls at internal borders, and the implementation of a treaty on cross-border police intervention, with joint patrols and surveillance of suspects. The treaty was amended in 2008 to establish a Benelux Union, laying down three themes for

future cooperation: the internal market and economic union, sustainable development, and justice and home affairs. Before the new treaty came into effect in 2010, the Benelux countries set out the extension of cross-border cooperation and, particularly, the possibility of collaboration with the regional cooperation bodies of other EU Member States as two of the principal objectives of their external cooperation.

The second cooperation forum was put in place in the early 1950s by the countries of northern Europe. As Denmark, Norway and Iceland had preferred to join the Atlantic alliance in 1949 rather than create a Scandinavian defence union, the plan for a customs union no longer appeared to be realistic. In 1951 Hans Hedtoft, the Danish Prime Minister, proposed that a common consultative assembly for the Scandinavian countries be set up. This proposal was immediately accepted by Denmark, Norway, Iceland and Sweden, resulting in the creation of the Nordic Council in 1952. This Nordic cooperation forum was expanded to include Finland in 1955, followed by the Faeroe Islands and Åland Islands in 1970 and Greenland in 1984, the last three each having autonomous status. This is largely an inter-parliamentary cooperation body, with 87 representatives from the five countries and three autonomous territories. Since 1996, the Nordic Council has held ordinary annual meetings and also extraordinary meetings on particular topics. Political cooperation extends well beyond mere consultation or information exchange. Since it was created, the Council has established common rules for its members concerning the organisation of the labour market and social security. In 1954 it also implemented a Nordic passport union, guaranteeing the free movement of citizens among its member states. The fact that this entered into force in 1958, well before the first Schengen agreements were signed, demonstrates the pioneering nature of Nordic cooperation in this area. In 1971, the Nordic Parliamentary Council was supplemented by an intergovernmental body, the Nordic Council of Ministers, which meets regularly to discuss common problems and matters of cross-border cooperation. The Nordic Council is still operative today.

A third inter-country cooperation forum came into being in central and eastern Europe in 1989, shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall.



The Visegrad Group began in February 1991, during a meeting between the heads of state or government of Poland (Lech Wałęsa), Czechoslovakia (Václav Havel) and Hungary (József Antall). The objective of this cooperation body was initially to dispense with these countries' past history as people's democracies with tightly controlled borders, to overcome animosities between these neighbouring states, and to develop a common strategy towards the European institutions. Between 1991 and 1993, the Group therefore concentrated its energies on establishing ties with the EEC/EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Since Czechoslovakia split into two states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the Visegrad Group has consisted of four member states. Cooperation has been put into effect through the medium of several contact groups at all levels: diplomats, experts, non-governmental organisations, associations, etc. The subjects dealt with are also quite diverse and may, for instance, concern culture, the environment, transport, tourism, science and education, as well as more sensitive subjects, such as security or defence. Cooperation has been established mainly through consultative meetings on an informal basis. Neighbourhood relations have not been put on any formal or contractual basis, and no institution for cooperation has been created. Nevertheless, the member governments make annual contributions to an international Visegrad fund, created in 2000, in order to support a variety of

cooperation projects. An action plan has also been drawn up every year to set the priorities for cooperation. Furthermore, the Visegrad Group also aims to establish good neighbourhood relations with other states in central and eastern Europe that share a common history as socialist régimes after 1945 which have experienced economic and political transition since 1989.

Finally, in 1993, the Kirkenes Declaration established a cooperation forum aimed more closely at protecting the environment around the Barents Sea in the Arctic. This forum, whose members are states bordering on the Arctic (Norway, Finland, Russia, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland), consists of two distinct bodies: the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, which brings together the foreign ministers of the member states and the European Commission, and the Barents Regional Council, whose members are the different regional entities of the Barents region, as well as representatives of the indigenous peoples living in Finland, Norway, Sweden and Russia. Each of these Councils has its own working groups on the environment, transport and economic cooperation, while other groups have been formed to deal with tourism, health, culture and the environment. This two-pronged organisation of cooperation in the Barents region — at intergovernmental and regional levels — makes this cooperation forum a hybrid, which operates in a similar manner to a cross-border working community.

In fact, cross-border working communities are, in principle, groupings of regional authorities seeking to establish bilateral or multilateral cross-border cooperation. It happens that there is no precise definition of a cross-border working community in the terminology of cross-border cooperation. Working communities are often similar to forums, where experiences are exchanged but without the intention of developing projects. Their legal basis is consequently non-binding, and the members of these communities have not transferred decision-making powers to the joint body in question. The majority of them cover a broad area united by a particular geographical feature (a mountain range, for example), and generally contain a large number of regional authorities. Cross-border working communities are distinct from euroregions. The latter also group together



Chamonix Valley and Mont Blanc

local authorities from two or more border regions, but their objective is to create a true cross-border area. That results in a more binding cooperation framework, which allows policies to be initiated and joint projects to be carried out.

Historically, however, the two concepts of working communities and euroregions have been intrinsically linked. The first euroregion to be created in Europe — the Gronau Euregio on the Dutch-German border — was initially a cross-border working community. It began in 1954 when two local associations, one German and one Dutch, were founded in order to bring together five border regions which, between them, comprised more than 100 municipalities on either

side of the border. The joint work of these two bodies gave rise to the Euregio in 1958. Its main office was built in 1985 just 75 metres from the Dutch-German border. This cross-border working community was transformed into a euroregion in stages. The same kind of development took place on the Franco-German-Swiss border, in the Upper Rhine area. The objective of the Regio Basiliensis, established in 1963 as a Swiss association (Verein) in Basel, was to bring together French, German and Swiss local authorities in order to secure the development of the Basel agglomeration in a trilateral framework. Two homologous associations were then set up: first came the Regio du Haut-Rhin (Upper Rhine Regio), established at Mulhouse in France in 1965, and then the Freiburg-im-Breisgau

Regio in Germany (1985). In 1995, these three structures merged to form the TriRhena Regio, comprising the South Baden region (Germany), the north-western region of Switzerland (Basel, Solothurn, Aargau and Jura) and the Department of Haut-Rhin (France). There too, the structure of this grouping developed into a euroregion. Not all cross-border regions have undergone the same process. Thus, the Institut pour la coopération régionale dans les régions frontalières intercommunautaires (Institute for Regional Cooperation in Inter-Community Border Regions), established in 1971 between Germany, France and Luxembourg by industrial undertakings, the Saarbergwerke (Saar Mines Board), the Houillères du bassin de Lorraine (the Coalmines of the Lorraine Basin) and the Acières réunies de Burbach-Eich-Dudelange (the United Steelworks of Burbach-Eich-Dudelange), initially formed a working community. At the same time, a mixed Franco-German-Luxembourg intergovernmental commission was set up by the foreign ministries of the three countries. In this way, the working community was merged into an institutionalised framework for cooperation. An equivalent trade union framework, the SaarLorLux Interregional Trade Union Council, the first of its kind in Europe, was established in 1976. The SaarLorLux Euregio, which is an association under Luxembourg law, was established in 1995 with the aim of enhancing cross-border cooperation at the regional level.

The cross-border working communities that developed later resemble multilateral cooperation groupings around shared natural spaces, such as lakes or mountain ranges. The first example of these is the International Lake Constance Conference, established in 1972. The regional authorities bordering the lake — the Land of Baden-Württemberg in Germany, the Swiss cantons of Schaffhausen, Appenzell, Thurgau, St. Gallen and Zürich, the Austrian Land of Vorarlberg and the Principality of Liechtenstein — established an international discussion forum on the environmental management problems of the lake. From the 1970s onwards, several cross-border working communities appeared in order to manage mountain ranges. The ARGE Alp (the Association of Alpine States), the first working community in the central Alps, was established

in 1972 to bring together authorities from five countries. A second working community, under the name of Alpe-Adria, some of whose members were also members of ARGE Alp, was established in the eastern Alps in 1978. The original feature of this working community was its cooperation with Yugoslavia, a Communist country. The end of the Cold War and the disintegration of Yugoslavia had the effect of bringing new member countries into Alpe Adria.

Starting in the 1980s, the dynamism of the European integration process, in which Switzerland was not involved, encouraged Switzerland's border cantons to establish several working communities to enhance their cross-border cooperation. The Mont Blanc region witnessed a veritable burst of cross-border cooperation. In 1982 the first working community was established in the western Alps: COTRAO, the Western Alps Working Community. Founded in Marseille, it is centred on Geneva and groups regional authorities from three countries (France, Italy and Switzerland). Within this community, the Mont Blanc Community of regional and local authorities was established in 1991. It was consolidated in 2014 when the partners agreed to create a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). Further to the north, the Jura Working Community brought together Swiss cantons and the Franche-Comté region of France after 1985. In 2001, it styled itself the Conférence transjurasienne (Trans-Jura Conference). A second Franco-Swiss working community, the Lake Geneva Council (Conseil du Léman), based around Geneva and the Lake Geneva agglomeration, was established in 1987. Finally, two communities have been created between Italy and Switzerland: the Valais-Valle d'Aosta Council (1990) and the Regio Insubrica (1995).

After the death of General Franco in 1975 and the democratic transition in Spain, cross-border cooperation between France and Spain across the Pyrenees could also be contemplated. A few years before Spain's accession to the EEC, the Pyrenees Working Community was created in 1983, comprising three French regions, four Spanish regions or autonomous communities, and the Principality of Andorra, which in fact took the initiative for this cooperation association and

is home to its headquarters. By contrast, it took much longer for the first cross-border communities between Spain and Portugal to come into being. The Galicia-North Portugal Working Community, founded in 1991, had its legitimacy confirmed by becoming an EGTC in 2010. The new millennium saw two other cross-border working communities created between the two countries: the Castile-Leon-North Portugal Working Community in 2000, and the Algarve-Alentejo-Andalusia Euroregion Working Community in 2010. The simultaneous designation of the latter as a working community and a euroregion shows that the distinction between these two types of cooperation remains fluid in terms of both form and content.

The description of the cross-border cooperation bodies along the former Iron Curtain confirms that observation: whereas several euroregions have been established since the 1990s, particularly between Germany and its neighbours, the number of working communities created remains limited. The ARGE Donauländer (Danube Lands Working Community), whose membership consists of both regional authorities and national states, was set up in 1990 during a conference of the heads of state or government of the Danube countries at Maria Taferl in Austria. The Oder Partnership, founded in 2006 in Berlin, brings together border regions and cities in Germany and Poland (Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony, Wielkopolskie, Lubuskie, Dolnośląskie and Zachodniopomorskie). Lastly, a working

community was established in 2002 between Slovenia and Carinthia: the ARGE Carinthia-Slovenia.

Interregional cooperation forums have sprung up alongside the cross-border cooperation forums and working communities. The 'Four motors for Europe' cooperation agreement, bringing together four regions (Catalonia, Lombardy, Baden-Württemberg and Rhône-Alpes) that are economic powerhouses in their respective countries in western Europe, was established in 1988. It was an original initiative, but has shown little institutional development. Since 1990 this forum has also included Flanders and Wales. At the same time, the Atlantic Arc was founded as a maritime interregional forum for 32 coastal regions from Scotland to Andalusia, under the aegis of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR). Finally, there is the Channel Arc, which has grouped French and British local authorities since 1996, with the objective of initiating maritime cooperation.

This brief description of cross-border cooperation forums and working communities in Europe demonstrates that the latter are very diverse and take many forms. Nevertheless, they have one thing in common: their objective is to bring together border communities, with a view to improving their neighbourhood relations. The creation of platforms for discussion, exchange and consultation reinforces this objective.

Cooperation forums and cross-border working communities



1.3 The Interreg programmes (1990-2020): from cross-border cooperation between neighbours to multifaceted cooperation

Since its inception, Interreg has been a community initiative programme (CIP) with the objective of forging links between neighbouring local actors on both sides of a national frontier between Member States. This stitching together of border areas, which was part of the perspective of the single market in 1993, is intended to reduce the obstacle to relations and exchanges that the border represents. Four generations of programmes, lasting from four to seven years, have been initiated since 1990, and a fifth phase, which began in 2014, will be completed in 2020. Since 2007, European territorial cooperation (ETC) has been a fully fledged objective of cohesion policy. The Interreg CIP programmes, and later those of the ETC objective (which continue to go under the name of Interreg) aim at integration at various scales (cross-border, transnational and inter-regional) within the framework of decentralised management, using a standard, shared-management approach. This policy has remained constant while the EU has grown from 12 to 28 Member States.

The initiative of a Community support programme for cross-border cooperation dates back to the mid-1980s. The crisis in the steel industry, which affected the border areas of Luxembourg, Belgium and France alike, prompted the European Commission to come up with a new initiative. The creation of the European Development Pole in 1985 was seen as a joint response to the redevelopment of a trinational area. Thirty-five years after the Schuman Declaration, it was once more coal conversion and steel production that provided the impulse for an innovative European initiative to emerge. The agreement signed by the three countries brought them into a partnership with local actors in the same institutional initiative. This initiative paved the way for more general consideration.

Since 1987, the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), founded in 1971, has been engaged in talks with the Commission and Members of the European Parliament with the aim of proposing long-term projects backed by European financial support in border regions. The regions in question are peripheral areas within countries, where the economy depends on the presence of the border. The programme is aimed as much at mitigating the undesirable effects

of the opening of the borders that took place in 1993 as at overcoming national differences. The 14 pilot projects, located primarily in the six founding Member States of the EEC, were awarded funding amounting to ECU 21 million under Article 10 of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Although modest, these trials were considered a success and smoothed the way for the establishment of the Interreg programme. This programme introduced a territorial dimension into regional policy by identifying the border regions of the EU-12 Member States as territories whose geographical location gave rise to specific characteristics. The Interreg programme sought to involve local and regional stakeholders in eliminating barriers to the free movement of goods, people, capital and services, by allowing them to develop cross-border projects. Consequently, these stakeholders also take part in the process of European integration as much as the Member States themselves. That has enabled border territories to shed their position as peripheral regions in their respective countries and to gain a pivotal position in the context of multilevel governance.

The introduction of reciprocal arrangements through cross-border projects could not, however, be applied across the board to all frontiers, particularly those that formed the external borders of EU-12. The eligible areas were essentially those NUTS 3 (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) ⁽¹⁾ areas separated by a land or maritime border. However, it can be seen from Map 1 that, with a few exceptions (Corsica-Sardinia, Kent/Nord-Pas de Calais, Storstrøm and Fyn in Denmark), the eligible areas correspond to areas separated by land frontiers. Project selection depends on a number of principles, namely the involvement of at least two stakeholders situated on either side of a frontier in the areas eligible for the programme; co-financing

1 NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) is a harmonised, hierarchical and nested classification of European territory at six levels (NUTS 0 to NUTS 6). Level 0 corresponds to the territories of the Member States and the EFTA member states associated with this classification. The regional level is divided into three parts: NUTS 1 corresponds to the most extensive regional level; NUTS 3 is an intermediate level. For several countries, particularly the smaller ones, certain levels do not exist.



The Vomare Project (Voluntary Maritime Rescue): developing cooperation between the rescue services of Finland and Estonia

by different partners (the EU provides up to 85 % of the total for the 2014-2020 period); independent management (a managing authority handles all interaction with the Commission); and management control exercised by the Member States in question, under the Commission's supervision. Each programme, which is negotiated by the partners on either side of the border and the Commission, includes a strategy that provides overall guidance for the projects. This procedure thus enables local and regional stakeholders to deal directly with the Commission, which enhances their independence.

In 2015, ETC cross-border programmes cover all the border areas of the 28 Member States, the members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the states bordering the Member States, within boundaries that in some cases have been extended to the point where some countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, etc.) are entirely or almost entirely covered by eligible areas. This is particularly the case with the countries that have joined the EU since 1995. Each generation of Interreg programmes has taken account of successive enlargements of the EU by including on each occasion

an ever-greater number of eligible areas, which are here called 'cross-border regions', a term enshrined in the Treaty since 2007. The three maps show that the extent of these cross-border regions has increased in step with the various enlargements, and also that certain non-EU countries have been widely involved in the process, particularly Switzerland since Interreg I and Norway since Interreg III. Moreover, several regions figuring in the first two phases of Interreg have seen their areas enlarged, particularly in Interreg IV and V. Finally, maritime regions are now also included as eligible areas; this mostly affects those countries that have been involved the longest, such as Denmark, France, Italy and the United Kingdom, but also Greece and Sweden. In fact, the Commission has been taking the maritime aspects of borders more into account since Interreg IV. This also demonstrates that a maritime border is no longer regarded as a discontinuity but rather as an interface. At the end of each programming period, a stocktake of activities is performed, the results of which are then taken into account in redefining programmes for the following phase. Furthermore, each programme is considered in conjunction with other aspects of European policy.

Table 1 – Interreg projects, phases and ERDF funding totals

INTERREG	Phase	Number of Programmes	Funding amount (million EUR in real terms)	Number of EU Member States
0	1988-1989	14 projects	0,021	
I	1990-1993	31	1,082	12
II	1994-1999	59	3,500	15
III	2000-2006	79	5,100	25 (after 2004)
IV	2007-2013	92	7,800	27
V	2014-2020	100	10,100	28

Sources: INTERACT, The Community Initiative INTERREG; LRDP LTD, *Ex-post* Evaluations

Although it covered a limited area, Interreg I (1990-1993) incorporated a wide range of border regions in terms of their populations, activities and development. The borders of Benelux and the border between France and Germany were very open with numerous interactions, in contrast to others that were marked by their peripheral character and the limited knowledge that stakeholders had of each other (as in the Iberian Peninsula, Greece and Ireland).

After Interreg I, which provided the opportunity for a trial run at European level, Interreg II, which ran for six years (1994-1999), introduced a number of innovations. First, apart from the three new Member States, the eligible areas also involved certain EFTA countries (particularly Norway), which provided support for their border areas. In addition, cooperation was no longer limited to neighbouring regions but also took account of two new dimensions. Interreg IIB took over the funding of cross-border energy networks, which had been the responsibility of the REGEN initiative ⁽²⁾ during the previous phase, in accordance with a principle of territorial continuity (where one issue is shared by all the territorial stakeholders). Interreg IIC,

introduced in 1997 in four regions bringing together large contiguous areas of several Member States, and then Interreg IIIB, beginning in 2000, in which each European region would be involved in at least one programme, represented a new strand of Interreg, namely transnational cooperation. Interreg IIC arose from a reconsideration of European spatial planning inspired by the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT) and launched, on the part of the EU, by the first ministerial meeting at Nantes in 1989, attended by the President of the Commission, Jacques Delors, and subsequently by the policy studies initiated by the Commission: Europe 2000 and Europe 2000+. The disastrous floods along the Rhine and Meuse in 1993-1995 led to the launch of the Interreg programme Rhine-Meuse Activities (IRMA) at the level of the combined river basins. In the wake of this programme, and under pressure from organisations such as the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), the Commission proposed to create Interreg programmes that were no longer limited exclusively to contiguous border regions but would now extend to larger 'transnational' groupings, taking their inspiration from the eight regional groupings belonging to several EU Member States and other European and Mediterranean states that the Europe 2000+ study had identified. The Interreg IIC strand was launched in 1997; it was regarded as the programming instrument that would

2 REGEN is a Commission initiative, designed to improve connections between energy (gas and electricity) networks and to develop them in peripheral regions.

complement the planning initiative taken at Nantes, which resulted in the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) at Potsdam in 1999.

Interreg III (2000-2006) was part of the Lisbon strategy ('to become the most competitive region in the world by 2010') and the territorial strategy outlined by the EU in the 1999 ESDP. It addressed the prospective enlargements of 2004 and 2007 with the first Phare programme (Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies). Projects in the border regions of the future Member States were provided with financial support from 2000 onwards. Similarly, the border regions of Russia adjoining Finland were assisted through the Tacis programme (Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States). Interreg III covered all the internal and external border regions of EU-15 and then EU-25 after 2004. The following period (2007-2013) saw a change of name for Interreg, when European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) officially became one of the three goals of the European cohesion policy of that time. The three strands A, B and C kept their roles, but two new instruments put in place to assist regional development along the external borders were IPA CBC (a pre-accession instrument) and ENPI CBC (a neighbourhood policy instrument). Moreover, the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), an instrument created by a regulation in 2006, was designed to be a legal instrument aimed at facilitating cooperation at all levels. Strand B sought to respond to spatial planning problems in 13 spatial ensembles. Finally, strand C (interregional cooperation) sought to promote networks at the European level by means of four programmes (Interreg IVC, ESPON, URBACT and INTERACT).

A new phase, Interreg V, has started for the 2014-2020 period as part of the EU's Europe 2020 strategy. It aims to promote both smart and sustainable growth and a diverse and inclusive society. Eleven thematic priorities linking directly to the Europe 2020 strategy have been identified and are developed in all Interreg V programmes, depending on their territorial priorities. Interreg V currently takes the form of over 100 programmes, 60 of which are in strand A, 15 in strand B, 12 under

IPA CBC and 16 under ENPI CBC, to which one should add strand C, with Interreg Europe, and the three networking programmes already present in Interreg IV (URBACT, INTERACT and ESPON).

Since 1990, Interreg programmes have become more intensive and more complex. Compared to regions in western and southern Europe, eastern and northern European cross-border regions are often less densely populated but geographically larger. The succession of Interreg programmes over time can be seen as expressions of an original policy of regionalisation, transforming a country's borders from lines of separation into interfaces. Cross-border regions have become spaces for interaction, marked by the existence of enduring links which are intended to become permanent. The assemblage of cooperation areas at different scales enables different authorities to join together in common projects transcending existing national frontiers. Through rescaling in cross-border contexts and proposing formal and financial cooperation frameworks, the Commission has been approaching what the political scientist Fritz Scharpf ⁽³⁾ has called 'positive integration' (the establishment of supranational regulatory systems), which is more successful than 'negative integration' (the removal of barriers between national territories). European territorial cohesion is thereby strengthened.

In this context, the main themes within which these projects fall can be distinguished. Transport is the most important budget item, especially for Interreg I and II, as it responds to the issues of integration and reducing isolation. It is followed by tourism and the environment. New themes, such as health and culture, emerge in Interreg III.

Interreg can therefore be seen as an essential instrument for legitimating a supranational approach, which has become a vector of European integration, by disseminating best practices (multilevel governance between the Commission, Member States and local and

3 Scharpf, Fritz, *Governing in Europe. Effective and democratic?*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999, 252 p.

regional stakeholders; and cross-border governance associated with management, intercultural, co-development and other initiatives).

Table 2 demonstrates that Interreg programmes have become an essential component of territorial cooperation within the EU and on its external borders. Fund management and project implementation are often the responsibility of local and regional stakeholders, but EU support is not provided unless the project complies with a certain number of rules and principles. Eligible territories are always cross-border areas (in the sense that they bring together

regions located in adjoining countries) but their spatial organisation and the forms that integration takes are often appreciably different. Strand A helps to tie cross-border regions together by supporting local and regional stakeholders in a framework of proximity. Strand B aims to promote cohesion around common spatial planning issues over large areas covering several countries; it encourages the establishment of governance structures in order to draw up strategies and action plans. Strand C is intended as a cooperation framework for fostering interaction between local and regional stakeholders throughout the EU on a networking basis.



The MED-Laine Project: revitalising the wool industry (Corsica, Tuscany, Sardinia)

Table 2 – The three strands of Interreg (beginning with Interreg II)

Strands	Spatial emphasis	Integration	Stakeholder level
A. Cross-border	Proximity	Contiguity	Local, regional
B. Transnational	Cohesion	Planning as the overarching theme (transport, environment, etc.)	Regional, supraregional, national
C. Interregional	Network	Interactions	Regional, supraregional, local

Sources: INTERACT, The Community Initiative INTERREG; LRDP LTD, *Ex-post* Evaluations

These instances of cooperation at different scales, which make use of different forms of distance management, can be regarded as test beds for European integration, since cooperation requires the stakeholders, who are all grounded in their national territories, to demonstrate inventiveness and establish calm and constructive relations with their foreign partners (through cross-cultural management or cross-border governance, for example) while at the same time implementing measures designed by the Commission. Overall, Interreg territorial cooperation programmes take the form of a set of extremely elaborate instruments of integration, which transcend national borders and turn them into interfaces that link territories at scales and around issues that are both different and complementary. By encouraging partnership approaches, they make it possible to go beyond existing national frameworks while still according them due respect.

Interreg programmes can thus be viewed as a success, in that they have helped reduce the distances between territorial stakeholders located in different foreign countries, and in that they are seen as opportunities to learn about others at close quarters. Every border is the outcome of a long history and a sometimes painful legacy. These programmes have diminished the role of the border as a place of tension, reduced people's ignorance about their neighbours and in certain significant cases they have brought about reconciliation

by encouraging partnerships, developing project-based approaches and fighting a lack of understanding. As we shall see below, these programmes have served to support the EU's enlargement and neighbourhood policies. European territorial cooperation can thus be seen as an integration policy that establishes relations between local and regional border stakeholders and the European institutions, while fostering horizontal links across borders.

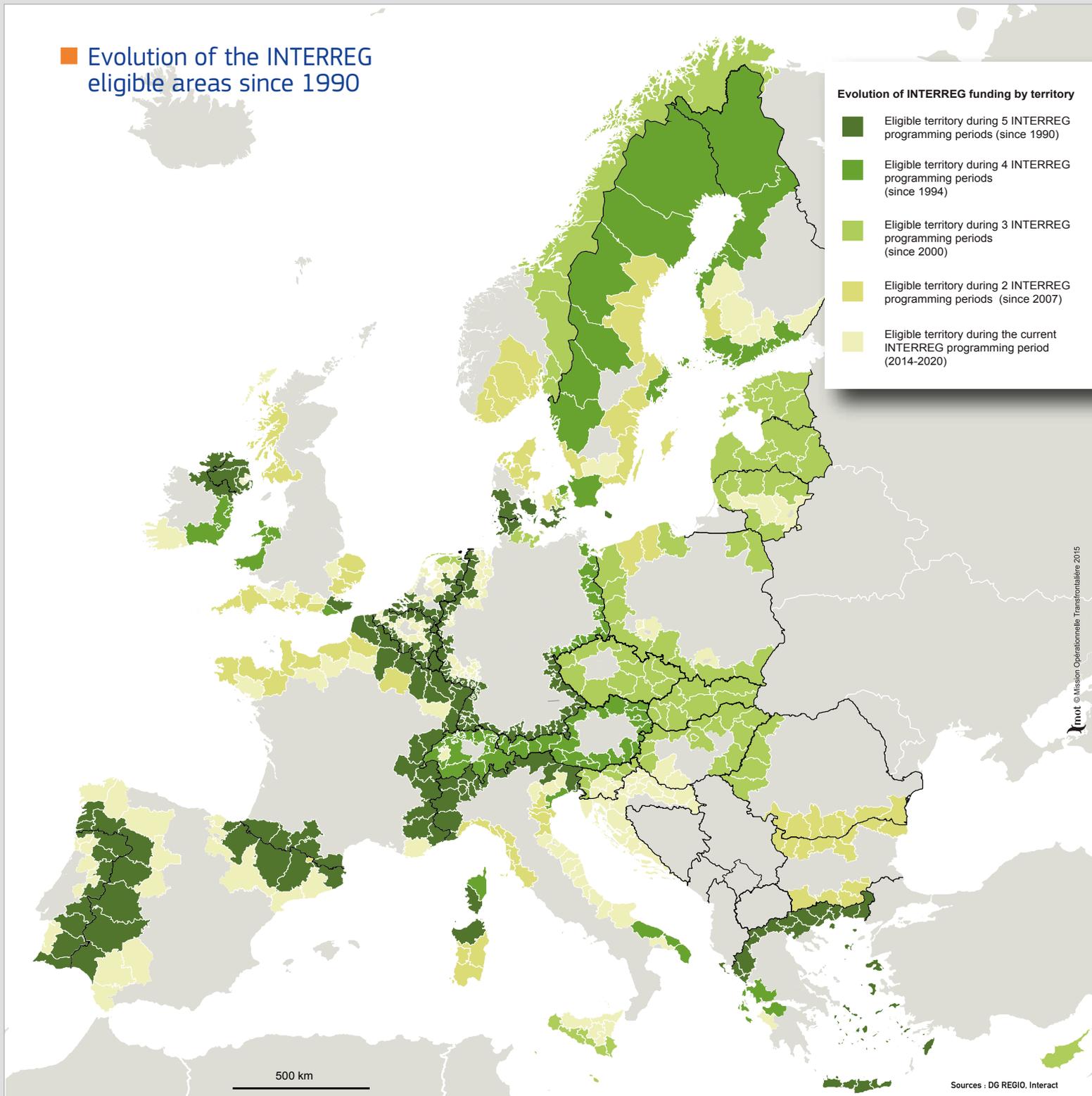
Interreg, however, is not in a position to ensure the cohesion of cross-border regions by itself, principally because its financial resources are limited, so it is unable to eliminate economic differentials across frontiers. One of the challenges to be faced in the near future will certainly be how to secure co-development prospects in cross-border regions, through cross-border coordination of regional and national strategies and funding methods, with Interreg acting as a catalyst. Moreover, major differences continue to exist between cross-border regions at the European level. Tensions have not completely disappeared, especially where economic differentials remain great. Finally, cross-border projects are essentially institutional in nature, and economic stakeholders rarely play a prominent part in them. The predominance of institutional stakeholders, and especially large authorities (cities and regional-level institutions) betrays a measure of selectivity, since other players may not have the necessary resources or interest to take part. Economic players seldom



The WINNET 8 Project: improving women's participation in the labour market, a joint venture by partners in 8 Member States

have a cross-border outlook but instead tend to think at a global, European or national level. Other civil society stakeholders do not always have the human resources required to prepare complex dossiers needing genuine know-how. Moreover, cross-border cooperation sometimes remains a marginal issue even for the authorities involved, and it is not always central to their concerns. Given these difficulties, the EU's engagement in European territorial cooperation inevitably falls within a long-term perspective.

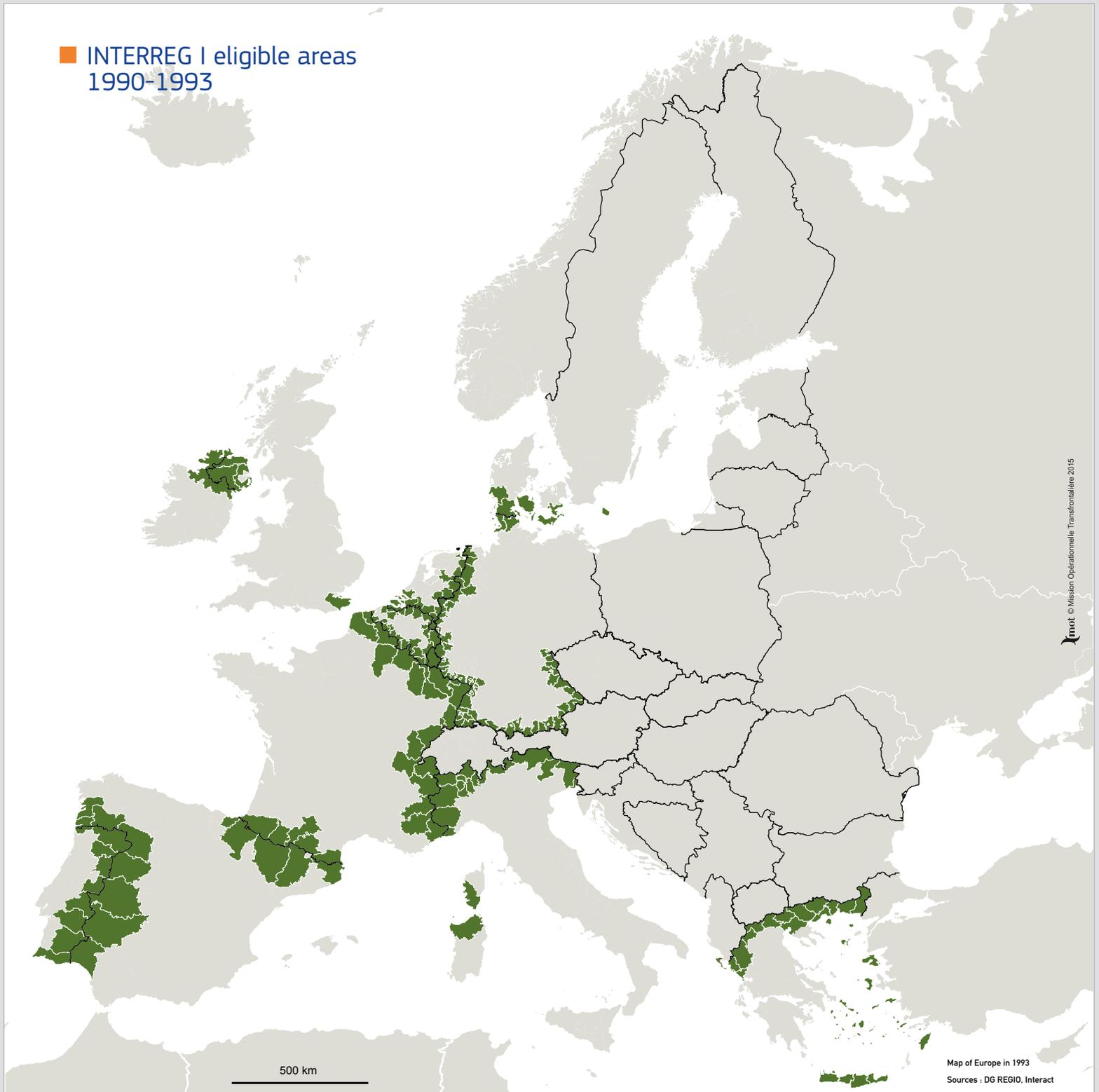
Evolution of the INTERREG eligible areas since 1990



Evolution of INTERREG funding by territory

- Eligible territory during 5 INTERREG programming periods (since 1990)
- Eligible territory during 4 INTERREG programming periods (since 1994)
- Eligible territory during 3 INTERREG programming periods (since 2000)
- Eligible territory during 2 INTERREG programming periods (since 2007)
- Eligible territory during the current INTERREG programming period (2014-2020)

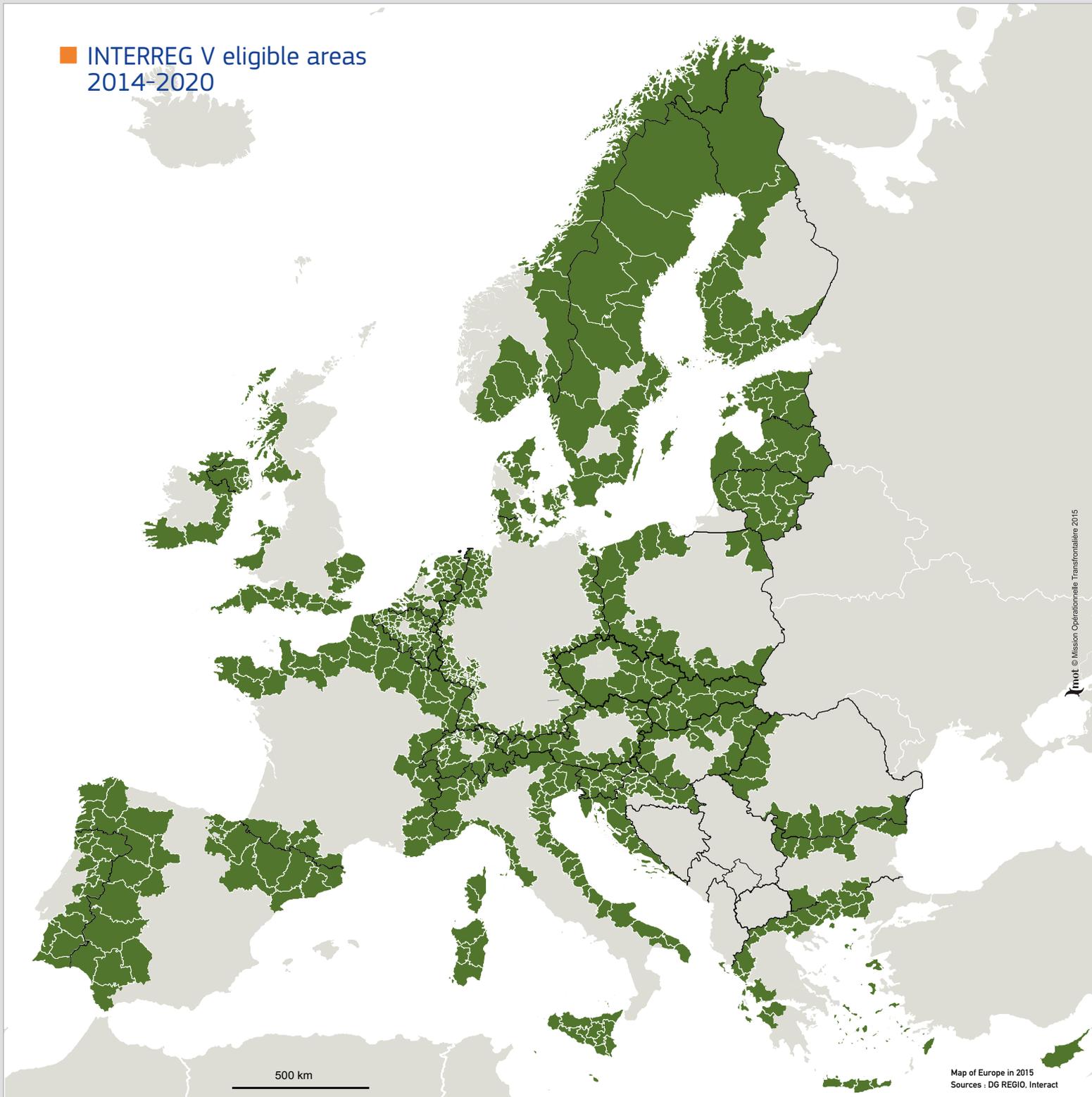
■ INTERREG I eligible areas
1990-1993



500 km

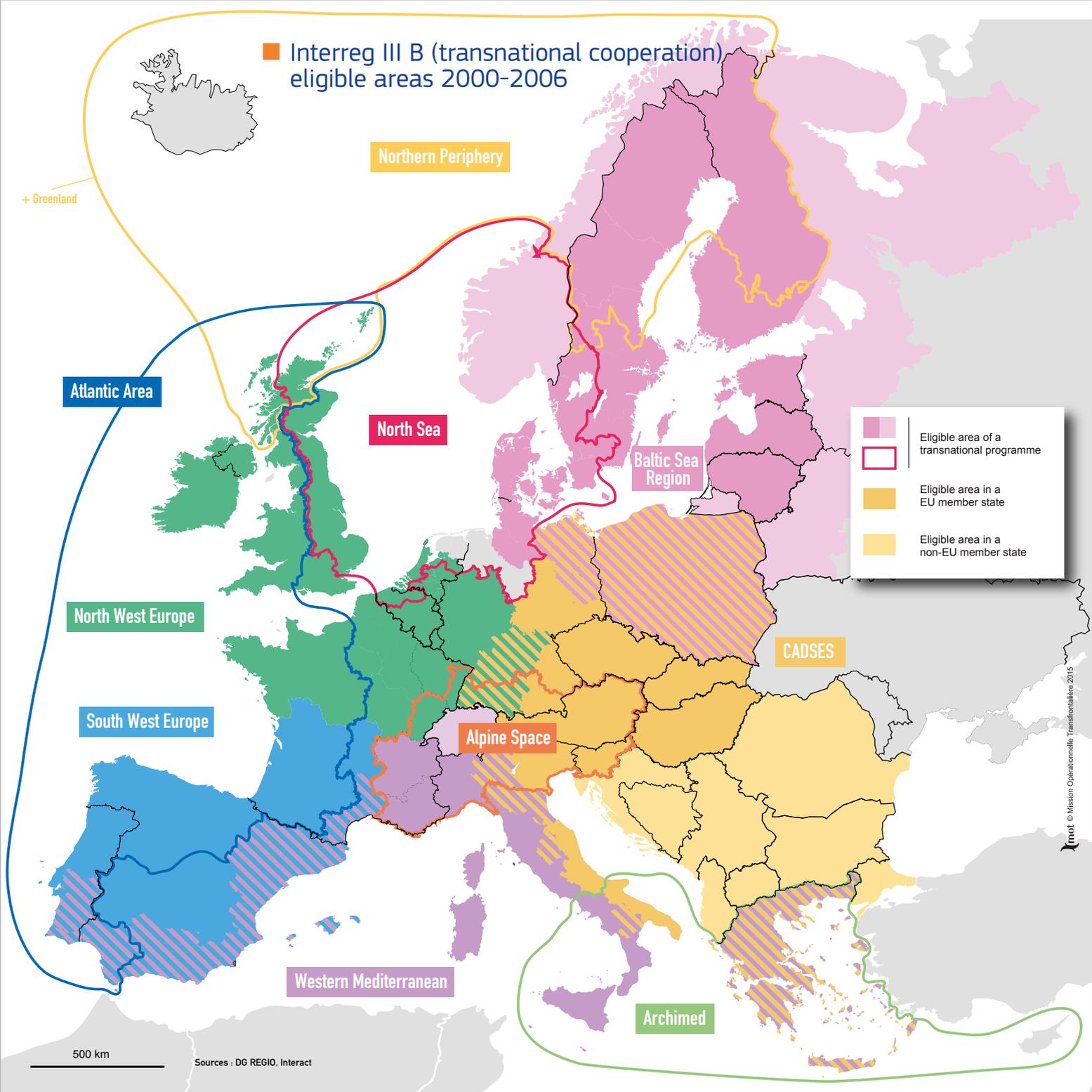
Map of Europe in 1993
Sources : DG REGIO, Interact

