

ULYSSES

Using applied research results from ESPON as a yardstick
for cross-border spatial development planning

Targeted Analysis 2013/2/10

Practical Guide for the elaboration of cross-border territorial development strategies

ULYSSES HELP DESK

Association of European Border Regions
(AEBR)

Final Version

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ULYSSES Help Desk

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1. Introduction

The geographic specificity of border areas and the variable degrees of “territorial non-integration” which still exist along most EU-borders in a cross-border perspective are the main reasons that increasingly motivated policy-level stakeholders and also the inhabitants of border areas to conceive **an alternative model for the territorial development of cross-border areas**. This alternative development model differs from and is additional to the established domestic territorial development models in that it is basically implying a direct co-operation with various types of actors from a neighbouring country for solving joint problems and for harnessing shared development prospects.

The first and today most widely perceived **policy-level expression of this alternative development model is the increasing number of “decentralised cross-border co-operation initiatives”¹ which were established in Europe over the past 50 years**. Nearby all EU-borders are now covered by such decentralised cross-border co-operation initiatives. They have various structural expressions,² which is mainly due to the fact that the basic legal framework conditions formally allowing such decentralised cross-border co-operation have developed much slower and also very unevenly across the territory of the European Union. Especially since the early 1990s, this development was strongly catalysed by the introduction of specific EU-programmes supporting cross-border co-operation such as the INTERREG Community Initiative (1990-2006), the European Territorial Cooperation Objective (since 2006) and specific funding schemes focussing on the external EU-borders with neighbouring Third Countries.

The second but probably less widely perceived **policy-level expression of this alternative development model is the growing interest of border areas in the elaboration of comprehensive “cross-border territorial development strategies”**. Since the end of the 1990s, one can observe that an increasing number of long-term oriented and multi-thematic territorial development strategies are elaborated on the own initiative of European border regions for their respective cross-border co-operation area. This trend was generally favoured by the mandatory elaboration of short- and medium-

¹ These initiatives involve mainly regional and/or local authorities. They are distinct to central state-led cross-border co-operation initiatives which exist along several borders e.g. for the purpose of a joint coordination of spatial planning.

² e.g. topical & project-based ad-hoc co-operation or permanent und multi-thematic co-operation in the context of Euroregions, Working Communities or Eurodistricts and other similar structures.

term intervention strategies for the EU-level cross-border funding programmes which were implemented during the various periods of the INTERREG Community Initiative (1990-2006) and the ETC objective (2007-2013) as well as by the explicit recommendation formulated on this matter in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) and the Territorial Agenda.

Both main elements of this alternative development model are indeed closely inter-related, but they are also very unevenly developed across Europe: Whereas the set-up of permanent cross-border co-operation structures has progressed well along nearly all EU-borders, one has to observe the elaboration of cross-border territorial development strategies is characterised by a significant spatial imbalance because the realisation of such activities have remained an exception up to now along several internal EU-borders in North-West Europe (UK, Ireland, France) and especially along the vast majority of the internal and external borders in the South and East of the EU.³

Due to this, the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) has initiated **the ESPON project “ULYSSES”** (“Using applied research results from ESPON as a yardstick for cross-border spatial development planning”) as an experimental and innovative project supported by 18 European border and cross-border areas, which aims

- to support already experienced cross-border areas in further up-grading their already existing cross-border territorial development strategies with respect to their thematic focus and the methodological approaches used;
- to assist those cross-border areas not yet having experiences with an elaboration of cross-border territorial development strategies in coping with the manifold challenges of such a process.

The present Practical Guide is an important output of the ULYSSES project and has the purpose of addressing the above-mentioned needs of European border and cross-border areas. The Guide was elaborated by combining the extensive practical cross-border co-operation experience and the main findings of current policy research which was available to the authors. However, they voluntarily acknowledge that this represents only a part of the vast knowledge which exists on the issue at stake. Due to this, the authors lively encourage the readers of this Guide to communicate their own experiences and (critical) remarks to the Association of European Border Regions (by using the e-mail info@aebr.eu and by adding the reference “*ULYSSES Practical Guide*”) in order to help that a more updated version of this Guide can be elaborated at a certain point of time.

³ This is true along the many internal and external EU-borders in the South of the EU (e.g. Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece), but especially along many “new” internal EU-borders among the new EU-member states (e.g. EE/LV, LV/LT, SK/HU, HU/RO, RO/BG etc) and the Eastern external EU-borders (e.g. FI/RUS, EE&LV/RUS, LT/BY, PL/UKR, RO/UKR/MOL etc).

