



LINES OF EXCLUSION AS ARENAS OF CO-OPERATION:
RECONFIGURING THE EXTERNAL BOUNDARIES OF EUROPE
POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND PERCEPTIONS

E · X · L · I · N · E · A



Enlargement and Wider Europe: The Perspective from EXLINEA

May 2004 was of particular significance to the EXLINEA project and its project teams. On the one hand, the EU-25 became reality: the European Union has extended its borders eastward towards Russia and the Ukraine, and southward towards Mediterranean and Middle Eastern regions. On the other hand, geopolitical concepts of a Wider Europe (WE) acquired a new urgency with the Commission's Strategy Paper and its intentions to accelerate its greater regional agenda of partnership with "non-EU" neighbours.

One of the central questions that emerges from these simultaneous processes is one of "re-bordering" in all of its multifaceted senses. Viewed from the co-operation perspective, particularly the regional and local cross-border kind, enlargement and WE provide an overlying geopolitical context that is in many ways promising but in several ways contradictory.

The "Wider Europe" initiative, unveiled last year by the EU Commission, expresses a will on the part of the EU to avoid future divisions due to socio-economic disparities, political divergences and conflicts of interest. This is to be achieved through comprehensive co-operation agendas that transcend political, economic and cultural dividing lines. The EU appears genuinely committed EU to an "alternative" geopolitics, based on partnership and non-exploitative interdependence. This, however, requires regional partnerships that can flexibly manage heterogeneous economic and socio-political realities.

At the same time, however, economic particularism and selective border regimes could have profoundly negative effects on the eastern border regions of the new EU-25 (and particularly of the new member states). This could also exacerbate development gaps between the EU-25 and non-EU states. Additionally, while free trade and open borders are upheld as necessary for economic partnership, securitisation and stricter regulation of the EU's external boundaries threaten to limit the extent to which transnational civil society and socio-cultural co-operation can flourish. Stifling border interaction that is vital to economic and social development locally could confirm fears of a "Fortress Europe" syndrome and suspicions of neo-colonialist or even "neo-imperialist" designs on the part of the EU.

If it is to succeed with its Wider Europe initiative, the EU must open up possibilities for a genuine transnationalisation (rather than a strict "Europeanisation") of space, extending networks, alliances and development opportunities to regions neighbouring the EU.

By: Silke Matzeit and James Scott

Free University of Berlin

EXLINEA Project Progress

EXLINEA's May 2003 workshop in Nijmegen marked the midpoint of our consortium's research activities. Having completed background reports and preparation of the case studies, all teams have now embarked on extensive field work, collecting data via standardised questionnaires, interviews and document analysis.

Preliminary results confirm the general dichotomy of pragmatic (e.g. issue and problem-oriented) co-operation and everyday (e.g. "emotional" and/or "opportunistic") practices of cross-border interaction: up to now there has been only partial evidence of a mutually beneficial integration of the two. Furthermore, a relative lack of resources (despite EU funding) and expertise as well as more structural hindrances continue to make the development, maintenance and expansion of cross-border networks and projects difficult. This is not to say that cross border cooperation (CBC) is merely a question of symbolic politics at the EU's external borders. Many of the actors interviewed in the case study regions see the gradual development of durable cooperative structures between local governments, public agencies, universities, NGOs and other organisations – cooperative structures that could form the basis for positive transnational social capital.

There are, of course, specific contexts that are especially conducive to CBC. Cultural overlap due to the existence of transnational ethnic groups has, particularly in the case of most of Hungary's borders, been an "empowering" factor. A variety of technical and administrative circumstances also favour small-scale, locally based co-operation rather than grand euroregional concepts. Finally, pragmatic approaches that focus on projects and that eschew complicated institutional arrangements have shown to be quite effective as well.

At another level of analysis, it appears that the EU's perceptions, practices and policies towards the new external borders are characterised by contested political agendas that make the development of an "essential" and overarching cross-border region model unlikely. Tensions are evident between the objectives of "positive interdependence" and border securitisation - both explicitly mentioned in Wider Europe and New Neighbourhood Initiative memoranda. Furthermore, criticism has been leveled at the EU's plans to maintain fragmented programming mechanisms in place after 2006, perpetuating EU versus "non-EU" distinctions in the promotion of transnational partnerships. While the consequences of such fundamental policy conflicts are as yet unclear, the lack of a pre-defined EU template for cross-border regionalism could provide more latitude for locally developed solutions for regional problems at the external boundaries.

During that last 18 months, EXLINEA team members have disseminated information and knowledge generated by project activities via conferences, panels, publications (both completed and in progress) and university courses. An end-user-oriented survey has also been carried out in order to gauge the possible relevance of EXLINEA research activities to the needs of public-sector and civil society practitioners. Last, but certainly not least, EXLINEA has been in contact with other research consortia, both within and outside the EU-RTD framework, that deal with issues of borders, border conflicts, security and co-operation.