■ INTERREG V eligible areas
2014-2020



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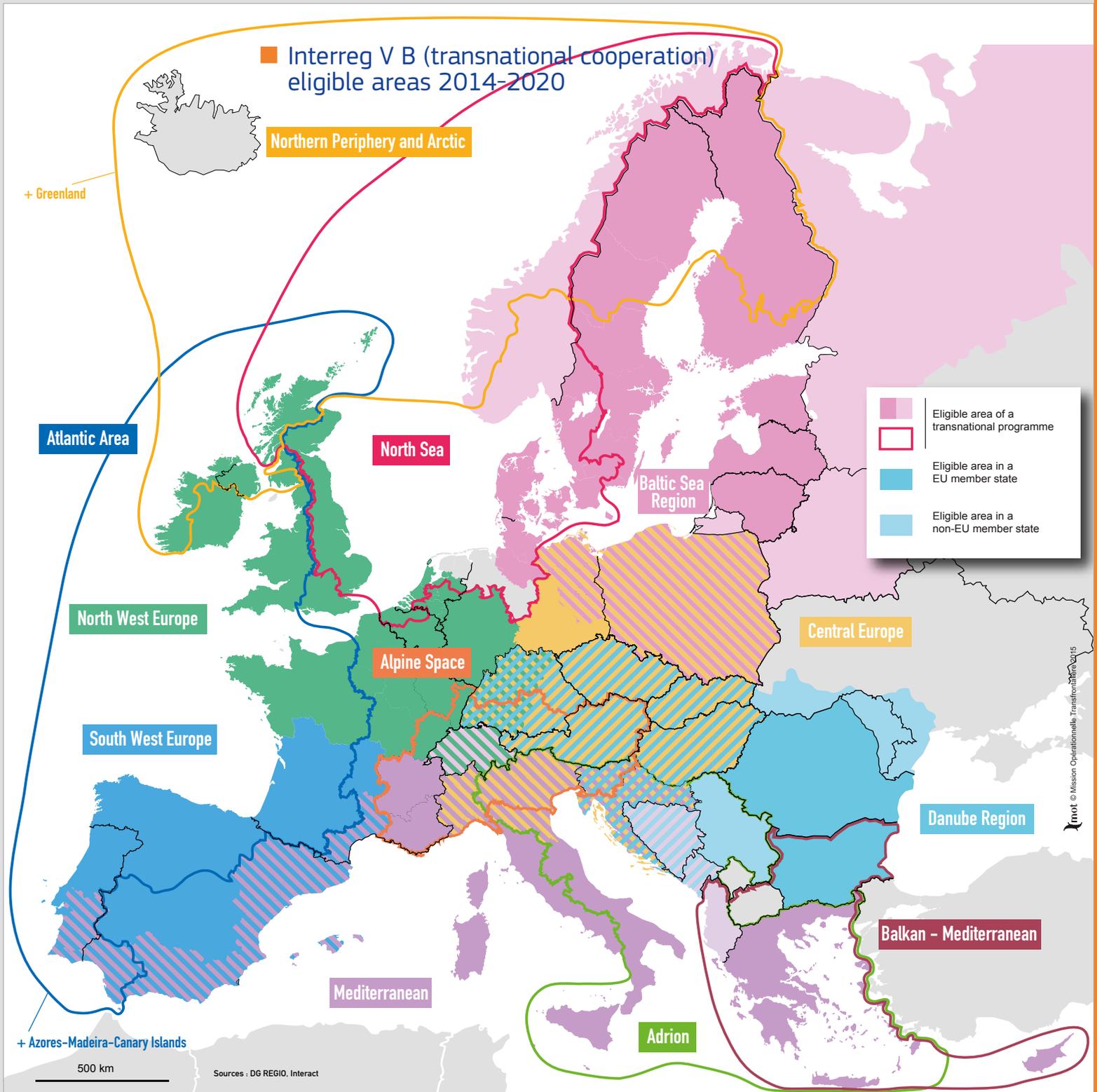
Interreg III B (transnational cooperation) eligible areas 2000-2006



	Eligible area of a transnational programme
	Eligible area in a EU member state
	Eligible area in a non-EU member state

500 km

Sources : DG REGIO, Interact



1.4 Macro-regional and maritime strategies

The EU's macro-regional approach represents an attempt to respond and adapt to the economic, political and social upheavals that have occurred since the end of the 1980s and to the successive enlargements that have since then taken the EU from 12 to 28 Member States. In the face of globalisation, increasing global flows and the liberalisation of trade at the global level, as well as the change in the geopolitical order that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the EU found itself confronted with new challenges. These included the challenge of making enlargement to the east succeed; the challenge of (re)defining its relations with neighbouring countries; the challenge of ensuring a role for itself in the stabilisation of the European continent, shaken after 1991 by the conflict in the Balkans; and the challenge of defining a post-Cold-War security policy able to respond to new threats that were not only military in nature but also environmental (climate protection), economic (monetary crises), and humanitarian (people trafficking, migration flows, etc.). Following the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, the EU adopted a common foreign and security policy (CFSP), but this mainly responded to 'classical' threats arising from political conflicts and military confrontations. It needed to be complemented by other good neighbour policies at micro- and macro-regional scales, which could also provide responses to other threats. Environmental issues, for example, on the scale of sea or river basins or mountain ranges, required more coordinated action from the Member States.

By the end of the first decade of the new millennium, the EU had developed macro-regional strategies in key regions in order to help stabilise the European continent, through support for cooperation and economic growth. The European Commission defines a macro-region as a grouping of entities covering several Member States or regions, which share certain characteristics and which come together to cooperate on matters of common interest. Macro-regions differ from cross-border euroregions by virtue of being multilateral and by the fact that, in general, it is the states themselves that are the principal actors. Beginning in 2009, the EU progressively implemented four macro-regional strategies: two based around maritime areas (the Baltic Sea region (EUSBSR) and the Adriatic and Ionian

region (EUSAIR)); one comprising a major river basin (the Danube region (EUSDR)); and one around a mountain range (the Alpine region (EUSALP)).

The idea of countries taking concerted action around a macro-regional area is not new, however. Historically this approach can be traced back to 1952, when the Nordic countries set up the Nordic Council, one of whose primary focuses of interest is the management of the Baltic Sea, which is common to three of its members. This objective was also fundamental to the creation of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council in 1993 by the same countries together with Russia, with a view to cooperating to protect the environment and maintain political stability in the region. Finally, 1996 saw the creation of the Arctic Council, which adopts a similar approach to the previous two bodies, by eight countries bordering on the Arctic (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States).

The EU is not the only European organisation to take an interest in a macro-regional approach. Since the 1990s, the Council of Europe has supported the creation of multilateral euroregions, the idea behind which is clearly distinct from the EU's macro-regional strategies. These instances of macro-regional cooperation are intended to promote democratic stabilisation in the areas concerned, an issue that is of major importance to the Council of Europe. The creation of macro-regions has been regarded as a strategy with a geopolitical dimension designed to disseminate the fundamental values of the organisation (human rights, democracy and the rule of law). The EU also supports this approach. In February 1993, for example, the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Catherine Lalumière, inaugurated the first macro-region in central and eastern Europe under the aegis of the EU. This was the Carpathian Euroregion, which groups together the border regions of four countries (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine); it was followed by the Carpathian Convention, adopted in 2006. These macro-regional cooperation initiatives of the Council of Europe place great importance on the participation of local and regional authorities, and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is responsible for their implementation.

Three other instances of macro-regional cooperation have gradually been established around maritime areas, with the support of the Strasbourg-based organisation: the Baltic Sea Euroregion (1997), the Adriatic Euroregion (2006) and the Black Sea Euroregion (2008).

For the EU, macro-regional strategies are intended to strengthen cooperation among the countries in the areas in question in order to reinforce the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the European space; this aim resembles the objectives of transnational cooperation specified in the Interreg programmes. This integrated approach means that macro-regional strategies are able to respond to transverse spatial planning issues, such as environmental protection or the fight against climate change. By promoting horizontal coordination between different European policies, these strategies bring genuine added value to the EU, by transcending the usual territorial limitations.

Several features also distinguish macro-regional strategies from instances of classic cross-border cooperation. The first is that these cooperation initiatives involve broad geographical areas with a certain degree of physical unity (river basins, maritime areas and mountain ranges), and they are multilateral (in that they involve at least three EU Member States). Secondly, their legal and administrative structure is clearly defined: they are established at the behest of the European Council and on the basis of EU legislation, and they generally come with an action plan adopted by the European Commission and then approved by the European Council. Lastly, these strategies must follow three principles, also called the three 'no's', which are no new European legislation, no new European institutions and no new EU funding. Three levels of governance are involved in managing macro-regional strategies. First, the European Commission and an intergovernmental group of coordinators monitor their general implementation. Second, national points of contact are responsible for administration in each state. Third, sector experts and coordinators in each priority region manage the strategies at regional level and the implementation of the projects.



A meeting between Herwig van Staa, President of the Regional Parliament of Tyrol, and Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy (Alpine macro-regional strategy)

In spite of this general framework and these common principles, the EU's four macro-regional strategies were not developed at the same time or by the same stakeholders. Each macro-regional strategy therefore has its own history.



The macro-regional strategy for the **Baltic Sea region (EUSBSR)** was initiated in 2006, based on a report by the European Parliament. In December 2007, the European Council asked the Commission to quickly draw up a common strategy to address the environmental degradation (eutrophication) of the Baltic Sea, which is linked to insufficient policy coordination between the countries bordering the Baltic. In 2009, the EUSBSR (European Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region) was adopted for this region, which has a population of more than 85 million people, bringing together eight EU Member States (Denmark, Germany, Poland, Finland, Sweden and the three Baltic States). The agreement also provided for cooperation with other countries adjoining the region, such as Belarus, Norway and Russia. Several priorities have been identified. Firstly, the aim is to improve protection of the Baltic Sea environment by acting in particular on water quality, biodiversity conservation and improved navigation safety. Secondly, networking needs to be developed further in order to raise the prosperity of the region (through improving modes of transport, enhancing the reliability of the energy markets and consolidating the single market and the Europe 2020 strategy) and to combat cross-border crime. Moreover, the EUSBSR proposes following the EU's horizontal actions, such as spatial planning, sustainable development and the neighbourhood policy towards non-EU countries in the Baltic region. The first results of the macro-regional strategy seem promising: the condition of the Baltic Sea environment has improved, thanks to anti-pollution actions (CLEANSHIP) and support for scientific research projects on changes in marine ecosystems (BONUS Baltic Sea Research 24).



The second strategy, that for the **Danube region (EUSDR)**, only came into being in 2011. Whereas at a country level this strategy was based on a joint initiative by Austria and Romania, the impetus for it in fact came in the middle of the previous decade, when the German Federal State of Baden-Württemberg organised two successive conferences on the Danube in Brussels, in 2006 and 2008. During the second conference, the Minister-President of Baden-Württemberg, Günther Oettinger, called on the Commissioner for Regional Policy, Danuta Hübner, to draw up a policy for the Danube area, incorporating the three themes of ecology, transport and the socio-economic realm. This initiative was initially supported by the Committee of the Regions, then by the European Parliament, which voted in favour of a strategy for the Danube region in 2010. In contrast to the Baltic Sea, this area can boast a long tradition of cooperation dating back to 1856, when a European Danube Commission was established. The EUSDR, adopted in 2011, covers an extremely large geographical area corresponding approximately to the Danube river basin, and extends from the Black Forest in Germany to the Black Sea in Romania and Ukraine. It has a population of 115 million. Nine EU Member States are involved in this strategy, together with three candidate or potential candidate countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia) and two other non-EU countries (Moldova and Ukraine). The EUSDR's priorities are boosting economic development, improving interconnectivity in transport and energy networks, protecting the environment and enhancing security. In practice, the strategy rests on themes analogous to those of the EUSBSR. The European funds are the same as those called on for the implementation of the projects. The difference

between the two strategies consequently lies mainly in the maritime character of the EUSBSR, whereas the EUSDR involves cooperation around a river. In this respect, the EUSDR may be described as an example of good practice, in that navigation on the Danube has improved thanks to maintenance projects, and projects comparable to the EUSBSR's on environmental protection and the development of project-specific technologies are under way. On the other hand, the lack of a coordinated response to the devastating floods along the Danube in 2013 shows that not all the obstacles to cooperation have been eliminated.



The third strategy, the **Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR)**, is associated with an approach made by the European Council to the European Commission in 2012. The Commission approved the communication together with an action plan in 2014, based on consultations with local stakeholders and taking account of experiences garnered from the two earlier macro-regional strategies. EUSAIR developed out of the maritime strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. Launched in December 2012, the maritime strategy is intended for all the Member States bordering those seas, and forms part of the EU's global maritime strategy. Four non-EU countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia) take part in EUSAIR, together with four EU Member States (Greece, Croatia, Italy and Slovenia). The priority areas for intervention are still to be refined, by reference to the two earlier strategies, but EUSAIR addresses economic, social and environmental diversity and the fragmentation of the Adriatic-Ionian region. This strategy has been coordinated *ab initio* with the new framework for the EU's 2014-2020 programming period. This allows EUSAIR to benefit from not only the usual funding but also funding from the Western Balkans Investment Framework and the European Investment Bank.



The fourth macro-regional strategy, that for the **Alpine region (EUSALP)**, is the only one to have its origins at the interregional level. Historically, there has been cross-border cooperation between countries in this region since 1995, when the Alpine Convention, an international treaty on sustainable development in, and protection of, the Alps, was signed by the Alpine countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia and Switzerland). In March 2010, seven Alpine regions adopted an initial declaration in favour of such a strategy at Mittelwald in Bavaria (Germany) ⁽¹⁾. In 2011 the Alpine Conference, the decision-making organ of the Alpine Convention, gave its support to this idea and proposed linking it with the Convention, the aim of which has been to promote the sustainable development of the Alpine region since its inception in 1995. The Alpine Conference caught the attention of the national governments and the European Commission in 2012, leading to a joint document signed in Grenoble in October 2013 by 15 regions and 7 countries. EUSALP has subsequently been developed by the European Commission, prior to its approval by the European Council, scheduled for the second half of 2015. It involves a total of 48 regions, 5 EU Member States (Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Slovenia) and 2 non-EU countries (Liechtenstein and Switzerland).

1 Bavaria, South Tyrol, the Canton of Graubünden, Tyrol, the Province of Trento, and the Provinces of Salzburg and Vorarlberg.

The EU's macro-regional strategies cannot be dissociated from its maritime basins, which are seen as areas of cooperation between countries and infranational authorities around maritime areas and oceans. Eight maritime basins are included in the EU's integrated maritime strategy, which has been developed since 2007: the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, the Atlantic Ocean, the Arctic Ocean, the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, the North Sea and the maritime areas of the outermost regions. Only the Atlantic Strategy has been formally adopted as such, in 2011. It is linked to an action plan for the 2014-2020 period, which is intended to contribute to achieving the goals of the EU strategy known as 'Blue Growth'. The other regional strategies for each maritime basin are either subsequently integrated into a macro-regional strategy (the Adriatic-Ionian or the Baltic Sea strategy) or left for the time being as instruments of the EU's integrated maritime strategy.

The macro-regional strategies increase the EU's ability to intervene in the field of spatial planning, regarded not in terms of hard planning or master plans but as an integrated approach, comprising a truly strategic dimension (a place-based approach or soft planning, with horizontal coordination between sectoral policies and vertical coordination between regions, countries and the EU). In other words, these measures increase the EU's ability to create territorial cohesion by complementing the planning policies of the Member States.

However, there is an opinion that the principle of the three 'no's restricts the capacity for implementation, given the absence of financial support from the EU. Therefore, in the regulatory framework for the 2014-2020 programming period, the EU is calling for more systematic links between transnational territorial cooperation programmes (Interreg) on the one hand, and coordination between macro-regional and maritime basin strategies on the other. The cooperation programmes, which have limited amounts of funding by comparison with the regional programmes of cohesion policy or the resources of the Member States themselves, are therefore rediscovering their role as catalysts, as they were originally perceived, and prompting countries and regions to take cooperation seriously by including it at the heart of their strategies and programmes (beyond the context of Interreg). Moreover, assessments have shown that these strategies have complemented the bottom-up approach characteristic of Interreg initiatives with a top-down approach. That was why the European Council asked the Commission to develop a strategy for the Baltic Sea. These strategies have been developed in an innovative, integrated manner, combining bottom-up and top-down approaches. Lastly, macro-regional strategies respond to a need to link territories located within the EU with territories located outside its external borders, with a view to managing spaces that are united by a physical feature and subject to the same environmental pressures. Only a multilateral approach can respond to these challenges.

Macro-regional strategies and Sea basins



200 km

Sources: Interact, DG REGIO, DG MARE
 * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

1.5 Cooperation at the external borders of the Union

The European Union has introduced two instruments designed to facilitate cross-border cooperation across its external borders: these are the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). Whereas the first is intended for candidate countries that are seeking to accede to the EU in the short or medium-term and therefore relates to borders that will in time become internal, the second is aimed at countries that are not necessarily intending to join the EU and thus relates to external borders that are destined to remain so for the foreseeable future.

Neighbourhood policy is involved in the extension of the Phare and Tacis programmes and also the MEDA programme for the Mediterranean area. The first two of these programmes were developed in response to the changes in the geopolitical order that Europe underwent at the end of the 1980s. The third is part of a wider perspective, namely that of the development of the territories around the Mediterranean Sea. In all three cases, the objective is to establish an area of stability extending beyond the continent of Europe and to prevent the external borders from becoming lines signifying marked disparities.

In 1989, the EEC inaugurated the Phare programme with a view to providing financial aid for the economic and political transition of Poland and Hungary, two socialist countries that had been members of Comecon (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) and were undergoing substantial political change foreshadowing the opening of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989. Negotiations in Poland between the Government and the Solidarność trade union led to partly free elections in spring 1989, and there was a partial dismantling of the Iron Curtain in spring 1989 in Hungary. Phare, which was later extended to other countries, was designed to provide aid for the transition of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War (with the dismantling of the Iron Curtain), and from 1994 it became an instrument of the pre-accession strategy for these countries. The objective was in one sense economic, since it was a question of facilitating the transition from a planned economy to a capitalist economy; but it was also

political, since it involved promoting the emergence of democratic regimes based on the rule of law. All the countries that joined the EU between 2004 and 2013 received aid (with the exception of Malta and Cyprus).

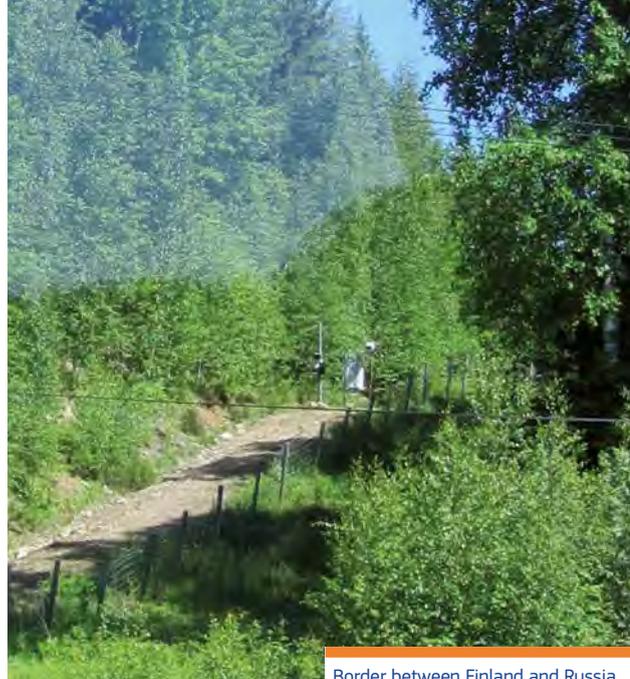
The Tacis programme, inaugurated in 1991, supported the transition of 12 countries, including Russia, that emerged from the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Its objectives were similar to those of Phare, but Tacis differed from the former in that it supported the transition of the New Independent States (NIS), which are geographically more distant (and in some cases located in Asia), towards parliamentary democracy and the market economy. Mongolia was also included in this group of countries from 1991 to 2003. Tacis was replaced by the European neighbourhood policy (ENP) with effect from 2007. The ENP is supported by a financial instrument, first the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), and then the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) since 2014.

The MEDA programme had the objective of providing financial aid for the Union's Mediterranean policy, as defined in the Barcelona Declaration of 1995. This EU initiative, which involves a dozen countries on the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, was designed to promote an area of peace and stability and to build a zone of shared prosperity around this maritime area. The point of departure for this policy is the premise that the Mediterranean is a region containing significant disparities in development, which need to be smoothed out in order to avoid the emergence of tensions. The process was reinforced by the creation in 2008 of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), which brings together the 28 EU Member States and 15 adjoining countries (some of which border the Adriatic, such as Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro).

In 2000, Phare was converted into a pre-accession programme with the 2004 enlargement in mind. In this context, it was supplemented by two new instruments: the Structural Instrument for Pre-accession (ISPA) and the Special Accession Programme for Agricultural and Rural Development (SAPARD). The former was designed to prepare the

candidate countries to manage European policies and regional policy, while the latter was to prepare them for the common agricultural policy (CAP). The need to prepare the candidate countries to manage European funds and to secure transition gave rise to the establishment of the IPA. Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union provides that a would-be candidate country shall respect the criteria of the Copenhagen European Council of June 1993, namely the adoption of democratic governance with stable institutions, the establishment of the rule of law, respect for human rights, freedom, equality, the protection of minorities and, lastly, the existence of a market economy and the obligation to abide by the rules of the Treaty on European Union. Since 2007, two types of country have been able to benefit from the IPA: candidate countries ⁽¹⁾ on the one hand, and potential candidate countries ⁽²⁾ on the other. The difference between the two categories depends on the degree to which negotiations with the European Commission have progressed. The IPA enables the EU to provide support for programmes between Member States and pre-accession states, programmes between one pre-accession state and another, and also programmes between pre-accession states and other adjoining states that are not members of the EU. The IPA is divided into five component parts: technical assistance and institution building; cross-border cooperation; regional development; development of human resources; and rural development. Only the first two are open to all partners. The IPA CBC (cross-border cooperation) programme, which covers cooperation initiatives between Member States and beneficiary countries as well as cooperation among the candidate countries themselves, plays an essential role, since it encourages partners situated on either side of a common border to share management tasks and develop a transitional approach. This consists in applying the same rules and jointly managing budgets. The objective is to have a single managing authority, situated in a Member State, in order to increase harmonisation and integration. However, it remains possible to decentralise some of the management to the

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- 1 Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.
 - 2 Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo.



Border between Finland and Russia

neighbouring country if establishing a single authority might create difficulties between the partners. The approach is to combine principles with a pragmatic approach, while encouraging the use of similar practices, with a view to increasing cohesion along these borders.

The IPA replaced and reorganised several previous programmes (Phare, ISPA, SAPARD, CARDS and financial instruments for Turkey) for the 2007-2013 programming period, which led to greater coherence due to more integrated management. There is coverage of cooperation in the areas of education, culture, employment, transport and the environment. For the 2014-2020 programming period, IPA III continues to focus on future enlargements. In this period, there is provision for 12 programmes between the EU and the candidate countries, covering cross-border regions in south-eastern Europe from the Adriatic Sea to the Black Sea. Apart from Greece, which is involved in three programmes (with Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey), the Member States concerned are all recent members, having joined in 2004 or 2007. The transition from candidate country to Member State has altered the structure of some programmes. With the accession of Croatia in 2013, for example, some borders became internal and were therefore able to benefit from ERDF funding. The IPA essentially involves countries in Central Europe and recently erected borders (those resulting from the



Rügen Island, Baltic Sea

break-up of the former Republic of Yugoslavia), as well as Turkey. There are also seven programmes between non-EU countries. In addition, two cross-border cooperation programmes with Turkey (Greece-Turkey and Cyprus-Turkey) have not been ratified. Management broadly follows the existing rules of the Structural Funds.

As regards neighbourhood policy, two types of partnership have been implemented (the Eastern Partnership and the Southern Partnership). They have more or less similar goals, but their implementation methods and approaches are significantly different. Generally speaking, the policy objective is to prevent the EU's external borders from opening up a gulf between the EU and the outside world and to ensure that close relations can develop between the EU and its neighbouring countries. Consequently, this policy seeks to foster not only stability but also prosperity, security and sustainable development. The Eastern Partnership takes the form of programmes bringing together six countries and essentially concerns land borders. When it was developed in 2002, it was supposed to involve Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova, but

it was then extended in 2004 to the three countries of the Caucasus. Russia participates indirectly in this partnership, through one interregional cooperation programme and seven cross-border cooperation initiatives. The border shared by Finland and Russia, which runs for more than 1 500 km, has been the site of cross-border cooperation initiatives since the early 1990s and is a source of inspiration for others. The second partnership has been developed with 10 Mediterranean countries, including the Palestinian Authority. From a legal point of view, the Lisbon Treaty calls for the development of special ties with countries that do not necessarily wish to join the EU. Three programmes have been launched covering borders, essentially maritime ones, between Member States and non-members. Of the three programmes, only one is cross-border (Italy-Tunisia), whereas the other two have been established at an intergovernmental level (the Mediterranean Sea and Mid-Atlantic Programmes). The Mediterranean Partnership's instruments are principally intergovernmental in nature, whereas in the Eastern Partnership the presence of both levels reveals the importance of cross-border cooperation.

For the 2007-2013 programming period, the EU employed a single instrument, the ENPI. It was first the subject of a strategy prepared in 2006 for the four-year period 2007-2010, and then of a second strategy, developed during the course of the programme, for the period 2011 to 2013. The programme operated in three stages. First, the Commission prepared reports on the economic, social and institutional situation in each of the countries concerned. In the second phase, specific action plans or association agendas were negotiated for each country, laying down the measures to be implemented over a period of three to five years. Twelve such bilateral plans (detailing the assistance to be given by the EU to each country) have been signed to date. The EU requires committees to monitor the progress of the plans and evaluate their roll-out, and a report on the progress of the neighbourhood policy is published every year. In addition to these bilateral plans, some interregional programmes (offering assistance on a particular theme to a number of countries in the geographical area concerned) and cross-border programmes (cooperation between regions of the Member States and partner countries on either side of the EU's external border) have also been launched. The Commission provides financial aid, which can be supplemented by loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB) or the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). As with pre-accession programmes, the management of cross-border cooperation programmes is premised on the existence of a common framework of shared rules, with the objective of establishing a balanced partnership between the different partners. A project cannot begin until it has been jointly established on both sides of the border. Management is carried out by a local or regional authority situated in a Member State. Projects must fall within one of the four main strategic areas, namely promoting economic and social development on both sides of the border; overcoming common challenges in the environmental and health sectors and the fight against crime; securing borders; and promoting cross-border activities to bring people closer.

For the 2014-2020 programming period, three types of cross-border cooperation programme have been developed. The first two involve the NUTS 3 regions of the Member States in partnership with regions

of equivalent size in the non-member states. The programmes are established on land borders or between regions separated by a narrow stretch of water (of a width less than 150 km). From the Norwegian Sea to the Black Sea, via the Baltic Sea, there are 11 cross-border programmes principally involving Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Russia (including the Kaliningrad Oblast). For the Mediterranean Sea, only one programme has been registered, organised around a maritime border (the Strait of Sicily), which brings together the southern provinces of Sicily and the coastal governorates of Tunisia, but does not include Malta, despite the fact that it is situated between the two territories.

Lastly, of the programmes established on land borders, the Kolarctic programme is an original case in terms of both the area involved (which gives it an interregional dimension) and its geographical characteristics. It covers an area on the northern fringe of Europe, along the shores of the Norwegian Sea and the Barents Sea. These sparsely populated and largely forested territories are inhabited by indigenous peoples, the Sami in particular. The programme seeks to promote cross-border cooperation, one aspect of which consists of combatting isolation and remoteness and fostering economic development in these very thinly settled areas. Norway, which is involved in this cooperation initiative, provides its own funding.

The third type of programme brings together NUTS 2 regions of Member States and regions of equivalent size in non-EU countries around a maritime space regarded both as a border and as a shared resource area. These programmes cover the Baltic Sea, the Mediterranean basin, the Mid-Atlantic and the Black Sea. They may, if justified, include adjacent territories for certain actions.

Of the 16 programmes, two cover extremely extensive areas. The Mediterranean Sea Basin programme includes 14 countries adjoining this maritime area. It is a region where the socio-economic contrasts between the northern and southern shores are particularly striking. The countries taking part in the programmes have prioritised two broad policy directions out of the themes suggested by the Commission: promoting social and economic development is one,

and environmental management is the other. Within this framework, inter-cultural cooperation is regarded as a cross-cutting axis.

The Baltic Sea programme also covers an extensive area, given that it includes Norway and Belarus in addition to the countries with a Baltic seaboard, as well as several distant Russian and Polish regions corresponding to the river basins of waterways emptying into the Baltic. Since the fight against pollution is one of the objectives targeted, it is important to include the whole range of authorities able to contribute to improving the condition of the environment. This programme is linked to the macro-regional strategy for the Baltic Sea region (EUSBSR), which extends over a wider area and includes national authorities.

The other two programmes are less extensive than those described above. The Black Sea programme is designed to strengthen regional cooperation between the countries bordering the Black Sea. The programme's perimeter, however, extends beyond the six Black Sea countries, since it also encompasses Caucasian countries (Armenia and Azerbaijan), Moldova and Greece. The issues addressed by the programme concern both the transportation of energy (since this is one of the routes used by tankers shipping the gas and oil produced in Russia and the countries bordering on the Caspian Sea to the rest of the world) and the conflicts in the Caucasus region. In contrast to the other three programmes, which already existed during the last programming period, the Mid-Atlantic programme only began in 2014. It is centred around Morocco (where it covers part of its territory along the Atlantic coast), the southern regions of Portugal, and Andalusia and the Canary Islands in Spain. It covers some of the ground covered by the MAC (Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands) Outermost Region programme.

In short, the cooperation policies developed on the external borders of the EU under the IPA banner involve states already undergoing the accession process. As a consequence, these programmes are governed by the same rules as the Interreg programmes. The IPA is clearly a transitional instrument that should enable stakeholders

in the candidate countries to become accustomed to the Commission's management rules. The external borders concerned are expected to eventually become internal borders.

The European Neighbourhood Instrument pursues six main objectives: to facilitate the emergence of a democratic framework; to enable regulatory convergence with the rules governing the single market; to manage the mobility of people; to encourage economic and social development; to establish an atmosphere based on confidence and good relations; and to enhance cooperation at different levels. It is within this last strand that the ENI CBC programmes fall. They take their inspiration from the cooperation policy of the Interreg programmes, but they do not have the same objectives, and this distinguishes them from the pre-accession instrument, although they have similar implementation rules. Since partnerships have been developed at different scales, allowing both states and local authorities to be involved, the EU encourages local and regional authorities to share funding and resources and to develop joint strategies. Neighbourhood policy is above all regarded as a means of securing political stability in the areas neighbouring the EU. As such, it falls easily within the framework of European integration with a view to developing a large area of peace, and peace is associated with the idea of prosperity. However, the objective is not merely to develop partnerships but to propagate the political and economic model of democratic systems based on the rule of law, respect for individual freedom, human rights and the autonomy of local authorities, and operating a capitalist economic system. The idea is firmly to develop a joint approach to the external frontiers from within the EU and to secure a kind of integration without the countries concerned being members of the EU. This policy establishes a new proximity framework of a sort between the EU and the countries on its borders.

In this context, the Eastern Partnership differs markedly from the Southern Partnership. To the east, the concern of neighbourhood policy is to ensure good relations with the states situated between the EU and Russia, which have seen their geopolitical situation change upon gaining their independence. These states form a kind of middle



Sveti Stefan, Montenegro

zone between the EU and Russia. It is also a transit zone, characterised by the issue of energy transportation. However, although the neighbourhood policy is intended to bring about and guarantee stability, it seems to be regarded by Russia as an instrument for propagating a political, ideological and cultural model that is detrimental to its interests. To the south, the Mediterranean area is seen as a space marked by fraught or fragile situations. The sea is like a physical discontinuity emphasising economic, political and socio-cultural disparities and marked by migratory tensions.

Cross-border cooperation policies are arranged like a set of concentric circles, in which the EU and the European non-member countries already taking part in Interreg programmes (Switzerland and Norway) lie at the centre, with the candidate countries and neighbourhood policy states (including Russia) in the next circle as an associated periphery, and the remaining countries in the world on the outside. However, this arrangement comes up against the fact that

neighbourhood policy takes account of the differences that exist between countries, and consequently that it is difficult to harmonise practices in the short term across the whole range of programmes. Moreover, one could ask whether this policy is capable of reducing existing political and economic disparities, which can sometimes be considerable. A long-term policy will be needed to achieve any convergence. It is also worth examining how countries perceive and interpret neighbourhood policy. Developing a partnership could be seen either as an opportunity (of a financial, political or symbolic nature) or as a constraint, or even as a subtle form of domination, depending on the case.

Cross-border programmes of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance IPA CBC 2014-2020

- IPA CBC 2014-2020 programme
- IPA CBC programme between non EU countries
- EU member state
- Non EU member state

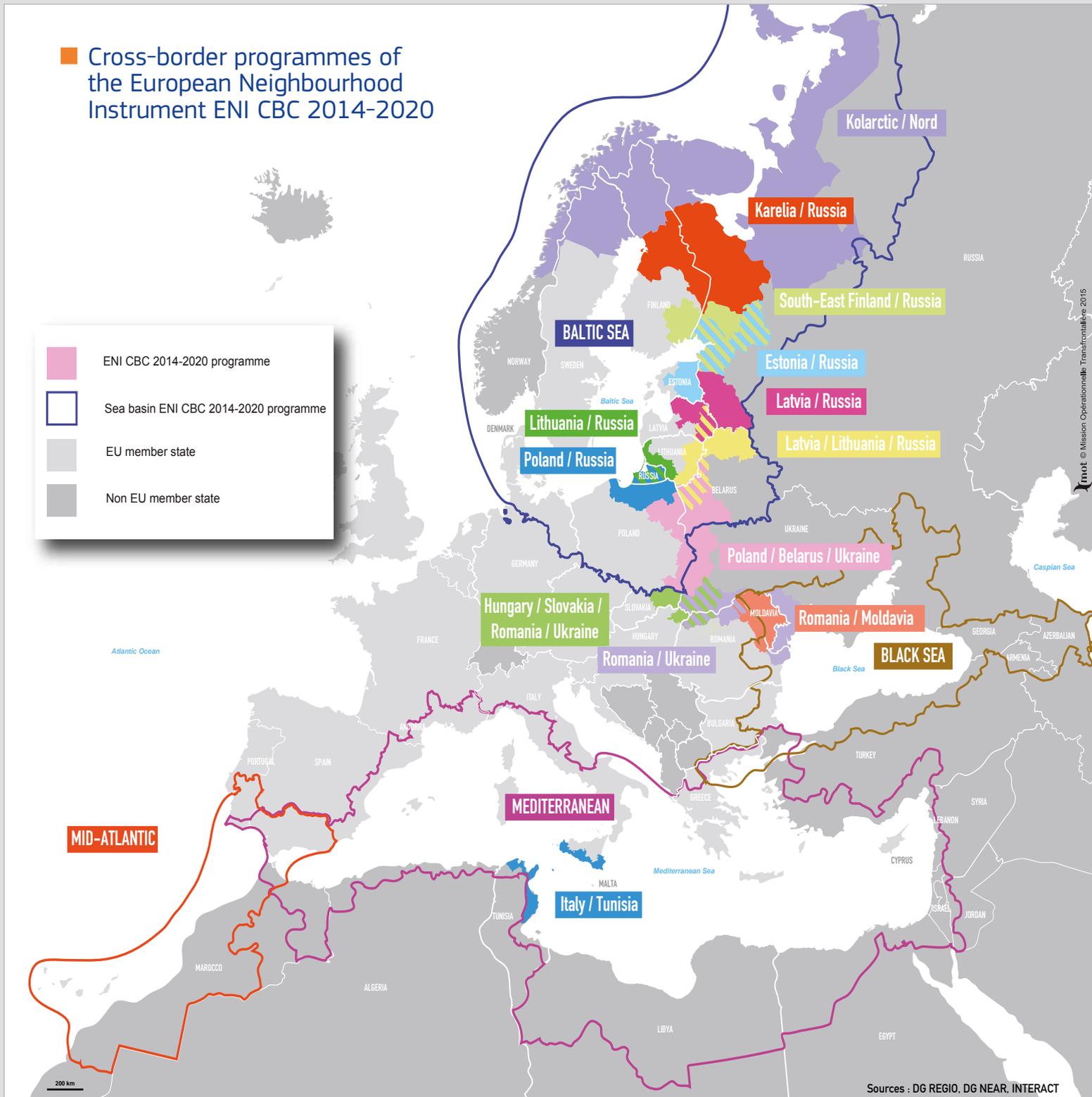


200 km

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

Cross-border programmes of the European Neighbourhood Instrument ENI CBC 2014-2020

- ENI CBC 2014-2020 programme
- Sea basin ENI CBC 2014-2020 programme
- EU member state
- Non EU member state



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1.6 Cross-border and transnational cooperation in the outermost regions

The term 'outermost regions', the status of which was officially recognised by the EU in 1992, refers to territories forming part of a European country but situated outside the conventional geographical definition of Europe. Regarded as lying geographically in other continents, the outermost regions are characterised by a double discontinuity: geographical (distance, intervening maritime area) with respect to their political territory, and political (international border) with respect to the surrounding geographical space. Not all the remote territories of Member States fall into this category, however. In fact, outermost region status does not apply to the overseas territories of Denmark, the Netherlands or the United Kingdom, or to certain French territories. A distinction has to be made between outermost regions that are members of the EU and, as such, take part in territorial cooperation programmes and benefit from regional policy support, from those overseas countries and territories (OCTs) that form part of a Member State but are not part of the EU and therefore do not qualify for support from those funds. In 2014, two new French regions were added to the seven outermost regions specified in 1992 (the Azores, the Canary Islands, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Madeira, Martinique and Réunion). The new additions are Saint Martin, which was detached from Guadeloupe in 2009, and Mayotte, which became part of the EU in 2014 by virtue of changing its status from an overseas collectivity to a department of France.