2. The added value of decentralised cross-border co-operation and its role in territorial development

Regions located along the internal and external land and maritime EU borders (border regions⁴) cover a large proportion of the EU population: in 2007, over 196 million people or almost 40% of the EU total population lives in border regions. Most of these live in internal border regions (36% of the EU population), while population growth between 2000 and 2007 was much the same in both internal and external border regions (at around 0.3% a year).

The **socio-economic situation of EU border and cross-border regions**⁵ is still characterised by significant imbalances and often also by a peripheral location within their own country or within Europe as a whole.

- On average, their GDP per head is less than the EU average (89% of the average in 2007) and the GDP per head is less in the external border regions (65% of the EU average) than in internal border regions (92% of the average).
- Unemployment was also higher in external border regions (8.3%) than in internal ones (7.3%). In addition, external border regions also have, on average, a larger share of their employment in agriculture than internal border regions.
- Access to basic services is, on average, more limited in border regions where proximity to a hospital or a university is much less than in the rest of the Union. This is also true of access to an airport, especially for several border regions located in the new Member States. This particularly applies to the external borders.
- The levels of development between regions located on the two sides of the border are sometimes very different. This is the case between several internal border regions and also between Eastern external border regions of the EU and border regions in neighbouring Third Countries.

Equally important are **the multiple day-to-day border problems** which exist in cross-border regions and which are usually absent in areas not located close to a border. They result out of the different policies, laws and administrative regulations applied on either side of the border (e.g. on taxation, economic activities, health care, social affairs, education etc), but also out of specific historical legacies and socio-cultural or linguistic

⁴ Border regions are NUTS 3 regions which are eligible for cross-border co-operation programmes under the European Regional Development Fund regulation.

⁵ **European Commission, DG REGIO (2010):** Investing in Europe's future. Fifth report on economic, social and territorial cohesion.

differences (e.g. previous military conflicts, mutual fears & animosities, mental & communicative barriers, lacking willingness to establish closer contacts etc).

Good cross-border cooperation is therefore crucial for eliminating or minimising the negative effects which result from the persistence of state borders and also for better exploiting the undeniable territorial development opportunities which exist in a border-crossing perspective.

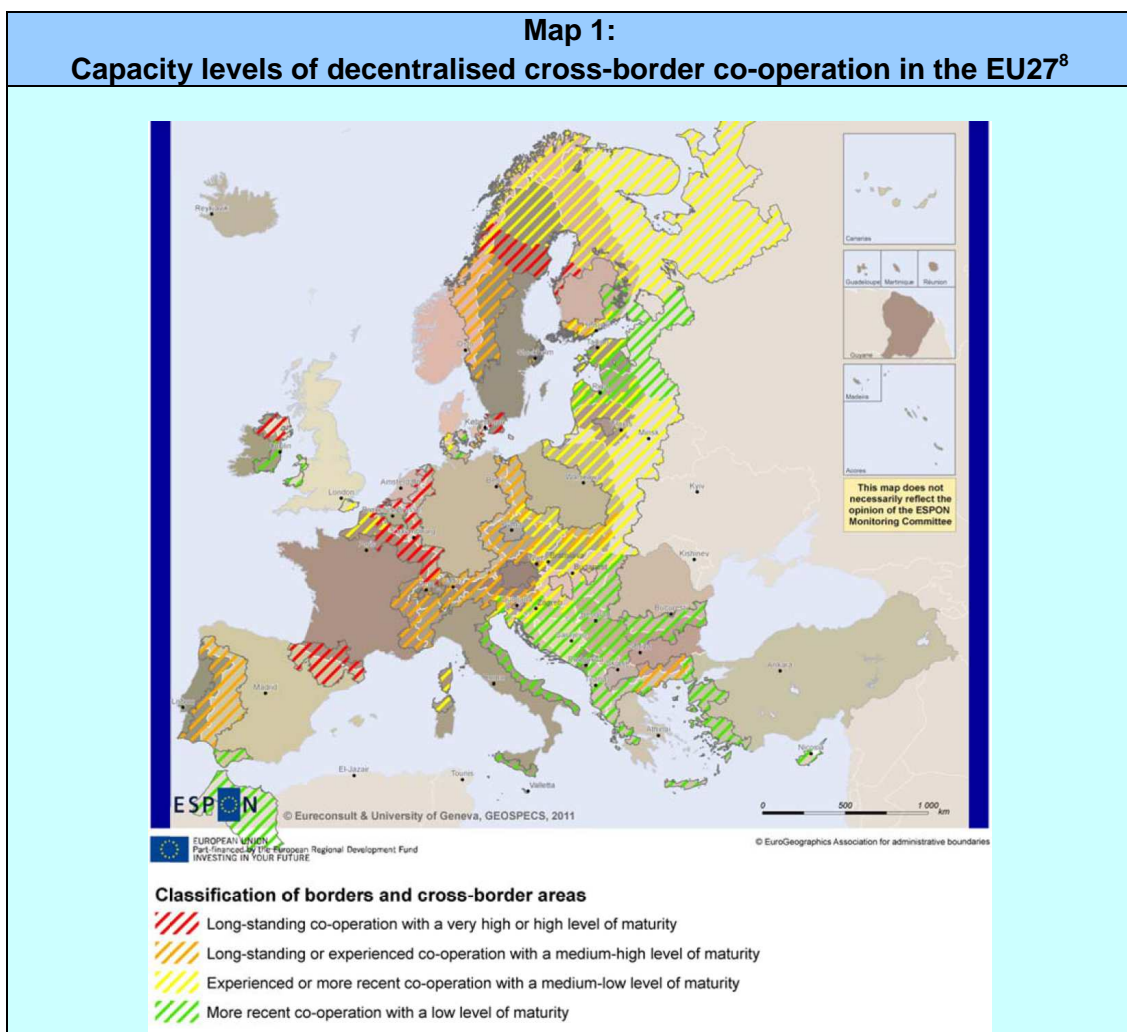
Over the past decades, decentralised cross-border cooperation between regional and local public authorities as well as between economic and social actors expanded significantly across Europe. Practical experience shows that this normally happened in a gradual process of adaptation, which usually started with project-level for finding pragmatic solutions to specific problems and then successively led to the establishment of permanent cross-border co-operation structures (**see box 1 below**) for tackling in a more systematic way the multitude of legal, administrative and political problems existing along borders.⁶