By: James Scott

Project Coordinator



EXLINEA project workshop

Nijmegen, the Netherlands, 14-15 May 2004

The third EXLINEA meeting was held in Nijmegen, after previous meetings in Tallinn and Debrecen in 2003. The meeting was kicked-off on Friday evening when the in-depth interviews were discussed by a section of the group. Next morning, Roos Pijpers of the hosting Nijmegen Centre for Border Research (NCBR) opened the workshop. The meeting was presided over by project co-ordinator James Scott and his assistant Silke Matzeit.

The first subject of the second day of the workshop were aspects relating to EXLINEA's overall progress, including some essential technical aspects. After that, the final report of the Supranational Level Studies was presented by NCBR. The next subjects were the 'Wider Europe' and 'New Neighbourhood' initiatives and their implications for the EXLINEA-project. Some critical remarks could be heard with regard to these incipient border-relevant policies.

The afternoon session was rather lively and included presentations from the case study areas that were both interesting as enjoyable (see below). The discussion on the research methodology in general, and on the questionnaire in particular, was also animated and focused on tensions existing between the highly contextual nature of the various case-study areas versus the comparability-requirements inherent to our research. On the morning of the third day an additional short meeting on this subject was held, resulting in an agreement to gather later this year in Warsaw for progress-monitoring purposes.

The meeting was given a further impetus by the presence of EXLINEA Scientific Officer from the European Commission, Mr. Aris Apollonatos.. He provided many important critical insights from his wider, comparative perspective of research on boundaries, social conflict and co-operation. As Mr. Apollonatos commented, one of the central challenges of EXLINEA is the integration of more policy-oriented research with approaches that take perceptual data and symbolic orders into consideration.

By: Roald Plug, Nijmegen Centre for Border Research; Silke Matzeit and James Scott, Free University of Berlin

Photo: Workshop in Nijmegen



Research on the Policy of the European Commission towards the Re-bordering of the European Union

The supra-national level studies research report was prepared to complement individual case studies of emergent cross-border ‘regime’ dynamics situated at the future eastern borders of the European Union, providing an overview of the perceptions, policies and practices underlining the proposed governance of this frontier by key EU institutions.

In the Theoretical Framework, developed for EXLINEA at the beginning of the project period, two over-arching and interrelated ‘meta-themes’ were defined from this literature. These meta-themes, divided into sub-themes, were the following:

- 1 What/where is the European Union:
 - Drawing Eastern EU-borders: who’s in and who’s out?
 - What model is the European Union?
- 2 Openness and closure of the external border
 - Cross-border political networking
 - Migration, border control and citizenship

The overall research process has been characterised by three stages; (1) data collection, (2) data analysis and (3) elaboration of the research report. The data collection stage specifically concentrated on those documents produced by EU policy-making institutions actively involved in the field(s) of border regimes, cross-border co-operation and migration/security issues. These institutions include the Directorates General for ‘Enlargement’, ‘Regional Policy’, ‘Internal Market’ and ‘Justice & Home Affairs’ within the European Commission, as well as the European Council and the European Parliament. The documented sources include, amongst others, basic EU-principles, Commission communications and proposals, political statements, press material and reports of debates. In addition to the collection of written source material, various interview sessions were held with representatives of relevant EU policy-making institutions.

As is evinced in this report, no internal EU consensus exists on the question of the nature and timing of future membership. Moreover, the authors consider it significant that no official interviewed for this study ventured to conjecture on what form of territorial entity the European Union will or should be consequent upon enlargement. Given that an underlying cartographic bias would appear to guide much of the Commission’s thinking regarding the direction and sequencing of enlargement (in the sense of a progressively eastward ‘domino theory’ of expansion), the absence of a ‘vision’ for the new European policy-in-the-making should raise concerns that at the heart of the Commission functionalist economic criteria may be gaining the upper hand in visualizing Europe’s future territorial identity.

In the absence of a grand plan governing the EU’s future outward boundary line, it may be expected that judicious use of EU structural funds may facilitate ‘bottom-up’ solutions for the cross-border regions that the EU shares with non-EU partners. As the INTERREG cross-border funding program increasingly shifts focus from Western to Eastern European accession states and their neighbours, this matter will become all the more pressing given the accelerating socio-economic inequalities that will surely be produced as a consequence of reinforcing the exclusionary mantle of the Schengen Agreement

The full report is available at: www.exlinea.org/

By: O. Kramsch, R. Pijpers, R. Plug and H. van Houtum

NIJMEGEN CENTRE FOR BORDER RESEARCH

“ judicious use of EU structural funds may facilitate ‘bottom-up’ solutions for the cross-border regions ”

The Finnish-Russian border region

During the latest half-year period of the Exlinea project, the Finnish research team has concentrated on planning and testing the fieldwork phase. The fieldwork includes both standardised questionnaire and in-depth interviews, and an optional newspaper screening of regional and national level newspapers. In the Finnish case, it is considered vital to broaden the knowledge of the background conditions of cross-border interaction through the newspaper screening.