Since the adoption of the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999, outermost regions have been identified as regions with specific constraints associated with their insularity, small population and remoteness from the metropolis. Obtaining this status, which had been the subject of negotiations with the European institutions since the end of the 1980s, was an achievement that resulted from strategic thinking by several of these territories. The first conference of the governing authorities of the territories concerned took place in Madeira in 1988. Its objective was to establish a dialogue with the European institutions and their respective Member States in order to gain recognition of their specific issues and benefit from European funding. This strategy bore fruit, in that their special status was obtained in 1992 and their constraints were recognised in 1999.

Since they are regarded as regions whose development is lagging behind, outermost regions benefit from funding from both the ERDF and the European Social Fund (ESF) at a higher rate than for other regions: the rate can be as high as 85 % as opposed to 50 %. This special treatment was retained after 2004, even though in the context of the 2004 enlargement several outermost regions experienced a change in their wealth rankings in the EU and ceased to qualify as poor regions. From 2007 to 2013, outermost regions were eligible under the convergence objective, which applies to the least developed areas of the EU. They also benefit from specific measures introduced in response to their constraints, namely the programme of options specifically relating to remoteness and insularity (POSEI).

The issues facing outermost regions are described in several strategic documents prepared by the European institutions (the 2004 communication; the communication entitled 'The Outermost Regions: an asset for Europe' of 2008; 22 recommendations proposed in 2011; and the communication entitled 'The outermost regions of the European Union: towards a partnership for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' of 2012), as well as documents drawn up by the parent countries (the memorandum signed by Spain, France and Portugal in 2010) and by the regions themselves (the memorandum entitled 'From now until 2020' of 2009). These reports show that the outermost regions are gradually becoming defined not solely by their constraints but by their potential. By virtue of their geographical location, they contribute to the influence of the EU in different parts of the world. Within the framework of the 2014-2020 programming period, the EU wishes to adapt European policies to the needs of these territories along five strategic axes: improving accessibility to the single market; increasing competitiveness; strengthening regional integration with surrounding territories; reinforcing the social dimension; and addressing climate change.

The broad strategy being outlined envisages a twofold integration for the outermost regions — integration within the EU and integration into their regional environment. It takes into account the constraints arising as much from their geopolitical situation as from



The Sete Cidades Massif, Azores, Portugal

their intrinsic characteristics. Outermost regions are most often island territories ⁽¹⁾ suffering from the disadvantages of small size, both in area and in population. Their limited market prevents economies of scale. Their economies specialise in certain sectors, such as tourism, fishing or agriculture, making them dependent on the outside world to meet the needs of their populations. Finally, the fact that they are located in the tropics makes climate-related problems more likely than in Europe. All things considered, their geographical location penalises them twice over. Europe is geographically remote and only accessible by air or sea, and that is reflected in increased transport costs. While their political inclusion in European countries certainly allows them to benefit from the support and infrastructure

1 Although French Guiana comprises quite a large territory on the South American mainland, its situation is similar by virtue of having very few relations with its neighbours (Brazil and Suriname) and a small population.

of a developed country, the outermost regions face competition from neighbouring, less-developed territories that specialise in the same economic niche markets and often have lower wage costs, and with which they have limited relations. Ambitions are set very high for the 2014-2020 programming period, as the challenge is to achieve two-fold integration (with Europe and with their geographical surroundings). The EU aims to make these territories bridgeheads for its actions directed at the surrounding areas. The outermost regions are involved in six territorial cooperation programmes at multiple scales, covering extremely large areas outside the continent of Europe.

The MAC programme involves the Madeira, Azores and Canary archipelagos and also brings in West African countries. The programme has been in existence since 2000 and has a transnational dimension. The objective is mainly to encourage cooperation between the three territories, ensure integrated development and foster collaboration

with the neighbouring countries of West Africa. There are three main axes: promoting research and innovation; strengthening environmental management and risk prevention; and cooperating with third countries by applying the principle of an extended neighbourhood.

The Interreg Caribbean programme involving Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint Martin and French Guiana extends over an extremely large area, linking the states and island territories of the Caribbean as well as the continental countries of Central America (including Mexico) and South America (Colombia, Guyana, Suriname, Venezuela and the northern states of Brazil). Launched in 2000, the programme is original in that it links two Interreg components (cross-border and transnational). It comprises three axes: encouraging growth and employment and enhancing attractiveness through openness and connectivity; enhancing and protecting environmental capital through sustainable

management and risk prevention; and strengthening the cohesion and social integration of the Caribbean area. The Caribbean is broadly covered by regional organisations, namely the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

The Amazonia operational programme covers part of that continental area and funds cooperation projects between French Guiana and the neighbouring continental states of Suriname and Brazil. For the 2007-2013 period the programme had only a cross-border dimension. The new programme includes a transnational strand, and Guyana is also one of the eligible territories now. Whereas the Interreg Caribbean programme emphasises the integration of the outermost regions both in an island context (the Caribbean islands) and under a regional approach (with the continental countries),



Border between France (French Guiana) and Brazil



20th Conference of the Presidents of the Outermost Regions, Guadeloupe, France (2015)

the Amazonia operational programme is a response to the specificities of a continental area characterised by extremely low population densities and a specific physical environment.

The Indian Ocean operational programme also covers a vast area. It links Réunion (and, since 2014, Mayotte) with countries bordering on the Indian Ocean, including Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania in Africa as well as India and Australia, plus the island states of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles). Launched in 2000, this programme also has a double transnational and cross-border dimension.

The final two programmes were launched in 2014 and cover limited areas in comparison to the areas described for the four above-mentioned programmes. The Mayotte-Madagascar-Comoros operational programme covers part of the area covered by the Indian Ocean programme and focuses on Mayotte and the nearby Comoros archipelago and Madagascar. Three priorities have been designated: increasing trade; improving the population's state of health and the emergency services; and facilitating the mobility of teachers.

The Saint Martin cross-border programme is well adapted to the territory's specific situation. In fact, the island of Saint Martin is divided

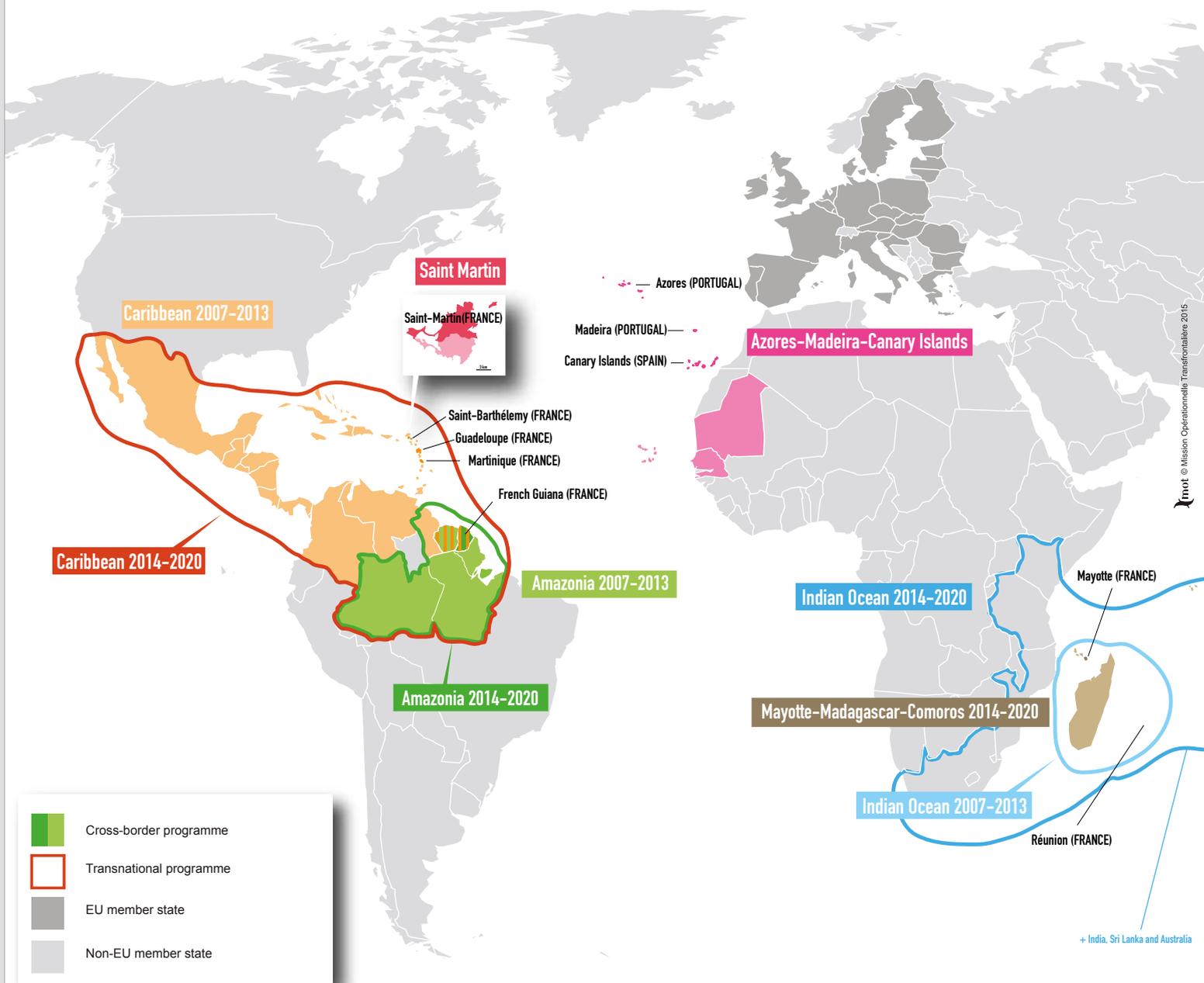
into two: the northern part is an outermost region and the southern part, Sint Maarten, is a country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. During the life of the previous programme, Saint Martin was associated with Guadeloupe. Its change of status prompted a programme aimed primarily at strengthening cooperation with Sint Maarten, particularly in the areas of the environment, water management and risk prevention.

Although as a general rule ERDF funds may only be defrayed on European territory, they may exceptionally also be defrayed in regions neighbouring outermost regions, up to a maximum of 30 % of the funds available for each programme. Moreover, several countries that neighbour the outermost regions are members of the ACP (the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States) and thereby benefit from funding from the European Development Fund (EDF); there

are plans to coordinate the programming of these two funds in order to co-finance cooperation projects.

What these various programmes show is that the strategies developed in each area must incorporate widely differing aspects: cultural (linguistic and cultural areas), economic (different levels of development), geographical (climate zones, physical environments, populations, continental and maritime characteristics) and geopolitical (the presence or absence of regional powers). All in all, despite this diversity and in addition to the shared characteristics described above, the special nature of the outermost regions is also to be found in their awareness of their individuality and in the solidarity that seems to drive them and has led them to demand their outermost region status, making them act proactively in relation to the EU and their respective mother countries.

Cross-border and transnational cooperation in the Outermost regions



1.7 The EGTC, a legal instrument for territorial cooperation

The European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) is an EU legal instrument for facilitating and promoting territorial cooperation (cross-border, transnational or interregional) with the aim of strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion. It makes it possible to set up bodies with legal personality and financial autonomy linking public entities (states, regional and local authorities, etc.). Participants may also include businesses that provide public services. This body can also provide governance of the cooperation undertaken by the members concerned and to run projects on their behalf that lie within their joint sphere of competence, with or without financial participation from the EU.

An EGTC is governed by three types of law: Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006, as amended by Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013; the provisions of its founding agreement and statutes; and the national law of the Member State in which the EGTC is registered. It must comprise at least an assembly, made up of representatives of its members, and a director who represents it and acts in its name and on its behalf. Other organs, such as an office or a consultative council, may be set up optionally. Each year, the assembly must adopt a programme of work for the grouping that falls within the scope of its mandate, as defined in its founding agreement, and within its budget.

In 2004 the work of preparing a legal instrument was begun under the initiative of Commissioner Barnier and with the broad support of the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the associations of regional and local authorities. This legislative innovation was created by Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 concomitantly with the new programming of the EU Structural Funds for the 2007-2013 period. It was fully aligned with the further development of European cohesion policy that began with the Single European Act of 1986, in the sense that it filled a gap in this policy. Cohesion policy in fact encouraged the joint management of cross-border programmes and projects even though initially no EU public law instrument was available to support such management.

Under Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006, notice of an EGTC's constitution must be provided to the EU Committee of the Regions before it is published in the Official Journal of the EU. By 24 March 2015, 53 EGTCs had been set up, based in 19 of the EU's Member States. EGTCs exhibit great diversity:

- there are EGTCs for integrated territorial initiatives, to assist in drawing up and implementing governance structures suitable for cross-border territories;
- EGTCs acting as managing authorities for operational cross-border programmes;
- EGTCs created with a view to supporting and establishing cross-border projects to benefit the territory and the members of the EGTC, such as the Cerdanya cross-border hospital on the border between Spain and France;
- EGTCs relating to networks, such as the European Urban Knowledge Network, which is a platform shared by several European countries for exchanging ideas and experience in the field of urban development.

The EGTC is neither the first nor the only legal instrument capable of supporting public projects in Europe. It was preceded by instruments put in place by various bilateral or multilateral agreements on various borders within the framework of the Council of Europe Madrid Convention (such as the Local Grouping of Cross-border Cooperation (LGCC), created in 1996 under the Karlsruhe Agreement between France, Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland and extended to the Franco-Belgian level in 2002 under the Brussels Agreement; and the Council of Europe, which subsequently established the ECG, the Euroregional Cooperation Grouping, inspired by the EGTC). It sits alongside other less sophisticated instruments (associations under various national laws) or those originating from other purposes (EEIGs, European Economic Interest Groupings, sometimes used to support cross-border projects). Since it has the advantage of being a tool that can be used by all EU public bodies, the EGTC is becoming the standard tool for supporting cross-border territories or services as part of a sustainable governance approach.



Forming an EGTC provides the stakeholders involved with a joint legal entity that is able to run cross-border development projects in accordance with an annual programme of work and a specific budget voted for by its members. In this way, the EGTC acts as a tool to clarify and simplify the implementation of joint projects. Nonetheless, it should not be regarded as an indispensable tool for cross-border cooperation, since an EGTC will be set up in response to a specific desire on the part of its members, who agree on the form of cooperation that is best suited to their joint projects. An EGTC is a very flexible structure, capable of precisely matching the needs of its members within a legal framework provided by the European regulation and the national laws concerned. However, it remains a structure that is detached from its members, with a legal personality and its own budget, and able to recruit its own staff directly and conclude legal acts in order to carry

out its mandate (public procurement, contracts, etc.). That entails a commitment from its members to keep its running costs to a minimum and to take part in the EGTC assembly.

The decision to create an EGTC is based on an agreement by its members (formalised in the founding agreement), who thereby share a political wish to engage in a joint partnership or joint projects over a period of time of their choice. In fact, EGTCs can be created for a limited period of time, sufficient to carry out a particular mandate (thus the EGTC that managed the 2007-2013 Greater Region Interreg programme had to be wound up at the end of the programme), or for an indefinite period (through the permanent establishment of a legal structure and hence of a formal governance structure for cooperation projects or infrastructure).

The EGTC tool is of recent origin, as the European regulation that created it dates from 5 July 2006. The first EGTCs to be created highlighted some implementation difficulties directly associated with their cross-border character, such as the application of the law of the country of the registered office for the operation of the grouping. Whereas it seemed logical to have a single body of law to cover the operation of the EGTC's organs and for its bookkeeping, managing personnel based in another Member State than the one in which the EGTC was registered proved to be more complicated, as was taking action or undertaking public procurement in a Member State where the law differed from that of the country of registration. The first change to the regulation, made by an amending regulation dated 17 December 2013, clarified the way EGTCs work by requiring the agreement to make specific reference to the applicable law.

Moreover, Directive 2014/24/EU requires Member States to allow the assembly of an EGTC to choose whether to apply the rules of the country of registration or the rules of another Member State where the EGTC carries out its activities to any deals they make. Although a number of problems may now be solved, issues of mutual inspection still need to be clarified. Each EGTC founding agreement must provide for methods of mutual inspection. However, there is no harmonised procedure as regards the exchange of information between the authorities responsible for monitoring legality.

EGTCs are so recent that they have not yet been set up over the entire territory of the EU. As of June 2015, the 53 existing EGTCs had members from 21 EU Member States. However, there are no cross-border cooperation EGTCs on Europe's northern borders (where other forms



The University of the Greater Region
EGTC: Physicist, Saarland University,
Germany

of cooperation based on international agreements or through associations do exist), along the United Kingdom's border with Ireland (where cooperation between authorities exists in other forms, by way of associations in particular) or on the borders in south-eastern Europe (where cooperation is more recent and based on forms not requiring the creation of bodies such as EGTCs that have a legal personality and financial autonomy). Conversely, the concentration of EGTCs in the 'European pentagon' can be explained by the comparatively larger size of the populations involved (more than half of the population lives in border areas there, as opposed to only a quarter in the EU-15) and their longer history of cooperation (due to linguistic similarity and the structuring of euroregions as EGTCs). On the border between Spain and Portugal, several EGTCs have come out of existing working communities of long standing that do not have their own legal personality. The EGTCs on the French borders also reveal the continuity of older, legally structured cooperation initiatives, since the existing example provided by the LGCCs meant that stakeholders were already familiar with this type of legally formalised cross-border arrangement. The first EGTC was in fact created on the Franco-Belgian border (the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis).

By way of illustration, four examples of an EGTC are described below:

The Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis

The first EGTC to be created in Europe (on 28 January 2008), the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis is situated on the Franco-Belgian border and has 14 members. These are the French State, the Region of Nord/Pas-de-Calais, the Department of Nord and the Lille European metropolis on the French side; and the Belgian Federal State, the Flemish Region and the Flemish Community, the Province of West Flanders, the Leiedal intermunicipal authority (Courtrai District), the WVI intermunicipal authority (the districts of Roeselare, Ieper and Tielt), the Walloon Region, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, the Province of Hainaut, the IDETA intermunicipal authority (the districts of Tournai and Ath and the municipalities of Lessines, Silly and Enghien) and the IEG intermunicipal authority (the district



ZASNET EGTC: Cross-border cooperation on environmental conservation (Portugal, Spain)

of Mouscron and the municipality of Estaimpuis) on the Belgian side. The creation of the Eurometropolis was part of a process of strengthening cross-border cooperation between the different constituent authorities. In fact, territorial cooperation in this part of Europe has existed for a long time, because these authorities had already been linked since 1991 in a joint endeavour known as the Cross-border Standing Conference of Intermunicipal Organisations (COPIT). In 2003, a review of the approach to joint governance was launched in order to identify the obstacles to cooperation and to find solutions in certain areas of joint action. This review led to adoption of the agreement and statutes of the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis EGTC, to promote and support effective and consistent cross-border cooperation in the territory concerned. The mandate of the EGTC is therefore to ensure consultation and dialogue and promote policy debate, particularly by supporting projects coming out of a jointly developed strategy. Its objective is thus to facilitate the daily lives of the people of the cross-border metropolis, and its areas of operation include, in particular, mobility and accessibility of the area, provision of quality services (in health care, education and sustainable

energy), joint spatial and environmental planning and the creation of businesses and jobs.

The Greater Region ('Grande Région')

The Greater Region EGTC was founded on 29 March 2010 by the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the German federal states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland, the Walloon Region, the French Community of Belgium, the German-speaking Community of Belgium and the French Region of Lorraine. It was the first and so far the only EGTC set up in order to act as the managing authority of a European programme (the 2007-2013 Grande Région operational programme). At the end of the 2007-2013 programming period, this EGTC was also the first to be wound up. Another EGTC has replaced it to manage the 2014-2020 Interreg Greater Region programme.

The Cerdanya Cross-border Hospital

Founded on 26 April 2010, the Cerdanya Hospital EGTC is an operational project. It was established in order to build and operate a hospital capable of providing medical care to about 30 000 people living in the isolated Cerdanya valley, on both sides of the border between France and Spain, since the French and the Spanish populations did not individually reach the critical mass necessary to justify the

building of two separate hospitals. Other healthcare institutions could also be managed by the EGTC within its geographical area of operation. Its members are the relevant health authorities on either side of the border, namely the Region of Catalonia on the Spanish side and the French Government, the National Health Insurance Fund for Employees (CNAMTS) and the Regional Health Agency (l'Agence régionale de santé) on the French side. Created originally for a ten-year period, this EGTC will have its life extended automatically unless any of the members raises an objection.

ZASNET

Created in January 2010, the ZASNET EGTC is an example of legal structuring of cross-border cooperation for environmental conservation purposes. It also operates in the fields of tourism, culture and sustainable development. It links two Portuguese members (the municipal associations of Terra Fria do Nordeste Transmontano and Terra Quente Transmontana) and three Spanish members (the provincial councils of Zamora and Salamanca and the municipality of Zamora) and coordinates cross-border territorial development issues in the above-mentioned fields on their behalf. UNESCO approved the Meseta Ibérica as the 15th cross-border biosphere reserve on 9 June 2015. This initiative was led by the ZASNET EGTC and the reserve will be the first to be managed by an EGTC.

European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)

Local scale

- Urban type territory
- Rural type territory
- Cross-border operational equipment

Regional scale

- Supraregional scale
- Network

European programme

- EU member state
- Non EU member state



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200 km



Territorial cooperation
on the borders of
European Union countries

Cross-border cooperation between European countries has been supported by the European Commission since 1990. However, as we saw in Part One, cooperation initiatives had been proposed long before that time. Indeed, cross-border exchanges are nothing new. Yet these exchanges have increased substantially and cross-border projects have burgeoned. Whether referring to flows, partnerships or projects, 'cross-border' entails describing and understanding the interaction between two or more national territories while taking a dimension of proximity into account. In other words, an analysis of territorial cooperation policy in Europe requires an examination of the borders and territorial dimensions of each country. As a demarcation of sovereignty, the border introduces a significant differentiation between national territories. The modern concept of a continuous territory, comprising a single area circumscribed by an exact boundary, arises in fact from the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). However, the Westphalian border only gradually came to prevail on the ground and in people's consciousnesses through the institution of a legal system, the construction of a territory represented by maps and the demarcation of border lines. The objective of a state was to have its power clearly demarcated, and as part of the process of the territorialisation of the state, the border became one of the attributes enabling one state to distinguish itself from others. At the Congress of Vienna (1815) and during the negotiations that resulted in the Treaty of Versailles (1919), the maps of Europe were redrawn with Westphalian borders. Such a border is a geopolitical object that symbolically and physically distinguishes and separates one political community and its territory from another.

After the Second World War, the four Allied Powers (the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the USSR) established the borders of the countries of Europe, but they were unable to draw up a peace treaty. The territorial status quo remained fragile, all the more so because the erection of the Iron Curtain from 1947 onwards divided Europe into two halves — the democratic and capitalist West, allied to the United States, and the communist East, allied to the Soviet Union. Cross-border cooperation, as understood in this work — i.e. a partnership between local and regional authorities

situated on either side of a national border — did not therefore apply to Europe as a whole for over 40 years. Until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, this form of cooperation between adjoining European regions was able to develop only in the western half of Europe, where democratic political systems endowed their local authorities with political autonomy and there was a civil society. Borders are not immutable, however. Conflicts between states cause frequent territorial shifts and the redrawing of boundaries, as was the case throughout the 19th and for much of the 20th century. The map of Europe has thus undergone many changes. More recently, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dismantling of the Iron Curtain have led to the disappearance of some countries and to considerable territorial reorganisation. While the border between the two Germanies disappeared upon reunification, Czechoslovakia was split into two and the break-up of Yugoslavia has brought six countries into being, plus a further state that has yet to be recognised — Kosovo. Finally, the break-up of the USSR has given rise to 15 states, including the vast expanse of Russia. Several administrative boundaries have become international borders. The implementation of the EU's territorial policy has consequently taken place within the context of profound and often contradictory changes to borders, involving their disappearance, downgrading, emergence and erection.

Yet even in Western Europe it has not been easy for regional and local authorities to cooperate across a national border. In fact, foreign policy in all European countries, including federal ones, is a sphere reserved for the central state. Consequently, in order to develop genuine relations, local and regional stakeholders have needed a national legal framework that authorises them to do so, as well as a cross-border mechanism. The first instances of cross-border cooperation, along the German-Dutch border (the 1958 Euroregion) or along the French-German-Swiss border (the 1963 *Regio Basiliensis*), had only a weak institutional superstructure, in the form of associations. Subsequently, the history of territorial cooperation in Europe saw the emergence of cross-border bodies with different configurations and going under a variety of names: *regios*, *euoregions*, *euodistricts*, *euorités*, *Eurociudad*, *Euregio*, *Europastadt*, *eurometropolis*, etc. The closeness



20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall (Germany), 2009; José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, and Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament

of the relations and the types of institutional and contractual relations also depend on several factors, including the nature of the national political and administrative systems (centralised, decentralised or federal state); the type of regional or local authorities involved (city, region, urban community, etc.); the duration and experience of cooperation (from several decades to recent); and the political culture of the nations involved (informal, non-contractual culture, or administrative and contractual culture). Tensions very often arise from the fact that the border represents a 'historical scar' between neighbouring states, due to a history of conflict, territorial disputes, grievances resulting from wars, etc.

Three stages can be identified in cross-border cooperation between Member States, beginning with the European Community. Firstly, the pioneering initiatives began in the 1960s on the French-German border and in the border regions of the Benelux, in other words mostly involving the founder members of the European Community or their neighbours (Switzerland). The second stage, which began in 1990, mostly involved the border regions of the 12 Member States of the EEC that participated in Interreg from 1991 onwards (Belgium,

Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom). For the first time, however, it also affected the border regions of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in transition, which took part in cross-border cooperation via specific aid programmes (Phare and Tacis) set up by the European Commission. At the same time, the geopolitical upheavals of 1989 gave rise to the emergence of new states and the transition of political systems from communism to capitalism. The new cooperation programmes provided these countries with aid and assistance for their economic and political transition, enabling their local and regional authorities to engage in cooperation with authorities from other countries. A third stage of territorial cooperation began after the enlargement of the EU to the east in 2004 and currently covers the new external borders of the EU — those to the east (with Russia and the countries situated between Russia and the EU), and those to the south (the Mediterranean countries) — in the form of the European neighbourhood policy (ENP).

The aim of Part Two is to provide a country-by-country survey of existing cooperation initiatives. After the overall view of cooperation



The Phare programme, dispatch of support equipment to Estonia (1998)
– Hans van den Broek, European Commissioner for External Relations

provided in Part One, it seemed necessary to describe what is taking place at the level of the individual states. The EU is an association of states that exhibit great diversity in the way they function and, in addition, did not all join the supranational framework at the same time. This examination of cooperation country by country will reveal their different forms of involvement and the variety of their focuses of interest. Our hypothesis is that territorial cooperation has intensified and become more widespread, but that significant divergences exist between countries. Our analysis is based on maps and an approach that provides a relatively consistent description of the individual national situations.

The aim of the maps is to present all the recognised institutional cross-border cooperation frameworks for each state. The focus is on cooperation between regional and local stakeholders, which means that inter-state cooperation (through intergovernmental conferences,

etc.) is not included. We are also concerned with cooperation bearing on multithematic territorial governance. Sectoral cooperation limited, for example, to management of cross-border plant (e.g. a water treatment plant) is not discussed, without exception. Finally, the commentaries on the maps are not exhaustive (certain initiatives may feature on a map but not in the text).

In the absence of an exhaustive list, we have had to compare different sources of information. The European Commission, the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) and the Mission opérationnelle transfrontalière (MOT) have proved to be particularly valuable sources, but they remain quite general. The information obtained was cross-checked with that produced by the countries and institutions themselves. The aim was not only to find out that a cooperation initiative existed, but also to gain a good overview of its history, to identify the partners involved and the area covered, to find out what form of governance it had chosen and to form a picture of the types of cooperation engaged in. This work came up against enormous differences in the quality of the sources, since not all countries prepare lists of the cooperation bodies existing on their territories. In some cases, direct contact was made with information officers in the cooperation bodies themselves, but the replies obtained did not always live up to expectations. Faced with this variety of sources, the authors took the decision to show on the maps all the cooperation arrangements for which they had confirmation of their existence. Each arrangement was identified by reference to the geographical criteria described in the introduction to Part One, namely the scale, and the difference between urban and rural. Initially, the intention was to produce a map for each country, but the diversity in size of the territories and the relative importance of the cooperation bodies involved led to a solution based on both readability and geopolitical context. The very large number of cooperation bodies in Germany, France and Poland suggested that those countries should be presented individually. The other countries were grouped according to shared issues associated with their geographical situation and the history of their territories. The key to reading the maps is therefore both geohistorical and geopolitical. Thus the

three Baltic States were grouped together, since their paths are linked by their former status as Soviet republics. Romania and Bulgaria are presented together because they both emerged as nation states at the turn of the 20th century as the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires declined, they were both members of the communist bloc between 1945 and 1989, and they joined the EU together in 2007. The Czech Republic and Slovakia are grouped together due to the fact that they were part of the same state until 1993. Finally, Austria and Hungary were constituent elements of the same empire before 1919. Moreover, they are similar in size and marked by the large relative weight of their capital cities. These two countries were also separated by a stretch of the Iron Curtain that began to be dismantled in spring 1989, leading to changes that have affected Europe ever since.

Each of the maps is accompanied by a commentary that goes beyond being a mere description. The commentary is intended to provide a geohistorical — i.e. both historical and geographical — survey of the cross-border cooperation initiatives in the countries mapped. In order to avoid descriptions in the style of monographs, the authors decided to adopt a common structure. This begins with a historical overview of how the national territory and borders of the country developed. This involves understanding how the national identity has been forged, identifying how old the country is, and seeing whether its territorial configuration has changed significantly or otherwise during the course of the 20th century. Membership of supranational bodies other than the EU will also be mentioned in this context. The country's borders are also described in terms of how stable they have been, how they relate to geographical space (whether they run along physical barriers or not), and the importance of conflict or peaceful relations. An overview of the border regions is also given, with an emphasis on population density and the resonance of cross-border interaction. This approach is essential for understanding the underlying motivation for cross-border cooperation. Thirdly, the chronology of cross-border cooperation will be built up by examining details of the cooperation bodies, such as their dates of establishment or changes in status. This chronology will

be cross-referenced with a geographical description of the cooperation initiatives, including the area covered and the scale of intervention, the involvement of the partners, the line taken by the border concerned, etc. This general structure is necessary to put the countries' cross-border cooperation efforts into perspective. However, we believe that, even though the way in which countries' territories and borders have developed has a significant effect on their cross-border cooperation, European territorial cooperation policy is bringing about a gradual harmonisation of integration frameworks while still taking the local dimension into account.

2.1 Germany

Germany is the most populous country in the EU with over 80 million inhabitants, but it is smaller in area than either France or Spain; its territory covers 357 340 km² from the North Sea and the Baltic Sea in the north to the Alps in the south. Among its natural frontiers, three great rivers that cross Germany are worthy of mention: the Danube, the Elbe and the Rhine, the last of which also forms a large part of Germany's border with France. The country has land borders with nine other countries. The longest (784 km) is with Austria in the south and the shortest (68 km) is with Denmark in the north. To the west, it shares a border first with the Netherlands (577 km), Belgium (167 km) and Luxembourg (138 km), and then with France (451 km) and Switzerland (334 km). To the east, it borders on two countries: Poland (456 km) and the Czech Republic (646 km). Geographically, Germany also features several enclaves, both in neighbouring countries and within its own territory. Five German enclaves are situated in Belgium, cut off by the Vennbahn railway, which is under Belgian sovereignty, and the German town of Büsingen, on the upper Rhine, is an enclave within Switzerland. The Austrian municipality of Jungholz forms a quasi-enclave within Germany since its only connection with Austria is over the summit of Sorgschrofen. Lastly, Germany shares maritime borders with five countries: in the North Sea with the United Kingdom (18 km) and the Netherlands (336 km), in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea with Denmark (706 km) and in the Baltic Sea alone with Sweden (55 km) and Poland (456 km).

The history of Germany's borders is complicated and varies largely with the historical period considered. The unification of Germany took place gradually over the 19th century from a large assemblage of German states. It began in the Year of Revolutions, 1848, when revolutionaries made the first attempt to establish a German Federation, with the convocation of a constituent assembly in Frankfurt. Unification was not actually accomplished until 1871, however, when Bismarck proclaimed the German Empire, then comprising 23 German states. After the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 the border between France and Germany had remained constantly under dispute, with the Rhine little by little becoming the military and political frontier separating the two countries. The subsequent history

of Germany's borders is largely marked by the two world wars. After the First World War in 1919, defeated Germany considered the peace treaty to be a humiliation. The loss of territory to France and Belgium in the west (Alsace-Lorraine, Eupen, Malmedy), Denmark in the north (North Schleswig) and Poland in the east (Poznań (Posen) and Upper Silesia) was felt to be an injustice. As a consequence, Germany's new borders were challenged and German revisionism helped Hitler to come to power in 1933, after which he went on to seize back the lost territories and to occupy practically the whole of continental Europe during the war. After the Second World War, Germany was in a unique situation of its own. Firstly, in 1945 Germany was occupied by the four victorious Allied Powers (the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the USSR) and, in the absence of a peace treaty, its borders were not definitively settled. It is true that France recovered Alsace-Lorraine, Poland gained the territory of East Prussia to the east of the Oder-Neisse rivers, and the USSR gained the city of Königsberg (now Kaliningrad), but this state of affairs was only temporary, since the Allies had failed to agree on a definitive solution for the future of Germany. Secondly, two German states were established in 1949: the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the west and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the east. They were separated by the Iron Curtain, part of which, the Berlin Wall, built in 1961, came to symbolise the division of the world into two opposing ideological blocs for over 40 years. Germany was not reunified until 1990, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and its borders were definitively ratified by an international treaty, which in particular confirmed the Oder-Neisse line as the border with Poland.

Germany's anomalous situation has been reflected in the evolution of cross-border cooperation, the primary objective of which for the Germans was reconciliation with their neighbours to west and east. Two phases in this cross-border cooperation can be identified. The first began in the 1950s and involved the country's western neighbours; the second, which had to await the end of the Cold War in 1989, developed on its eastern borders after the reunification of Germany. Cooperation with Denmark and Austria could also

be included in this second phase, for different reasons, since it was driven by the European Commission's Interreg programme in the early 1990s on the one hand and by the accession of Austria to the EU in 1995 on the other.

Cross-border cooperation in Germany began in 1958 with the creation of the Euregio on the border with the Netherlands. This association brought together more than 100 border communes and included the district of Bentheim, the city and district of Osnabrück, the municipalities of Emsbüren, Salzbergen and Spelle, and the city and urban area of Münster on the German side; and the areas of the Achterhoek Regio and Twente Regio plus the municipalities of Hardenberg, Ommen and Coevorden on the Dutch side. The prime mover was Alfred Mozer, a member of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), who was at the time Secretary to the Commissioner for Agriculture in the first European Commission. For him, the aim of cross-border cooperation was to reconcile the peoples of Europe: it was essential to 'transcend borders', which were the 'scars of history', as he said several times to the members of the Euregio. This cross-border reconciliation was all the more effective since it took place at the level nearest to the people, between local authorities. Other cross-border associations of this sort were subsequently created along the German-Dutch border, the first being the Rhine-Waal Euregio (1971), which linked 20 German and 31 Dutch municipalities. This was followed by the Rhine-Meuse-Nord Euregio (1978), which linked chambers of commerce on both sides of the border as well as a number of German and Dutch municipalities. At the regional level of cooperation, the Ems Dollart Region was founded in 1977, covering the north-western part of Lower Saxony in Germany and the provinces of Groningen, Drenthe and Friesland in the Netherlands. A first trilateral association was established in 1976, involving Belgian border authorities; this was the Meuse-Rhine Euregio, which included the region around Aachen in North Rhine-Westphalia, the southern part of the Dutch province of Limburg, the Belgian provinces of Limburg and Liège and the German-speaking Community of Belgium. In 1998, the list of German-Dutch cross-border associations was supplemented

by the creation of Eurode Kerkrade-Herzogenrath, which links the municipalities of Kerkrade and Herzogenrath (in the administrative region of Cologne). In the 2000s, cooperation on the border with the Netherlands and Belgium was strengthened by the creation of two cross-border nature parks. The first was the Drielandenpark, set up trilaterally in 2001 by the Dutch and Belgian provinces of Limburg; the Flemish and Walloon regions, Liège Province and German-speaking Community in Belgium; and the city of Aachen, the association of municipalities in the district of Aachen, the administrative district of Cologne and the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany. The second was the Maas-Schwalm-Nette nature reserve, which is bilateral and unites the Schwalm-Nette nature reserve in Germany and the municipalities of Beesel, Echt-Susteren, Leudal, Roerdalen, Roermond and Venlo in the Netherlands.

The process of reconciliation was also begun along the Franco-German border, both along the upper Rhine in conjunction with Switzerland, and in the area between Saarland and Lorraine, together with Luxembourg. In the upper Rhine region, cross-border cooperation began in 1963 with the creation of a Swiss association (Verein), the Regio Basiliensis, whose geographical boundaries extended to the cities of Basel, Freiburg im Breisgau in Baden-Württemberg, and Colmar in the Department of Haut-Rhin. Although the initiative for this cooperation came from local stakeholders in Basel, the pioneers of this cross-border arrangement were acting in the context of Franco-German reconciliation, sealed by the Élysée Treaty signed by Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle on 23 January 1963. The Basel association was subsequently supplemented on the French side by the creation of the Upper Rhine Regio in Mulhouse (1965) and on the German side by the Freiburg Regio (1985). Ten years later, these local cooperation initiatives were merged into a single body known as the Regio TriRhena. In the area between Lorraine, Saarland, Luxembourg and the Palatinate, it was the German industrialist Hubertus Rolshoven, the President of the Steering Committee of the Saarland Mining Corporation, who was the initiator of the SaarLorLux cross-border cooperation project, as he called it from 1969 onwards. This initiative was needed

to respond to the crisis in the steel industry, which hit this mining region extremely hard and caused similar economic problems on the German, French and Luxembourg sides of the border (with unemployment, a need for retraining, etc.). The joint efforts of the region's industrialists led to the creation of two commissions in 1971, one at intergovernmental level and the other at regional level. They were both set up to deal with cross-border problems in the SaarLorLux area and the region of the western Palatinate in Germany.

Subsequently, a legal basis was established for cross-border cooperation in these two areas along the Franco-German border by means of international treaties. In the upper Rhine region, the intergovernmental agreement signed in Bonn in 1975 established an intergovernmental commission and two regional commissions. It set the geographical boundary for this cooperation arrangement to include the German federal states of Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate, the French region of Alsace and the two Basel cantons. In 1980, a second intergovernmental agreement was signed in Bonn, this time for the SaarLorLux area. The two cross-border regions subsequently underwent similar development. In the upper Rhine area, the Upper Rhine Conference was established in 1991 to manage cooperation at the level of the regional executives. It is based in Kehl in Germany. The Franco-German-Swiss Bonn agreement was amended in 2000 in Basel in order to extend the cooperation area to the five cantons in north-western Switzerland (the two half-cantons of Basel and the cantons of Aargau, Jura and Solothurn). As regards the SaarLorLux area, after a summit of regional executives was held in 1995 it was renamed the Grande Région (the Greater Region) in order to take account of its German partner, the federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate. Its geographical boundary was also extended with the inclusion of three Belgian federated entities in 2005, namely the Walloon Region, the French Community and the German-speaking Community. Finally, the first decade of this century was marked by a strengthening of cross-border cooperation in both areas. In 2010, the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine was created to manage cooperation in four fields: the economy, politics, science and civil society. At the local level, four eurodistricts have also been set

up in the region. The first, the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict (2005), was launched by Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder during the 40th anniversary celebrations of the Élysée Treaty in Strasbourg and Kehl in 2003. The Regio Pamina, set up as a local territorial cooperation grouping (LTCG) in 2001, was also converted to a Eurodistrict at the same time. There then followed the Freiburg Region/Central and Southern Alsace Eurodistrict (2005) and the Basel Trinational Eurodistrict (2007). For its part, the Greater Region was converted into a European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) in 2010 in order to provide management for the Interreg operational programme of the same name. At the local level, the Saar-Moselle Eurodistrict was also established on the basis of an EGTC with the participation of Saarland, the Department of Moselle and the Lorraine Region.