Box 1: Establishment of a permanent cross-border co-operation structure
Advanced cross-border cooperation at regional or local level requires after a certain moment the establishment of permanent and “binding” cross-border co-operation structures. Whereas the establishment of a cross-border co-operation structures having an own legal personality can hardly be effected in a short period of time, some practical agreements can be concluded very quickly. There is, for example, the possibility of setting up national associations/societies on both sides of the border according to the existing private or public law in each country. Those regional/local structures can then serve as basis for developing a joint cross-border cooperation structure having an own legal personality, either under national private or public law or even better on ground of specific legal provisions included in inter-state agreements on cross-border co-operation (i.e. where existing). Since the EU-law based creation of a ‘European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation’ (EGTC) is now possible, considerably simplified opportunities are now available for further structuring permanent strategic cross-border co-operation or project-level co-operation and event the joint management of EU programmes.

Currently, there are more than 185 border and cross-border regions (Euroregions, etc.) or cross-border associations (based on an inter-state agreement), out of which 26 have a legal status as a European Grouping for

⁶ For further information on all these aspects, we suggest - among the huge amount of scientific and policy-level literature available today – a reading of the following comprehensive and also practice-oriented comprehensive EU-wide analyses: **Association of European Border Regions / Commission of the European Communities (2000)**: LACE-GUIDE – Practical Guide to Cross-border Co-operation. Brussels/Gronau. **Committee of the Regions (2002)**: Trans-European Co-operation between territorial authorities. New challenges and future steps necessary to improve co-operation. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. **Commission of the European Communities (2004)**: Towards a new Community legal instrument for public law based Trans-European Co-operation among territorial authorities in the European Union (Synthesis Report). DG Regio, Brussels. **Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäischer Grenzregionen (2008)**: Zusammenarbeit Europäischer Grenzregionen – Bilanz und Perspektiven. Baden-Baden.

Territorial cooperation (EGTC), as well as 6 large-scale cross-border associations. This shows that the number of Euroregions and similar structures has increased rapidly over the years, but one can also observe that the past and very uneven development of the basic legal framework conditions for decentralised cross-border co-operation has led to a strong diversity in the basic capacity for action of those structures (e.g. basic types & legal status of co-operation structures, fields of action which can be addressed etc). A map-based representation a typology⁷ which was developed by the ESPON 2013 research project “GEOSPES” suggests that there is still significant scope for further improving the capacity of decentralised cross-border co-operation especially along the internal and external borders of the eastern part of the in the EU27 (see: Map 1).