The fieldwork phase, in the Finnish-Russian border region, began with standardised questionnaire interviews in the two case study regions. The respondents were chosen from diverse actor groups of public and private sectors, and non-governmental organisations. The primary qualification criteria of the interviewees, were that the organisations should be closely involved in cross-border interaction with Russia.

Altogether 40 standardised questionnaire interviews will be accomplished in the Finnish-Russian border region. Until now, 13 interviews have been conducted in the northern, and nine in the southern Finnish case study regions. On the Russian side, the respective numbers are 9 and 13. Preliminary results show that both the Finnish and Russian actors believe to benefit from cross-border interaction and see the border rather as an opportunity than a barrier.

Forthcoming fieldwork activities, in the Finnish-Russian case study regions, include the completion of the standardised questionnaire interviews and the in-depth interview implementation. This work will be done during summer 2004.

By: Juha Ruusuvoori, Karelian Institute

UNIVERSITY OF JOENSUU

Photo: Salpaline fortifications in the Finnish eastern border region. Hundreds of kilometres of barrier lines against tanks were built by the Finns during the Second World War.

New Book

Cross-Border Governance in the European Union

**Olivier Kramsch and Barbara Hooper (eds.) (2004).
London: Routledge.**

The term governance has become a catchword designating contemporary shifts in power and rule 'beyond' the nation-state, upwards to supra-national institutions - such as the European Union, and the WTO - and downwards to the sub-national territorial units of cities and regions. This volume attempts to draw debates on governance, at both of these levels, into the spaces of cross-border regionalism in Europe today.

Embodying both supra-national and sub-national dynamics of contemporary forms of governance, cross-border regions (or euro-regions) enable observation of the fitful progress and contradictions of the multi-level polity that is contemporary Europe. Presenting case studies from throughout the EU as exemplars of wider 'border regimes', the volume identifies the practical and theoretical stakes involved in governing Europe's new cross-border territories as part of a newly reinvigorated 'regional question'. In Europe's Euro-regions, it is argued, issues of democracy, identity, sovereignty, citizenship and scale must be re-thought when 'a border runs through it'.

The volume utilises a diversity of perspectives and a range of case studies to examine modes of governance emerging across the nation-state borders of Europe. It will interest students and researchers of EU borders, as well as those working on issues of transnational governance generally.

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Routledge Research in Transnationalism

Series Editor: Steven Vertovec, University of Oxford



The Estonian-Russian border region

After Estonia joined the EU on May 1, 2004, there has been much discourse as to the nature of the eastern border. The threat of the new „iron curtain“ is contrasted with the new benefits from the cooperation in the framework of the New Neighbourhood Instrument for the border regions of both Estonia and Russia. Unlike some other new members of the EU, Estonia has already established a full visa regime with its eastern neighbour in 2000, abolishing the simplified border-crossing regime in the border regions to comply with the Schengen Agreement. The border treaty with Russia is still in limbo, and the temporary control line now functions as the external border of the EU. Thus, Estonia's accession to the EU has not led to any major changes in the nature of CBC.

As a result of the pilot interviews in the border regions and the overview of the existing policy analysis and framework, we have determined the focus areas and actors of the cross-border cooperation between Estonia and Russia. The two areas represent the Narva-Ivangorod twin-town complex on the north-eastern border of Estonia and the Euroregion „Pskov-Livonia“ on the south-eastern Estonian border. One of our focus groups in the Narva-Ivangorod border region would be the representatives of the local authorities (e.g., the members of the Commission on CBC in the Narva City Council). Establishing the contacts at the level of the Narva and Ivangorod City Councils and the information exchange have been the most successful forms of cooperation. The administration at the county level is less involved in CBC since being the states' representatives, county administrations can conduct CBC according to the procedures of international cooperation, which would significantly slow down the process. Thus, in southern Estonia it is the Union of Municipalities, and not the county administrations, that cooperate with the Russian local and regional administrations. NGOs, such as the Narva Business Centre, are the second focus group of our possible interviewees. Although NGOs are not very well developed in the border areas, the few ones that exist are among the most active actors in CBC. Their activity is largely project-based and is funded from the EU programs PHARE and TACIS. In south-eastern Estonia, the most important groups would be the members of the Euroregion „Pskov-Livonia“. Businesses would be another important focus groups that would help clarify the lack of economic cooperation in the border regions.

Local actors in Narva see the border issues as becoming a strong priority for local development and are positively tuned towards the intensification of cross-border cooperation and a possible creation for the Euro-region with its Russian partner regions. However, one cannot overlook a number of obstacles such as the absence of a Estonian-Russian border treaty, lack of competence at the local level, lack of support for the local cross-border initiatives from the centre, a small degree of autonomy for the local actors and dominance of the negative stereotypes. Cold political relations between Estonia and Russia, and the difficulties of the bureaucratic procedures both in Estonia and Russia, among other factors, are to blame for the lack of CBC (2004, pilot interview). There is also CBC at the grass-root level in the cultural sphere but it is not institutionalized being based mostly on the old networks (2004, pilot interview).