The second phase of cross-border cooperation involved the borders to the south, north and east of the country. Cooperation in southern Germany had already begun with Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, around the shared natural area of Lake Constance. In 1972, the lakeside authorities of the four countries (the federal state of Baden-Württemberg, the cantons of Schaffhausen, Appenzell, Thurgau, Saint Gallen and Zurich, the province of Vorarlberg and the Principality of Liechtenstein) set up an international conference so that they could jointly manage problems relating to the environmental management of the lake. This cooperation initiative was consolidated in 1997 with the creation of the Lake Constance Euregio, which on the German side also involved local partners (the towns of Konstanz, Lindau, Oberallgäu, Ravensburg, Sigmaringen, Kempten and the district of Lake Constance) in addition to the Federal State of Baden-Württemberg. Four other euroregions, whose principal feature is their informal or associative structure, have been established in the mountainous areas along the German-Austrian border. The Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein Euregio was founded in 1995 by the German districts of Berchtesgadener Land, Traunstein and Altötting and the Austrian districts of Flachgau, Pinzgau, Pongau, Tennengau, Braunau and Kitzbühel and the city of Salzburg. In 1997, the Via Salina Euregio brought together the Allgäu Regio of Germany and the Kleinwalsertal



Bridge over the Rhine between Kehl and Strasbourg (Germany, France)

Regio and the Außerfern Regional Development in Austria. Finally, 1998 saw the creation of the Zugspitze Euregio linking the Werdenfels and Seefeldler Plateau Regios and the Außerfern Regional Development, and then of the Inntal Euregio by the Bavarian districts of Rosenheim and Traunstein and the Tyrolean districts of Kufstein and Kitzbühel.

To the north, cross-border cooperation with Denmark intensified from the mid-1990s thanks to the possibility of funding from the European Commission's Interreg programme. On the German-Danish border, attempts at reconciliation were still necessary, particularly in the region of Schleswig, where German and Danish minorities were still suffering from the border changes after the two world wars. The route of the border was moreover disputed by certain border communities. In order to remedy this situation and create a joint cross-border living space, the Sønderjylland-Schleswig Euroregion was established in 1997 by the city of Flensburg, the administrative districts of Schleswig-Flensburg and North Friesland on the German side, and the region of Southern Denmark and the municipalities of Åbenrå, Tønder, Haderslev and Sønderborg on the Danish side. In addition, the island municipalities of the Wadden region in the

North Sea created an association in 1999, enabling them to undertake a maritime version of cross-border cooperation: the Wadden Euregio links the islands of Lower Saxony in Germany, West Friesland in the Netherlands, and Rømø, Mandø and Fanø in Denmark. In the first decade of the present century, other cross-border communities have been established. The first of these was the Fehmarnbelt Region established in 2006, linking the region of Zealand (Storstrøm district) in Denmark with the administrative district of Ostholstein, the Hanseatic city of Lübeck and the administrative district of Plön in Germany. A project on a grand scale is currently under way in this cross-border area: the Fehmarnbelt tunnel will form a link under the Baltic Sea between the two territories. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2015. The second is represented by the cooperation initiative launched in 2007 by the Danish region of Fyn and the K.E.R.N. technological region (which groups the cities of Kiel and Neumünster and the districts of Rendsburg-Eckernförde and Plön), linking the main islands of Fyn, Langeland and Ærø on the Danish side and the K.E.R.N. technological region on the German side.

The 1980s were marked above all by the development of the first example of East-West cross-border cooperation, which became

possible after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the reunification of Germany in 1990. The scars of history along the Polish and Czech borders are deep, since the reduction in Germany's territory and the westward shift of Poland after the Second World War caused significant population migrations. The inhabitants of the border areas do not have a historic link with a border that was kept sealed during the Cold War. Moreover, demands for compensation made by associations of displaced persons in Germany were never met. In a number of cases, the establishment of the border on the Oder-Neisse line after the Second World War had split some municipalities and towns into two parts, which now sought to set up cooperation arrangements. A process of reconciliation linked to economic cooperation was therefore necessary to prevent disparities becoming deeper and to promote European integration. Since 1991, the number of euroregions and eurocities that have emerged on the borders with Poland and Czechoslovakia has mushroomed. The first eurocity, Guben-Gubin, was established on the German-Polish border in 1991. This put the seal on cooperation between the twin towns of Guben and Gubin, situated on either side of the border. That same year, the first euroregion (Neisse-Nisa-Nysa) was established on the river Neisse border, linking three local associations on the German, Polish and Czech sides. The first cross-border cooperation initiative between Bavaria and Czechoslovakia was launched in 1991 when the Bavarian Forest National Park, created in 1982, was linked to the Czech forests in the Šumava National Park. Subsequently, three euroregions were created on the German-Czech border. The Elbe/Labe Euroregion (linking the cross-border local-authority associations of the Oberes Elbtal/Osterzgebirge Euroregion on the German side and the Labe Euroregion on the Czech side) and the Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Euroregion (comprising the German districts of central Saxony and the Ore Mountains (Erzgebirge) and the municipalities

of the Czech districts of Louny, Most, Chomutov and Litoměřice) were both set up in 1992. In 1993, after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, the Egrensis Euroregion was established. It brings together three cross-border working communities, two on the German side (Euroregion Egrensis of Bavaria and Euroregion Egrensis of Saxony-Thuringia) and one on the Czech side (the Bohemian Euroregion). In the same year the first euroregion linking Austria, Germany and the Czech Republic was created, namely the Bavarian Forest-Bohemian Forest-Lower Inn Euroregion. This trilateral cooperation arrangement was intensified in 2012, when the Danube-Vltava Euroregion was established by Upper Austria, the Mostviertel and Waldviertel regions of Lower Austria, Lower Bavaria (the administrative districts of Altötting and Upper Palatinate) and, on the Czech side, Southern Bohemia, Plzeň and Vysočina. On the Polish border, two more euroregions were created in 1993. One of them, the Spree-Neisse-Bober Euroregion, links two cross-border cooperation associations on the Polish and German sides; the other is the Pro Europa Viadrina Euroregion, linking the German federal state of Brandenburg and the voivodeship of Lubuskie. A third euroregion, which was formed in 1995 at an intermunicipal level in the region of Pomerania, was extended in 1998 to Sweden. The Pomerania Euroregion thus comprises two associations of municipalities in Poland and Germany and the Swedish association of local authorities of Scania. Two further eurocities have also been created on the Polish border: Frankfurt (Oder)/Ślubiice in the Lubuskie-Brandenburg region (in 1993) and Europastadt Görlitz-Zgorzelec (in 2007).

Today, then, Germany engages in cross-border cooperation on all its borders, and the processes of reconciliation to the west, north and east have fused together in a great variety of cross-border initiatives, helping to heal the scars of history and create joint cross-border living spaces.

2.2 The Benelux countries: Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands

Geographically, the three Benelux countries are situated in the centre of continental Europe; politically, they are at the heart of the project of European integration, as they are among the six founder members of the European Economic Community (EEC) together with Germany, France and Italy. Moreover, they correspond to a single entity that existed in the past. Their joint territory corresponds closely to that of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, as it existed from its creation in 1815, under the Congress of Vienna, until 1830 and the independence of Belgium. These three states all share a border with Germany; Belgium and Luxembourg also border France; and Belgium and the Netherlands share a maritime border with the United Kingdom. The smallest of the three countries is the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, which, with an area of 2 585 km², could be classified as a European micro-state. Luxembourg borders Belgium, Germany and France and comprises two regions — Oesling in the north and Gutland in the south. For its part, Belgium has a border of 450 km with the Netherlands and one of 167 km with Germany.

The history of the Benelux is closely linked to the formation of the three states of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, which is in turn broadly interconnected with and dependent on relations with Austria and their two large neighbours, France and Germany. The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, which became a possession of the House of Habsburg in the 15th century, was annexed by the King of France in 1648, but passed back to the Austrian branch of the Habsburgs in 1714-1715 to form part of the Austrian Netherlands together with the Belgian provinces. Following the French Revolution in 1789, the whole of Austrian Luxembourg was again annexed by France, which divided it into nine departments. In 1795, France also annexed the Belgian territory, and between 1810 and 1814 the Netherlands too formed an integral part of the French Empire. After the defeat of France, however, the Congress of Vienna in 1815 incorporated eight of the nine Luxembourg departments into the new United Kingdom of the Netherlands, which included the territories of the Austrian Netherlands and those of the former United Provinces (the northern Low Countries). The new Duchy of Luxembourg, created from the eighth French department of the Forêts, acquired a hybrid

status in the new European order, since it formed part of a personal union with the United Kingdom of the Netherlands but also became a member state of the German Confederation. After the creation of the Belgian State in 1831, Luxembourg kept its unique status, but its territory was greatly reduced in 1839 to the benefit of the Netherlands, while the border between Belgium and the Netherlands was eventually laid down in 1843. The borders of the three states were not, however, permanently fixed. Despite their declared neutrality, both Luxembourg and Belgium were occupied by Germany in the First World War and again in the Second World War, as was the Netherlands on this occasion. The borders of the three Benelux countries were consequently not restored until after 1945, when Belgium obtained the territory it had been awarded by the Treaty of Versailles, namely the eastern districts and the Eupen and Malmedy region, which had formed part of the German Empire before 1919.

These constant changes of borders and political affiliations led the three countries to engage in cross-border cooperation at an inter-state level at a very early stage between the wars. The Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union of 1921 was the first step towards establishing a customs union between the three countries, which was achieved as early as 1944 and became the Benelux Union in 1948, after the customs agreement came into force. Since then, the name Benelux has generally been used to designate the three countries as a whole in terms of geography, politics and culture. In a way, their cooperation was a forerunner of the process of European economic integration as it developed following the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1950.

It is not therefore surprising that cross-border cooperation at the inter-state level also first developed in the Benelux countries. The first cross-border association, the Euregio, was established in 1958 by Dutch and German local authorities in Gronau. Its geographical boundary was regional but its stakeholders were at the local level. The informal character of these forms of cross-border cooperation is significant, as it enabled local authorities on both sides of the border to develop neighbourhood relations flexibly and



The Ticket to Kyoto project: aiming to reduce CO₂ emissions from public transport (5 partners)

without legal constraints. This form of cooperation also suited the needs of the Dutch municipalities, which were dependent on a centralised state that had devolved few powers to its provinces.

Subsequently, other cross-border cooperation initiatives of this type were established at both local and regional level, but none involved all three Benelux countries together. It was in 1967 that a first example of informal cooperation, Benego, was established on the border between the Netherlands and Belgian Flanders by 11 Dutch and 11 Belgian municipalities. Two more cross-border associations between Germany and the Netherlands came into being in the 1970s, the first being the Rhine-Waal Euregio in 1971, which linked 20 German and 31 Dutch municipalities. This was followed by the Rhine-Meuse-Nord Euregio in 1978, which was original in that it linked chambers of commerce on both sides of the border as well as a number of German and Dutch municipalities. At the regional level, a first instance of trilateral cooperation was established in 1976, but Luxembourg did not feature among its partners. The Meuse-Rhine Euregio was a Belgian-German-Dutch cooperation initiative between the southern part of the Dutch province of Limburg, the Belgian provinces of Limburg and Liège, the German-speaking

Community of Belgium and the Aachen Region public interest group in Germany.

In the case of Luxembourg, the beginnings of cross-border cooperation were also to be found at the regional and indeed inter-state level, but did not initially involve either of its Benelux partners. It was when an intergovernmental commission and a regional commission were set up in 1971 for the Franco-German-Luxembourg cooperation project SaarLorLux, which also included the western Palatinate in Germany. This cross-border cooperation initiative was provided with a legal framework in 1980 through the adoption of an intergovernmental agreement between France, Germany and Luxembourg. Belgium became involved in this arrangement at a very late stage, in 2005, when the Walloon Region, the French Community and the German-speaking Community were officially admitted to the Greater Region summits, which had been held since 1995, to allow for regular meetings between the chairs of the regional executives of the SaarLorLux partners. Nevertheless, Luxembourg had already been cooperating with the Walloon Region since 1996, within the context of the Longwy European Development Pole (EDP) established by the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Walloon province of Luxembourg, the department



Alzette-Belval Ecocity, a public development agency between the Region of Lorraine (France) and the southern region of Luxembourg

of Meurthe-et-Moselle and the Lorraine region of France, to facilitate the development of the cross-border agglomeration.

Most of the cross-border cooperation arrangements in the Benelux countries had in fact already been established in the period 1950 to 1970, with stakeholders on the German-Dutch border acting both as precursors and as initiators of several cooperative associations, most of them at local level. After the European Commission introduced the Interreg programme in 1990, the Benelux countries came to intensify their neighbourhood relations by implementing joint projects without necessarily adding new cooperation arrangements.

There were a few exceptions, however, including two new cooperation initiatives on the Dutch-Belgian border. In 1993, the Scheldemond Euregio was created at a regional level, linking the Belgian provinces of East Flanders and West Flanders and the Dutch province of Zeeland. At the local level, the municipalities of Baarle-Nassau and Baarle-Hertog established an original form of cooperation in 1998 with the *Gemeenschappelijk Orgaan Baarle* (GOB) (Joint Baarle Organ), which allows them to take joint decisions on matters of common interest. A new association for cross-border cooperation was also created on the border between the Netherlands and Germany. This was *Eurode Kerkrade-Herzogenrath*, which links the

Dutch town of Kerkrade with the German town of Herzogenrath (in the administrative region of Cologne). Finally, the island municipalities of the Wadden region in the North Sea created an association in 1999, enabling them to undertake a maritime version of cross-border cooperation: the Wadden Euregio links the islands of Lower Saxony in Germany, the islands of West Friesland in the Netherlands and the islands of Rømø, Mandø and Fanø in Denmark.

Natural frontiers do not a priori constitute an issue for cross-border cooperation in the Benelux area, since no mountains or major rivers separate the three countries. However, protection of the environment and sustainable development have become priority areas for cooperation between the Benelux countries since the beginning of the new millennium. The Hainaut Cross-border Nature Park, which has linked the Scarpe-Escaut Regional Nature Park in France and the Scheldt Plain Nature Park in Belgium since 1996, has served as a model for other examples of cross-border cooperation between nature reserves. Thus, the Drielandenpark was created in 2001 as a working community by the Dutch and Belgian provinces of Limburg; the Flemish and Walloon regions, Liège Province and the German-speaking Community in Belgium; and the city of Aachen, the association of municipalities in the district of Aachen, the administrative district of Cologne and the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany. The same year saw the creation of the De Zoom-Kalmthoutse Heath along the Belgian-Dutch border. This links the two former regional parks and, in particular, nature conservation groups on both sides of the border. In 2002, the Maas-Schwalm-Nette Nature Park was created on the German-Dutch border by the Schwalm-Nette Nature Park in Germany and the municipalities of Beesel, Echt-Susteren, Leudal, Roerdalen, Roermond and Venlo in the Netherlands. The unique feature of this cooperation initiative was the choice of its legal basis, since it is both an international association and a public corporation under Dutch law. Finally, 2009 saw the decision by the towns of Maaseik and Bree in Belgium and the municipality of Weert in the Netherlands to establish a cross-border rural cooperation community named Weert-Maaseik-Bree, which operates on a purely informal basis.

The first decade of this century also witnessed an intensification of cross-border cooperation in the Benelux countries with the creation of a number of European Groupings for Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs), which confer a genuine joint legal personality on cross-border institutions. Most of these EGTCs have been created on the Franco-Belgian border. The first such EGTC was the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis, which was established in 2008 by the French and Belgian states, the Nord/Pas-de-Calais region and the European Metropolis of Lille on the French side, and the Flemish Region and Community, the province of West Flanders, the Walloon Region, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, the province of Hainaut and several intermunicipal organisations on the Belgian side. A second EGTC was established in 2009 as the Flanders-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale EGTC, which is structured in a similar fashion, but revolves around the urban community of Dunkerque and the intermunicipal association of West Flanders and also involves regional and national partners. In 2010, the Greater Region was restructured as an EGTC in order to become the single managing authority for the operational programme of the same name ⁽¹⁾. The EGTC also includes the German federal states of Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg alongside its Belgian and French partners. Finally, two EGTCs at the intermunicipal level have also come into being. The first is the Linieland van Waas en Hulst, a thematic EGTC created in 2011 by the municipalities of Beveren,



1 The Greater Region Summit Secretariat EGTC was also set up in 2011 to organise the political representation of this area.

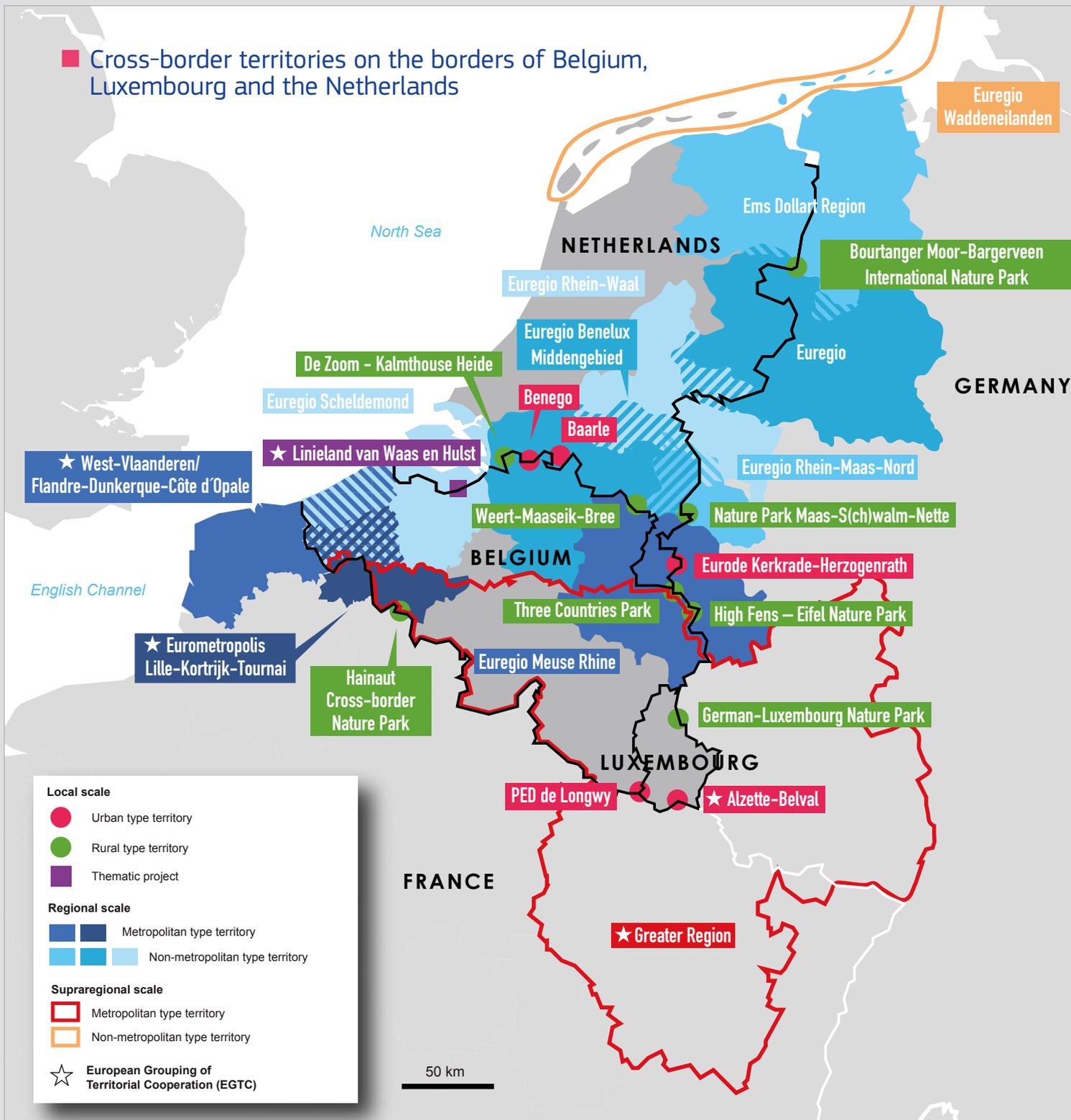
Sint-Gillis-Waas and Stekene, the province of East Flanders and the Interwaas intermunicipal association in Belgium, and the municipality of Hulst and the province of Zeeland in the Netherlands. Its objective is to jointly develop the left bank of the Scheldt. The second EGTC is Alzette-Belval, set up in 2013. It amounts to the restructuring of a public urban development undertaking initiated in 2009 and completed in 2012 between the Lorraine region and the southern part of Luxembourg.

Today, therefore, cross-border cooperation between the Benelux countries is both strong and diversified. It complements the still functional inter-state cooperation first established in 1948, as it has neither the same stakeholders nor the same geographical boundaries. That is because in the first place the communities and bodies involved in cooperation below the state level often include towns and municipalities, and sometimes also Dutch provinces and Belgian Regions and Communities, but these initiatives are not intergovernmental in nature. Secondly, they are organised either on a Belgian-Dutch bilateral basis or, in the majority of cases, with one or other of the larger neighbouring countries — Germany or France.



Border between Belgium and the Netherlands (at Moresnet)

■ Cross-border territories on the borders of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands



2.3 France

France, one of the founder members of the European Community, covers an area of 665 000 km², of which Metropolitan France accounts for 552 000 km², and is therefore the largest country in the EU. It has land borders with 13 countries, 9 of which neighbour Metropolitan France, namely: Belgium (620 km), Luxembourg (73 km), Germany (451 km) and Switzerland (573 km) to the northeast and Italy (513 km) and Spain (623 km) to the south, with a Spanish enclave (Llívia) inside French territory. France also shares two borders with micro-states, namely: Monaco (4.4 km) and Andorra (56.6 km). The Treaty of Canterbury signed on 12 February 1986 changed the maritime border between France and the United Kingdom to a land border, which has been crossed by road and rail traffic since the Channel Tunnel opened in 1994. With its Overseas Departments and Territories inherited from its colonial past, France has a 730 km border with Brazil and a 510 km border with Suriname in French Guiana, and borders with Canada on Green Island, close to the archipelago of Saint Pierre and Miquelon, and the Netherlands on Saint Martin in the Antilles.

The history of France's borders is linked to the long history of continental Europe and the formation of nation states in the 19th century, in which France played an important role, in particular by disseminating ideas born out of the French Revolution in 1789, which stirred up a desire on the part of the peoples of Europe to identify themselves as nations and establish their territories (this was the introduction of Westphalian sovereignty). It is also bound up with a past marked by numerous territorial conflicts between European powers, as a result of which the post-World War II borderlines still awaken painful memories and resentment in certain border populations. The territorial rivalries between France and the United Kingdom up to the 19th century — when they gave way to confrontations mainly outside Europe — were violent, and France's border conflicts with Germany and Italy were no less so. Alsace-Moselle has been tugged back and forth between France and Germany ever since the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), changing national affiliation three times since it was attached to France under the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia: it became German in 1871, when it was annexed to the Reich, then

French again in 1918 after World War I, German again under the National Socialist government in 1940 and then French again following liberation in 1945. The border between Italy and France has also been disputed: Corsica was annexed by France in 1769, whereas Savoie and the County of Nice did not join France until 1860, during the unification of Italy, when the border on the River Var was moved east. The Franco-Monegasque border changed at the same time, with Menton and Roquebrune opting in a referendum to join France. The French borders were finally fixed under the 1947 Paris Treaties. France gained 700 km², following its enlargement in the Departments of the Alpes-Maritimes, Hautes-Alpes and Savoie and a number of minor subsequent changes to the borders with Switzerland, Andorra and Luxembourg.

France's cross-border projects and regions have developed in three main phases. The first started in the early 1960s and mainly concerned the Franco-German border, but also the borders with Switzerland and Luxembourg. France's first cross-border cooperation projects developed along the Rhine and the Moselle in Alsace and Lorraine, two regions long disputed between France and Germany. The creation of Franco-German regional cooperation structures can therefore be seen as a step in the reconciliation process launched in parallel by the two countries at a bilateral level. Thus the first cross-border association was the Regio Basiliensis, created in the Franco-German-Swiss area around Basel in 1963, coinciding with the signing of the Élysée Treaty by Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle. However, that Regio was driven from the Swiss side, even though two other Regios were subsequently created on the French and German sides, namely the Upper Rhine Regio (Regio du Haut-Rhin) in Mulhouse (1965) and the Freiburger Regio in Freiburg (1985). Together these associations represented the local level of cross-border cooperation, which was strengthened in 1995 when they merged into a single association, the Regio TriRhena. At regional level, cooperation in the Upper Rhine area was institutionalised when an intergovernmental agreement was signed in Bonn in 1975 and the area was joined by the federal states of Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate, the region of Alsace and the two cantons



The Regio Pamina Eurodistrict covers the southern Palatinate and the Mittlerer Oberrhein districts (Germany) and Northern Alsace (France)

of Basel. From 1991 onwards, this cooperation was managed by the Upper Rhine Conference based in Kehl in Germany. It was enlarged in 2000 to include the five cantons in north-western Switzerland (the two Half-Cantons of Basel and the Cantons of Aargau, Jura and Solothurn), under a new intergovernmental agreement signed in Basel. Finally, the Trinational Metropolitan Region of the Upper Rhine was created in 2010 in order to put proper multilevel governance in place in the cross-border area. This governance was also designed to involve the local cooperation associations which started to emerge after 2000. Four eurodistricts have been created in the region. The first, the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict (2005), was launched by Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schröder during the 40th anniversary celebrations of the Élysée Treaty in Strasbourg and Kehl in 2003. The Regio Pamina, set up as a local cross-border cooperation grouping in 2001, was converted to a eurodistrict at the same time. These were followed by the Freiburg Region/Central and Southern Alsace Eurodistrict in 2005 and the Basel Trinational Eurodistrict in 2007.

Cross-border cooperation in the area between Lorraine, Saarland, Luxembourg and the Palatinate developed along similar lines to cross-border cooperation in the Upper Rhine Valley. The term SaarLorLux was first coined in 1969 by Hubertus Rolshoven, President of the Steering Committee of the Saarland Mining Corporation. Cross-border cooperation in this region was originally

closely bound up with the crisis in the steel industry, which hit this mining region extremely hard and caused economic problems simultaneously on both sides of the border (with unemployment, a need for retraining, etc.). It was later used as the name of the intergovernmental committee and regional committee set up in 1971, even though the regional committee already included the western Palatinate region in Germany and therefore extended beyond the SaarLorLux area. A legal basis was adopted for this cross-border cooperation in 1980, when an intergovernmental agreement was signed in Bonn between the three countries involved. However, the name for this cooperation area later changed. After a summit of the regional executives was held in 1995, the area was renamed the Greater Region (Grande Région) and sometimes referred to as SaarLorLux+ in order to take account of its extended geographical scope. That in turn grew over the course of time, with the inclusion of three Belgian federated entities (the Walloon Region and the French and the German-speaking Communities) in the Greater Region in 2005. At local level, the Greater Region is also divided into several intermunicipal units: the Longwy European Development Pole (PED) founded in 1985 between the municipalities of Aubange (in the Belgian Province of Luxembourg), Mont-Saint-Martin/Longwy (in the French Department of Meurthe-et-Moselle) and Pétange (in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg). A similar association was created 11 years later, in 1997, between those municipalities, Saarland, the Department of Moselle and the Region of Lorraine, becoming the

SaarMoselle Eurodistrict in 2010 based on an EGTC. Finally, the Ecocity of Alzette-Belval was established in 2009 as a public development agency between the Region of Lorraine and the southern region of Luxembourg.

A second phase of cross-border cooperation in France started in the 1980s and primarily involved regions close to the mountain ranges of the Alps, Jura and Pyrenees. That cross-border cooperation was driven by the national governments, as the French, Swiss, Italian and Spanish authorities gradually set up cross-border working communities. The Franco-Genevan Regional Committee was set up in July 1973 between the Cantons of Geneva and Vaud on the Swiss side and the prefectures in the Rhône-Alpes Region, Ain and Haute-Savoie and the Departments of Ain and Haute-Savoie on the French side. They were joined in 2004 by the Region of Rhône-Alpes itself and in 2006 by the ARC (Association régionale de coopération des collectivités locales du Genevois/Regional Cooperation Association of Genevan local authorities). This top-down process was completed in the 2000s by the bottom-up Greater Geneva agglomeration project (see below). The working communities and conferences established in the 1980s tended to focus on cooperation between local and regional authorities, especially following the first French decentralisation law passed in 1982, which delegated greater responsibilities to the Departments and introduced a new institution for regional cooperation in France, the regional council. After the transition

to democracy in Spain and the establishment of the autonomous communities there, regional cooperation also became possible on the Franco-Spanish border. The Pyrenees Working Community was set up in 1983 between the Regions of Aquitaine, Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon in France, the Autonomous Communities of Catalonia, Aragon, Navarre and the Basque Country in Spain and the Principality of Andorra. This was followed by the creation of the Western Alps Working Community (COTRAO) in 1983 (between the Cantons of Geneva, Valais and Vaud and the Regions of Rhône-Alpes and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, which were later joined by Valle d'Aosta, Piedmont and Liguria), the Jura Working Community in 1985 (between the Cantons of Jura, Berne, Neuchâtel and Vaud and Franche-Comté: prefecture of the region, region and departments), and the Lake Geneva Council (Conseil du Léman) in 1987 (between the Cantons of Geneva, Vaud and Valais and the Departments of Ain and Haute-Savoie). Based on these initial forms of collaboration with foreign neighbours, cross-border cooperation was stepped up in the 1990s and extended to other partners. In the Alps, the Mont Blanc Cross-Border Conference was set up in 1991 between the Canton of Valais, two communities of French municipalities in Savoie and Haute-Savoie and municipalities and the region of Valle d'Aosta, thereafter known as the Mont Blanc Area. Another two conferences were subsequently set up with Italian neighbours in 2000: the Franco-Italian Alps Conference (CAFI) between the French Departments of Alpes-Maritimes, Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, Hautes-Alpes, Isère,



Col des Émigrants, on the border between France and Spain

Savoie and Haute-Savoie, the Italian Provinces of Imperia, Cuneo and Turin and the autonomous region of Valle d'Aosta; and the Conference of the High Valleys, which was pitched at a more local level between communities of French municipalities and Italian mountain communities. Finally, cooperation was also placed on an official footing in the Jura with the creation in 2001 of the Trans-Jura Conference to replace the old Jura Working Community. This second phase of cross-border cooperation also gave rise to the concept of joint management of natural spaces. The first European nature park (Alpi Marittime-Mercantour) was established in 1987 by merging the Mercantour National Park in France and the Alpi Marittime Nature Park in Italy and has been managed by an EGTC since 2013. In the Pyrenees, the Pyrenees National Park on the French side and the Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park on the Spanish side have been cooperating in a less integrated manner since 1988, but are nonetheless classed as a single UNESCO World Heritage Site. The first nature park on the Franco-Belgian border was established much later. In 1996, the Hainaut Cross-border Nature Park was set up between the Scarpe-Escaut Regional Nature Park (one of the oldest regional parks in France, established in 1968) and the Scheldt Plain Nature Park in Belgium.

While the need to manage natural areas such as mountain ranges gave rise to synergies for cross-border cooperation, other border areas in France needed a greater external impetus, which came from the Interreg programme launched by the European Commission in the early 1990s. This marked the start of the third phase in cross-border cooperation in France in places where local initiatives had previously been few and far between, such as on the northern border with Belgium and with the United Kingdom. The adoption of Interreg programmes in all French border regions eventually resulted in the management of cross-border projects and the creation of joint cooperation institutions at local and/or regional level (covering different areas from those covered by the Interreg programme management bodies) and even in the formation of euroregions. Following the first generation of Interreg programmes (1990-1995), cross-border cooperation between France and its

neighbours increased and intensified at all levels: national, regional and local. Landmark projects were implemented, such as the first international marine reserve of Bouches de Bonifacio, launched in 1992 by France and Italy between the Territorial Authority of Corsica and the Department of Corse-du-Sud and the Region of Sardinia and the Province of Sassari. The memorandum of understanding for the marine park resulting from this maritime cooperation project was signed in 1993. Cooperation with Spanish border regions has also developed very dynamically. It was thanks to strong regional identities (Catalan and Basque) that local and regional partners spawned numerous cross-border bodies and projects. The Department of Pyrénées-Orientales set up the Pyrénées-Cerdagne Cross-border Community of Communes with Cerdanya District Council in 1996, which was to become an EGTC in 2011. It also launched the Catalan Cross-border Area Eurodistrict project with Catalonia in 2008. On the Basque side, the Basque Eurocity of Bayonne-San Sebastián was formed in 1993. Today it includes the Diputación Foral de Gipuzkoa, the city of Donostia-San Sebastián and the Oarsoaldea local development agency on the Spanish side, and the Côte Basque-Adour agglomeration and the Sud Pays Basque agglomeration on the French side. The Bidasoa-Txingudi Cross-border Consortium was also set up at local level in 1998 between the municipalities of Hendaye, Hondarribia and Irun. In the 2000s, Franco-Spanish cross-border cooperation gave rise to cross-border structures and projects which were increasingly important from both an institutional and a legal perspective. The Region of Aquitaine (France) and the Basque Autonomous Community (Spain) started to collaborate in the 1990s by setting up a joint cooperation fund. The fund acquired a legal personality in 2004 with the creation of the Aquitaine-Euskadi Logistical Platform in the form of a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), followed by the creation of the Aquitaine-Euskadi Euroregion in the form of an EGTC in 2011. The Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion was set up in 2004 between the Regions of Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées and the Autonomous Communities of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands. It too was converted to an EGTC in 2009. At a more local level, the flagship project is the Cerdanya cross-border hospital project set up as an EGTC

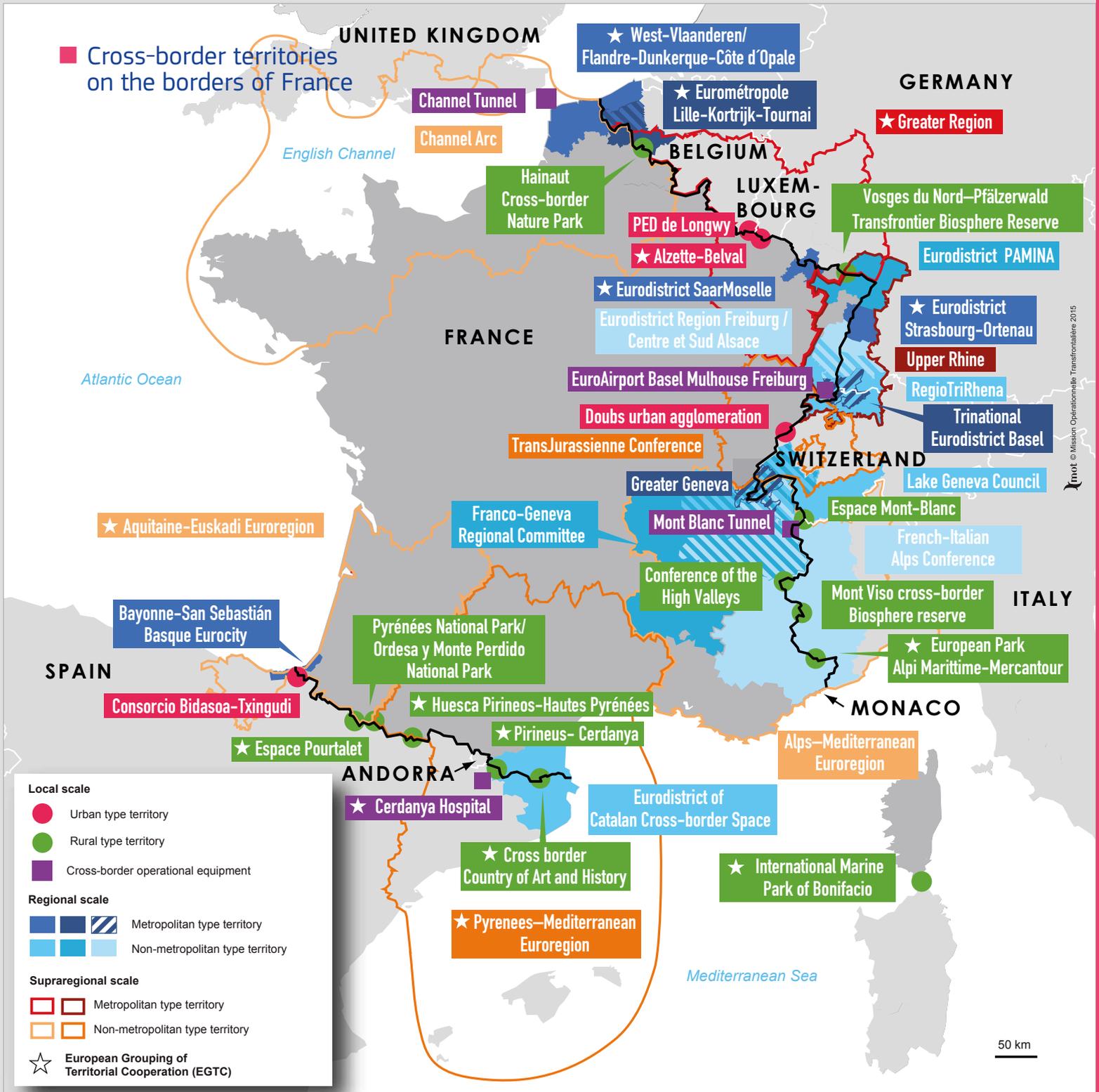
between France and the Catalonia Health Council in 2010. This was the first project to pool health services between two European countries. Another example is the EGTC between the Department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques and the Autonomous Community of Aragon, which manages the Pourtalet area.

Euroregions and eurodistricts were set up on other French borders in the 2000s. The Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai Eurometropolis was established as an EGTC in 2008, as the successor to a cooperation project launched in 1991 with the Standing Intercommunal Cross-Border Conference (COPIT). It involves the European Metropolis of Lille, the Department of Nord, the Nord/Pas-de-Calais Region and the French State on the French side, and several intermunicipal groupings, the Provinces of West Flanders and Hainaut, the Flemish Region and Community, the Walloon Region, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the Belgian State on the Belgian side. A second EGTC was set up in 2009 in the region from West Flanders to the Flandre-Dunkerque-Côte d'Opale area. It is structured in a similar fashion, but it revolves around the urban community of Dunkerque and the intermunicipal association of West Flanders and also involves regional and national partners. The most important projects between France and Switzerland in this context are, first, the urban agglomeration of Doubs, the declaration of intent for which was signed in 2006 and which was converted to an EGTC in 2014 (involving the municipalities of Morteau, Villers-le-Lac and Fins on the French side, and Le Locle, La Chaux-de-Fonds and Les Brenets on the Swiss side); and, second, the local cross-border cooperation grouping (LCCG) of Greater Geneva set up in 2013 involving the Cantons of Geneva and Vaud, the City of Geneva, the District of Nyon, the Region of Rhône-Alpes, the Departments of Ain and Savoie, and the ARC, a mixed syndicate of communities and municipalities in the French part of Greater Geneva.