⁷ This typology was established through a complex ranking process which used simultaneously various indicators taking into account the overall duration of decentralised cross-border co-operation (i.e. number of years during which structured co-operation is carried out) and the level of maturity achieved by this co-operation over time (i.e. the quality & scope of existing legal framework conditions for co-operation; the structural features, thematic scope and legal status of the established cross-border co-operation structures).

⁸ **ESPON (2010):** GEOSPES – European Perspective on Specific Types of Territories. Interim Report (March 2010)

Moreover, this progress in terms of organisation was also not always accompanied by a creation of appropriate own funding sources for these cross-border co-operation structures. It is, unfortunately, the case that many cross-border structures (mainly in Central and Eastern Europe) were set up primarily with a view of obtaining external funding from EU-support programmes which – as a result – made them heavily dependent on EU-funding and other national co-financing funds.

Despite these obvious shortcomings, decentralised cross-border co-operation creates **a widespread added value** which covers various dimensions and aspects ([see box 2 below](#)). This added value is an essential catalyst for stimulating the territorial development of border and cross-border regions, which in turn also gives important impulses for furthering the territorial cohesion and wider integration of the European Union as a whole.

Box 2: The added value of decentralised cross-border co-operation
<p>European added value arises from the fact that in the light of past experience, people who are living together in neighbouring border regions want to cooperate and thereby make a valuable contribution to the promotion of peace, freedom, security and the observance of human rights.</p> <p>Specific added value in relation to an implementation of the “Europe 2020 Strategy”: Genuine cross-border co-operation always adds value to national measures through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the additionality of cross-border concepts, programmes and projects, • the synergies emerging through cross-border cooperation, • joint research and innovation, • cross-border networking, • exchange of good practice and know-how, • spin-off effects by overcoming borders, • efficient cross-border resource management. <p>Political added value involves making a substantial contribution towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of Europe and European integration; • getting to know each other, getting on together, understanding each other and building trust; • the implementation of subsidiarity and partnership; • increased economic and social cohesion and cooperation; • preparing for the accession of new members; • using EU funding to secure cross-border cooperation via multi-annual programmes, and ensuring that the necessary national and regional co-financing is committed in the long term. <p>Institutional added value entails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • active involvement by the citizens, authorities, political and social groups on both sides of the border; • secure knowledge about one's neighbour (regional authorities, social partners, etc.); • long-term cross-border cooperation in structures that are capable of working efficiently: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> .1 as a vertically and horizontally functioning partnership, despite having different structures and areas of responsibility; .2 as a legally accepted target of aid and a working partner, receiving and administering funds;

- joint drafting, implementation and financing of cross-border programmes and projects.

Experience gained throughout Europe shows that jointly developed concepts / strategies, programmes and projects can be most effectively implemented and realised if the regional and local partners play a considerable role.

The **socio-economic added value** becomes apparent in the respective regions, albeit in different ways, through:

- the mobilisation of endogenous potential by strengthening the regional and local levels as partners for and initiators of cross-border cooperation;
- the participation of actors from the economic and social sectors (for example, chambers of commerce, associations, companies, trade unions, cultural and social institutions, environmental organisations and tourism agencies);
- the opening up of the labour market and harmonisation of professional qualifications;
- additional development, e.g. in the fields of infrastructure, transport, tourism, the environment, education, research and cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises, and also the creation of more jobs in these areas;
- lasting improvements in the planning of spatial development and regional policy (including the environment);
- the improvement of cross-border transport infrastructure.

Socio-cultural added value is reflected in:

- lasting, repeated dissemination of knowledge about the geographical, structural, economic, socio-cultural and historical situation of a cross-border region (including with the media's help);
- the overview of a cross-border region afforded in maps, publications, teaching material, and so on;
- the development of a circle of committed experts (multipliers), such as churches, schools, youth and adult educational establishments, the conservation authorities, cultural associations, libraries, museums, and so forth;
- equal opportunities and extensive knowledge of the language of the neighbouring country or of dialects as a component of cross-border regional development and a prerequisite for communication.

In this way, cultural cross-border cooperation becomes a constituent element of regional development. Only if socio-cultural cooperation takes place a workable cross-border environment for business, trade and services can be established.