In the south-eastern border region, the Euro-region project „Pskov-Livonia“ has received more media coverage and attention in academic circles. Previously, the Euro-region existed under the name of the Council for Cooperation of Border Regions, Võru-Aluksne-Pskov, initiated as early as 1996. Being based on the existing networks and personal contacts, the Council was quickly formed but did not prove to be an active instrument of CBC. On the 15th of October 2003, the administration of the Pskov oblast signed an agreement to transform the Council into the Euro-region with juridical status in all three countries and in the international area. The Euro-region has already applied to become a member of the AEER, which would contribute to the successful establishment and functioning of this CBC mechanism in relations with the EU.

By: Eiki Berg, Julia Boman

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The Polish-Ukrainian border region – Chances and obstacles of future CBC cooperation

The EU enlargement and the introduction of Schengen rules on the Polish – Ukrainian border are facts of great importance to cross border co-operation in the region. The Polish – Ukrainian border has become an external border of the EU. In the case of Poland and the Ukraine, there are some ties between these two countries that may prevent the establishment of a new line of division within Europe. First of all, these are cultural, historic and linguistic similarities, as well as the existence of ethnic minorities on both sides of the border. Secondly, Poland regards the Ukraine as a key partner in the geopolitical arena. These two countries are also committed to upholding a document regarding the strategic partnership between Poland and the Ukraine - Poland was an active promoter of the invitation the Council of Europe and permanently supports Ukraine's Western NATO-oriented and EU-oriented policy. In addition, due to the geographical proximity, the situation in Ukraine influences the situation in Poland, and at the same time, has become an important issue for the new EU.

The new opportunities which may affect Polish- Ukraine transboundary cooperation after EU enlargement should be connected to a strengthening of the activities undertaken by the Euro-regions. On the basis of the experience from the Polish – German border region, it turns out such institutions play an active role in promoting dialogue between local authorities, businessmen and other actors involved in cross-border activities. They also provide a chance of exchanging knowledge, experience and information between partners from both countries. On the other hand, Euro-regions support the social integration among citizens of the region. Thanks to projects directed to average citizens (such as youth exchanges, common sport or cultural contests) they have a chance to recognize their neighbors and their every-day life.

The role and potential of the Euro-regions in the Polish – Ukrainian border should be strengthened by the EU - first of all, by financial resources, secondly, by professional business and administrative consulting activities. So far, the Euro-regions have had a rather symbolic importance – mainly because of their lack of resources. The situation has changed somewhat since funds from PHARE, CBC, and PHARE Tacis Programs became available in the late 1990's. In order to increase the efficiency of Euro-regions – and especially the Carpathian Euro-region, it should be divided into smaller parts (see the report on the German-Polish and Hungarian-Austrian border regions below). Such a large structure is difficult to manage and has less in common with local problems than in all other parts of the Euro-region (e.g. the Polish part of the Carpathian Euro-region hasn't many common local problems with Romania). In case of the Bug Euro-region, which is smaller, the cooperation is much more effective and has a better institutional basis.

The Polish – Ukrainian border region was, in the past, beyond the scope of state policy and neglected as a political periphery. This state of affairs still affects the current situation in the region. East Poland is now the most undeveloped region in the country. By contrast, West Ukraine is now one of the faster developing regions in that country; however most of the economic indicators are still below the average for Ukraine. This factor is regarded as one of the most important obstacles for effective cross-border co-operation between Poland and Ukraine. The thorny question is, therefore, whether cooperation between a weak EU region and, from an economic point of view, a relatively even weaker non-EU region will bring satisfactory effects for the whole transboundary region.

Another obstacle may be asymmetries with regard to political-administrative structures: power is much more centralized in the Ukraine and the autonomy of local authorities there is rather symbolic and very limited. This factor may play a significant role in cross-border co-operation, especially since CBC is important primarily from a local point of view and in terms scope of local government priorities. Using the greater part of EU resources requires the active participation of local actors and local institutional mechanism and will depend on their ability to make use of such funds and programs.

The general character of the new border appears to be a key question in the very near future – will it become a “new-iron curtain” or a line of real co-operation? Regardless of the answer, to the above stated question, one should be reminded, that Ukraine, after Turkey, is the biggest non-EU country that has expressed a will to become a EU member. On the other hand, despite this will, the Ukraine has not yet been offered the prospect of future membership.

By: Katarzyna Krok

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Ukraine post-Enlargement: Press Reactions to the EU's Move Eastward

The moment that millions of people across the continent have long been anticipating has finally arrived. There has been a massive expansion of the European Union, mostly to the East, integrating post-communist Central European economies into a re-united Europe. Some people had positive expectations about enlargement; others raised concerns about the administrative and budgetary consequences. But it is not only EU member states and the accession countries that have been following the process closely. The Ukraine – one of the EU's new neighbours to the East – has been observing everything just as carefully, with just as many hopes and fears for the future.