In contrast, cross-border cooperation between France and the United Kingdom has remained poorly developed, especially at the institutional level, even after the opening of the Channel Tunnel linking the two countries in 1994. Whether it is because neither State has a federal structure and local and regional authorities lack any real power

or because the British prefer flexible, non-institutionalised forms of cooperation, the only real cooperation forum is the Channel Arc, which began in 1996 and was set up in 2003 as a regional assembly composed of five French regions (Upper Normandy, Lower Normandy, Picardy, Nord/Pas-de-Calais and Brittany) and six English counties and unitary authorities (Kent, West Sussex, Hampshire, Devon, Brighton and Hove, and Southampton). However, this is more an interregional than a cross-border cooperation arrangement. All in all, France's borders are home to a plethora of cooperation arrangements at various levels, which have developed either bottom up (from local authorities) or top down (from the French State and neighbouring federated or federal states). This has given rise to a multilevel cooperation model, which differs from one border to another and which illustrates the awareness of the need for cross-border cooperation on the part of authorities at different levels — at the national level, with the indispensable involvement of national governments in cooperation arrangements (intergovernmental committees); at the supraregional level (Greater Region, Upper Rhine Valley, Trans-Jura Conference, Pyrenees Working Community and Pyrenees Euroregion); at the regional level, with eurodistricts (along the lines of euroregions on other German borders); and at the local level, in urban or rural cross-border areas — and, ultimately, the need for coordinated action between those levels. This need for multilevel governance is also illustrated by the creation of the Mission opérationnelle transfrontalière (MOT — Cross-Border Operational Mission) in 1997, which brought together authorities at the various levels of government on either side of France's borders and their cross-border groupings.

Cross-border territories on the borders of France



2.4 Denmark, Sweden and Finland

The Scandinavian countries, which are relatively large but sparsely populated, lie on the northern periphery of Europe. With the exception of Denmark, their low population densities contrast starkly with those of other regions of the continent. They also have high living standards and a welfare state and provide high levels of social protection. The Kalmar Union, which existed between 1397 and 1523, was a state that brought all four Scandinavian countries together (with the exception of Iceland). The history of these territories has been shaped by political ties in the form of associations. Norway was part of the Kingdom of Denmark until 1814 and then part of Sweden. The Grand Duchy of Finland was integrated into Sweden until 1809. The 19th century saw the rise of Scandinavism, a political and cultural movement which advocated rapprochement between the different territories.

The Nordic Council, formed in 1952, has certainly facilitated integration between the five countries (Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Iceland), which maintain close economic, social and cultural relations. A number of cross-border cooperation initiatives date back to the 1960s (North Calotte Council, 1967) or 1970s (Kvarken Council, 1972; Midnordic Region, 1978), before Finland and Sweden joined the EU. Although three countries are members of the EU, they did not join on the same date. While Denmark is a relatively old member (1973), Sweden and Finland only joined in 1995, following the geopolitical changes which took place in Europe in 1989. In fact, it could be said that the Scandinavian countries had until then been defined by their dual peripheral and geographical situation; more importantly, however, they had been defined by their geopolitical situation, due to the proximity of the Iron Curtain, which extended to the Baltic Sea. When the Iron Curtain fell, Finland was able to join the Council of Europe in 1989 and then the EU in 1995, together with Sweden. These two Member States both have external European borders. While the border between Sweden and Norway is an open border (Norway is also a member of the Schengen area), the border between Finland and Russia is very tightly controlled, despite the changes to the political regime. Against the background of these geopolitical changes,

it appears that regional integration within Scandinavia has facilitated the development of cross-border cooperation.

However, the three countries have not all integrated into the EU to the same extent. Denmark has negotiated exemption clauses and, like Sweden, has not adopted the euro. All three countries are involved in Baltic Sea programmes (the Interreg B Baltic Sea Region Programme, the macroregional strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme). Sweden and Finland are involved in cooperation frameworks for the Arctic in general, together with Norway and Russia (as the Barents Euro-Arctic Region).

Denmark

Although Denmark joined the EEC in 1973, the first forms of cross-border cooperation were not initiated on its borders. Denmark is a small country (43 000 km²), which is densely populated by Scandinavian standards (130 inhabitants/km²). The state and the nation themselves are ancient; however, the territory has been subject to major changes and only took its current form post-1864. Two autonomous territories are attached to Denmark: Greenland and the Faeroe Islands, both of which are overseas countries and territories (OCTs) and not part of the EU. Denmark comprises a peninsula (Jutland), attached to the continent by a 70 km-long isthmus, and over 400 islands, the largest of which (Zealand) includes the capital, Copenhagen. This configuration (a mainland and a multitude of islands) causes problems in terms of territorial continuity, some of which have been resolved by the state by investing in bridges and tunnels for both road and rail traffic. The demographic importance of the capital poses another problem: over one-third of the country's population lives in the agglomeration of Copenhagen, which lies on Denmark's eastern seaboard close to Sweden, from which it is separated by the Øresund, a strait linking the Baltic Sea to the North Sea. As one of the cities commanding the strait, Copenhagen is both a coastal and a border city, due to its proximity to the Swedish coast about 10 km away.



Bridge over the Øresund strait
(Denmark, Sweden)

Denmark therefore has two types of frontier. First, it has a land border with Germany. It was established in 1864 following the loss of Schleswig and Holstein, which were ceded to Prussia and Austria. However, the border continues east as a maritime border through the Flensburg Fjord and the sea area of Fehmarnbelt. The political border does not coincide with the linguistic border, since there are Danish minorities living in Schleswig. The borders with Sweden and Norway are also maritime borders.

Denmark participates in three Interreg programmes. The first (Øresund-Kattegat–Skagerrak) links counties in southern Norway, provinces in western Sweden, the northern part of the Jutland peninsula and the island provinces in the east. The second (South Baltic) covers the German and Polish regions on the Baltic Sea, the coastal provinces of south-eastern Sweden and the Region of Klaipėda in Lithuania. The Danish island of Bornholm is included in the programme and the regions in eastern Denmark are associated with it as adjacent regions. The third programme concerns the border with Germany. The territories eligible for the Syddanmark-Schleswig-K.E.R.N. programme are southern Jutland, the Province of Fyn and part of the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein.

Cooperation bodies were set up mainly during the 1990s and at the start of the millennium. The Øresund Committee is a committee of local and regional authorities (municipalities and counties) and representatives of both states (Sweden and Denmark). This cooperation was launched in 1993 in order to strengthen relations between the metropolitan region of Copenhagen and the highly urbanised neighbouring regions of Sweden (Scania includes the cities of Malmö, Sweden's third largest city, and Lund, which has one of the most prestigious universities in the country) with a view to establishing a fixed link across Øresund by 1999. Since then a dual road/rail link has replaced the former ferry service linking the two shores. Although it has a loose governance structure with no legal personality, cross-border cooperation is very close. The association has a team of 17 technicians, some of whom are assigned to the preparation of Interreg projects. Thanks to this advisory structure, quite complex projects can be prepared. A truly metropolitan region is being established, with Copenhagen as the centre and Malmö playing a secondary role. It reflects increasing integration between the two coasts, which are linked by an RER (regional express railway) system. Three cross-border cooperation structures have been set up on the German-Danish border: Sønderjylland-Schleswig in 1997,

the Fehmarnbelt region in 2006 and Fyn Province-K.E.R.N. in 2007. Even though they are termed euroregions, they are essentially arrangements between local authorities (municipalities on the Danish side and towns and districts on the German side, together with a technological network in the case of K.E.R.N.). However, Danish municipalities are very large and have broad powers. The Fehmarnbelt region is involved in the project to establish a fixed link between the island of Lolland (Denmark) and the island of Fehmarn (Germany), which would improve accessibility between Hamburg and Copenhagen. The cultural dimension of these cooperation arrangements, which aims to encourage minorities and other border populations to learn neighbouring languages, is one of their most original features. The last euroregion, the Wadden Euregio, was established in 1999. What is original about this euroregion is not just that it links the Netherlands with Denmark and Germany, but that it establishes cooperation between the North Sea islands and the Baltic islands of those countries. This island network enables best practices to be shared and cooperation to be based on common concerns (environmental pressures). Finally, the Baltic Euroregion only includes the Danish island of Bornholm, 160 km east of Copenhagen.

All in all, the Danish borders are home to intensive cross-border cooperation. That cooperation is bound up with projects to create fixed links (Øresund, Fehmarnbelt) and the desire to establish an island cooperation network. The lie of the land (especially the fact that it is an archipelagic country) has a decisive influence on cross-border cooperation. In addition, a cross-border metropolitan region is being established over the Øresund, with Copenhagen and Malmö as its two main centres.

Sweden

Like Denmark, the Swedish state was a long time in the making and its territory has changed over the centuries. However, Sweden has played a much larger role in establishing the European territorial order than Denmark. Between 1611 and 1718 Sweden was a major European power whose territories extended to the southern and



The CoSafe Project: strengthening and improving cooperation between the Norwegian and Swedish mountain rescue services

eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. It has since become a distinctly modern state with an efficient administration. With 9.7 million inhabitants, Sweden has a much larger population than Denmark but, with just 20 inhabitants per km², it still has one of the lowest population densities in Europe. Moreover, the population and the towns are concentrated in the south of the country and along the coast, while the interior is very sparsely populated. Sweden is a neutral state and has not been involved in war since the early 19th century.

Its frontiers with Norway and Finland have remained more or less the same since the 15th century. Demarcation was virtually complete by the start of the 19th century. The border with Norway more or less follows the watershed line to the west. To the north, the border with Finland crosses a vast forest area that is home to the Sami, an indigenous people who can be found in all the adjoining countries (Norway, Finland and Russia). The border zones are very sparsely populated and the population is declining. The Gulf of Bothnia basically serves as the border between Sweden and Finland. Finally, the Baltic Sea divides Sweden from the Baltic States and Poland. Today there are sea links with these countries, which were previously behind the Iron Curtain. All these borders are now internal EU borders,

with the exception of the border with Norway. However, that border has been included in programmes since Interreg II, and the Norwegian Government takes the place of the EU for the funding allocated to partner authorities in that country.

Five programmes cover the north-south border: Sweden-Norway, Nord, Kolarctic, Botnia-Atlantica and Øresund-Kattegatt-Skagerrak. All programmes apart from the first, which only involves Swedish and Norwegian provinces, involve provinces in a country other than the two referred to: the second and third involve Finland and the last one involves Denmark. Finally, the Central Baltic Programme links Eastern Sweden (including Stockholm) with Estonia and NUTS 3 regions in Latvia and southern Finland (including Helsinki), and establishes cooperation across the Baltic Sea.

Cross-border cooperation started back in 1967 in the far north of the country, with the creation of the North Calotte Council, set up by the Nordic Council. Based in Rovaniemi in Finland, the Council is built on partnership between the various provinces and regions of Sweden, Finland and Norway. It has undertaken various cooperation projects in a wide range of areas (environment, culture, economic development, etc.) since its inception. A second euroregion, the Midnordic region, was established between these three countries a little further south in 1978. It joins a Finnish region to a Swedish region across the Gulf of Bothnia, together with a region in the centre of Norway.

Several cross-border regions were also set up from the 1970s onwards, before Sweden joined the EU. They mainly comprised regional or local authorities in Sweden with neighbouring counterparts in either Finland (Kvarken Council, 1972; Haparanda-Tornio, 1987) or Norway (Arvika-Kongsvinger, 1978; Svinesund Committee, 1980; Mittskandia, 1988) or all three together (Tornedalen Council, 1987). Most of these structures have the status of associations rather than legal status in the country in which they are based. The most original of all cooperation projects is the one between the two border towns of Haparanda and Tornio, which started pooling their

public services in the 1960s (swimming pool, waste water treatment, etc.). The decision to set them on a formal basis in 1987 ratified a cooperation arrangement that had been in place for over twenty years. New projects were developed under the Interreg programmes in both the education and training and the environmental sectors.

Curiously, Denmark and Sweden did not establish any cross-border cooperation until the 1990s, even though the two countries are only separated by a narrow strait crossed by numerous ferry services. In this instance, it was the project to establish a fixed link across the Øresund which set the wheels in motion. Finally, mention should be made of two euroregions involving local authorities on either side of the Baltic Sea. The first is the Pomerania Euroregion, created in 1995 between associations of municipalities in north-western Poland, north-eastern Germany and southern Sweden (Scania). Its objective is to promote cooperation between the municipalities in the association in their areas of responsibility. The second, the Baltic Euroregion, involves regional authorities in five countries, including the oblast of Kaliningrad (Russia), which does not belong to the EU.

The intense cross-border activity on Sweden's borders was kick-started in the 1960s by the Nordic Council. That cooperation was pursued primarily with Norway and Finland. It was only following accession to the EU that cooperation was extended southwards to Denmark and across the Baltic Sea.

Finland

Finland is the most sparsely populated Member State of the EU (15 inhabitants per km²). Unlike Denmark and Sweden, it is a relatively new country, which resulted from emancipation from first Sweden and then Russia. The land which now corresponds to Finland belonged to Sweden between the 12th and the 19th centuries. This area was gradually colonised from its western shores. The first towns were founded by the Swedes. The county of Finland was annexed by Russia in 1804 but remained largely autonomous. At that point the capital was moved from Turku, on the west coast, to Helsinki,

on the southern coast closer to Russia. Finland gained independence in 1917, in the aftermath of the Russian revolution. Finland was invaded by the Soviet Union in 1944. After World War II, the USSR recognised the independence of Finland under the Paris Treaty (1947), on condition that it remained neutral. As a result, it was unable to benefit from the Marshall Plan or to participate in cooperation projects with the western world. Thus 'Finlandisation' came to mean a form of controlled neutrality. In return, however, Finland became a preferred supplier of the USSR. With the advent of glasnost in 1985, the USSR became more open towards Finland and the country joined the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1986 and the Council of Europe in 1989, before applying to join the EU. However, it did not renounce its neutral status.

Finland's borders were fixed in the 17th century with Norway and in the 19th century with Sweden. However, the border with Russia and then the USSR was subject to change. That was particularly the case with Karelia, which belonged first to Finland and then to Russia. When the Paris Treaty was signed in 1947, a large part of Karelia was returned to the Soviet Union. Finland lost about 10% of its pre-war territory. After World War II, Finland was the only country in western Europe to share a border with the USSR and that gave rise to a special relationship. The fall of the Iron Curtain initially weakened the Finnish economy, which was highly dependent on its large neighbour. Finland also has a border in the north with Norway, which is an external EU border. The border with Sweden became an internal border when the two countries joined the EU. Much of the population in the western part of the country, close to the Gulf of Bothnia, where there is a large Swedish minority, is bilingual. To the south, the Gulf of Finland forms the dividing line between Finland and the Baltic States.

Successful cooperation between Finland and Russia has been established under the Tacis programme and, later, the neighbourhood policy. Alongside the programmes with Sweden and Norway, there are three cross-border programmes (ENPI-CBC) which cover that border from north to south: Kolarctic/Russia, Karelia/Russia, Southeast Finland/Russia, plus an Interreg B Baltic Sea programme.

In addition to cooperation arrangements with Sweden which predate EU accession, original cooperation structures have been established with Russia. The first was the cooperation established in the region of Pasvik-Inari between Russia, Norway and Finland following a meeting between the three countries' national authorities in 1991 to discuss environmental protection and management problems. Nature reserves were created in each country. The municipalities have been involved in this cooperation since 1999. New projects have been developed within the framework of the neighbourhood programme since 2006.

In 1992, a partnership was set up between Imatra in Finland and Svetogorsk in Russia, which are only five kilometres apart. However, it was only after 1995 that cooperation really started to develop, with projects being financed first under Tacis on the Russian side and the ERDF on the Finnish side and then under the neighbourhood policy, in sectors such as waste-water treatment, education, tourism, etc. A cross-border strategy has been proposed by the two towns.

The second cooperation project, the Helsinki-Tallinn Euregio, is a highly original project set up in 1999 between the two national capitals, which lie just 65 km apart across the Gulf of Finland. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, the two cities have been linked by ferry services that make the crossing in ninety minutes several times a day. All kinds of exchange have increased considerably, even though the economic balance is still tipped in Finland's favour. These two towns are the only real metropolises in their respective countries, each being home to their main international activities, although this is more marked in Estonia than in Finland. By contrast, Helsinki appears to be much more powerful than Tallinn in the system of European cities. The creation of a cross-border association with a joint administration council between the two capital regions is the outcome of the constant increase in movement between them, which requires real coordination between the stakeholders. The NUTS 3 regions link the province of Uusimaa and the city of Helsinki in Finland and the county of Harju and the city of Tallinn in Estonia. Transport scenarios between the two regions have also been



The 'On the Border' project: developing a new joint town centre for the towns of Haparanda (Sweden) and Tornio (Finland)

prepared. Cooperation has gradually become more complex and new objectives have been set to create complementarities, with a view to generating economies of scale, and to increase innovation, in order to foster joint growth and promote the regions together. Cooperation between the regions has also encouraged initiatives by other public bodies (universities and economic promotion agencies) and private enterprises (transport, energy, IT, distribution and other companies). The cooperation established is similar, although on a different scale, to that established between Copenhagen and Malmö across the Øresund.

The Karelia Euroregion links three Finnish regions and the Republic of Karelia in Russia. Karelia is an historic region, which has given rise to a shared culture on either side of the border. Cooperation mainly concerns environmental issues and cultural aspects. Finally the Bothnian Arc, created in 2002, links local authorities along the Gulf of Bothnia in Sweden and Finland.

All in all, territorial cooperation is relatively well developed in the Scandinavian countries, both among themselves and with non-EU countries. Cooperation between Finland and Russia has been

strengthened by neighbourhood cross-border programmes and by the special relationship that Finland had with the USSR during the Cold War. The projects developed in urban areas bear witness to close cooperation. Two cross-border metropolitan regions are emerging, which is all the more remarkable given that their two main centres are separated by seaways. In the case of Copenhagen-Malmö, the completion of a fixed link has kickstarted cross-border integration.

Cross-border territories on the borders of Denmark, Sweden and Finland

Local scale

- Urban type territory
- Rural type territory
- Cross-border operational equipment
- Planned cross-border equipment

Regional scale

- Metropolitan type territory
- Non-metropolitan type territory

Supraregional scale

- Metropolitan type territory
- Non-metropolitan type territory



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2.5 Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

The three Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) are not grouped together here simply because they all border the Baltic Sea. Indeed, the term is not applied to other countries on the Baltic. Nor is it because they all lie on the periphery of Europe. Finland is close to them geographically and could be included in the same category. They are grouped together by reason of their particular geopolitical situation, which is the outcome of what can only be described as a troubled history. All three countries are former Soviet republics and, as such, they have a special relationship with Russia within the EU. The fall of the Iron Curtain gave the populations of these territories new prospects by enabling them to regain the independence which they had acquired between 1920 and 1940. European integration is seen as a guarantee of the autonomy gained in the early 1990s during the geopolitical upheavals that rocked Europe. The issue of their borders is coloured by their recent statehood, the fact that they formed part of the Soviet Union for 45 years, and the fall of the Iron Curtain which had separated them from the West. The fact that they neighbour Russia is the main common feature of these countries, although they each have their own individual features.

All three Baltic States proclaimed independence in 1989, for the second time in their history. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, signed in March 1918, put an end to hostilities between the German Empire and Russia on the eastern front during World War I and upheld German claims to the territories to the east of the Baltic Sea, which had been under Russian control since the 18th century. However, the provisional Russian government which emerged from the 1917 revolution recognised the autonomy of these provinces shortly after it came to power. The independence hard won in 1920 following skirmishes with the Soviet army was called into question in 1940 as a result of the Nazi-Soviet Pact signed on 23 August 1939, which laid down a dividing line between German and Soviet spheres of influence. The Baltic States were occupied by the Soviet army in 1940, before being invaded a year later by Nazi Germany. The USSR reconquered these territories in 1944 and they each became Soviet republics, with slight changes to their borders. The policies of restructuring (*perestroika*) and transparency (*glasnost*) adopted by Mikhail Gorbachev in the

USSR in 1986 gave rise to a resurgence of nationalist movements in the Baltic States. On 23 August 1989, a human chain 600 km long was formed linking Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, Riga, the capital of Latvia and Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. This demonstration was organised in protest against the Nazi-Soviet pact signed 50 years earlier and was based on the idea that the presence of the USSR was not legitimate. It also highlighted the solidarity between the three nations in their common demands against the Soviet Government. The republics proclaimed their independence in 1989, but only really gained independence in 1991 after a period of troubles. The independence of the Baltic States has twice been linked to changes in the political system in a powerful neighbour: Russia post-1917 and the USSR post-1989.

Their membership of the USSR has left its mark. First, they have inherited large Russian minorities, which vary in size from one country to another. Second, relations with Russia are coloured by energy issues, as some resources were being exported to western Europe (and, to a degree, still are) by the Baltic republics, which in turn depend on Russia for their energy consumption.

The three Baltic republics are small Member States within the EU. Together they barely account for just over 1 % of the EU's population and they have been marked by a rapid decline in their populations since independence, due to low birth rates and negative net migration. Finally, like Finland and Sweden, they are sparsely populated. These three countries are aware of their degree of vulnerability.

Once they had acquired independence, all three states started to look towards western Europe. They refused to join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), an association of 11 former Soviet republics under the aegis of Russia. Instead, they applied to join the EU, to which they acceded together with several other Central and Eastern European countries in 2004, the same year in which they joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). It is somewhat paradoxical that these countries, which had barely regained their independence, were prepared to join a regional entity to which they transferred some

of their powers. All three countries joined the Schengen area in 2007 and by 2015 they had all joined the euro area, albeit on different dates. As countries on the Baltic Sea, they are also all members of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, set up at the initiative of Germany and Denmark in 1992. European integration appears to be the best way of preserving their independence and of maintaining peaceful relations with their powerful neighbour, given that border demarcation has been the subject of tense negotiations with Russia. The territorial limits of all three countries have undergone radical changes in terms of their function rather than their alignment. These changes took three different forms.

First, the administrative borders of each individual country have become national borders. This applies to the bilateral borders between the three states. These are unproblematic dividing lines which became internal EU borders when the Baltic States joined the EU. The borders with Russia in particular and with Belarus are more of an issue. They not only became international borders but also external borders of the EU and then of the Schengen area, thereby hampering cross-border movement, especially by inhabitants of the border zones. Finally, a number of international borders became internal borders (with Poland, Sweden and Finland). The borders with Sweden and Finland have changed radically; they are maritime borders that previously formed part of the Iron Curtain and now, instead of being sealed, they are borders of peace.

The different forms of cross-border cooperation for these three types of borders are examined below. We believe that the territorial cooperation policy is a means of harmonising cross-border cooperation in spite of different histories. Each state is now examined in turn.

Estonia

Of the three Baltic States, Estonia is the most sparsely populated (with approximately 1.3 million inhabitants) and proportionally has the largest Russian minority (over 25%). In terms of population density, there is a marked gradient from the coast to the hinterland, and



The Estonian-Latvian and Latvian-Estonian Dictionary project: developing a new dictionary and distributing it as widely as possible

the urban network is dominated by a single city. The capital, Tallinn, accounts for around one third of the country's population. Estonia is the northernmost of the three countries and is separated from Finland by the Gulf of Finland, which is approximately 120 km wide. The identity debate is slightly more marked here than in the other two Baltic States. The people speak Estonian, a Finno-Ugric language related to Finnish, which sets them apart from their neighbours to the south, who speak Balto-Slavic languages, and brings them closer to Finland.

The independence of Estonia was recognised by the USSR in the Tartu Peace Treaty signed in 1920. New independence was

proclaimed in 1989 and accepted by Russia in 1991. A border treaty was signed between the two countries in 1996, following a period of dispute. The borders of modern Estonia are not identical to its 1920 borders. The borders established in 1945 incorporated two new districts to the east of the 1920 border as well as Lake Peipus. A new agreement was due to be signed in 2005, but Russia went back on its word a few months later. Lands were exchanged and the border across Lake Peipus and the maritime border with Russia were defined more precisely when negotiations resumed in 2012. One of the objectives of that agreement was also to facilitate cross-border movements. On land, 70 % of the 460 km border between Estonia and Russia follows natural features — Lake Peipus in the centre and the River Narva in the north. Only the southern part is entirely a land border. There are just three border posts; the main post is in the north, between Narva and Ivangorod, which together form a single cross-border agglomeration on a line between Saint Petersburg and Tallinn. The borderline along the River Narva laid down in 1945 split a contiguous urban area into two parts, one on each side of the border between two republics. That was not a problem under the USSR, but it became one when Estonia gained independence and the international border was activated. The other land border, with Latvia, does not cause any major problems, although the small number of crossing points is a legacy of the Soviet period, when few road networks were built.

The entire territory of Estonia is covered by three cross-border programmes. To the west, the Central Baltic programme unites the whole of Estonia with NUTS 3 regions in Latvia, eastern Sweden (including Stockholm) and southern Finland (including Helsinki) and establishes cooperation across the Baltic Sea. The Estonia-Latvia programme covers the NUTS 3 regions of southern Estonia and northern Latvia on either side of the land border. These two Interreg programmes are complemented by the EstLatRus programme, which covers NUTS 3 regions in eastern Estonia and Latvia and the neighbouring Russian oblasts of Pskov and Leningrad. The capital regions of the two Baltic countries are included as adjacent territories. Cross-border cooperation commenced on Estonia's accession to the EU.

The first cross-border cooperation body was set up by local authorities in 1994. The Peipus Centre for Cross-Border Cooperation is a non-governmental organisation whose mission is to propose management solutions for Lake Peipus and the River Narva basin, both of which straddle the border. The organisation gradually developed into a cross-border resources and sustainable development analysis centre specialising in the external borders. It is based in Tartu, the second largest city in Estonia, about 15 km from Lake Peipus. A similar body (the Chudskoe Project) exists in the Russian town of Pskov.

One of the salient features of Estonian cross-border cooperation is that it concerns urban spaces separated or crossed by a border. Cooperation between the two neighbouring towns of Valga and Valka on the border between Estonia and Latvia dates back to 1995, and a joint secretariat set up in 2003 established interregional cooperation with the region of Alsace. This cooperation arrangement is very local and covers two very small towns, with 13 000 and 6 000 inhabitants. A binational institute was established in 1999 and the two towns have developed a joint cross-border agglomeration project. Accession to the EU meant that cooperation between the two countries could be stepped up, and the cooperation between the two towns is particularly symbolic of that. Celebrations to mark the inclusion of the two countries in the Schengen area were held in that agglomeration in December 2007.

The second cooperation project was initiated in 1999 between the two national capitals of Helsinki and Tallinn, which lie just 65 km apart across the Gulf of Finland. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, the two cities have been linked by ferry services that make the crossing in ninety minutes several times a day. All kinds of exchange have increased considerably, even though the economic balance is still tipped in Finland's favour. These two towns are the only real metropolises in their respective countries, each being home to their main international activities, although this is more marked in Estonia than in Finland. By contrast, Helsinki appears to be much more powerful than Tallinn in the system of European cities. The creation of

a cross-border association with a joint administration council between the two capital regions is linked to the constant increase in exchanges, which requires real coordination. The NUTS 3 regions link the province of Uusimaa and the city of Helsinki in Finland and the county of Harju and the city of Tallinn in Estonia. Transport scenarios between the two regions have also been prepared. Cooperation has gradually become more complex and new objectives have been set to create complementarities, with a view to generating economies of scale, and to increase innovation, in order to foster joint growth and promote the regions together. Cooperation between the regions has also encouraged initiatives by other public bodies (universities and economic promotion agencies) and private enterprises (transport, energy, IT, distribution and other companies). The cooperation established is similar, although on a different scale, to that established between Copenhagen and Malmö across the Øresund.

The third cooperation project between urban authorities was established on the Russian-Estonian border between Narva and Ivangorod in 2006. It comes under the Interreg IIIC City Twins Cooperation Network project, which brings together five cross-border agglomerations in eastern and northern Europe. A cross-border commission was set up between the two urban municipalities and prepared a joint development strategy for economic issues, infrastructure and cooperation between public authorities.

Finally, a cooperation project at regional level is the Pskov-Livonia Euregio, which covers three Estonian counties, four Latvian districts, and five districts and the town of Pskov (population approx. 200 000) in Russia. The initiative for that arrangement was tabled at the 'Cross-border Cooperation in Baltic Sea Region' conference organised by the Council of Baltic Sea States in Karlskrona (Sweden) in 1996. The main objectives were to improve the highway between Riga and Saint Petersburg and increase trade and, secondarily, to establish links in culture, tourism, etc. Cooperation is managed by an association which issued a document with its proposed vision up to the year 2010. The main projects are in culture, youth matters and tourism.

All in all, Estonia has fairly informal cooperation structures, most of which seek to manage hydrographic basins and cross-border urban areas and improve transport infrastructure. Although the entire country is eligible for cross-border programmes (under Interreg or the neighbourhood policy), not all its frontiers are covered by cooperation projects, especially the western part of the border with Latvia. However, there is an important metropolitan-type cooperation structure across the Gulf of Finland between the capitals of Estonia and Finland.

Latvia

Latvia lies between Estonia and Lithuania on more than one count. That obviously applies to the population; however, it also applies to the way the nation developed: whereas Estonia and Lithuania grew up around a central nucleus, Latvia emerged from an association of several territories which had been under Swedish and then Russian domination (the Duchy of Courland, part of Livonia, and Latgale). As in Estonia, there is a marked gradient in population density between the coast and the hinterland. Much of the population is concentrated in the capital, which is the largest agglomeration in the Baltic States. The country is less compact than Estonia, mainly due to the size of the Gulf of Riga. Latvia also has a large Russian minority (just under 25%). Political tensions have long persisted regarding the citizenship, civil and educational rights of the Russian-speaking population.

The USSR first recognised the independence of Latvia under the Treaty of Riga, signed in August 1920. As with the other two Baltic States, Russia accepted its new independence in 1991, although the border between the two countries has been contested. Russia in fact reduced the size of Latvia when it became a Soviet republic, compared to the territory it had held when it first gained independence. Negotiations between the two countries failed to progress on this count until Latvia agreed not to challenge the borderline established in the Soviet period. The treaty establishing the borders was finally signed in 2007. Latvia also has a border with Belarus, another former Soviet republic that has gained independence. An agreement

signed in 2012 allows Belarusians living in border villages who have a special permit to cross the border without a Schengen visa. A similar arrangement has been put in place for Russians living in the border zone. Finally, Latvia shares a border with Lithuania. At 450 km in length it is the country's longest border. It follows the line demarcated during the Soviet period and negotiated in the 1920s. Most of these borders cross vast, sparsely-populated areas. The only exception is the cross-border agglomeration of Valga/Valka on the border with Estonia.

The whole of Latvia is covered by five cross-border programmes, including three with Estonia: the Central Baltic and Estonia-Latvia Interreg programmes, and the EstLatRus programme, which comes under the neighbourhood policy. The neighbourhood policy also includes the Latvia-Lithuania-Belarus programme linking the eastern region of Latvia, Latgale, with the regions of southern and eastern Lithuania (including the capital Vilnius) and the two oblasts of northern Belarus, plus a further two oblasts which qualify as adjacent territories (including Minsk). Finally, there is a specific Interreg programme for Latvia-Lithuania (LatLit) linking the NUTS 3 regions of southern Latvia with the regions of northern Lithuania.

Five cooperation bodies have been established for Latvia's borders. Chronologically, the first initiative concerns the cross-border agglomeration of Valka/Valga described previously. Four euroregions were then established over a very short space of time between 1996 and 2000. The first was the Pskov-Livonia Euregio with Russia and Estonia. That was followed in 1998 by the Country of Lakes Euroregion in Belarus, Lithuania and Latvia, linking local authorities in the three countries. That cooperation was launched on the back of an agreement signed by Belarus and Latvia in 1998 to promote cross-border cooperation. The first conference of the parties tabled the possibility of establishing cooperation with Lithuania and the local authorities then set up a council with a secretariat in each country. The projects implemented include the establishment of a joint information centre based in Krāslava, a Latvian town close to the border with Belarus, and measures to promote economic

growth, exploit their common cultural heritage and safeguard prospects for sustainable development.

A third euroregion was established in 1999. It was named Saule, which means 'sun' in Lithuanian. It was original in scope in that it linked NUTS 3 regions in southern Latvia, two districts in Lithuania and Lithuanian local authorities with local authorities in the oblast of Kaliningrad, a Russian exclave granted special privileges due to its status. The regions linked are each a long way from the main development centres in their respective countries. The main objective of this cooperation arrangement is to overcome historical conflicts and improve living standards for the people by boosting economic growth. Finally the Bartuva Euroregion was established in 2000 by Latvian and Lithuanian municipalities along the Baltic coast in order to respond to environmental challenges. This appears to be the least active of all the cooperation projects.

Latvia's borders are mostly covered by euroregions engaged in very differing degrees of cooperation. Cooperation between the towns of Valka and Valga is the most original of all these arrangements. Finally, unlike Tallinn, Riga has not entered into cooperation with any other towns on the Baltic Sea. Although there is a ferry service to Stockholm, it only runs three times a week and the crossing takes 18 hours.

Lithuania

With just under three million inhabitants, Lithuania is the most populated of the three Baltic States. It is also largest of the three and the one with proportionally the smallest Russian minority (less than 10%). However, it does have other Slav minorities (Poles, Belarusians and Ukrainians). Also, the contrast in population density between the coast and the hinterland is not particularly marked as the main towns, including the capital Vilnius, are located in the southern part of the country. Lithuania derives its legitimacy as a nation state from the history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which existed from the 13th to the 18th century. Although as a state it is older

than its two neighbours, the way in which its territory evolved during the 20th century was more complex.

Lithuania's independence was finally recognised by the USSR under the Moscow Peace Treaty signed in 1920, after two years of conflict. However, further changes to the territory of the new republic were yet to come. The capital, Vilnius, was ultimately ceded to Poland; in return, the German town of Memel finally became Lithuanian in 1924 under the name Klaipėda, while the new capital was established in Kaunas. Thus Lithuania won its independence but lost some of its major historical sites. The changes to Lithuania's borders in the wake of World War II were associated with Poland's shift westwards, when Vilnius was regained and once more became the capital of the republic. At that time, the oblast of Kaliningrad was ceded to the Russian Soviet Republic, due to the strategic importance of the military base in Kaliningrad, a sheltered port which does not ice over in winter, unlike other Soviet ports on the Baltic Sea. Moreover, as the USSR's outpost towards western Europe, the territory is directly controlled by the central government. Since independence in 1991, Lithuania has shared a border with Russia, which is an external EU border, via the exclave of Kaliningrad. Enlargement towards central and eastern Europe in 2004 and the establishment of the Schengen area resulted in intense negotiations between the EU and Russia, with the EU wanting to secure its borders and Russia wanting to maintain free movement between Kaliningrad and the rest of Russia. A transit document was introduced in 2002 allowing inhabitants of Kaliningrad to cross Lithuania by train to the CIS without needing to obtain a visa. Cross-border cooperation is seen as a means of resolving certain problems amicably. There is a second external border in the east of the country with Belarus, which has been strictly controlled since 2004. Lithuania also has two internal land borders, one with Latvia to the north and one with Poland along a straight line roughly 100 km in length. Finally, its seaboard faces Sweden and Denmark.

The entire territory of Lithuania is covered by five cross-border programmes. Three are implemented on internal borders, namely the LatLit and Central Baltic programmes already mentioned, and the Lithuania-Poland Interreg programme, which has enabled energy

cooperation to be increased and infrastructure between the two countries to be improved. Two are implemented on the external borders and form part of the neighbourhood policy, namely Lithuania-Poland-Kaliningrad, which addresses the challenges of cross-border cooperation between Kaliningrad and its neighbours Poland and Lithuania; and Latvia-Lithuania-Belarus.

Several euroregions were established around Lithuania's borders in the second half of the 1990s and at the start of the millennium. The Niemen Euroregion was set up in 1997 between a Polish voivodeship and several municipalities, a Belarusian oblast and three districts in southern Lithuania, together with Russian local authorities in the oblast of Kaliningrad. The objective of the cooperation is to improve the living standards of the population and boost economic growth. As a result, the fields of cooperation vary enormously. The Sesupe Euroregion was established in 2003, after the Country of Lakes, Saule and Bartuva Euroregions described above. Although it only covers a small area, it links local authorities in four states, namely Russia, Poland, Lithuania and Sweden. It encompasses the local authorities in the River Šešupė basin together with their international partners in the aim of bringing about improvements in the economic, educational, cultural and environmental sectors. This cooperation arrangement has a broad cultural section designed to highlight the heritage and encourage people to learn the language of their neighbours. All these euroregions have the status of associations.

Finally, the Baltic Euroregion should be mentioned, as it was the first cross-border cooperation area to link Russia with other European partners. This euroregion involves local and regional authorities in six countries, of which only Denmark and Sweden were EU members when it was created. This transregional platform is designed to improve the living standards of the inhabitants and prevent border disputes and as an instrument for reconciliation and the settlement of animosities. With its headquarters at Elbląg in Poland, this body has implemented numerous projects in various fields, such as planning, infrastructure, tourism, neighbourhood language-learning and improved border crossings.

Conclusion

Overall, the border zones of the Baltic States are covered by numerous cooperation structures, even though they do not cover all the borders. Cooperation mainly takes the form of euroregions, most of which were created prior to the countries' accession to the EU. Most of these bodies have the status of associations. Aside from the euroregions, which vary enormously in size, cooperation at the scale of cross-border agglomerations or cross-border urban regions deserves special attention. The most original and promising of these is the cooperation arrangement between the two capital regions of Tallinn, in Estonia, and Helsinki, in Finland. Moreover, the cooperation between Russia and Estonia around Lake Peipus and the River Narva basin acts as a reminder that natural geographical spaces can sometimes be seen as a common challenge. The map of cooperation structures in the Baltic States illustrates that no distinction is made between internal and external borders, suggesting there is convergence between Interreg and neighbourhood policy programmes. However, this finding needs to be qualified and investigated further through a detailed analysis of the projects and their geographical implications and of the investments made by stakeholders.