Bearing in mind the above-said, then also the following fundamental and also crucial question needs to be raised: **How can decentralised cross-border co-operation, which also is a part of European Territorial Co-operation (ETC) and of the wider EU Cohesion Policy for the period 2014-2020, make an effective contribution to achieving territorial cohesion in the European Union?**⁹

⁹ Territorial cohesion was included as an EU-wide objective in the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in 2009. Article 3, third indent, of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) now reads: “[the Union] shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and solidarity among Member States”, whereas Article 2 (c) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) provides that “shared competence between the Union and the Member States applies in (...) economic, social and territorial cohesion”. The Treaty also adds a new paragraph into Article 158 stating that among (...) *the regions concerned, particular attention shall be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions.*

It is not easy to provide an answer to this question in the context of this Guide, but some ideas about the general direction to be followed can be derived from a wider interpretation of some concluding observations which were made in the European Commission's ex-post evaluation of the INTERREG III Community Initiative.¹⁰

Decentralised cross-border co-operation should enhance the territorial integration of the concerned cross-border areas in order to make them functioning in a way that comes close to what is normally experienced in a domestic context. To this end, **cross-border territorial development needs to stimulate in parallel**

- **a progressive elimination or alleviation of remaining border-obstacles** (physical / geographical, administrative, regulatory) which still cause a fragmentation of socio-economic and interpersonal relations between areas located along a common border, thus ensuring that EU citizens and enterprises are not disadvantaged by where they happen to live and work and that they have equal opportunities across territories to access services of general interest and knowledge;
- **a progressive establishment of more widespread cross-border functional relations and their further densification**, by taking advantage of favourable territorial proximity effects (i.e. common identity or history; shared development opportunities; complementary specialisation) and by considering also various macro-processes which affect these cross-border areas (e.g. globalisation, climate change, demographic change, migration, further aging of the population etc.).

An important instrument which helps border and cross-border regions to make progress in this direction is the elaboration of cross-border territorial development strategies. Well-elaborated and also well-accepted cross-border development strategies can ensure that all structural and sector-specific policies as well as all kinds of actors make a focused contribution to the achievement of a territorially more integrated development status and thus also to a common and better future in cross-border regions. When discussing about such a better future, a bottom-up approach departing from the regional/local and involving all actors from both sides of a border should be used to ensure the largest possible proximity to the citizens living in these areas. Moreover, a bottom-up approach is also helpful for mobilising without much effort the additional knowledge of other actors which can then be used for shaping this common future.

¹⁰ **PANTEIA (2010)**: Ex-Post Evaluation of the INTERREG 2000-2006 Community Initiative funded by the Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Final Report to the European Commission DG Regio. Zoetermeer, 2010.

3. Cross-border territorial development strategies – What’s the issue?

In the domestic context of most EU-Member States, an integrated territorial development policy is usually shaped through spatial planning activities which are a task of public authority. Spatial development planning is a competence of the national level and most often also of the regional and local levels.

But because public authority and competences usually end at national borders, also domestic spatial development plans find their limits at the state borders. Due to this, also no territorial authority of one state has a “cross-border competence” which can reach into the sovereign territory of another neighbouring state. Accordingly, spatial planning documents which are elaborated for areas close to a border usually contain only very limited remarks about the cross-border context (e.g. in their introduction) and only sometimes consider in maps for purely informational reasons aspects such as major transport infrastructure links leading to a neighbouring country or close-by cities and urban centres on the other side of the border. Beyond this, however, domestic planning documents usually do not make reference to policies and especially sector-policies of a neighbouring country.

Cross-border cooperation in the field of spatial planning has started quite early, but first of all between states. Already in the 1970s, bilateral agreements on inter-state cooperation in the field of spatial planning were concluded in Western Europe and later on also more and more along other borders.¹¹ On ground of these agreements, specific inter-state cooperation structures in form of “inter-governmental spatial planning commissions” and/or “regional commissions and sub-commissions” were established which have no legally binding decision making authority and only very limited practical possibilities (i.e. the coordination of neighbouring domestic spatial planning activities at various levels through a joint formulation of non-binding recommendations, joint elaboration of non-binding spatial development concepts etc).

With the introduction of the INTERREG Community Initiative (INTERREG I: 1990-93) and its subsequent continuation (INTERREG IIA: 1994-99; INTERREG IIIA: 2000-06), also local and regional authorities became increasingly interested in “cross-border border spatial planning”.

¹¹ Examples for such inter-state agreements on spatial planning are those between Belgium-Germany (1971), Switzerland-Germany (1973), Austria-Germany (1974), France-Germany (1975), the Netherlands-Germany (1976), Austria-Hungary (1985), Germany-Poland (1992), Slovak Republic-Poland (1994), Slovak Republic-Hungary (1995) and Czech Republic-Poland (1995).