Analysing the Ukrainian press in the two weeks after enlargement leads to the conclusion that most people are quite pessimistic about the consequences of enlargement. In contrast to a couple of years ago, there are now only a few people with positive assessments about the geo-political and geo-economic changes caused by the EU appearing on Ukraine's borders. At the national level, opinion is more concerned with the loss of trade due to the EU enlargement (particularly after the EU again refused to grant the Ukraine market economy status at the end of April 2004), the tightening of security and border controls, and negative statements from Brussels about the chance of Ukraine ever joining 'the club' (re the speech given by the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, at the Enlargement ceremony in Dublin). For those living near the new border, enlargement has had clear and immediate consequences: longer queues at the Polish, Slovakian and Hungarian borders, a decline in turnover for local trade, a radical fall in the number of border crossings by Ukrainians (at the same time as visits by EU citizens are stable or growing), and so on. While Ukrainians on the Polish border have been queuing for about 24 hours, they have looked on angrily at the separate queue for EU nationals, where people move through passport control and customs procedures smoothly and quickly. This has already led some locals to protest against 'segregation' by blockading these so-called 'green corridors.'

It is fair to say that since May 1, Ukrainians have turned from 'Euro-optimists' into 'Euro-realists.' This is partly because the Ukrainian leadership had encouraged unrealistic hopes about enlargement without performing the radical reforms to strengthen both the market economy and democratic values which are fundamental criteria for accession. It is also partly because the European Commission has repeatedly failed to articulate a clear position about the future place of the Ukraine in the continent. So Euro-realism is likely to remain the prevailing mood in the near future, and it is up to the EU itself whether to try gradually to improve things, or whether to leave the Ukraine to reject integration, turn back towards Russia, and become a nation of Euro-pessimists. There are already warning signs among the section of the Ukrainian elite, which have actively promoted a policy of

European integration for the last ten years. Only a few days after enlargement, one of the most prominent supporters of integration within the Ukrainian government resigned. This is a serious loss for the whole movement, and is likely to be the first of many. It is obvious that a new, more sober and pragmatic period of Ukrainian-EU relations is beginning, replacing the previous era, which was full of grand expressions of dedication to the European ideal but short of practical measures to prove this.

The Ukrainian government recently admitted that the Ukraine had failed to follow the Polish model of European integration, and that there was no chance now that it could achieve the same level of negotiations as Poland had done. The new model proposed that relations with the EU is closer to that of Norway, Iceland, and Switzerland, which have strong links to the Union while keeping their distance from its institutions. This model is in line with the European Neighbourhood Policy, paving the way to access to the 'four freedoms', and the 'everything except institutions' concept it proposes to its 'ring of friends.' The Ukraine will now have to reconsider its whole relationship with the EU, basing it on realistic expectations and a re-prioritisation of its foreign policy. At the same time, the ever-strengthening partnership between Poland and the Ukraine offers, at least potentially, space for more constructive negotiations on future accession. Few in Europe would deny that the project of building a united Europe cannot be complete without the Ukraine. Sadly, at the current moment external actors such as the US are much more articulate about this than the EU has been.

By: Olga Mrinska

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Hungarian-Austrian and German-Polish Background Studies

What defines the REGION in a cross-border sense? The Hungarian-Austrian and German Polish border regions can look back at almost 15 years of experience in the gradual build-up of co-operation institutions and strategies. The comparison of these two cases is revealing in terms of the different means in which cross-border regional ideas are constructed and how practical day-to-day co-operation practice unfolds.

Departing from the regional development problems of the two areas, and generalizing socio-economic and other “hard” data, it is clear that these border regions suffer from a lack of endogenous innovative potential, a dearth of small and medium-sized enterprises, mediocre intraregional communications and pronounced urban-rural disparities. In absolute GDP and employment terms, the Hungarian-Austrian “region” (known as Westpannonia) profits from its proximity to the Vienna and Budapest agglomerations and a denser urban network, but the vulnerability of both regions to marginalisation within the new European economic context is quite comparable. These development issues are at the centre of the development story in the German-Polish and Hungarian-Austrian cases. Where the two regions diverge significantly is in their socio-political contexts for region-building.

Given the simultaneity of inclusion and exclusion in borderlands contexts, the quality of co-operation will to a great extent depend on the role political and civil society actors assume in promoting a regional idea and bridging cultural differences. The quality of the political message, however, is not only a local issue, it is subject to practices and discourses that operate at several different spatial levels and societal realms. In the case of the Austrian-Hungarian and Polish-German border regions, for example, a powerful geopolitical rationale – namely that of constructing a new East-West development axis within the EU - has provided both a discursive platform as well as a series of policy-centred practices that promote cross-border region-building. However, the strategies chosen to exploit geopolitical “advantages” and the region-building practices actually developed differ considerably.

The story behind Westpannonia is one of pragmatic incrementalism, learning-by-doing and a gradual process of institutionalisation. Incrementalism, however, is not an objective but a means. As working relationships have solidified, experience in joint project development accumulated and expertise in promoting regional interests increased, so has the capacity of regional actors to take on large-scale problems and projects. Westpannonia is “blessed” with more positive economic, structural and socio-cultural conditions for region-building than are present in most areas along the EU’s external borders. It was, in fact, an “unbordered” region within Hungary until 1922. However, the pragmatic nature of developing cross-border relationships deserves consideration as a “good” practice by other regions.