■ Cross-border territories on the borders of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Local scale

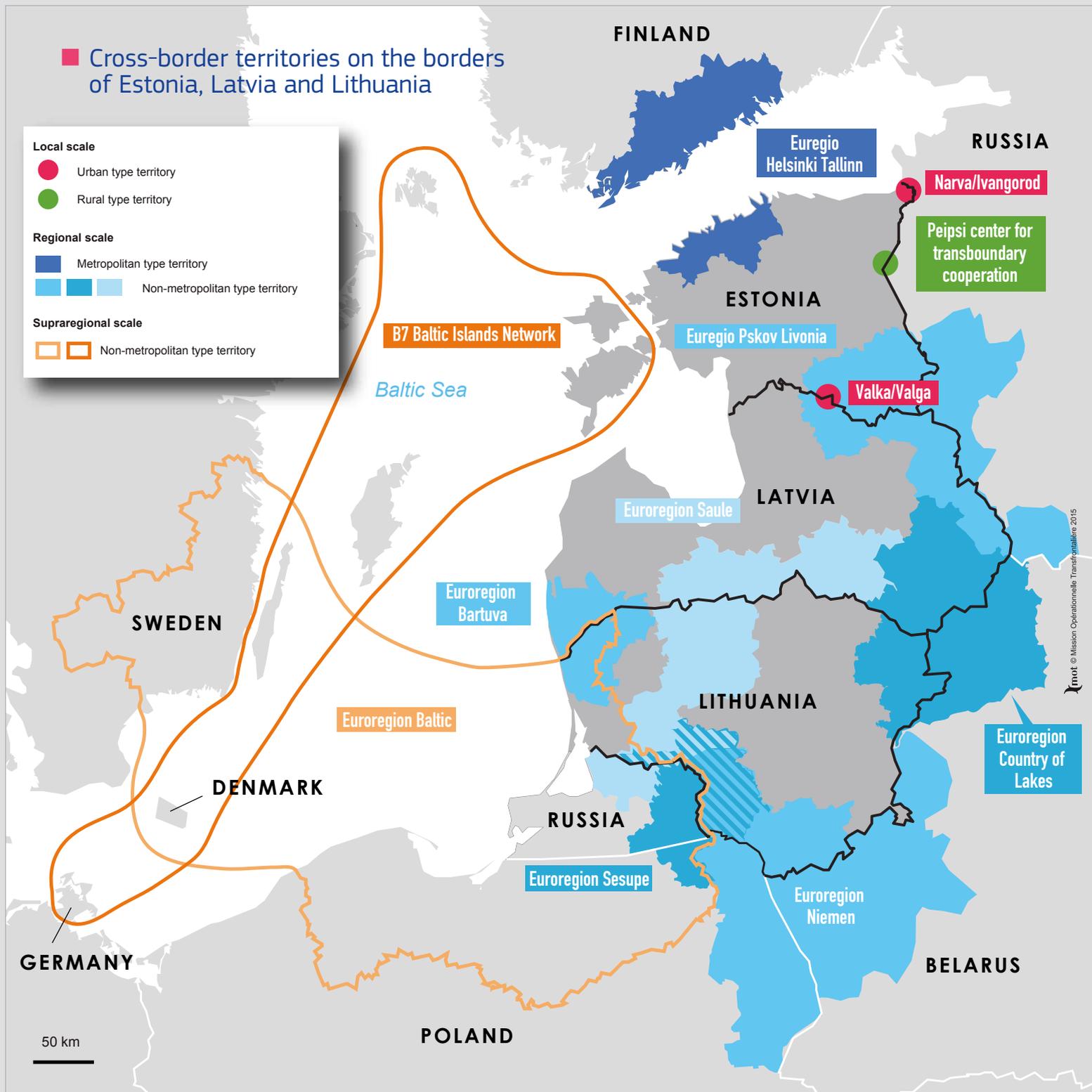
- Urban type territory
- Rural type territory

Regional scale

- Metropolitan type territory
- Non-metropolitan type territory

Supraregional scale

- Non-metropolitan type territory



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2.6 United Kingdom and Ireland

Aside from the fact that they are both islands, what sets the United Kingdom and Ireland apart is that they both joined the EEC in 1973 and are therefore among the oldest Member States. Although Ireland appears to be on the fringes of the European Union, the United Kingdom does not; its capital is one of the most populous cities in Europe and is the leading financial centre in the world. The two countries have important relations with other EU Member States. Their accession in 1973 resulted in the establishment of the ERDF in 1975. In fact, Ireland was still fundamentally a rural country at that time, with low living standards compared to the countries of continental Europe. In the United Kingdom, several industrial areas (including the Midlands, Yorkshire and Wales) were undergoing serious crises. That led to the first two objectives of regional policy being laid down: to provide help to regions lagging behind and to provide retraining in crisis areas. Despite the intensity of their relations with other European countries and the existence of the Channel Tunnel since 1993, Ireland and the United Kingdom are separated from their neighbours by maritime borders. The Irish Sea separates these two countries from each other and the English Channel and North Sea separate the United Kingdom from continental Europe. These physical barriers mean that large distances have to be crossed and costly infrastructure (ports, bridges, tunnels, etc.) is needed to do so. They can also have a psychological effect and exacerbate the impression of isolation or detachment. We suggest that these physical discontinuities act as serious obstacles to territorial cooperation.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is the joint second most highly populated country in the EU. With 64.3 million inhabitants, its population is equivalent to that of France. Like France, the state has been a long time in the making, starting in the 13th century with the consolidation of royal government. The United Kingdom has been and, in some respects, still is a major global power. That is reflected in the Commonwealth, created in 1931, which is formed of a large number of countries which have sworn allegiance to the British crown. The

members of the Commonwealth share a common history and bonds of friendship, which the UK's membership of the EU has not entirely disrupted. Apart from being an island, the United Kingdom has three other important characteristics. First, the United Kingdom still owns overseas territories, mostly in the Atlantic Ocean (Saint Helena, Falkland Islands) and the Caribbean (Bermuda, Cayman Islands), but also in the Pacific (Pitcairn Islands) and the Indian Ocean (Chagos Archipelago). That list can be extended to include the enclave of Gibraltar in southern Spain, which has been an overseas territory since the Treaty of Utrecht was signed in 1713. Second, a number of territories are associated with the United Kingdom but have special status: the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are crown dependencies and therefore have considerable political autonomy. Third, the 1707 Act of Union created a United Kingdom of four nations, namely England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The introduction of devolution in 1997 has enabled Scotland and Wales to increase their autonomy.

Northern Ireland has its own specific characteristics, which are described below. Although densely populated (260 inhabitants per km²), population densities vary considerably across the country. Scotland, in the northern part of the United Kingdom, accounts for a third of the area but only 8% of the total population. The borders of the United Kingdom are all maritime borders, with the exception of the land border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The distances between the British coast and the French, Belgian or Irish coasts is rarely more than 100 km (in fact, across the English Channel between Dover and Calais it is less than 40 km).

The United Kingdom is involved in four Interreg B transnational cooperation programmes: the North-West Europe Programme, involving eight European countries including Switzerland and Ireland, the aim of which is to strengthen economic growth, enhance innovation and disseminate knowledge; the Atlantic Area Programme, which links regions in France, counties in Ireland and the United Kingdom, the regions of Portugal and certain Spanish regions; the North Sea Region Programme, which links six countries in addition to the United



The PEACE programme aims to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland

Kingdom ⁽¹⁾; and the Northern Periphery Programme, which also includes Ireland and four Scandinavian countries ⁽²⁾. The United Kingdom is also included in four Interreg A cross-border programmes, two with continental partners to the east and two with Ireland to the west. The France (Channel)-England Programme links regions in the south of the United Kingdom and north-western France. The Interreg A Two Seas Programme links the same English counties with the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region in France and some Belgian and Dutch provinces. Both programmes focus on economic growth through research and innovation, the development of a sustainable, low-carbon economy, and environmental issues. There is also a specific programme in place linking the counties in eastern Ireland with the coastal counties in Wales, which likewise covers the major issues described above, namely economic development, accessibility and environmental protection. Two programmes relate specifically to Scotland and Northern Ireland. They are the Programme for Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland, and the Ireland-United Kingdom (Wales) Programme. The two objectives of economic growth through innovation and environmental protection are included, as in the two programmes described above. However, the first programme also focuses on transport and social issues.

1 Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

2 Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

The United Kingdom is also involved in the think tank for the North Sea Basin, which it is hoped will produce a development strategy which exploits the potential of sea areas while protecting them against environmental pressures. In contrast, the United Kingdom has few cross-border cooperation bodies although, as with Denmark, the fixed link between the United Kingdom and France has brought about stronger relations and increased exchanges between the countries. The Cross-Channel Euroregion was set up in 1987 under a memorandum of understanding, originally between the French region of Nord-Pas-de-Calais and the English county of Kent. They were joined by the three Belgian regions in 1991, namely Wallonia, Flanders and the Brussels Region. This was one of the first cross-border cooperation bodies to be set up with the legal status of a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG). Although economic development was one of its main objectives, it also gave rise to cultural projects and socio-economic studies. However, the EEIG was dissolved in 2004 as not all the partners were equally involved in the structure.

Two cooperation projects have been set on a formal footing: first, the Channel Arc was set up in 2003, linking British counties and French regions across the English Channel, in order to formulate a maritime area strategy within the framework of EU maritime policy predicated on improving accessibility, developing competitiveness centres, identifying resources and putting governance in place to ensure



The O40 Project formed part of the EU Northern Periphery project: an alternative approach to supporting older people

sustainable resource management. However, not all coastal counties are involved in this cooperation, which was set up in the form of the Channel Arc Manche Assembly in 2005. Cornwall, Dorset and East Sussex do not participate.

Second, the NOSTRA (Network Of STRAits) project launched by the County of Kent and the Department of Pas-de-Calais in 2010 is designed to network the local authorities bordering several straits in Europe. Fifteen local authorities bordering eight straits have set up a partnership with the aim of getting European and national institutions to recognise the specific nature of these geographical areas. This network of local authorities also works to promote cooperation based on shared experiences in fields such as economic development, transport networks and resource conservation.

Ireland

The histories of Ireland and of the United Kingdom are closely intertwined and relations between them still bear the marks of a troubled past. This island was invaded several times during the Middle Ages. The English crown first established itself there in the 12th century

but it was only in the 16th century, during the Tudor reign, that the territory was annexed and colonised. Numerous Protestants moved to the island with the aim of keeping its Catholic population, which was always ready to fight, under control. The great famine of 1845 to 1849 decimated the population and resulted in large-scale emigration. The island lost approximately 40% of its population in the space of a few years. The western, more rural, areas were permanently affected by this demographic disaster. The island is resolutely nationalist and this has resulted in political demands. A home rule bill was tabled in the British parliament in 1914, but the act was suspended at the outbreak of World War I. Independence was achieved in 1921 after a two-year war of independence. However, the peace treaty partitioned the island, with six counties in the north-east, whose population was predominantly Protestant, opting to remain within the United Kingdom. At that point Northern Ireland had its own government, although some foreign affairs were overseen by the British government. The rest of the island became an independent dominion attached to the British crown. It was only after World War II that Ireland became a republic. In the 1960s the power held by the Unionists in Northern Ireland, who wished to remain within the United Kingdom, was contested by the nationalists, who wanted to unite with Ireland, and the troubles that started in 1969 developed into a real civil war between the communities. The political and social divide was underscored by sectarian and religious differences. The clashes were led by paramilitary groups, including the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The outline of a political solution started to emerge in the 1990s and a first ceasefire was signed in 1994. A second agreement signed at Stormont Castle in 1998 stipulated that the status of Northern Ireland could only be changed if the majority of the population was in favour, which opened up the prospect of possible reunification, and granted Northern Ireland a degree of home rule. The agreement, which was put to a referendum in May of that year, was endorsed by the majority of voters. However, it was nine years before the peace process became final and the armed groups laid down their weapons. The atmosphere has calmed down since 2008, although tensions persist and there are still 'peace lines' separating nationalist and unionist

districts of Belfast. These tensions have impacted on the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland. The border has never been closed but, with its heavy military presence, it bears all the hallmarks of a defensive border. As a result, the border zone of Ireland is classed as a peripheral region in which there has been little investment (especially in transport).

Although located on the western periphery of Europe, Ireland and its 4.6 million inhabitants are well integrated into the EU. Ireland is one of the oldest Member States and is a member of the euro area. It was one of the main beneficiaries of regional policy funds between the 1970s and the 1990s, before its GDP increased dramatically. The country's population density is only a quarter of that of the United Kingdom and the population is unevenly distributed across the country. The most densely populated regions, which are also the most demographically dynamic, lie in the east and south, closest to and with the best links to the United Kingdom and continental Europe. The western part of Ireland, other than the regions of Limerick and Galway, is very remote country.

Ireland is involved in three of the cross-border cooperation programmes described in the section on the United Kingdom, namely the North-West Europe Programme, the Atlantic Area Programme and the Northern Periphery Programme. Aside from the two cross-border programmes already mentioned — Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland and Ireland-United Kingdom (Wales) — there is a third programme entitled Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region (PEACE). The objective of this four-year programme, launched in 1995, was to promote political stability with a view to boosting economic and social development and to bring about reconciliation between communities in Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland. The programme was extended to 2006 under the name PEACE II and was renewed for the period 2007-2013 as PEACE III and for 2014-2020 as PEACE IV. The programme focuses on education and training and the pooling of services. Generally speaking, the border zones of Ireland are sparsely

populated and poorly served. Numerous initiatives have been launched in order to foster reconciliation and support new services based on a common vision. The programme is managed by the Special EU Programme Body (SEUPB). A cross-border study centre has been created in Armagh, in Northern Ireland, and in Dublin. Its remit is to research the cross-border areas and propose training programmes for target groups (detainees, displaced persons and victims of violence), who are expected to formulate projects with a view to fostering reconciliation.



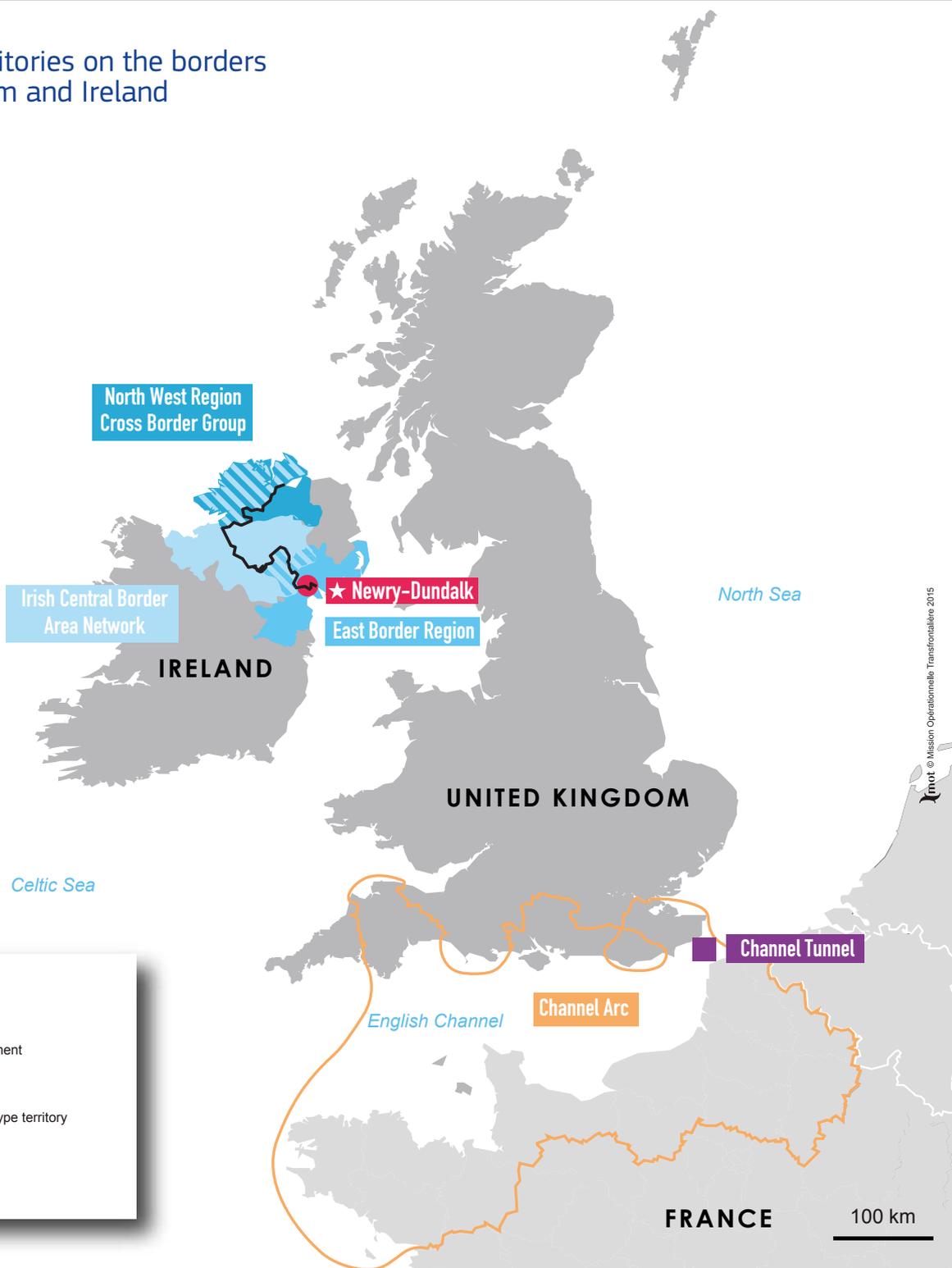
Aerial view of the Eurotunnel at Folkestone (United Kingdom)

Three cross-border regions have been established. The first, the East Border Region (EBR), was initiated in 1976 during a meeting of representatives of the counties held to discuss a new bridge over the River Newry. This organisation links ten counties and towns in the north of Ireland and the south of Northern Ireland. The aim of this cooperation network is to boost growth in agriculture, industry and trade. Cooperation has been stepped up since the 1970s and the authorities are currently formulating joint cross-border strategy documents. As part of that effort, the towns of Newry and Dundalk, which lie about 20 km apart on the road between Belfast and Dublin, started considering joint projects back in the 1970s. Strategic proposals on transport, training, pooled services and the environment have been tabled since 2006 within the framework of a regional twinning project.

Two other cooperation frameworks exist on the border: the North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCBG) in the region of Derry (Londonderry), which linked five counties in 1975, and the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN), set up in 1995, which links the counties to the west of the first region. These three cross-border regions are members of the AEER.

Despite the tense situation between the communities, cooperation initiatives started to emerge in the 1970s at local and regional level. The PEACE programme is not strictly speaking a cross-border programme, but it helps to calm tensions between the communities. All in all, the territorial cooperation policy of the United Kingdom and Ireland seems to apply more at transnational than at cross-border level. In the final analysis, it is on the joint land border that cross-border cooperation seems to have the most promising prospects.

■ Cross-border territories on the borders of United Kingdom and Ireland



Local scale

- Urban type territory
- Cross-border operational equipment

Regional scale

- Non-metropolitan type territory

Supraregional scale

- Non-metropolitan type territory

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2.7 Austria and Hungary

Austria and Hungary are two countries of Central and Eastern Europe which joined the EU in 1995 and 2004 respectively. Thus Austria formed part of the first wave of enlargement following the fall of the Berlin Wall (together with Sweden and Finland) and Hungary formed part of the second (together with most of the other eastern European countries). Austria has important natural borders. The Alps account for two-thirds of its surface area of 83 855 km² and it is crossed by the River Danube. It shares numerous borders with European neighbours: Germany (784 km) and the Czech Republic (362 km) to the north; Switzerland (164 km) and Liechtenstein (35 km) to the west; Slovenia (330 km) and Italy (430 km) to the south; and Slovakia (91 km) and Hungary (366 km) to the east. The border between Austria and Hungary acquired particular importance at the end of the Cold War as that was route via which inhabitants of the German Democratic Republic fled their country. It was therefore the first 'filter border' along the Iron Curtain. Hungary covers an area of 93 030 km². This landlocked country is also crossed by the Danube, as well as by the River Tisza. It shares borders not only with Austria to the west, but with Serbia (151 km), Croatia (329 km) and Slovenia (102 km) to the south-west, Romania (448 km) to the south-east, Ukraine (103 km) to the north-east and Slovakia (677 km) to the north.

The histories of Austria and Hungary are closely intertwined. Austria was one of the major European powers which, under the House of Habsburg, dominated the Holy Roman Empire from the 12th century until its dissolution in 1806. The Kingdom of Hungary was founded by the Magyars in 1001 and later fought over by the Habsburgs and the Ottomans. Following the Battle of Mohács, the Ottomans occupied Hungary from 1526 to 1686, when the Habsburgs liberated the country and brought it under Austrian dominion. The 1848 anti-Habsburg uprisings were quashed and, from 1867, the two kingdoms were united under the dual Austro-Hungarian monarchy established by Franz Josef I until the empire collapsed at the end of World War I. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was dissolved in 1918 and replaced by seven nation states (Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia), the

borders of which were laid down in the 1919-1920 peace treaties. Hungary's borders were established by the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, under which the country lost 71 % of its former realm. Austria's borders (which have remained the same to the present day) were laid down in the Treaty of Saint German-en-Laye; no Austrian delegation was present. Hungarian irredentism in the interwar period pushed the authoritarian leader Miklós Horthy into an alliance with Nazi Germany in order to reclaim lost lands, especially southern Slovakia in 1938, Subcarpathian Ruthenia (Ukraine) in 1939, Transylvania (Romania) in 1940 and Vojvodina (Yugoslavia) in 1941. However, Hungary was occupied by Germany in 1944 and then liberated the following year by the Soviet army. These lands were returned to those states after World War II and the Trianon borders were re-established. Hungary also lost land to Czechoslovakia. For its part, Austria was annexed to the Third Reich in 1938 following the Anschluss and was not liberated by the Allied forces until 1945. The country was then divided into occupation zones, like Germany, but neutral status was subsequently negotiated and, as a result, Austria gained its independence in 1955 under a treaty signed with the four Allied powers. Austria did not come within the Soviet sphere of influence, but Hungary found itself behind the Iron Curtain when a communist regime was established in 1948. However, it was instrumental in bringing down the Iron Curtain in 1989. On 1 January that year it opened the Austro-Hungarian border; as a result more and more East German citizens crossed to the West via Hungary and Austria and, ultimately, the Berlin Wall came down. From 1990 onwards, Hungary was quick to establish a democracy.

In theory, given their differing status during the Cold War, it is surprising that Austria and Hungary should have developed cross-border cooperation at the same time; while Austria was free to enter into neighbourhood relations with the West from 1955 onwards, Hungary was stuck behind the Iron Curtain between 1948 and 1990. However, even Austria was not very active in cross-border cooperation until the 1990s. Only one cross-border working community was set up in the 1970s, with Germany, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, around a shared natural space, namely Lake Constance. In 1972, the



Flooding of the Danube
at Linz (Austria)

lakeside authorities of the four countries (the federal state of Baden-Württemberg, the cantons of Schaffhausen, Appenzell, Thurgau, Saint Gallen and Zurich, the province of Vorarlberg and the Principality of Liechtenstein) set up an international conference so that they could jointly address problems relating to the environmental management of the lake. This cooperation was only stepped up following Austria's accession to the EU in 1995, when the Lake Constance Euregio was established in 1997, now including local partners (the towns of Konstanz, Lindau, Oberallgäu, Ravensburg, Sigmaringen, Kempten and the district of Lake Constance).

Prior to 1995, only one euroregion had been created on the border between Austria, Germany and the Czech Republic, the Bavarian Forest-Bohemian Forest-Lower Inn Euregio, established in 1993. This

trilateral cooperation was expanded in 2012 around the River Danube and the River Vltava, when the Danube-Vltava Euroregion was established between Upper Austria, Lower Austria (Mostviertel and Waldviertel), Lower Bavaria (Altötting and Upper Palatinate) and, on the Czech side, South Bohemia, Plzeň and Vysočina.

Austria's subsequent cross-border cooperation ventures were developed primarily with Germany. Several Euroregions were established on the German-Austrian border, mainly in the form of management arrangements for the shared natural space of the Alps. The Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein Euregio was established in 1995, and the Via Salina Euregio, a grouping of three regional associations, one on the German side (the Allgäu Regio) and two on the Austrian side (the Kleinwalsertal Regio and the Außerfern Regional Development),



Creating a cultural route between Hungary and Slovenia

in 1997. The latter was involved in the Zugspitze Euregio, another euroregion created in 1998 in conjunction with Regio Werdenfels and Regio Seefeldler Plateau in Germany. The Inntal Euregio was also set up in 1998 between municipalities in the Bavarian districts of Rosenheim and Traunstein and the Tyrolean districts of Kufstein and Kitzbühel.

Only two bilateral cooperation arrangements have been established with Italy, with two autonomous regions that have close cultural ties to Austria, namely South Tyrol and Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino Euregio has linked the province of Tyrol in Austria with the autonomous provinces of Trentino and South Tyrol in Italy since 1998. That Euroregion was converted to an EGTC in 2011. A year later, in 2012, the Senza Confini Euroregion was also

set up as an EGTC between the Austrian province of Carinthia and the Italian regions of Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Veneto. Austria has also developed a cross-border cooperation initiative on the border with Slovakia and the Czech Republic. In 1997, the trilateral Pomoraví-Weinviertel-Jižní Morava Euroregion was established. At bilateral level, the Styria-Northeast Slovenia Euregio was established with Slovenia in 2001 linking associations of local and regional authorities for cross-border cooperation on either side of the border. In 2002, the Silva Nordica Euroregion was established with the Czech Republic.

In Hungary, as in other former Soviet bloc countries in eastern Europe, cross-border cooperation offered an opportunity to participate in European integration before actually joining the EU. The European

Commission's Interreg, Phare and Tacis programmes provided the funds needed for the economic development of those countries, whose border territories were the first to benefit. Cross-border cooperation projects became a way of mitigating the economic differential between regions in the West and in the East. However, for Hungary, cross-border cooperation also fulfils another function: it enables Hungarians to re-establish relations with the Hungarian minorities living in neighbouring countries, especially Romania and Slovakia.

Thus, since 1993 Hungary has been a member of the Carpathian Euroregion, set up as a regional association between Hungarian, Polish and Ukrainian local and regional authorities, later joined by authorities in Romania (from 1997 onwards) and Slovakia (from 1999 onwards). The first trilateral cooperation arrangement with Romania and Serbia was set up in 1997. The Danube-Kris-Mures-Tisa Euroregion, also known as DKMT, was established between local and regional authorities in Romania and Hungary and the Serbian province of Vojvodina. This is the most active euroregion organisation on the Hungarian borders; it is also a founder member of the Consultative Council of the Euroregions of the Visegrad Countries and a member of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR). A second trilateral cooperation arrangement was set up in 1998 with Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregion was kickstarted by economic stakeholders and includes the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Pécs-Baranya in Hungary and the chambers of commerce of the County of Osijek-Baranja in Croatia and Tuzla Canton in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as local and regional authorities in all three countries. Finally, a further two trilateral cooperation arrangements were launched in 2000, one with Romania and Ukraine (the Interregio between the communities of Satu Mare on the Romanian side, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg on the Hungarian side and Transcarpathia on the Ukrainian side), and one with Croatia and Slovenia (the Dráva-Mura Euroregion).

At a bilateral level, Hungary's first cross-border cooperation arrangement was with Austria, in the West/Nyugat-Pannonia Euroregion established in 1998 between Burgenland in Austria and the counties

of Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas and Zala in Hungary. In 2002, bilateral cooperation was established on the border between Hungary and Romania with the Hajdú-Bihar-Bihar Euroregion.

However, most of Hungary's bilateral cooperation arrangements are on the border with Slovakia. In 1999, the Ipeľ-Ipoly Euroregion was established by the Mayors of Balassagyarmat on the Hungarian side and Šahy on the Slovakian side. It was extended to include four more municipalities and six civil society organisations in Šahy and then to the entire middle section of the River Ipoly. In the same year, the Euroregio Vág-Duna-Ipoly was established a little further west in the same region. Two cooperation arrangements between border towns have also been established in that area: one between Komárno and Komárom, and one between four twinned towns in the Ister-Granum region (Ister was the Ancient Greek name for the River Danube and Granus was the medieval name for the River Hron). That cooperation commenced in 1999 with the rebuilding of the Mária Valéria Bridge over the Danube, which had been destroyed by the Nazis. It was later consolidated under a bilateral agreement in 2000, became a euroregion in 2003 and was finally replaced with an EGTC in 2008. Two other Slovak-Hungarian euroregions were created in 2000, namely the Košice-Miskolc Euroregion and the Sajó-Rima/Slaná-Rimava Euroregion, which was again initiated by two mayors, the Mayor of Putnok on the Hungarian side and the Mayor of Tisovec on the Slovak side. The euroregion is managed by an NGO and involves over 324 Slovak municipalities and 125 Hungarian municipalities. Within the euroregion, four towns decided in 2008 to step up their cooperation by creating an EGTC, which was ultimately set up in 2013. In January 2001, the Podunajský Trojopolok/Hármas Duna-vidék Euroregion was established between the municipalities of the Hungarian county of Győr-Moson-Sopron and the municipalities in the Slovak regional association of Csallóköz-Mátyusföld. That euroregion covers the territory of approximately 298 municipalities. Lastly a memorandum on an interregional development alliance for the region of Zemplin was signed in 2004. That alliance is now called the Zemplin Euroregion. It links numerous associations of municipalities, towns and regional development agencies on both sides of the



Slovak-Hungarian border and is very active in organising cross-border events, such as Euroregion days, the Zemplin exhibition and the Szomszédolás Zirc ('Visit Your Neighbours') festival, all financed by the Community Interreg programme. However, not all the euro-regions between Hungary and Slovakia are quite so successful. For example, the Eurorégió Neogradiensis, established in 2000 on the basis of a memorandum of understanding signed in 1999 between representatives of the Hungarian county of Nógrád and several Slovak districts, was more or less defunct after 2003.

Finally, it is notable that most of the various cross-border working communities in Hungary and Austria were established with other neighbouring countries rather than with partners across their joint border. The two countries are both involved only in one important macroregional cooperation project set up in 2003, namely the Centrepe Region (Vienna-Bratislava-Brno-Győr), established with the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which covers a very large area linking the provinces of Vienna, Burgenland and Lower Austria on the Austrian side, the regions of South Moravia and South Bohemia on the Czech side, the regions of Bratislava and Trnava on the Slovak side and the counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas and Zala on the Hungarian side.

■ Cross-border territories on the borders of Austria and Hungary



2.8 Czech Republic and Slovakia

The Czech Republic and Slovakia are two Central and Eastern European countries which acceded during the first enlargement of the EU to the east in 2004. The Czech Republic has an area of 78 870 km² and shares land borders with Germany (646 km), Poland (658 km), Austria (466 km) and Slovakia (215 km). Slovakia has an area of 48 845 km², four-fifths of which lies in the Carpathian Mountains. Like the Czech Republic, it shares land borders with Austria (91 km) and Poland (444 km). It also shares land borders with Hungary (677 km) and Ukraine (97 km). The only navigable waterway in Slovakia is the Danube. The Czech Republic is crossed by two large rivers, the Elbe and the Vltava.

The history of the Czech Republic and of Slovakia starts with a long period of separation. In fact, when Great Moravia was invaded by the Hungarians in 907, the Slovaks were placed under Hungarian rule while the Czechs initially remained autonomous, before becoming a German dominion. That marked the history of the Czech and Slovak nations for close to a thousand years. Thus the Czech State was formed in the 10th century. In the 14th century, the Kingdom of Bohemia became part of the Holy Roman Empire, after which it experienced a long period of Austrian domination, while Slovakia was absorbed into the Ottoman Empire, which occupied Hungary in 1541. Following the Spring of Nations in 1848, a Czech resistance movement started to take shape within the Austrian Empire. At the same time, the Slovaks allied themselves with the Austrians against the Hungarians. However, following the establishment of the Dual Monarchy in 1861, Slovakia remained under Hungarian control, while Emperor Franz Josef I of Austria granted the Czechs quasi-equality within a largely decentralised imperial system. The history of the two countries became interconnected after World War I. Czechoslovakia was formed in 1918 under President Wilson's 14-point programme, bringing together the Czechs, Slovaks and Ruthenes from the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. The newly independent state also included a large German minority (in the Sudetenland, South Moravia and Bohemia) and a Hungarian minority. The borders of Czechoslovakia were defined in succession under the 1919 peace treaties: the borders with Austria and Poland were laid down in the Treaty

of Saint-Germain-en-Laye and the border with Hungary in the Treaty of Trianon. However, these borders were contested in the interwar period, especially by Nazi Germany, which annexed the Sudetenland in 1938. That annexation was recognised by the international community in the Munich Agreement. The first secession in the country occurred during World War II, when Slovak nationalists formed an independent state supported by Hitler. The country reunified after the war but was then included in the Soviet sphere of influence. A communist regime was installed during the Czech coup in 1948, when Czechoslovakia became the last country in Europe to cross to the Soviet side of the Iron Curtain. It was not until after the Velvet Revolution of 1989 led by Václav Havel that a democratic regime was restored in 1990. However, the new federal Czech and Slovak Republic was dissolved just two years later in 1992. It was decided in a peaceful process to partition the country, resulting in the creation of two states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, in 1993 and the emergence of a new national border.

Cross-border cooperation initially developed after the end of the Cold War between Czechoslovakia and neighbouring countries (1990-1992). From 1993 onwards each of the two new states developed neighbourhood relations independently. In the first phase of cross-border cooperation up to 1993, cross-border working communities were established, mainly on the Czech border with German local and regional authorities. Czechoslovakia's objective was similar to that of Poland, which also borders on Germany, namely to use East/West cross-border cooperation at local and regional level to demonstrate that the new Central and Eastern European States were willing and able to participate in the process of European integration. As accession to the European Community was not possible immediately for economic reasons, cross-border cooperation was the only way of establishing links with the European Community. The European Commission supported this process by providing funding through Interreg, Phare and Tacis. Numerous cross-border organisations and projects then emerged on the German-Czech border, some of which also involved Poland. Thus the first euroregion between East and West was a trilateral cooperation project around the River Neisse



The Velvet Revolution
in Czechoslovakia in 1989

(Nisa in Czech). The Neisse-Nisa-Nysa Euroregion was created in 1991 to link three local associations in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. In the same year the first cross-border cooperation project with Bavaria was set up to manage the shared natural forest in the Bohemia region. A national park had been created in 1982 on the German side (the Bavarian Forest National Park) and a companion park was then created on the Czech side (the Šumava National Park). Another two euroregions were established on the German-Czech border in 1992, before Czechoslovakia was partitioned, namely the Elbe-Labe Euroregion linking two cross-border working communities (the Oberes Elbtal/Osterzgebirge Euroregion on the German side and the Labe Euroregion on the Czech side), and the

Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Euroregion between the German districts of central Saxony and the Ore Mountains and the municipalities of the Czech districts of Louny, Most, Chomutov and Litoměřice.

Following the formation of the Czech Republic, cross-border cooperation continued without interruption on the border with Germany and was extended to Austria. The Euregio Egrensis was founded on 25 January 1993, initially between three cross-border working communities, two on the German side (Euregio Egrensis of Bavaria and Euregio Egrensis of Saxony-Thuringia) and one on the Czech side (Euregio Bohemia). The first euroregion involving Germany, the Czech Republic and Austria was founded in the same year (the Bavarian



The Silesian Euroregion, two towns transcending borders (Czech Republic, Poland)

Forest-Bohemian Forest-Lower Inn Euroregion). However, only one bilateral cooperation project has been established between the Czech Republic and Austria, namely the Silvia Euroregion, which was set up in 2002 as a benevolent cross-border task force.

From the late 1990s onwards, cross-border cooperation was developed mainly between the Czech Republic and Poland. Several Polish-Czech euroregions were established at intermunicipal level. The Glacensis Euroregion was set up in 1996 between 50 local authorities on the Czech side and around 20 on the Polish side. It was followed by the Praděd/Pradziad Euroregion set up in 1997 between several Polish and Czech municipalities, which was later extended to 34 municipalities and 6 counties in Poland in the voivodeship of Opolskie and 71 Czech municipalities in the

Moravian-Silesian and Olomouc Regions. Finally, a further two Polish-Czech euroregions were established in 1998: the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion linking 12 municipalities in the county of Cieszyn, two municipalities in the county of Bielsko, the municipality of Godów in the county of Wodzisław Śląski and the town of Jastrzębie Zdrój on the Polish side with 16 municipalities in the district of Karviná and 24 municipalities in the eastern part of the district of Frýdek-Místek on the Czech side. The second euroregion (Silesia Euroregion) was based on a cooperation agreement between two associations: the Polish Association of Municipalities of the Upper Oder and the Czech Opava Silesia Association. It links a total of 58 municipalities and the Chamber of Commerce of the Moravian Silesian Region on the Czech side with 19 municipalities on the Polish side.

Slovakia has only established one bilateral cross-border cooperation project with Poland. In 1994, the Tatra Euroregion was established between 12 Slovak border counties and four counties, eight municipalities and 19 communities of municipalities in Poland. Otherwise, euroregions involving Slovakia developed later, from the late 1990s onwards. Those involving Czech partners were mostly established on a trilateral footing and involved municipalities in a third country. Thus, the Pomoraví-Weinviertel-Jižní Morava Euroregion was set up in 1997 on the border between Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. A second trilateral cooperation project was established between Polish, Czech and Slovak local and regional authorities in 2000. The Beskidy Euroregion linked over 60 Czech municipalities, the counties of Bielsko, Żywiec, Sucha, Oświęcim and Myślenice and 28 municipalities on the Polish side and the towns of Turzovka, Žilina, Bytča, Námestovo, Čadca, Kysucké Nové Mesto, Rajecké Teplice and 42 small municipalities on the Slovak side. Finally, a third multilateral euroregion was established in 2003 between partners in four countries, namely Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. Due to its geographical location it is called the Centropo Region (Vienna-Bratislava-Brno-Győr). It covers a very large area linking the provinces of Vienna, Burgenland and Lower Austria on the Austrian side, the regions of South Moravia and South Bohemia on the Czech side, the regions of Bratislava and Trnava on the Slovak side and the counties of Győr-Moson-Sopron, Vas and Zala on the Hungarian side. By contrast, there is only one bilateral Czech-Slovak euroregion, either because, as the two countries have decided to separate, the border municipalities do not want to embark on structured cooperation at local and regional level, or because they already cooperate adequately and do not feel the need to set their neighbourly relations on a formal footing. Nonetheless, the White Carpathians Euroregion was set up in 2000 on the Czech-Slovak border. It links over 50 very disparate partners on either side of the border (municipal and regional associations, towns, universities, chambers of commerce and industry, etc.).

At bilateral level, Slovakia has mainly developed cross-border cooperation with Hungarian partners. In 1999, two euroregions were

established at local level at the initiative of border municipalities. The Ipeľ'-Ipoly Euroregion was founded by the Mayor of Balassagyarmat on the Hungarian side, and the Mayor of Šahy on the Slovak side, and by four other municipalities and six civil society organisations in Šahy. This Euroregion covers the middle section of the River Ipoly. This was followed on 3 July 1999 by the Vág-Duna-Ipoly Euroregion slightly further west in the same region. Two cooperation arrangements between border towns have also been established in that area: one between Komárno-Komárom and one between four twinned towns in the Ister-Granum region (Ister was the Ancient Greek name for the River Danube and Granus was the mediaeval name for the River Hron). That cooperation commenced in 1999 with the rebuilding of the Mária Valéria Bridge over the Danube, which had been destroyed by the Nazis. It was later consolidated under a bilateral agreement in 2000, became a Euroregion in 2003 and was finally replaced with an EGTC in 2008. Euroregions are not always successful. For example, the Eurorégió Neogradiensis, established in 2000 on the basis of a memorandum of understanding signed in 1999 between representatives of the Hungarian county of Nógrád and several Slovak districts, has been more or less defunct since 2003.