In an early phase, however, many decentralised cross-border co-operation structures which wanted to deal with cross-border border spatial planning quickly entered into conflicts with their respective national authorities because spatial planning was in many countries still a domestic state competence (e.g. at the Lake Constance area, Upper Rhine area, German-Dutch-border). Although such conflicts could be partially solved in many areas by avoiding the notion of “planning” and by using instead the notion of “decentralised cross-border development concepts / strategies“, it appears that even today such controversies and difficulties continue to exist along some borders ([see box 3 below](#))..

Box 3: The example of the Øresund-Region
<p><i>(...) Cross-border planning in Öresund takes place in an institutional context that lacks the democratic legitimacy of a national system. Instead, planning is often based on informal arrangements manifested in networks that often involve various public as well as private actors on both sides of the sound. A substantial amount of cross-border planning activities, including the VISÖ project, has been carried out with funding from the EU Interreg-programs. An important actor in these programs, as well as for the overall political cooperation on regional and local levels, is the Öresund committee that was founded in 1993 and consists of regions and municipalities in the region. At the national level, cooperation mostly takes place within bilateral agreements between the two governments or between state agencies. A reasonable guess is that the institutional framework for planning and decision-making in the Öresund region also in the future will be flat and highly fragmentary (...). The political organizations will have to continue to combine formal agreements and institutions with informal ones (...).</i></p>
<p>Source: Hultén, J./ Schantz, P./ Andersson, B. (2011): VISÖ - Visualization of Infrastructure and Sustainable development in Öresund. Proceedings from the Annual Transport Conference at Aalborg University.</p>

Nonetheless, one can observe that the number of initiatives which aimed to elaborate decentralised cross-border development strategies was rapidly increasing along many EU-borders during the years of INTERREG Community Initiative ([see: Annex 1](#))¹² and that also under the new objective European Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013 (ETC) such cross-border activities were sometimes continued and led to a further widening of such initiatives.

¹² A comprehensive EU-wide overview on the development during this specific phase was given by Thomas Stumm and Jacques Robert in a still unique study on this matter. **ESPON-INTERACT (2006):** Thematic Study on Spatial Visions and Scenarios. Esch-sur-Alzette: ESPON.

However, a more continuous action leading to a systematic deepening of previous initiatives can only be observed in a very few cross-border areas. A good example in this respect is the Øresund-Region (**see box 4 below**).

**Box 4:
Continuous initiatives in the Øresund-Region**

Already with support from the INTERREG IIA programme (1994-1999), the Øresund-Region has realised extensive horizontal and policy-specific planning activities that led to the elaboration of a multi-thematic “*Joint Cross-border Regional Development Plan*” with recommendations for local authorities. Also the elaboration of a “*Joint Environmental Programme for the Øresund-Region*” and a cross-border transport-development plan for the time after the completion of the fixed link between Sweden and Denmark had been realised.

These early activities were taken forward under the subsequent INTERREG IIIA programme (2000-2006) by several projects which aimed at

- developing prospective scenarios for creating a common understanding of and reference picture for the future physical and functional infrastructure as well as for housing and business development in the cross-border region (e.g. *ÖRIB - Infrastructure and urban development in the Øresund-Region*),
- developing scenarios and strategic solutions to promote a more balanced and sustainable development and growth in the whole region (e.g. *A balanced development in the Øresund Region; Landscape as a resource - Scenarios and strategies for a sustainable development in the Øresund Region*),
- increasing the knowledge on potential impacts resulting from the building of a train tunnel for passenger traffic between Helsingborg and Elsinore (e.g. *HH train tunnel*),
- enhancing the emergence of a more integrated and well-functioning cross-border area by encouraging a positive increase in population in the outer areas of the Øresund-Region (e.g. *ØreSundBo – Living possibilities in the Øresund Region*).

Under the current European Territorial Cooperation cross-border programme also covering the Øresund Region (2007-2013), two other projects continued and further deepened some of the previous INTERREG III activities:

- The project *IBU-Øresund*, which built upon the findings of the previous *ÖRIB-project*, identified the planning challenges faced by stakeholders in the Øresund Region and in the rest of Sweden and Denmark with respect to infrastructure and urban development and also supported qualified discussions about future investments on both sides of the Øresund to meet these challenges.
- The project *VISÖ (Visualization of Infrastructure and Sustainable development in Øresund)* developed a methodology and a coordinated planning tool which allows planning authorities, politicians and the affected communities to better understand the strategic infrastructure choices that have to be made.