Cultural barriers, the artificiality of the border and a lack of

regional identity in much of the local population, especially on the Polish side, exacerbate the already difficult structural conditions for cbc on the German-Polish border. A high degree of institutional sophistication and multilevel governance in regional planning and development have only had modest impacts outside of environmental issues. What is emerging, on the other hand, is a learning process that is empowering local governments and groups to negotiate incremental improvements in their economic and political situation. This could prove the future basis for a more profound cross-border regionalism.

These case studies also highlight the selective nature of cross-border region-building. If anything has become clear in comparing the two cases, it is that cross-border regionalisation is inherently a process of socio-political construction and, in many, ways highly artificial. Cross-border regions do not create “monolithic” communities of interest, where citizens, political actors and the private sector participate equally in promoting co-operation. Instead, regionalisation in this case is a project of linking together actor groups and institutions with a stake in improved co-operation. These case studies also demonstrate that cross-border co-operation and region-building is a learning process: the more it is based on well-established links and working relationships, rather than on grand regional development schemes, the more it will be perceived as a realistic undertaking.

By: Silke Matzeit and James Scott

FREE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN

New Book

A határmentiség dimenziói. Magyarország és keleti államhatárai

*The dimensions of the border regional location.
Hungary and Its Eastern State Borders*

Baranyi, Béla.

Budapest–Pécs, Dialóg Campus Kiadó, 2004. 310 p.

This book deals with Hungary’s eastern borders, their historical genesis, changing geopolitical significance and their regional situation with regard to EU enlargement. The main objective of Baranyi’s book is twofold: on one hand the author examines how the borders imposed on Hungary after the 1920 Paris Peace Treaties have shaped regional development trajectories. On the other hand, Baranyi scrutinizes the new opportunities presented by EU enlargement and increasing cross-border interaction. Both Euroregional co-operation as well as the restrictions and requirements mandated by Schengen are contextual elements conditioning processes of “inclusion” and “exclusion” on Hungary’s borders with Romania and the Ukraine.

The Hungarian-Romanian and the Hungarian-Ukrainian border regions

The second and more comprehensive summary study has been completed and focuses on issues of Hungarian–Romanian and the Hungarian–Ukrainian cross-border co-operation. The case study report was made by researchers of the Hungarian team (Debrecen Department of the Centre for Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences). The study looks at the issues of the border location and the development of the cross-border relations from the perspective of national and sub-national levels and also from the aspect of local populations (the findings of this latter part of the essay were based on empirical, questionnaire surveys). The basic interdisciplinary basic research and the empirical studies examine “peripheries” in the border regions and the significance and prospects of cross-border relations as they relate to European integration processes, the separating or connecting role of state borders, and the new functions of the external EU borders. The analysis also highlights the situation of the border regions as “peripheries of the periphery”: the cross-border economic, social, cultural, institutional and ethnic relations; the gateway and mediating functions; the different interregional organisations; the expected consequences of the Schengen frontier guarding system and the new dimensions of the border’s regional position, etc. (The study, illustrated with figures and tables, as available on the website of EXLINEA.)

Field work has started, the progress has been good. Prominent persons in Romania, Hungary and the Ukraine have been interviewed. These persons mostly satisfied with the quality, content and structure of the questionnaire. Almost all interviewees were interested in the questionnaire survey, and in general in the motivation and the possible findings of the research programme. The interviewing and the summarising of the findings is continued in the coming months.

The acceptance of the accession of Hungary to the European Union was good on the whole in Hungary. Of course there was some fear and reluctance shown by some social groups (e.g. the agricultural population, small- and medium-size enterprise owners), especially because of the not always adequate information and deficient knowledge. The political elites and the media welcomed the accession, but with different emphases. The governing left-wing and liberal parties and the centrist powers close to them were enthusiastic about Hungary’s joining the European Union, whereas the right-wing parties of the former government made several critical remarks. Only the marginal right extremist and left extremist political powers displayed rejectionist attitudes.

By: Béla Baranyi

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The Northern Greek border regions

Following the completion of the final version of the standardized questionnaire in December 2003, the survey on empirical work taking place in the Northern Greek border region is in full progress. The questionnaire has been addressed to persons involved in the following groups.

- Mayors of important border cities
- Prefects of NUTS III border regions
- Regional administrators (NUTS II regions)
- Local / regional development agencies
- Other self government organizations representatives
- Chairmen of local / regional councils
- CSF Managing Authorities at the regional level
- Agencies promoting cooperation
- Universities or research institutes
- Local Chambers
- Local / Regional Industrial Associations
- Selected large firms with c-b experience
- Private research centers
- NGOs active in c-b cooperation
- Social networks of c-b cooperation
- Important local actors
(in the political, social or cultural sphere)
- Labor Unions
- v Minority group representatives

More specifically, the overall empirical work has been allocated to four groups from Greece, Albania, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, and Bulgaria. These groups are coordinated from the University of Thessaly in Greece.