Other Slovak-Hungarian euroregions followed in the new millennium. The Košice-Miskolc Euroregion and the Sajó-Rima/Slaná-Rimava Euroregion, which was again initiated by two mayors, the Mayor of Putnok on the Hungarian side and the Mayor of Tisovec on the Slovak side, were established in 2000. The euroregion is managed by an NGO and involves over 324 Slovak municipalities and 125 Hungarian municipalities. Within that Euroregion, four towns decided in 2008 to step up their cooperation by creating an EGTC, which was ultimately set up in 2013. In January 2001, the Podunajský Trojapolok/Hármas Duna-vidék Euroregion was established between the municipalities of the Hungarian county of Győr-Moson-Sopron and the municipalities in the Slovak regional association of Csallóköz-Mátyusföld. That Euroregion covers the territory of approximately 298 municipalities. Lastly, a memorandum of understanding on an interregional development alliance for the region of Zemplin was signed in 2004. That alliance is now called



Border post at Štúrovo-Esztergom
(Slovakia, Hungary)

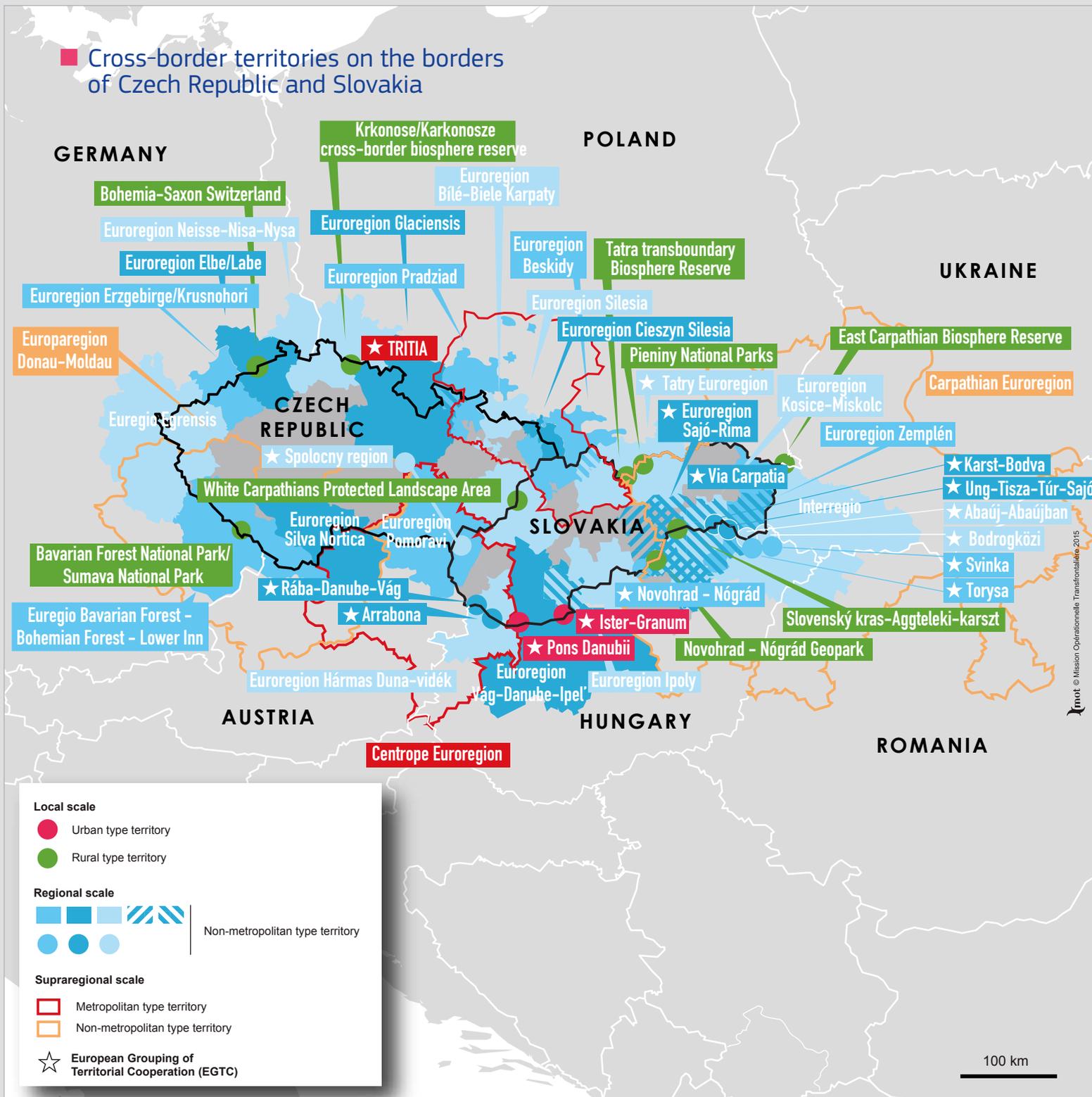
the Zemplin Euroregion. It links numerous associations of municipalities, towns and regional development agencies on both sides of the Slovak-Hungarian border and is very active in organising cross-border events, such as Euroregion days, the Zemplin exhibition and the Szomszédolás Zirc ('Visit Your Neighbours') festival, all financed by the Community Interreg programme.

Finally, the Czech Republic and Slovakia are each involved in interregional cooperation. The Slovak regions of Košice and Prešov decided in 1999 to join the Carpathian Euroregion, which was initially set up in 1993 as a regional association between Hungarian, Polish and Ukrainian local and regional authorities and, from 1997 onwards,

with the involvement of Romanian authorities. The Czech Republic (The South Bohemian, Plzeň and Vysočina Regions) are involved in the macroregion around the River Danube and the River Vltava established with Austria and Germany in 2012. The Danube-Vltava Euroregion includes Upper Austria and Lower Austria (Mostviertel and Waldviertel) on the Austrian side and Lower Bavaria (Altötting and Upper Palatinate) on the German side.

To conclude, the partitioning of Czechoslovakia did not disrupt the development of cross-border cooperation at local or regional level, which has proceeded without interruption since the early 1990s.

■ Cross-border territories on the borders of Czech Republic and Slovakia



2.9 Poland

Poland joined the EU in 2004 during the major enlargement towards the East. With territory covering 312 685 km², this central European country is similar in size to Germany and shares borders with that country (465 km) along the Oder-Neisse line to the west; with the Czech Republic (658 km) and Slovakia (444 km) to the south; with Lithuania (91 km), Belarus (605 km) and Ukraine (428 km) to the east; and with Russia (206 km) to the north. The border with Russia is with the oblast of Kaliningrad, a Russian exclave which lies inside the EU between Poland and Lithuania. Poland also shares maritime frontiers with Sweden and Denmark to the north, off its Baltic seaboard.

Poland's borders have shifted many times in its history, as the country has often been prey to territorial disputes between major European powers, especially Germany and Russia. In fact, the country was only recognised as a nation state in 1919 in the aftermath of World War I, in application of the principle of self-determination of nations enshrined in President Wilson's 14-point plan. Although Poland is a relatively new state, its nationalist feelings date back many centuries. The Kingdom of Poland was established as long ago as 1025 and it entered a political arrangement with Lithuania in 1569 to form the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but it lost its independence between 1772 and 1795, when its territory was partitioned among Prussia, Austria and Russia. It did not regain its independence until 1918, after the founding of the Second Republic. The Treaty of Versailles granted Poland territory which was mostly taken from the German Reich, which lost West Prussia, parts of East Prussia and Silesia, and Posen. The port of Gdańsk was declared a free city, giving Poland access to the Baltic Sea. However, the borders of the new Poland had not been set in stone, thereby allowing the two neighbouring states of Germany and Russia to contest them. Poland emerged victorious from the Russian-Polish war of 1918-1920, having recovered the town of Vilnius in Lithuania and all the old borders between imperial Russia and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth prior to the first partition of Poland in 1772. However, in the interwar period, Germany took back part of Silesia in the wake of a referendum and then, in 1939, Hitler annexed the port of Gdańsk. Moreover, under the German-Soviet pact, the USSR again annexed the eastern part of the

country which it had lost in 1920. Poland was invaded and occupied by the Nazis and then liberated by the Red Army in 1944. However, the USSR insisted at the Allied conference in Yalta in 1945 that it should get a share of the country and Poland's borders shifted yet again. The USSR kept the territory east of the Curzon line that it had annexed in 1939 and Poland's western border was shifted further west to the Oder-Neisse line, giving Poland the southern part of East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia. The USSR also included Poland in its security glacis during the Cold War, first by imposing a pro-communist government and then by incorporating it into the communist bloc together with the other satellite countries of eastern Europe. The Iron Curtain went up in 1948 and for 40 years the Polish-German border was with the German Democratic Republic (GDR), established in 1949. The Görlitz agreement (signed on 6 July 1950) confirmed the Oder-Neisse line as the border between the GDR and the Polish People's Republic, which named it the 'frontier of peace'. An agreement signed between the two neighbouring countries in 1967 allowed Polish inhabitants of the border regions to be employed in the GDR and, in 1972, the border between the GDR and Poland was opened for a brief period, only to be closed again in 1980. It was therefore only after the end of the Cold War, German reunification and the re-establishment of a democratic Polish republic in 1990 that cross-border cooperation started to develop with neighbouring countries at local and regional level. To the west, the border along the Oder-Neisse line was definitively recognised by unified Germany following ratification of the 2+4 Treaty between the Allies and the two German States. The border with Czechoslovakia was to become a border with two new states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, after that country divided in 1993.

Cross-border cooperation started in the early 1990s to the west, with Germany and the Czech Republic. Polish stakeholders had a dual objective. First, reconciliation was essential, especially with their German neighbours. Neighbourhood relations within the Soviet bloc had been poorly developed, especially on the border with the GDR. Moreover, some towns had been cut in two after World War II, meaning that new rapprochement was needed. The expulsion of German inhabitants from territories to the east of the Oder-Neisse line and



The TRITIA EGTC is the result of a partnership between the Opolskie and Śląskie regions of Poland, the Moravian-Silesian region of the Czech Republic and the Žilina region of Slovakia

the policy of resettling Polish populations in border regions meant that the inhabitants on either side were strangers and had to build up new cross-border links. Second, Poland wanted to join the EU as quickly as possible. However, the EU laid down accession criteria at the Copenhagen summit in 1993 which included a number of economic criteria. Cross-border cooperation then became a means of achieving the economic standards required and the European Commission programmes (Interreg, Phare and Tacis) were used to launch cross-border projects that would boost growth.

The first euroregions and eurocities established on the Polish border from the 1990s onwards therefore sent out a message that Polish stakeholders were prepared to launch a process of reconciliation and had the ability to participate in European integration. These euroregions and eurocities therefore acted as test beds for the reunification of the European continent. In 1991, the creation of the first eurocity uniting the towns of Guben and Gubin on the German-Polish

border became a symbol of reunification. That same year, the first euroregion was established (Neisse-Nisa-Nysa) linking three local associations on the German, Polish and Czech sides. This was a tri-lateral cooperation project implemented around the River Neisse. Another two eurocities and three euroregions have been established on the German-Polish border. In 1993, the town of Frankfurt (Oder) in the region of Brandenburg and the town of Słubice in Lubuskie decided to launch the Frankfurt (Oder)-Słubice cross-border project in order to link the two towns across the River Oder. In 2007, the town of Görlitz/Zgorzelec, which was cut in two after World War II by the border along the River Neisse, was united by creating the 'Europastadt' of Görlitz-Zgorzelec. Three more euroregions were established in succession along the Oder-Neisse border, covering the entire border territory with Germany. In 1993, the Spree-Neisse-Bober Euroregion was set up, linking two cross-border cooperation associations on the Polish and German sides, as was the Pro Europa Viadrina Euroregion linking the federal state of Brandenburg and

the voivodeship of Lubuskie. In 1995, the Pomerania Euroregion was set up by two associations of municipalities, Polish and German, in the region of Pomerania. Interestingly, the Pomerania Euroregion was extended to Sweden between 1998 and 2003, when it was joined by the Swedish community of municipalities of Scania. This cross-border cooperation project therefore acquired a maritime aspect, as both Sweden and Poland border the Baltic Sea. It was one of a new phase of macroregional cooperation projects launched in Europe at the end of the 1990s around large shared natural spaces, especially maritime areas and mountain ranges.

Two large macroregions have been established involving Poland. These are multilateral cooperation projects involving partners in at least five countries, including non-EU countries. The first macroregion was launched in the Carpathians, with joint support from the Council of Europe and the EU, which were keen on macroregional cooperation in order to consolidate democracy on the European continent. The Carpathian Euroregion was established in February 1993, initially as a regional association between local and regional authorities in three countries (Hungary, Poland and Ukraine). It was extended to Romania in 1997 and to Slovakia in 1999. Then, in 1998, the Baltic Euroregion was created between Poland (Pomorskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie), Sweden (Blekinge, Kalmar, Kronoberg), Denmark (Bornholm), Lithuania (Klaipėda) and Russia (Kaliningrad). The objective was to jointly manage the Baltic Sea with a view to improving environmental protection. The partners cooperated within an administration council in which they agreed on the biannual implementation of a joint action plan.

Cross-border cooperation with the Czech Republic and Slovakia proceeded along similar lines to cross-border cooperation with Germany, but it started later, in the mid-1990s. Several euroregions were set up, mostly on the Polish-Czech border, with the exception of the Tatry Euroregion, which was established in 1994 on the border with Slovakia between four counties, eight municipalities and 19 associations of municipalities in Poland and 12 Slovak countries; it became an EGTC in 2013. Most Polish-Czech euroregions have been

established at municipal level. The Glacensis Euroregion, founded in 1996, linked a large number of towns and municipalities (over 50 local authorities on the Czech side and around 20 on the Polish side). The same applies to the Praděd/Pradziad Euroregion, set up in 1997, which was later extended to 34 municipalities and 6 counties in Poland in the voivodeship of Opolskie and 71 Czech municipalities in the Moravian-Silesian and Olomouc Regions. On the Polish side, the association of municipalities in the euroregion accorded itself a structure with legal personality in 2000. Finally, a further two euroregions were established on the Polish-Czech border in 1998. The Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion links 12 municipalities in the county of Cieszyn, two municipalities in the county of Bielsko, the municipality of Godów in the county of Wodzisław Śląski, and the town of Jastrzębie Zdrój on the Polish side with 16 municipalities in the district of Karviná and 24 municipalities in the eastern part of the district of Frýdek-Místek on the Czech side. The second Euroregion (Silesia Euroregion) was based on a cooperation agreement between the Polish Association of Municipalities of the Upper Oder and the Czech regional association for Polish-Czech cooperation (Opava Silesia). It links a total of 58 municipalities and the Chamber of Commerce of the Moravian-Silesian Region on the Czech side with 19 municipalities on the Polish side. Only one trilateral cooperation project has been established between Polish, Czech and Slovak local and regional authorities. The Beskidy Euroregion links over 60 Czech municipalities, the counties of Bielsko, Żywiec, Sucha, Oświęcim and Myślenice, and 28 municipalities on the Polish side, and the towns of Turzovka, Žilina, Bytča, Námestovo, Čadca, Kysucké Nové Mesto and Rajecské Teplice and 42 small municipalities on the Slovak side. Finally the TRITIA EGTC, set up in 2013, links Polish, Czech and Slovak regions.

Poland also developed cross-border cooperation initiatives to the east with non-EU countries from the mid-1990s onwards, especially Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. These arrangements, which often involved Lithuania as well, were initiated before Poland and the Baltic States joined the EU in 2004. They enabled Poland to develop good relations with its neighbours to the east with the aim



A visit by Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy. Bridge between Słubice (Poland) and Frankfurt (Oder) (Germany)

of achieving democratic stability and security, an objective broadly supported by the Council of Europe and particularly its Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, on which the local and regional authorities of the neighbouring countries (except Belarus as a non-member) are represented. However, these forms of cross-border cooperation developed in a framework of local relations between close neighbours, and intergovernmental ties were very limited by reason of the authoritarian political regimes involved. Three euroregions were established with partners in Belarus: in 1995, the Bug Euroregion was established in the form of an association linking the voivodeship of Lubelskie in Poland, the region of Volyn and districts of Sokal and Zhovka in Ukraine and the region of Brest

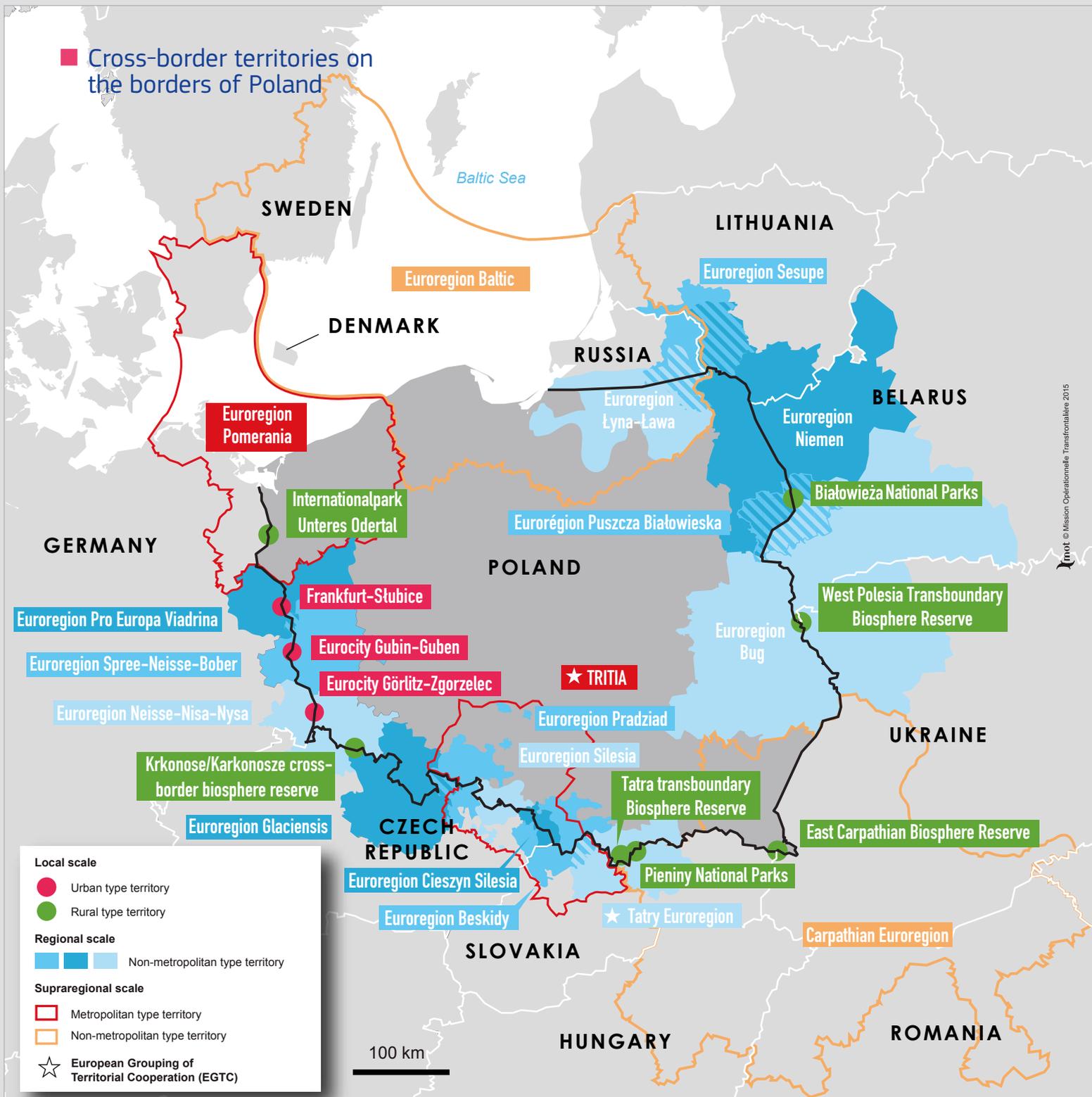
in Belarus. In 1997, the Neman Euroregion was established on the border between Poland (voivodeships of Podlaskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie), Lithuania (counties of Alytus, Marijampolė and Vilnius) and Belarus (region of Hrodna). Finally, the Białowieża Forest Euroregion established cooperation in 2002 between the districts of Pruzhany, Kamyanyets and Svislach on the Belarus side, and Hajnowski county with the municipalities of Hajnówka, Białowieża, Dubicze Cerkiewne, Czyże, Narew, Narewka, Czeremcha, Bielsk Podlaski, Orla and Kleszczel on the Polish side. Only one cooperation initiative has been established at municipal level with the participation of Russia. The Šešupė Euregio was set up in 2003 between local and regional authorities in Poland, Lithuania, Sweden and Russia.



The LitPol Link Project: building electric power lines and transmission stations to boost the energy independence of Lithuania and Poland

Polish cross-border cooperation projects therefore take several different forms. There is intensive cooperation at a local scale on the western border (with Germany, the Czech Republic and Slovakia), macroregional cooperation designed to protect natural spaces on the Baltic border to the north (with Denmark, Russia and Sweden) and on the Carpathian border to the south (with Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Ukraine), and broad, intermunicipal and somewhat informal cooperation on the eastern border (with Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine and Russia).

■ Cross-border territories on the borders of Poland

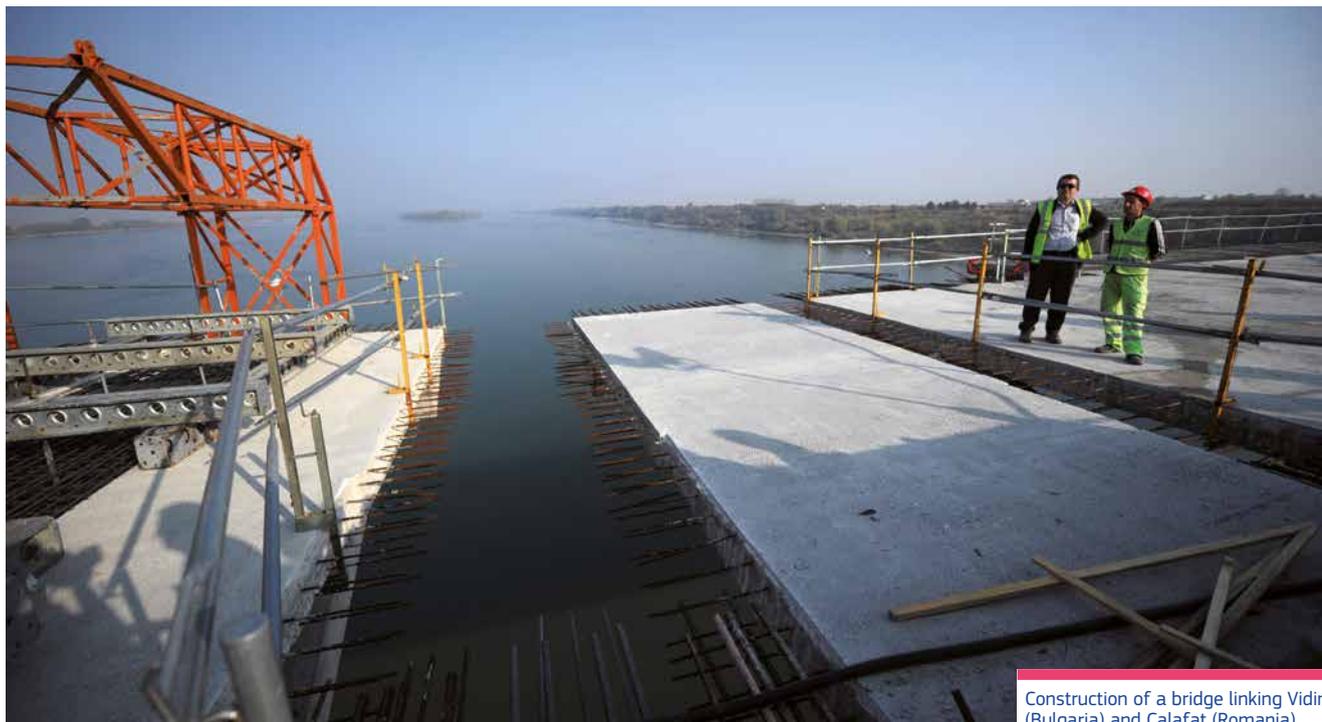


2.10 Romania and Bulgaria

Romania and Bulgaria were the last Central and Eastern European countries to join the EU, in 2007, apart from Croatia in 2013. Romania, which lies in the northeast Balkans, has an area of 238 392 km² and has several natural borders. It is crossed by the River Danube, with the Carpathians forming a physical barrier between two river basins. Romania stretches over both sides of the mountains. It also has a maritime border on the Black Sea. It shares land borders with Hungary (448 km), Moldova (450 km), Ukraine (531 km), Serbia (476 km) and Bulgaria (608 km). Its longest border therefore is with Bulgaria, which lies in southeastern Europe. Most of that border is formed by the River Danube, which only has two bridges in this section. Bulgaria is smaller at 110 550 km². It too shares a border with Serbia (318 km) and has a maritime border on the Black Sea. Bulgaria also shares borders with Greece (494 km) and two non-EU countries, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) (148 km) and Turkey (240 km).

The history of these two countries is closely linked to that of the Russian, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires. Bulgaria was founded in 681 by Bulgar tribes under the leadership of Asparukh, but the first Bulgarian kingdom (969-1018) lasted less than 50 years, as Bulgaria was annexed by Byzantium in 1014. It was restored in 1186 but remained under Ottoman rule for nearly 500 years, from 1396 to 1878. A Bulgarian reawakening did not start until the second half of the 18th century, when resistance to the Ottomans developed, culminating in the April Uprising of 1876. In the meantime, the Romanian United Principalities were established under the protection of France in 1859 in the aftermath of the Crimean War, in the form of a personal union between western Moldavia and Wallachia. In 1867, Transylvania came under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire but, with support from Russia, Romania gained full independence in 1878. It in turn came to the aid of the Bulgarians by waging war alongside Russia against the Turks (1877-1878), which resulted in the liberation of Bulgaria. Greater Bulgaria was formed in 1878, stretching from the Danube to the Aegean Sea, at which point its borders with Romania were fixed. However, Bulgaria was divided in two at the Congress of Berlin

in 1878, with only a small part gaining autonomy and the other again coming under Ottoman rule. The Kingdom of Bulgaria was restored in 1908 and fought over Macedonia with Serbia in the two Balkan wars of 1912-1913. That was when hostilities commenced with Romania. Although Romania had remained neutral during the First Balkan War, it supported Serbia during the Second Balkan War and in 1913 Macedonia was split between Serbia and Greece, with Romania obtaining Dobruja. That was why Bulgaria allied itself with the German Empire, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire during World War I and found itself on the losing side in 1918, losing access to the Aegean Sea under the Treaty of Neuilly in 1919. Romania, under Ferdinand I, joined forces with the Allies and found itself on the winning side. Under the Wilson 14-point programme, Bucovina and Transylvania voted to join Greater Romania and the unification of the country was recognised under the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye in 1919. The new border with Hungary and the border with Serbia were fixed by an international commission and Romania was given Transylvania, the eastern half of Banat and various lands in eastern Hungary in 1919 under the Treaty of Trianon. During World War II, the two states were again in opposing camps. Romania was protected by France, but when France fell in 1940 Stalin took the opportunity to occupy Bucovina and Bessarabia while Hitler forced Romania to cede part of Transylvania to Hungary. Having allied itself with Nazi Germany, Bulgaria managed to recover southern Dobruja. All in all, Romania lost one-third of its territory. In the aftermath of World War II, Romania recovered northern Transylvania and Stalin retook eastern Moldavia in 1947 under the Treaty of Paris. The borders therefore changed once again. Bulgaria and Romania subsequently shared the same fate, passing into the Soviet sphere of influence in 1944-1945, with Stalin backing the establishment of communist regimes in both countries. Bulgaria and Romania were therefore separated from western Europe throughout the Cold War by the Iron Curtain. It was not until 1990, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, that the two countries restored democracy and were able to start developing cross-border cooperation with their neighbours at local and regional level.



Construction of a bridge linking Vidin (Bulgaria) and Calafat (Romania)

Cross-border cooperation was late developing (towards the end of the 1990s), as the two states needed to introduce decentralisation reforms in order to give local border partners autonomous powers. Moreover, relations with neighbouring countries were complicated and marked by serious mistrust, given the deep scars left from their past history of frequent confrontation and the repeated shifts in border lines. That mistrust has coloured bilateral relations between Bulgaria and Romania and especially between Romania and Hungary. Finally, as a result of war in the Balkans, first between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995) and then in Kosovo (1998-1999), there is a feeling that the borders to the west are unstable. That makes it hard to develop cross-border cooperation

communities and bodies on the borders with Serbia and FYROM. Following Bulgaria's accession to the EU in 2007, neighbourhood relations with Turkey were constrained by the EU's new external border, which has gradually developed into a wall protecting fortress Europe against the wave of immigrants trying to enter the EU via Turkey.

It is therefore hardly surprising that only one euroregion has been formed; it was established in the early 1990s on the border between Bulgaria and Greece, which had joined the European Community in 1981. The Mesta-Nestos Euroregion was established in 1992 in the form of two NGOs, one on the Bulgarian side and one on the



The 'Regions for recycling' Project involves partners from 14 Member States: a healthy environment for improving people's well-being

Greek side. It links the Greek regional district of Thrace in East Macedonia with the Bulgarian region of Blagoevgrad on the banks of the River Mesta. For the rest, cross-border cooperation only started to develop on the borders of Bulgaria and Romania in the late 1990s, as the prospect of accession to the EU drew closer.

However, three macroregional cooperation projects have been established involving Romania and Bulgaria. The first was founded in 1993 by Poland, Hungary and Ukraine to jointly manage the shared natural space of the Carpathian Mountains. The Carpathian Euroregion was originally set up as a regional association between the local and regional authorities of the three countries. They were

joined by Romania (counties of Bihor, Botoşani, Harghita, Maramureş, Sălaj, Satu Mare and Suceava) in 1997 and by Slovakia (regions of Košice and Prešov) in 1999. In 2002, Bulgaria, the Republic of Serbia and FYROM established the EuroBalkans Euroregion with the aim of stabilising and consolidating neighbourhood relations in the Balkans. At the end of the first decade of the new millennium, Bulgaria and Romania jointly launched a macroregional cooperation project with the countries bordering the Black Sea. The Black Sea Euroregion was set up in 2008 and links 12 municipalities and districts, one region (Cahul in Moldova) and one autonomous republic (Adjara in Georgia) in five countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Armenia, Georgia and Moldova). Macroregions are supported especially by the

Council of Europe, which encouraged the creation of the Carpathian Euroregion and the Black Sea Euroregion in order to consolidate democracy in spaces shared by its member states.

The first cross-border cooperation associations were established in the late 1990s, starting on Romania's borders. The Danube-Kris-Mures-Tisa Euroregion, also known as DKMT, was established in 1997. This is a trilateral cooperation initiative between Romanian and Hungarian local and regional authorities and the Serbian province of Vojvodina. The first euroregion on the Danube was established in 1998 as an association under Romanian law. It was known as the Lower Danube Euroregion and linked the Romanian counties of Galați, Brăila and Tulcea, the Moldovan districts of Cahul and Cantemir and the Ukrainian region of Odessa. Two more trilateral cooperation projects were launched in 2000 on the Romanian borders, one with Moldova and Ukraine (the Upper Prut Euroregion) and one with Hungary and Ukraine (Interregio linking the authorities of Satu Mare on the Romanian side, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg on the Hungarian side and Transcarpathia on the Ukrainian side). In 2002 a further bilateral cooperation project was launched on the border between Romania and Hungary. That was the Hajdú-Bihar-Bihar Euroregion linking Bihar County on the Romanian side with Hajdú-Bihar County on the Hungarian side.

Bulgaria started to develop euroregions from the beginning of the millennium. In 2001, the Rodopi Euroregion was established between an association of 21 Bulgarian municipalities in four districts (Smolyan, Kardzhali, Plovdiv and Pazardzhik) and the Greek Delta-Rodopi regional cooperation organisation and its seven disparate members (a prefecture, municipalities and the chamber of commerce and industry). In 2001, the first (and only) euroregional cooperation initiative was established with the participation of Turkey, namely the Evros-Maritsa-Meric Euroregion linking Bulgarian, Greek and Turkish regional and local authorities. It was followed in succession by four euroregions, two with Greece and two with Serbia: the Strymon-Strouma Euroregion on the Bulgarian-Greek border and the Belasica Euroregion, which also involved partners from FYROM, both

of which were established in 2003; the Nišava Euroregion, set up between Bulgarian and Serbian municipalities in 2005; and the Stara Planina Euroregion, a rural euroregion set up between Bulgaria and Serbia in 2006.

A number of euroregions were established along the River Danube, mostly involving partners in Romania and Bulgaria, between 2001 and 2005. The Lower Danube Euroregion and the South Danube Euroregion were established in 2001. They were followed by two trilateral euroregions to the west linking Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia: the Danube 21 Euroregion in 2002 and the Middle Danube Euroregion in 2005. A very intensive cooperation project was established in the border zone between the region of Ruse in Bulgaria and the district of Giurgiu in Romania. The two border towns of Ruse and Giurgiu sit on opposite banks of the Danube. They were linked in 1952 by the first bridge over the Bulgarian-Romanian border, known as the Friendship Bridge. They signed a twinning agreement in 1997, which was converted into a euroregion-type association in 2002. The Danubius Euroregion covers various aspects



Board indicating the Greek-Bulgarian customs point at Egnatia



The Bulgarian-Serbian cross-border cooperation programme: judicial capacity building in the field of drug smuggling carried out by organised crime

of cross-border cooperation, such as economic growth, sustainable development and cultural heritage. In 2002, it created a joint cross-border university, the Bulgarian-Romanian Interuniversity Europe Centre. Only one euroregion has been established between Romania and Moldova. The Siret-Prut-Nistru Euroregion, set up as an association under Romanian law in 2005, links 26 district councils in Moldova, excluding Gagauzia and Transnistria, with three country councils in Romania.

Thus most cross-border cooperation projects involving Bulgaria and Romania are recent initiatives organised in the form of associative or intermunicipal euroregions on the Romanian border and along the Danube. There are also three macroregional cooperation initiatives based around the Black Sea, the Carpathian Mountains and the Balkan region. Finally, few cross-border communities involve Moldova, FYROM or Turkey. Clearly, it is harder for Bulgaria and Romania to develop cross-border cooperation on the external borders of the EU.

2.11 Italy and Malta

These two Member States are very different in terms of size and territorial structure, but they are neighbours. Italy, one of the founder members of the EEC, is described first. As a founder member, Italy is likely to be involved in a long-standing and relatively complex territorial policy. Malta is then described, with emphasis on its island status.

Italy

Italy is one of the largest EU Member States. This founder member of the EEC has 60.7 million inhabitants, putting it in fourth place in the EU in terms of its population, which is comparable to that of France and the United Kingdom. However, it was established as a nation state much later than those two countries, in the second half of the 19th century. The territories on the peninsula were only officially united in 1861, although it was another 10 years before the Papal States were incorporated. That made it possible to move the capital to Rome, which had both the advantage of being located roughly in the centre of the new country and the legitimacy conferred by its glorious history. Italy is still marked by its pre-unification structure. There is a clear divide between the north, with its powerful industrial cities, and the south, with its more rural economy and inequitable land structures. Italy is densely populated (201 inhabitants per km²) and has very few sparsely inhabited areas. The territory comprises a long peninsula running from north-west to south-east, the southern part of which is somewhat subdivided, as well as two large islands (Sardinia and Sicily) and several small islands. Most of its borders are therefore maritime borders. The Adriatic Sea separates Italy from the EU Member States Greece, Croatia and Slovenia (with which it also shares a land border) and from the candidate countries Montenegro and Albania. The Mediterranean Sea serves as a border with Spain and France to the west and with North Africa (Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) to the south. That border is particularly sensitive in that it is not only a political border but also a line marking a serious development divide. Although shorter than its maritime border, the land border separates Italy from four other countries, namely (from west to east) France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia. The border follows the Alps and has all the appearances of a natural border, but it is interrupted by valleys and

crossings, some of which are very busy. In fact, far from being a barrier, the Alps are a space linking northern Europe and southern Europe which is crossed by heavy traffic in transit. There are also numerous cross-border interactions in parts of the mountain range or its foothills which result in considerable movements of people for work, trade and leisure. Finally, the political border does not coincide with the linguistic border and cross-border linguistic communities exist. French is spoken in the Valle d'Aosta and German is spoken in Trentino/South Tyrol. In both cases, the local authorities have enhanced autonomous powers. The land border therefore crosses quite varied territory, with densely populated areas and cross-border agglomerations with heavy short- and long-distance traffic alternating with sparsely populated areas. In terms of their intensity, economic activities in Europe are concentrated in a space which stretches more or less from the London Basin to the Po Valley via Benelux and the Rhine regions and, depending on the analysis, may or may not include Paris. Northern Italy therefore forms part of the economic heart of Europe (the 'backbone' or 'pentagon of European cities') which straddles the Alps. The contrast between the maritime border and the land border is not just physical: there is a sharp contrast in terms of economic divides, exchanges and political relations.

Italy engages in very intensive territorial cooperation with its neighbours; however, this cooperation has developed differently depending on the type of border.

The fact that the territories eligible for cross-border cooperation stretch from the Alpine provinces to the Adriatic coast and the provinces of Liguria, Tuscany and Sardinia on the Mediterranean is the result, first, of progress in European integration (with the accession of Austria, Croatia and Slovenia) and, second, of the adoption of the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and the neighbourhood policy. The Italy/Tunisia programme is the only cross-border cooperation programme to have been adopted under the neighbourhood policy for the Mediterranean. It links five provinces in Sicily and six coastal regions in Tunisia and covers the economic dimension and innovation transfer, cultural aspects, tourism and the environment.



Aerial view of Gorizia (Italy) and Nova Gorica (Slovenia)

Special attention is paid to border security and its efficient operation. The Adriatic Cross-Border Cooperation Programme adopted for 2007-2013 was part of the IPA. It linked three Member States (Greece, Italy and Slovenia) with a candidate country (Croatia, now a Member State) and potential candidate countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro, the last of which applied to join in 2008). The new IPA programme for 2014-2020 links provinces in south-eastern Italy with Albania and Montenegro. Eight bilateral Interreg A programmes have been adopted for 2014-2020 between Italy and its neighbouring Member States, namely Greece, Croatia, Slovenia, Austria, France (2), Malta and Switzerland (which, although not an EU Member State, has been actively involved in Interreg programmes from the outset). In addition to cross-border cooperation, Italy is also involved in a total of four Interreg B transnational programmes: the Central Europe programme covering the northern part of the peninsula, the Alpine Space programme covering the same regions plus Emilia-Romagna, the Mediterranean programme, which covers the entire country, and the new Adriatic-Ionian programme. Italy is also involved in two macroregional strategies, the Alpine

Macroregion and the Adriatic and Ionian Macroregion. Finally, there are six working communities covering the Alpine border: from west to east they are COTRAO, the Lake Geneva Council, the Valais-Valle d'Aosta Council, Regio Insubrica, ARGE Alp and Alpe-Adria.

Alongside these various programmes and institutions, there are several cooperation bodies in place operating on different scales; most were not initiated until the 1990s or the 2000s. The first such initiatives covered spaces with a strong natural element in need of protection. The first cooperation project was initiated in 1987 between two national parks, the Mercantour National Park in France and the Alpi Marittime Nature Park in Italy. A charter was prepared in 1998 and the body, named Alpi Maritime-Mercantour European Park became an EGTC in June 2013. A second initiative concerned Mont Blanc, which straddles the border between France, Switzerland and Italy and has a symbolic dimension. Thus the Mont Blanc Cross-Border Conference was set up in 1991, linking the Canton of Valais in Switzerland, the autonomous region of Valle d'Aosta in Italy and an intermunicipal cooperation structure named the Pays du Mont Blanc in France.

In 2014 the partners signed a joint memorandum of understanding with a view to converting the body into an EGTC. A similar approach was taken for the Bouches de Bonifacio international marine reserve, a project covering the strait between Corsica and Sardinia, which dates back to 1992. The French and Italian States are partners in the project, which in 2012 resulted in the creation of an EGTC. Two other initiatives in the Alps deserve a mention. First, the Julian Alps Transboundary Ecoregion between Italy and Slovenia was given a EuroParc label in 2007, certifying active cooperation between two nature parks separated by a border. That cooperation had started

in 1996 between the Julian Prealps Nature Park in Italy and the Triglav National Park in Slovenia. Elsewhere, the High Valleys Conference links several nature parks and intermunicipal bodies in Italy and France in the central part of the Franco-Italian Alps. That arrangement, which started in 2000, is designed to promote cooperation in several fields, including transport, economic development, innovation and vocational training.

As on other borders, cooperation started at local level in a cross-border agglomeration. Cultural cooperation was initiated in the 1970s



between Gorizia in Italy and Nova Gorica in what was Yugoslavia and is now Slovenia. Cross-border cooperation abated following the independence of Slovenia, before being relaunched in the late 1990s. The two towns have been engaged in cooperation projects since 2001, covering higher education, urban planning, management of the water courses separating the two towns and transport. An EGTC was established in 2011 in order to strengthen cooperation between the two towns and a Slovenian municipality.

In addition to these cooperation initiatives at local level, several bodies have been established at regional or supranational level. The Regio Insubrica, established in 1995, is a working group linking the Canton of Ticino in Switzerland with four Italian provinces. The parties' main objective is to resolve problems relating to the border, which is the scene of numerous interactions. In fact, the Chiasso border crossing is on one of the busiest roads across the Alps linking the Rhine region of Europe with the Po Valley. There are also large numbers of border workers in the region. The Tyrol-South Tyrol-Trentino Euroregion links the province of Tyrol in Austria with two Italian provinces with a high degree of autonomy. That cooperation project, which officially started in 1998, is based on the existence of a cross-border German-speaking community. Here too an EGTC was set up in 2011. There are two other euroregions, the Franco-Italian Alps Conference (CAFI) and the Senza Confini Euroregion between Italy and Austria, which was converted to an EGTC in 2012. Finally, two cross-border spaces have a supranational dimension. The first, the Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion links local and regional authorities on the Adriatic coast, including a local authority in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The second, the Alps-Mediterranean Euroregion, has been converted to an EGTC. It links regional authorities, whereas the Franco-Italian Alps Conference links departments and provinces.