Sources: ESPON-INTERACT (2006): Thematic Study on Spatial Visions and Scenarios. Esch-sur-Alzette. Hultén, J./ Schantz, P./ Andersson, B. (2011): VISÖ - Visualization of Infrastructure and Sustainable development in Öresund. Proceedings from the Annual Transport Conference at Aalborg University.

Main purpose & added value of cross-border development strategies

Decentralised cross-border development strategies start where domestic spatial planning documents have – per definition - to end. Their **main purpose** lies in the provision of an “interpretative framework” which allows further improving and deepening cross-border co-operation in a medium- and long-term perspective.

Decentralised cross-border development strategies usually carry out a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative situation analysis in relation to a wide range of issues which are relevant for the territorial development of a cross-border area (e.g. physical conditions, infrastructure, demography, settlement patterns & living conditions, economic structure and R&D / innovation, labour market, education & training, health care systems, environmental issues, sewage water & waste treatment etc) or even develop future-oriented development scenarios in relation to some aspects, on ground of which common recommendations for cross-border actions are formulated which ideally should represent a clear cross-border added value in relation to what is planned or done in a domestic context.

If compared to domestic spatial plans, however, one has to observe that decentralised cross-border development strategies have in general no legally binding character. Cross-border strategies can indeed contain obligations for the local and regional authorities which have commissioned them, because otherwise they would not make sense. But even if the recommendations of decentralised cross-border development strategies are only creating commitments for the commissioning parties, they can indeed influence upon an elaboration of new or the up-dating of already existing spatial development plans of the domestic regional or local authorities situated in the cross-border area.

Through its overall approach, a cross-border territorial development strategy can generate an important **added value** for the integration of a cross-border area and thus also for the territorial cohesion of Europe as a whole:

- Improving the cross-border understanding of spatial structures und functional interrelations in the co-operation area.
- Identification of main border-related problems and development opportunities in relation to which joint action is required.
- Definition of medium- and long-term goals/objectives as well as concrete actions for further deepening and widening multi-thematic cross-border co-operation.
- Setting out a strategic framework for increasing cross-border territorial integration which directs cross-border territorial development towards making socio-economic interactions and exchange relationships function

in a way that comes close to what is normally experienced in the domestic context.

- Setting out a complementary multi-thematic framework for integrated cross-border territorial development which is wider than the intervention strategy of future ETC-programmes supporting cross-border co-operation (i.e. they tend to be thematically much more focussed than before).

Elaborating a cross-border strategy:

Operational main phases & over-arching principles to be observed

The entire process of elaborating a cross-border territorial development strategy can – in operational terms – be broken down into the following **three subsequent and interconnected main phases**:

- The preparation and realisation of the “territorial situation analysis” for a cross-border development strategy (**Phase I**).
- The definition of the “policy programme” and of the “application framework” for a cross-border development strategy (**Phase II**).
- Activities which ensure a cross-border development strategy’s political anchorage and sustainability over time (**Phase III**).

During the entire elaboration process of a cross-border territorial development strategy, finally, experiences from the practice suggests that **at least eight over-arching principles** should be closely observed:

- The entire elaboration process of a cross-border territorial development strategy **should take place on ground of a “participatory bottom-up approach”**. This process should involve existing cross-border co-operation structures and regional/local policy-level decision makers as well as a wider range of other stakeholders from the cross-border area which are in a wider sense relevant for territorial development (**see box 5 below**). Already at an early stage, also a list of politicians from all levels (local, regional, national, European) and of all political parties which should be involved in the process later on should be elaborated and they should be kept informed about the progress of the strategy elaboration process.
- The elaboration of a cross-border territorial development strategy **requires strong leadership** in order to maintain momentum throughout all phases of this co-operative bottom-up process. This can be ensured by setting up a smaller group of strategic actors (e.g. staff members of

an existing cross-border structure & other administrative planning professionals from the concerned regional/local authorities) who are organising and “driving” the entire elaboration process over time.

- A cross-border territorial development strategy **must fulfil the following three important functions:** **(1)** The function of bringing together all relevant data and knowledge in a comprehensive “territorial analysis”, which allows to promote a shared understanding of the development challenges and opportunities prevailing in the co-operation area. **(2)** The function of presenting a “policy programme”, which sets out the goals and objectives for the desired medium and long-term territorial development path of the cross-border area. **(3)** The function of providing an “application framework”, which actually translates the territorial development goals and objectives into concrete action.