By 31 May 2004, one hundred and forty (140) questionnaires were collected from all border regions of all the above countries. The actual aim is to exceed a gathering of more than three hundred (300) questionnaires before the end of June. The survey results will be presented at the 44th European Congress of the European Regional Science Association in Porto on 25-29 August 2004.

At the same time, the collection and survey of relevant official documents, political statements, press material, reports of debates, brochures, and local archival work is still in progress.

By: George Petrakos and Lefteris Topaloglou

The Moldova-Romania cross border cooperation in the framework of the “Upper Prut” Euroregion

“Upper Prut” The Euro-region is the one out of three Euro-regions with participation of Moldova and Romania, but unfortunately not much activity was witnessed here during the last year. Two major factors negatively influenced the situation: the further worsening of the Moldovan-Romanian inter-state relations and the administrative-territorial reform that was carried out in Moldova in May 2003. The latter reshaped the borders of the Euro-region on the Moldovan side. Due to it, instead of two bigger members Moldova has now six smaller ones. Since new people were appointed to the local public administration bodies, the continuity of participation in CBC was interrupted. Additionally, the country’s second biggest industrial city that was on the territory of the Euro-region now is out. The administrative-territorial reform was used as an excuse explaining the absence of any cooperation activities at the meeting of the Euro-region Council that took place in Botosani (Romania) in October 2003. However, after the transfer of the chairmanship to the Council at this meeting to Chernovtsy (Ukraine) no progress was noticed.

However, some good expectations of more active developments of “Upper Prut” might be connected to the initiated by the European Commission elaboration of the Neighborhood Cooperation Program between Moldova and Romania. Once finalized and approved (it is planned for September 2004), this Program will provide possibilities for financing of diverse CBC projects, and if the local actors demonstrate enough interest, initiative and skills in submitting the project proposals, the Euro-region might benefit a lot.

Because of the newness and contested nature of the border situation, the empirical challenges facing the team are considerable. In this regard, the data-gathering process can be seen as an important “pioneer” exercise. Within the EXLINEA project, field- work was conducted in order to test the standardized questionnaire (6 interviews). The results showed that there is interest for more active cooperation with the Romanian partners, but the means for getting financing, skills for the development of project proposals and finding donors are still insufficient. As yet, very few people living within in the Euro-region are aware of its existence; Euro-region awareness is even lower among those who participate in the cross-border cooperation at the institutionalized level. This is why the respondents have usually felt uncomfortable answering several of the questions. Perhaps because of heightened “border” sensibilities, these respondents believe that their perceptions should be based on more substantive knowledge and information and do not want to assume a responsibility to judge about things, events and processes where they are not the direct participants. In this respect, the Moldavian-Romanian case varies strikingly from other case study regions where the gathering of perceptual data has been largely unproblematic, seen rather a technical than controversial matter. At the same time, representatives of customs and border guards agreed to be interviewed only with

the permission from their supervisors. Indeed, the newness of the border situation is expressed by the difficulties of several local actors to relate to research questions in general. All in all it takes two – three hours to get the questionnaire to be filled in – to explain the purpose of the interview, to tell about the EXLINEA project, to persuade the interviewee that we do need their perceptions but not an informed evaluation etc.

For a number of reasons, gathering statistical data for the region is also complicated. The statistical system existing in the country does not provide the data disaggregated by the spatial units and according to relevant issues. The participation of 6 Moldovan districts in the Euro-region means that all the statistic data will be collected in each district apart and after this, could be used for compiling the picture of the region in general.

If the Neighborhood Cooperation Program between Romania and Moldova develops according to plan, there might appear some reports on its implementation already next year that will also provide information on cross-border cooperation within “Upper Prut”.

By: Alla Skvortova

University course, and field trip

As part and conclusion of their current two-semester university course on European border regions, Silke Matzeit and James Scott will be leading a group of graduate students of Geography from the Free University of Berlin on an excursion to Hungary and neighbouring countries. The university course consisted of various lectures by the two docents, and other EXLINEA team members, on their case study regions as well as theoretical aspects of border research. Students then worked on some ten different research projects on various border regions within Europe. The findings of the university course and the small research projects will now be “applied” to the experience in the field. Students will have guided tours in all respective border regions of Hungary, and on both sides of the borders. They will meet EXLINEA partners in the region, as well as external experts, and local and regional stakeholders. They will also have opportunities to meet other students from the region and some of them plan to complete their studies on their research subjects during and after the field trip. The topic of the study tour is cross-border co-operation and EU enlargement, with a focus on region-building and Euroregions. The tour will begin in Bratislava and take the group through Győr, Sopron, Pécs, Vukovar, Szeged, Subotica, Arad, Satu Mare, Ushgorod, Miskolc and Kosice - Hungary’s border regions.

Reports on the excursion, as well as the findings of, and experiences with the university course as a whole, including literature, will soon be available on EXLINEA’s public website.