All in all, Italy is broadly involved in cross-border programmes on various scales. These cooperation projects involve both Member States and non-EU countries (through the IPA and neighbourhood policy). The purpose of these cross-border cooperation frameworks is generally to manage shared natural and territorial resources and most of them



The T-CHEESIMAL Project: introducing new technologies to support traditional cheesemaking

have been established at local level. However, initiatives only started to be put on a formal footing in the 1990s, which is very different to what happened on the Franco-German or Scandinavian borders. Yet there has been a marked move towards institutionalisation since the end of the first decade of this century, with the creation of several EGTCs at both local and regional as well as supranational level.

Malta

Malta is an island state which holds several records in Europe: it the smallest, the least populated and the most densely populated EU Member State. The population of 425 000 is concentrated on the two main islands, which cover 316 km², giving a density of over 1 300 inhabitants/km². Lying approximately 100 km from the southern coast of Sicily and less than 200 km from the Tunisian coastline, this archipelago sits between the Western and the Eastern Mediterranean. It became part of the British Empire in 1814, obtained autonomy in 1947 and gained independence in 1964, while remaining a member of the Commonwealth. Malta joined the Council of Europe in 1965, but only joined the EU in 2004.



The Vamos Seguro Project: monitoring and forecasting the dispersal of volcanic ash between Sicily and Malta

Malta has just one EU neighbour, namely Italy. Interreg III introduced a specific cross-border cooperation programme between Italy and the island state. That programme was renewed for the subsequent programming periods. There are no cross-border cooperation bodies linking Malta and Italy.

■ Cross-border territories on the borders of Italy and Malta



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2.12 Spain and Portugal

Spain and Portugal, which lie in the south-western corner of Europe, both joined the EEC in 1986. These two Mediterranean countries were formerly major European powers which built up empires across the world. When the authoritarian regimes established in the two countries in the 1930s came to an end in 1974 and 1975, it marked their transition to a democratic system, enabling them to apply for EEC membership. The nationalist tendencies of their regimes found expression in a defensive perception of their borders. The border regions were thus seen as peripheral areas, where little investment was made. European integration can therefore be said to have kick-started territorial cooperation.

Spain, which is the largest EU Member State after France (504 000 km²), has 46.5 million inhabitants. The current configuration of the country dates back to the end of the 15th century, when Castile and Aragon merged, marking the end of the 'Reconquista' or reconquest of the Moorish kingdoms. Spain was a centralised state which built a colonial empire and acquired several possessions in Europe, but was itself composed of various nations. The civil war (1936-1939) ended with the victory of General Franco, who established a dictatorship which ended on his death in 1975. The new regime signalled both the end of a period of relative autarchy and a strong desire to catch up politically, economically and psychologically. Spain has two enclaves in Morocco (Ceuta and Melilla) and one outermost region (the Canary Islands) in the Atlantic Ocean west of Morocco. The town of Gibraltar, located beside the strait of the same name, has been a British overseas territory since the Treaty of Utrecht was signed in 1713.

With only 10.4 million inhabitants, Portugal gives the appearance of a small country compared to Spain, but it is slightly more densely inhabited. This territory on the south-western periphery of Europe has a long seaboard and just one neighbour, Spain. As a result, it is off the major transit routes in Europe. Portugal is one of the oldest nations of Europe, dating back to the 14th century. Although ruled by the Spanish crown between 1580 and 1668, Portugal retained a degree of autonomy. Despite being classed as a Mediterranean country,

Portugal borders only on the Atlantic Ocean, not the Mediterranean Sea. Portugal has two outermost regions in the Atlantic, the archipelagos of the Azores and Madeira, both of which are over 1 000 km from the capital. They have broadly autonomous institutional powers. The part of the territory on the Iberian Peninsula displays a certain asymmetry: the coastal plain is densely populated and includes the two largest cities in the country (Lisbon and Porto). By contrast, the interior is a rural, sparsely populated area which suffered serious depression in the 1960s and 1970s. It tends to be seen as a buffer zone with Spain in which there is little investment. The border is one of the oldest in Europe in that it has not changed significantly since the 12th century. It was recognised in 1668 under the Treaty of Lisbon, in which Spain recognised Portugal's independence. The sparse population on either side of the border reduces opportunities for interaction other than at the main crossing points (on the Atlantic seaboard between northern Portugal and Galicia, on the Mediterranean seaboard between the Algarve and Andalusia, and in the central zone on the road between Lisbon and Madrid between Extremadura in Spain and the district of Portalegre). With a few exceptions, the border does not follow natural dividing features and the two countries share several large river basins (Minho, Douro, Tagus and Guadiana) on which several cooperation agreements have been signed since 1964. Here the political boundaries coincide with the language boundaries.

The French-Spanish border (also a land border) was established with the signing of the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659. However, in this case the political border does not coincide with the language border: Basque and Catalan are spoken on both sides of the Pyrenees, although less so in France than in Spain. Exchanges across the French-Spanish border are much more important than across the border between Portugal and Spain, but they are concentrated on the coastal roads (Paris-Bordeaux-Madrid along the Atlantic seaboard and Lyon-Barcelona and Marseille-Barcelona along the Mediterranean seaboard), bypassing the Pyrenees.

The border regions have been incorporated into cross-border programmes between Spain and Portugal and between Spain, France and Andorra. The NUTS 3 territories corresponding to Spanish



The Lower Guadiana International bridge linking Portugal and Spain, opened in 2009

provinces and Portuguese subregions have been covered by Interreg programmes since the early 1990s. The whole of Spain and Portugal forms part of the Interreg B South-West Europe Programme and parts of the two countries (Spanish regions along the Mediterranean coast and southern districts of Portugal) form part of the Interreg B Western Mediterranean Programme. However, neither country participates in any macroregional strategies, although they are involved in the Mid-Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea neighbourhood programmes with all the coastal regions bordering these seas. Finally, the Madeira-Azores-Canaries (MAC) programme links the outermost regions of these two countries in the Atlantic Ocean. Numerous cross-border cooperation bodies have been set up since Spain joined the EEC, both on the French-Spanish border and on the Spanish-Portuguese border. However, there was a slight time lag between the two borders. The main organisations are described below.

The first cooperation project set up on the French-Spanish border was the Pyrenees Working Community (CTP) initiated by the Council of Europe in 1983. It links four Spanish autonomous communities, three French regions and the Principality of Andorra. Its aim is to boost development in the Pyrenees mountains and foothills, while conserving both resources and heritage. The CTP also promotes cross-border cooperation, with initiatives at local level. Cooperation was established in 1988 between the Pyrenees National Park and the Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park. It was set out in an action strategy in the form

of a charter. Again at local level, a cross-border cooperation agreement gave rise in 1993 to the Basque Eurocity of Bayonne-San Sebastián, the partners being Gipuskoa (NUTS 3) and the district of Bayonne-Anglet-Biarritz. That cooperation was established within a large agglomeration of around 600 000 inhabitants stretching more or less the length of the Atlantic seaboard on either side of the French-Spanish border. The partners set up a cross-border observatory with the status of an EEIG in 1997, which in 2000 was named the Cross-Border Agency for the Development of the Basque Eurocity. A white paper was published proposing a plan of action to strengthen the integration of this cross-border urban space. The aim was to organise a multicentre urban space. Enhanced cooperation was established in that space in 1998 between two Spanish municipalities (Irun and Hondarribia) and the adjoining French municipality of Hendaye. The Bidasoa-Txingudi cross-border Consortium set up at that time was also converted to an EEIG. At the other end of the Pyrenees, the Pyrénées-Cerdagne community was set up as a cooperation project between intermunicipal cooperation bodies within the Catalan Cross-border Area Eurodistrict in 1998. It was converted to an EGTC in 2011.

Two euroregions with EGTC status have been established on the French-Spanish border, namely the Catalan Cross-border Area Eurodistrict in 2008 and the Pourtalet Area in 2011. The first links the department of Pyrénées-Orientales and the province of Girona in a body aiming to draw up a joint land-planning policy and

strengthen cross-border ties between these two culturally and linguistically similar territories. The second links the autonomous community of Aragon and the department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques for the purpose of pooling services, creating a joint resource centre and developing cultural projects. A highly original project has been developed within the Catalan area, with the construction of a cross-border hospital in which resources are pooled, within the framework of the Interreg IIIA programme. This public facility, which opened in September 2014, was set up in 2010 as an EGTC between the French State and the Catalonia Health Council and was the first project to pool health services between two European countries. It is located in Puigcerdà in Catalonia and admits patients from both countries without distinction. Finally, two euroregions have a supra-regional dimension. The Aquitaine-Euskadi Euroregion covers the western part of the border in the Pyrenees, while the Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion lies in the eastern part.

Three working communities were established on the border between Portugal and Spain in the late 1980s or during the 1990s, but they do not cover the entire border as there is a gap between Extremadura on the Spanish side and the Portuguese region of Castelo Branco. Northern Portugal is involved in two, one with Galicia and the other with Castile-Leon, and the third covers Andalusia and the two southern regions of Portugal. These working communities promote cross-border cooperation. It is hardly surprising that the first cooperation body was established in 1991 in the shape of a task force on the border between Spain and Portugal (Galicia-North Portugal Euroregion), where the first working community had been established

in 1986. That Euroregion was converted to an EGTC in 2008. However, it was not until 2000 that certain local initiatives started to emerge. The cross-border association of municipalities of the Lands of the Great Lake Alqueva, established in 2005, works to promote the development of a disadvantaged and isolated region. In 2006, the Eurocity of Badajoz-Elvas, which links two towns 20 km apart, was set up in order to coordinate and pool services. In 2007, the Eurocity of Chaves-Verín similarly linked two towns in close proximity with a view to developing eurocitizenship and cultural cooperation. The first two have association status and the third has EGTC status. Finally, a further two eurocities have been established, but do not as yet have legal status: the Eurocity of Valencia-Tui (2012) and the Eurocity of Guadiana (2013).

Four euroregions were established during this period, three in 2009 (Duero-Douro, ZASNET and Euroace (Alentejo-Centro-Extremadura)) and one in 2010 (Alentejo-Algarve-Andalusia), two of which now have EGTC status.

All in all, cooperation appears to have started somewhat belatedly, in the 1990s. The creation of cross-border organisations appears to have picked up in the new millennium. Many now have EGTC status, which is a sign of the will to integrate. Although Spain and Portugal lie on the periphery of the EU, their local and regional authorities appear to be highly involved in cross-border cooperation at both local and regional level. However, initiatives on the border in the Pyrenees started well before initiatives on the border between Spain and Portugal.

Cross-border territories on the borders of Spain and Portugal

Local scale

- Urban type territory
- Rural type territory
- Cross-border operational equipment

Regional scale

- Metropolitan type territory
- ■ ■ ■ ■ Non-metropolitan type territory

Supraregional scale

- Non-metropolitan type territory

- ★ European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)

Atlantic Ocean

FRANCE

★ Aquitaine-Euskadi Euroregion

Imot © Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière 2015

★ Euroregion Galicia/
North of Portugal

Eurocity Valença-Tui

Transboundary Biosphere
Reserve Gerês-Xurés

★ Duero-Douro

Euroregion Alentejo,
Extremadura and
Centre Region

PORTUGAL

Euroregion Alentejo -
Algarve - Andalucía

★ Eurocity Chaves-Verín

★ ZASNET

Meseta Ibérica Transboundary
Biosphere Reserve

International Tagus Natural Park

Eurocity Badajoz-Elvas

Cross-border Association of the
Municipalities of the Lands Great Lake Alqueva

Guadiana Eurocity

SPAIN

Consortio Bidasoa-Txingudi

★ Espace Pourtalet

Pyrénées National Park/
Ordesa y Monte Perdido
National Park

ANDORRA

★ Cerdanya Hospital

Bayonne-San Sebastián
Basque Eurocity

★ Huesca Pirineos-Hautes Pyrénées

★ Pirineus-Cerdanya

Eurodistrict
of Catalan
Cross-border
Space

★ Cross border
Country of Art and History

★ Pyrenees-Mediterranean
Euroregion

Mediterranean Sea

← Gibraltar (UK)

← Ceuta (ES)

Melilla (ES)

100 km

2.13 Greece and Cyprus

While both countries are located in the eastern Mediterranean, there are very few similarities between Greece and Cyprus, even though the majority of the Cypriot population speaks Greek. In fact, Greece is a giant compared to Cyprus. Greece has a population of 11 million and covers an area of 131 000 km². Cyprus has a population of 850 000 and covers an area of just over 9 000 km². Their population densities are similar but the two territories are very different in form. Cyprus is an island, whereas Greece comprises both a mainland, where the main towns are situated, and an impressive number of islands, of which Crete is the largest. This territorial configuration is similar to that of Denmark, a country where cooperation is highly developed on its maritime borders. It will be interesting to see if similar forms of cross-border cooperation have developed on these maritime borders and land borders or if they are significantly different. Both of these countries lie close to Turkey, a regional power which is not an EU Member State. That proximity will therefore need to be taken into consideration.

Greece gained its independence at the London Conference of 1830 after fighting a 10-year war of independence against the Ottoman Empire, with support from the European powers in general and Russia in particular. The country was initially restricted to Attica and the Peloponnese. The territory of Greece expanded continuously in the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century. That expansion occurred on both the mainland and the islands. After the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), in which it gained Macedonia, Epirus and Crete, the territory of Greece looked very much as it is now. The 1920 Treaty of Sèvres, signed in the aftermath of World War I, sought to dismantle the Ottoman Empire and recognise nationalist movements. Greece was granted new territories (Thrace and the Smyrna region in Asia Minor) but lost them again in 1923 under the Treaty of Lausanne, which laid down the borders of the new Turkish Republic. The new border drawn between the two republics resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people and the homogenisation of their territories by making the cultural border coincide with the political border. These migrations also affected other countries, including neighbouring Bulgaria. The last territories

to be incorporated in Greece were the Dodecanese islands in 1947. These islands off the Turkish coast had been under Italian rule since 1912. This completed the expansion of Greece.

The most densely populated area is along an arc linking Athens and Thessaloniki around the Aegean Sea, followed by the Ionian seaboard to the west. Apart from Crete, the islands are small and sparsely populated and this causes problems in terms of territorial continuity. When it joined the EEC in 1981, Greece was located on its periphery. From its position on the doorstep of the Middle East, it was separated from its neighbours to the north and north-west by sealed borders (Bulgaria was behind the Iron Curtain, Albania had an autarchic regime and Yugoslavia looked more towards western than southern Europe). Relations are also complicated with Turkey, which contests Greek sovereignty over the Aegean islands.

Cyprus is a former possession of the Ottoman Empire that was occupied and then annexed by the United Kingdom in 1914. When the island gained its independence in 1960, the Greek inhabitants of Cyprus were keen to become part of Greece. Greeks were in the majority on the island, which also had a large Turkish minority (approximately 20% of the population). The Turkish army occupied the island in 1974 in response to a coup d'état that aimed at replacing President Makarios, who was in favour of independence, with a leader proposing union with Greece. The outcome was the partitioning of the island with the creation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in the northern part of the island, which is only recognised by the Republic of Turkey. The capital, Nicosia, is divided in two. The establishment of a quasi-sealed border resulted in reciprocal migrations: the Greeks living in the northern part of the country moved south and the Turks living in the southern part migrated north. The EEC association agreement signed in 1973 provided for customs union with the EEC. Cyprus applied to join the EEC in 1990, but the problem of the partitioning of the island had still not been resolved when it joined. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is not recognised by the Member States of the EU. The border follows the Green Line drawn in 1964 by a British officer for the purpose

of establishing a dividing line between the populations. Crossing points on the Green Line have been organised since 2008, including one in the centre of the capital. Cyprus is therefore in a unique situation, because although the Green Line is not an officially recognised border it has a serious impact on how the country is organised. There are also two large British military bases on the island (Akrotiri and Dhekelia). Greece is the EU Member State closest to the island and there are ferry links between the two countries.

No cross-border cooperation has been planned between the two parts of the island of Cyprus. Plans have been made for a cooperation programme with Turkey under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), but it has not yet been activated. However, a cross-border cooperation programme between Cyprus and eastern Greece (especially Crete) was set up under Interreg III and has been renewed in subsequent periods. It covers economic development, transport infrastructure, security and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage. Cyprus also participates in the Interreg B Mediterranean programme, which links six Mediterranean Member States, and in the Mediterranean Sea neighbourhood programme, which includes non-EU neighbours. Territorial cooperation in Cyprus is closely intertwined with territorial cooperation in Greece, due to their geographical proximity. As the island is relatively isolated, only one transnational-type cooperation network has been planned.

The border regions of Greece were classed as eligible territories under the very first Interreg programme. Aside from the programme with Cyprus, Greece participates in two other Interreg A programmes, with Italy and Bulgaria. Added to these are three IPA programmes: the Greece-Albania programme, the Greece-FYROM programme and the Greece-Turkey programme. All the prefectures on Greece's land borders are eligible, as are the prefectures on the Ionian seaboard (facing Italy) and the Aegean seaboard (facing Cyprus).

Due to its location in south-eastern Europe, Greece is the only country involved in two transnational neighbourhood programmes, namely the Mediterranean Sea programme and the Black Sea

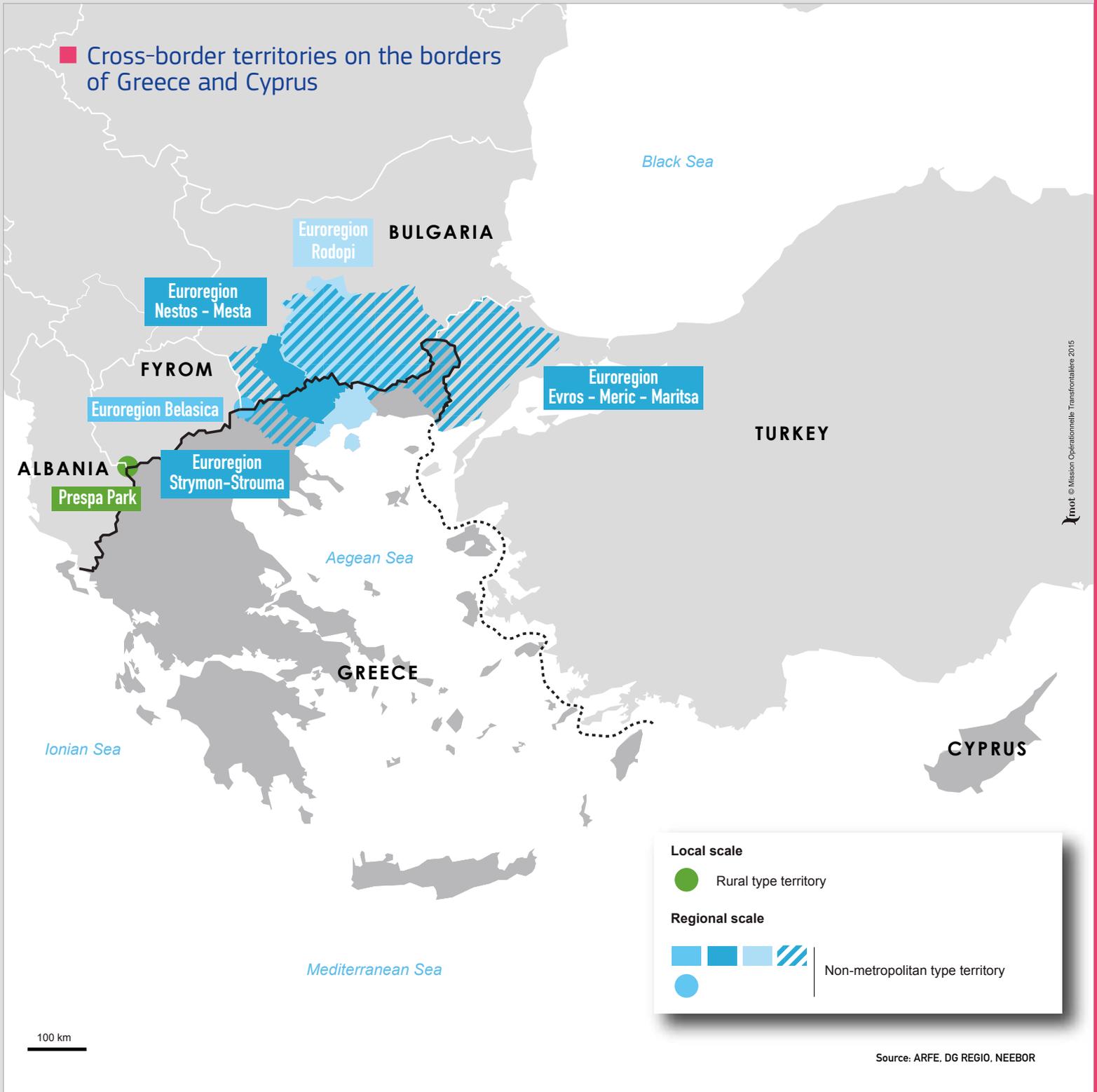


Cross-border fight against wild fires (Greece, Cyprus)

programme, which includes seven other countries in addition to Russia and Turkey. Finally, Greece is part of the Adriatic and Ionian macroregion strategy with Italy and other Adriatic countries.

Nine euroregions, not all of which are fully delimited yet, are dotted along the northern land border of Greece, which was sealed until 1989. The Mesta-Nestos Euroregion, the initiative for which dates back to 1992, enabled Bulgaria to establish a partnership with an EU Member State. Two NGOs, one on each side, together formed the cooperation organisation. It links the regional district of Thrace and East Macedonia in Greece with the region of Blagoevgrad on the banks of the River Mesta in Bulgaria. Other euroregions were established in the early years of this century. The first, the Rodopi Euroregion, overlaps with the Mesta-Nestos Region and links an association of 21 Bulgarian municipalities in four districts (Smolyan, Kardzhali, Plovdiv, Pazardzhik) and the Greek Delta Rodopi regional cooperation organisation, which comprises six local and regional

authorities (one a prefecture and the others municipalities) and a chamber of commerce and industry. A year later, another euro-regional cooperation project was launched (Evros-Maritsa-Meric), linking Bulgarian, Turkish and Greek authorities. This was the first euroregion initiative to involve Turkey. One last euroregion was established with Bulgaria, namely the Strymon-Strouma Euroregion). Four other euroregions, again with somewhat imprecise boundaries, have been initiated on the borders with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Albania. Finally, there are two euroregions in the Aegean Sea linking Greek islands with neighbouring Turkish territory. Cross-border cooperation projects have therefore sprung up recently on borders which were long sealed, either because no relations existed (as with Albania and Bulgaria) or because they were marked by tensions and disputes (in the case of Turkey). Cooperation now takes place across internal EU borders (with Bulgaria) and across external borders with candidate countries (Albania and FYROM).



2.14 Slovenia and Croatia

Slovenia and Croatia were both republics in a federation before gaining independence. In that sense they are somewhat similar to the Baltic States. However, the similarity ends there. Although they gained their independence at the same time, the process leading up to it was different. Moreover, Yugoslavia bore little resemblance to the USSR. By maintaining close relations with Western Europe, it ensured that its borders with its 'Western' neighbours (Italy and Austria) were easily passable. There was therefore a fundamental difference in their geopolitical circumstances. Slovenia and Croatia are therefore close, both physically and psychologically, to central Europe. Although these two countries have a number of features in common, the fact that they joined the EU at different times is in itself quite significant. Croatia was the last country to join the EU, in 2013, and it may be that this time lag has affected territorial cooperation in these two Member States.

Yugoslavia was created in 1918 during the dismantling of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and against a background of complex and sporadic emerging tensions and nationalist movements in this part of south-eastern Europe, which was occupied by the Ottoman Empire and is referred to in western Europe as the Balkans. From the day it was founded, Yugoslavia was home to peoples who each considered themselves to be very different. After World War II, the republic took the name of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and adopted a communist regime. It comprised six federated states, namely Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. In 1948, Marshal Tito, the Prime Minister, broke off relations with the USSR. Yugoslavia did not therefore join the Warsaw Pact in 1955 and helped found the Non-Aligned Movement. A change to the constitution in 1963 greatly increased the autonomy of the six republics in the federation. Each republic was based on a majority nation, but the population was far from homogenous in each republic. New changes were made in 1974, when the republics were given the right of secession. The upheavals in Europe in 1989 also impacted on the Yugoslav republics. Croatia and Slovenia held free elections, leading to a change of government, and sought to renegotiate the federal pact. These two states jointly

declared their independence in June 1991. Federal troops (mainly Serbs) invaded the two republics, but Slovenia, which had few Yugoslavs of other ethnicities, managed to oust them. War broke out in Croatia, however, and Yugoslavia claimed the eastern part, which was largely inhabited by Serbs. The conflict initially led to a loss of territory, which was ultimately reconquered. The war ended in 1995. The Dayton Agreement, signed in December of that year, put an end to the conflict between the various nations in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina, with which Croatia shared a very long border. Serbia recognised the border with Croatia the following year. The borders between Slovene and Croat territories were based on the dividing lines in place in pre-1991 Yugoslavia. The war had emphasised the differences between the two countries, which had previously enjoyed close relations while they were still part of the same federation. If anything, the accession of Slovenia to the EU in 2004 and then to the Schengen Area in 2007 consolidated the border between the two countries. It was hoped that Croatia's accession in 2013 would facilitate rapprochement and the development of cross-border interactions. Slovenia opposed the accession of Croatia for several years on the grounds of an outstanding dispute over their maritime border in the Adriatic Sea. Following mediation by Sweden, the two countries agreed that a commission should be set up to define the border. That agreement is currently being reviewed by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, which tries to find peaceful solutions to the territorial disputes brought before it.

With populations of 4.4 million and 2 million respectively, Croatia and Slovenia are among the least populated EU Member States. Slovenia is three times smaller and much more compact than Croatia, which is shaped like a crab's claw. Slovenia only has a narrow seaboard, while Croatia has a long coastline and numerous islands close to the shore. The two countries share a long border, which follows a fairly complex route. All of Slovenia's borders became internal EU borders on the accession of Croatia. Slovenia borders Italy, Austria and Hungary, which also adjoins Croatia. Croatia has a very long border with Bosnia and Herzegovina and



Dubrovnik, Croatia

a much shorter border with Serbia, part of which follows the Danube. Both are currently external EU borders. The six-kilometre-wide Neum corridor divides Croatian territory and gives Bosnia and Herzegovina access to the Adriatic Sea. The County of Dubrovnik-Neretva is therefore a Croatian exclave which has a very short border with Montenegro.

Slovenia and Croatia are jointly involved in several transnational programmes for the period 2014-2020 (the Danube Area and Central Europe) and in two macroregional strategies (the Adriatic and Ionian Macroregion and the Danube Macroregion). Slovenia, however, is part of the Alpine Region, while Croatia is not. Similarly, the two countries do not always belong to the same working communities: Slovenia belongs to the Carinthia-Slovenia working community and Croatia belongs to the working community of the Danube countries. However, both states belong to the Alpe-Adria working community. These partnerships are important in that they reveal the countries' joint interests and differences. The Adriatic is undeniably a common concern, whereas the Alps are an opportunity for territorial cooperation for Slovenia, as is the Danube for Croatia. Interestingly, the Croatian territories bordering on Slovenia, which used to be included in the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), are now involved in Interreg V cross-border cooperation programmes, while the Croatian territories bordering on Serbia and on Bosnia and Herzegovina are now

covered by the IPA (Croatia-Bosnia and Croatia-Serbia programmes). This extension allows new regions to become more involved in cross-border cooperation.

There are few cross-border cooperation bodies. Those established at local level with Italy (Gorizia-Nova Gorica, Julian Alps Transboundary Ecoregion) and at regional level with Austria (the Styria-North Slovenia Euregio) linking associations of local and regional authorities are described in the section on Italy. The most visible cooperation initiative is the Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregion set up in 1998 between Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Hungary. This was driven primarily by economic stakeholders, with the chambers of commerce of Pécs-Baranya (Hungary), Osijek-Baranja County (Croatia) and Tuzla Canton (Bosnia-Herzegovina) partnering the local and regional authorities in the three countries. The Dráva-Mura Euroregion is another trinational cooperation initiative with Hungary. Most initiatives seem to be concentrated on the land borders of Croatia and Slovenia at present. However, the maritime dimension is present, albeit at supraregional level, in the Adriatic and Ionian Euroregion.

All in all, the belated development of cross-border cooperation in these two countries may be explained by the fact that they only recently joined the EU. Initiatives appear to be more developed and



Mine-clearing operations on the border between Croatia and Hungary

more visible on Slovenia's borders than on Croatia's. This may be due to the nine-year time lag between the two accessions, but this gap should narrow as projects are developed under Interreg V and the IPA. The challenge here is both to promote cooperation and to pave the way for lasting reconciliation with the other countries in the Balkans.

■ Cross-border territories on the borders of Slovenia and Croatia

AUSTRIA

HUNGARY

Euregio Styria – North East Slovenia

Trilateral Nature Park Goricko-Raab-Őrség

Julian Alps Transboundary Ecoregion

Euroregion Muránia

Euroregion Drave-Mur

★ Gorizia-Nova Gorica

SLOVENIA

CROATIA

Mur-Drava-Danube Transboundary Biosphere Reserve

SERBIA

ITALY

Danube-Drava-Sava Euroregion

Adriatic Ionian Euroregion

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Euroregion Drina-Sava-Majeвица

MONTENEGRO

Adriatic Sea

ALBANIA

Local scale

- Urban type territory
- Rural type territory

Regional scale

- ■ ■ ■ Non-metropolitan type territory

Supraregional scale

- Non-metropolitan type territory

- ★ European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)

100 km

Conclusion



Conclusion

The purpose of this work was to review the development of territorial cooperation in the EU since 1990. Over the course of these 25 years, cooperation has expanded, intensified and become more complex.

From the EU's perspective, the Interreg programmes introduced in 1990 formed a framework for developing policies with a spatial dimension. In the first phase, up to the mid-1990s, the focus was on local projects. The second phase enabled transnational or inter-regional programmes to be adopted, thereby increasing the prospects for partnerships while at the same time promoting small-scale cooperation over wider areas. The geopolitical upheavals in the late 1980s/early 1990s motivated the European Commission to propose programmes such as Phare and Tacis to support the changes taking place in Central and Eastern Europe, including on the EU's borders. Finally, the introduction of transnational programmes in the late 1990s, which in a sense foreshadowed the macroregional strategies launched in the late 2000s, marked the start of a third phase. This suggests that an elaborate spatial vision had been acquired, as the aim was to involve state operators in cooperation initiatives in areas with shared problems and thus increase social and territorial cohesion in Europe.

This development formed part of a feedback process in the run-up to enlargement, after the emergence of spatial planning strategies in the 1990s (Europe 2000 and 2000+ reports; European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) in 1999). First, the review carried out after each Interreg phase allowed adjustments to be made for the next phase. Second, certain programmes could be adapted and incorporated in each new phase, such as the REGEN initiative under Interreg IIB, Phare CBC under Interreg III and IPA CBC under Interreg IV. Finally, the accession of new countries introduced new territorial management issues. When Finland and Sweden joined the EU in 1995, a sixth regional policy objective was adopted for the 1994-1999 programming period for extremely sparsely populated regions. The prospect of enlargement to the east prompted moves to refine or reform the programmes adopted in the early 1990s.

For example, the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) was introduced in 2000 and the neighbourhood policy between the EU and non-EU countries was adopted in 2004.

The table (see page 162), which maps the chronological development of territorial cooperation programmes since 1990, clearly illustrates how Commission programmes have expanded, intensified and become more complex.

The aim of territorial cooperation policy is to transform national land management concerns into European issues, in other words to propose a common response at supranational level to issues arising in similar ways in several national territories. The idea is not to ignore the issues of each individual country, but to propose an overall vision. The adoption of the ESDP and the new thinking on territorial cohesion (in the 2008 Green Paper, and the 2007 and 2011 Territorial Agenda) encouraged the EU — within an intergovernmental framework and with strong support from the Commission — to propose real management guidelines for its territory, which is seen as an inclusive whole rather than merely the sum of its national parts. By introducing the concept of eligible territory, establishing cross-border programmes between local and regional authorities in two or more Member States, bringing together local and regional authorities over wider areas, involving governments as and when necessary, and proposing new think tanks and action plans (on macroregional strategies, sea basins, etc.), cooperation has introduced a more territorial dimension, which may help to foster a real sense of belonging. Managing a mountain range stretching across several national territories and developing a strategy for a maritime area require stakeholders to develop a common vision based on an awareness that they share the same space. Thus the geometry of cooperation varies: it may be based on the notion of proximity (as in Interreg A programmes), the notion of continuity (Interreg B) or the concept of a network (Interreg C). When the various formats proposed by the European institutions are taken into account, European territory is seen to be organised into a set of interlaced and intertwined structures which, at the same time, form a global framework in which



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cooperation can take place. Andreas Faludi, professor of planning policy, talks of a 'learning machine'⁽¹⁾ and 'framing integration'⁽²⁾. Cooperation allows a semic system to be introduced which is identical for all territorial stakeholders. On that basis, the partnerships formed are all organised in a similar way, but are distinguished from each other by their local or regional characteristics. The term

- 1 http://www.researchgate.net/publication/23540068_The_learning_machine_European_integration_in_the_planning_mirror (accessed on 02/06/2015).
- 2 FALUDI, A., *Cohesion, coherence, cooperation: European Spatial Planning coming of age?*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2010, p.137.

'territorial cooperation', which has been used by the EU since 2007 and is recognised as a fully-fledged objective of cohesion policy, describes a vast set of programmes and arrangements designed to integrate the various components of the EU. That integration involves forging ties between territorial stakeholders operating within different national frameworks. Cross-border cooperation forms part of that effort, based on the idea of proximity. Transnational and interregional cooperation initiatives cover larger areas and bring stakeholders together to address shared concerns. These two dimensions show that the proximity-based approach has been replaced by continuity- and network-based approaches. Both cross-border and

transnational forms of cooperation are based on a territorial dimension. A sense of belonging may thus emerge or be consolidated in a local or regional, urban or rural cross-border area. However, transnational cooperation more specifically revolves around spatial planning. In the end, all forms of cooperation involve some form of multilevel governance. They link stakeholders active at different levels with each other and with the EU. Thus a 'European res publica', in the sense of a common weal that transcends the states while at the same time linking them with all the local and regional authorities involved, is gradually emerging. Everything contributes to integration, through the development of networks and links and thanks to the emergence of common elements (such as challenges, territory, or management frameworks). This was why the objective of territorial cohesion was introduced in the Treaty. The creation of a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) thus provides the local and regional authorities of the Member States and their neighbours with a legal structure that can manage and implement European projects. A Europe of territorial cooperation brings to mind the 'Europe of translation'⁽³⁾ posited by philosophy professor Etienne Balibar, i.e. a framework in which links have to be forged between different ways of thinking and different languages, which requires mediation and common mechanisms. However, that overall framework extends beyond the EU, as both the Instrument for Pre-accession Aid and the neighbourhood policy or the macroregional strategies are applied on Europe's external borders.

Despite the general context which favours the spread and development of cooperation at European level, fundamental differences persist at national level. The general philosophy at European level is that, because of its transnational and interregional aspects, cooperation concerns all territories and not just border territories. Yet cooperation started with the introduction of the Interreg programmes, thanks to local initiatives in western Europe and Scandinavia. Without doubt,

the cooperation framework that exists between the States creates an atmosphere conducive to cross-border cooperation, and the Council of Europe (with the legal framework of the Madrid Outline Convention), the European Community and later the European Union (with Interreg and EGTCs) and regional sub-groupings (such as Benelux and the Nordic Council) have all worked in that direction. However, it would be over-simplistic to think that this is an expression of a top-down approach. In fact, it is often the local and regional authorities that take the initiative on cross-border cooperation. The cooperation frameworks that have been developed in western Europe since the late 1950s have often started off as fairly informal arrangements, but they have given rise to real partnerships. Also, the close ties and mutual in-depth knowledge of cross-border authorities, which sometimes date back decades, facilitate project development when Interreg programmes are established. In the Mediterranean countries and the Central and Eastern European countries, the start of cross-border cooperation coincided with the establishment of Interreg programmes. That suggests that local and regional authorities in those areas are more dependent on the European Community and also that in some cases there were previously no strong functional cross-border relations. Cooperation started in the second half of the 1980s in the Mediterranean countries, and shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall in Central and Eastern European countries, once the climate was more conducive to opening their borders.

Overall, territorial cooperation has intensified in all EU Member States since the 1990s, with good take-up rates for the various Community programmes and the development of cooperation bodies on a more or less formal footing. The institutional reasons for cooperation often hide cultural reasons. The establishment of institutional frameworks at European level does not necessarily mean that they will be broadly disseminated. In fact, in numerous areas of Europe, cooperation takes the form of an association. This has the advantage of being more flexible than a formal framework, which might impose serious constraints and conflict with national legislation. It is hard to say if there is a correlation between a high degree of institutionalisation and the effectiveness of a cooperation

3 ■ BALIBAR, E., 'Europe as borderland', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27 (2), 2009, pp. 190-215.

initiative. However, there are enormous differences depending on the geographical area concerned. In the north (Scandinavia, the United Kingdom and Ireland) cooperation is often informal, whereas in the west (Germany, France and Benelux) and south (Spain, Portugal and Italy), there are numerous formal cross-border cooperation structures and several EGTCs have been established. In the east (the Central and Eastern European countries and Austria), there are a number of less formal structures (associations and working communities), but they tend to be converted to EGTCs after a few years in some countries (Hungary, for example). Finally, in the south-east (Slovenia, Croatia, Cyprus and Greece), cooperation has yet to find the forms and frameworks best suited to the situation in the region. There may be several reasons why these institutional forms are more or less popular. First, an institutional framework may be perceived as a precondition for cooperation in some countries (in southern Europe), whereas in other countries (in northern Europe) partnerships tend to be based more on trust and the flexibility of a functional approach. Second, a long history of cooperation is conducive to a greater degree of institutionalisation (in western Europe). Conversely, more recent cross-border cooperation initiatives (in eastern and south-eastern Europe) tend to be less formal, although they may be put on an institutional footing a few years later. All in all, there is no single model for cross-border cooperation and various forms exist that are suited to the local or regional culture and context. On a border, that also involves linking two different national territorial systems. This initial review of the history of territorial cooperation illustrates how partnerships have spread and how a web of cooperation has been woven across the EU and around its edges, which the new 2014-2020 programming period should help to develop further. Against this dynamic backdrop, few initiatives have failed. However, the bones of this review need to be fleshed out with systematic field studies of the genesis and evolution of cooperation initiatives based on a standard matrix in order to produce a detailed basis for comparison.

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
INTERREG A	PILOT PHASE INTERREG 1989-1990		INTERREG I A 1990-1993			INTERREG II A 1994-1999						INTERREG III A 2000-2006							
INTERREG B		REG-REGEN				INTERREG II B 1994-1999						INTERREG III B 2000-2006							
INTERREG C									INTERREG II C 1997-1999										
PHARE CBC						PHARE CBC 1994-1999						PHARE CBC 2000-2006							
PHARE CREDO									PHARE CREDO 1997-2000										
TACIS CBC						TACIS CBC 1994-1999						TACIS CBC 2000-2006							
MEDA							MEDA 1995-1999				MEDA II 2000-2006								
ISPA												ISPA 2000-2006							
SAPARD												SAPARD 2000-2006							
CARDS												CARDS CBC 2000-2006							
INTERREG C												INTERREG III C 2000-2006							
URBACT												URBACT I							
INTERACT												INTERACT I							
ESPON												ESPON I							
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
INTERREG IV A 2007-2013							INTERREG V A 2014-2020						
INTERREG IV B 2007-2013							INTERREG V B 2014-2020						
IPA CBC 2007-2013							IPA CBC 2014-2020						
ENPI CBC 2007-2013							ENI CBC 2014-2020						
INTERREG IV C 2007-2013							INTERREG EUROPE 2014-2020						
URBACT II							URBACT III						
INTERACT II 2007-2013							INTERACT III 2014-2020						
ESPON 2013							ESPON 2020						
2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020

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