By: Silke Matzeit and James Scott

FREE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN

Koli Border Forum seminar series 2003-2004, Finland

Five Koli Border Forum seminars took place in Koli, Finnish eastern border region, during the period from May 2003 to April 2004. The seminars were financed by a Finnish Cultural Foundation and were organised by the University of Joensuu, the Karelian Institute, the Finnish Forest Research Institute, the North Karelia Regional Environment Centre and the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. The Karelian Institute hosted two of the seminars. The topics included international relations, security, territoriality, identity, biodiversity and environmental protection.

The first seminar “Russia’s Border Regions. Problems and opportunities in the Russian border regions” discussed from the Russian point of view the European Union and its eastern enlargement. In October 2003, the second seminar Transfrontier National Parks and Biosphere Reserves addressed national parks and the biosphere zones of the Finnish-Russian border region.

In November 2003, On the border of the European Union symposium focused on the development of employment and educational possibilities over the Finnish-Russian border. The fourth seminar, The European Borders was held in February 2004. Participants of this seminar (which included EXLINEA’s James Scott and Thomas Diez and Matthias Albert of the EUBORDERCONF project) discussed the external borders of the European Union both from the conflict resolution and cooperation viewpoints. The New Borders and Orders was the fifth and final seminar of the series. In this seminar the target was to discuss security issues and international relations. For more information visit: <http://tkk.joensuu.fi/itainnova/koli/>

By: Juha Ruusuvuori

KARELIAN INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF JOENSUU

SUMMER SCHOOL

Väraska, Estonia; 8–14th August 2004.

Cross-border cooperation in the New EU External Border Areas

Peipsi Center for Transboundary cooperation will organize a summer school on cross border cooperation, targeted to local authorities, NGOs, research institutes from Baltic States, Russia, Ukraine and Moldova. The summer school is aiming to increase awareness on EU regional development and cross border cooperation issues, youth exchange programs, best practices and funding opportunities; special focus is put to News Neighborhood program and cooperation with EU Eastern partners. For more information visit: www.ctc.ee

By: Margit Säre

PEIPSI CENTER FOR TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Graz, Austria; 15–19th September 2004

Borders in a New Europe: Between History and New Challenges

The ABS 2004 European Conference will have six main themes:

- Theorising borders: concepts, methodologies and models
- History of borders in Europe: from medieval to present
- Economy and political unifications/divisions in the new Europe
- From international to internal EU border: policies, regulation and security
- Communication within and across borders: language, people, cultural practices, everyday life
- New European reality in terms of demography and social relations: immigration, ethnic and cultural difference, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism

For more information visit: http://www.ish.si/abs_e/calls.htm

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Israel; 9–16th January 2005.

Border Regions In Transition. The BRIT VII Conference

Crossing Discipline, Crossing Scales, Crossing regions

The conference will be jointly hosted by the Department of Politics and Government and Centre for the Study of European Politics and Society at Ben Gurion University; and The Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem.

Most of the sessions will be held in Jerusalem, and there will also be two field trips:

1. The West Bank, Jerusalem and the Separation Wall.
2. The Trilateral Border region
 - Elat (Israel), Aqaba (Jordan), Taba (Egypt)

Part of the conference will deal with theoretical border issues, while parts will deal with empirical case studies of border and territorial issues throughout the world. Two sessions, including local scholars and public figures, will be devoted to territorial and border issues in Israel Palestine.

Interested participants should send their abstracts NO LATER than 20th July to the following email address: geopol@bgumail.bgu.ac.il

Abstracts should be approximately 250-300 words.

Individual enquiries can be made at this stage to Professor David Newman at the above email address.

Description of the participants with contact details

FREE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN (Germany)

FUB is a multi-disciplinary working group incorporated within the Department of Geography at the Free University of Berlin. Presently it encompasses various aspects of urban and regional development and planning.

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PEIPSI CENTER FOR TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION (Estonia)

CTC is an international, non-governmental organisation which aims to promote sustainable development and cross border co-operation in the border areas of the Baltic States and the New Independent States.

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THE NIJEMEGEN CENTRE FOR BORDER RESEARCH (Netherlands)

NCBR's important themes are concentrated on the policy of Euro-regions, bi-national cities, the governance of cross-borders economic, social and political networks, democracy and legitimacy in border regions, cross-border labour markets, borders as barriers, regional and national identity, mental borders and borders as social and political constructs.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF JOENSUU (Finland)

UJOE's task is to carry out basic and applied research into the intellectual and material development of Eastern Finland and Karelia.

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UNIVERSITY OF TARTU (Estonia)

The UT is concentrated in two aspects, one is the negotiation with Russia over the border and the other refers to socio-economic cultural and political conditions of the borderlands.

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THE HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, CENTRE FOR REGIONAL STUDIES (Hungary)

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THE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY (Greece)

The UTH is concentrated in regional economic development and policy, urban and regional planning, transportation planning, public administration and policy, geography and methods of analysis, social and environmental issues.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW (Poland)

EUROREG is an interdisciplinary research and educational institution specialising in regional and local studies and policies. The institute carries out research on the transformation processes in Central and Eastern European countries and conducts comparative studies of the development of science and technology.

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