Box 5: Potential key actors to be involved in the elaboration process of a cross-border territorial development strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional branch offices of national having a legal competence for spatial planning & territorial development. • Regional and local administrations having a legal competence for spatial planning & territorial development. • Other public or semi-public bodies or agencies having a competence for spatial planning (e.g. spatial planning associations or co-operative planning structures) & territorial development (e.g. regional development agencies, agencies active in the field of R&D/innovation and technology transfer). • Labour market agencies. • Chambers of commerce & industry and similar intermediary institutions (chambers of agriculture). • Other professional organisations (trade unions, employers associations etc). • Private or public transport infrastructure operators & public transport organisations. • Universities and other institutes for higher education etc. • Education & training facilities / institutions. • Health care facilities, hospitals & social health insurances. • Police & customs administration. • Tourism agencies and tourism promotion networks. • Institutions managing natural reserves/national parks & environmental organisations • Other social or cultural organisations at regional / district level.

- A cross-border territorial development strategy **should at the same time be “inward-looking”** (i.e. focussed on the cross-border area) **and “outward-looking”** by taking into consideration macro-societal development trends as well as EU-wide policies which have territorial effects on the cross-border area.
- The territorial analysis of a cross-border strategy **should address the relevant main themes for territorial development not only in a**

present-time perspective (e.g. through an assessment of data & facts from the recent past & conclusions on the current situation), **but also in a medium- or even long-term perspective** where possible and useful (e.g. through trend extrapolations & spatial prognoses or scenario methods).

- The policy programme of a cross-border territorial development strategy **should define an overall long-term development vision** which is made more concrete through **a limited set of meaningful strategic goals and operational objectives**.
- The application framework of a cross-border territorial development strategy **should set out clear operational provisions also having a strong “stakeholder-orientation”**, which helps to ensure that the cross-border strategy is useful for directing regional/local public policies and also enjoys a strong regional/local ownership and support.
- A finalised cross-border territorial development strategy **should be provided with a solid “political anchorage”** (e.g. through a wider political discussion & a formal validation) **and also ensure that it remains valid and useful over time** for the wider group of key stakeholders addressed in the co-operation area (e.g. through a regular monitoring of the actual progress achieved with its application).

With respect to each of these main phases and also in relation to every of the over-arching principles mentioned above, the present Practical Guide will provide further guidance and information in the now following chapters.

4. Preparing and carrying out a comprehensive “territorial analysis” for a cross-border development strategy (Phase I)

The main purpose of a comprehensive territorial analysis for a cross-border development strategy is to bring together all relevant information, data and knowledge in order to further a shared understanding among all stakeholders with respect to the functional territorial structures and inter-relations in a given co-operation area and to the main cross-border problems and development challenges existing there.

A comprehensive territorial analysis for a cross-border area can, in operational terms, be realised by selecting one of the following **three basic options**:

- **It can be elaborated only “internally”**, by making use of the in-house expertise which is available in an existing cross-border co-operation structure and/or in the local and regional public authorities located in the concerned co-operation area (e.g. the technical staff of various administrative departments such as spatial planning, economic development, transport, environment etc). This option requires that the in-house staff disposes of the required qualifications (i.e. regarding the analytical methods & techniques), has sufficient time available to do this work (i.e. beyond their usual day-to-day duties) and is also able or used to work in a cross-department (disciplinary) group process.
- One can frequently observe in practice that **this part of the process is “externalised”**, though sub-contracting an adequately qualified private consultancy or another public/semi-public and private research organisation (e.g. university, other specialised research institution & or agency). Due to the complexity of the issues to be examined and the often high level methodological sophistication required for such a territorial diagnosis, such a sub-contracting of external expertise is rational because such corporate actors are normally able to offer all of the required qualifications. However, such an externalisation imperatively requires that the strategic cross-border actors have a good initial understanding about “what they want” (i.e. as regards the analysis; to be specified in the Terms of Reference for a tender) and about “how this can be achieved” (i.e. as regards the financial cost to be mobilised for hiring the external experts).
- The last option is a combination of the previously described two options, i.e. **an elaboration through a mixed involvement of internal and**

external experts. This constellation is also frequently chosen in practice because it allows in principle to achieve a resource-efficient and also result-effective pooling of existing specialist knowledge in the co-operation area. An important pre-condition for benefiting of this advantage is that from the outset the mutual division of main tasks and the organisation of the joint work process for the analysis are clearly defined (to be specified in the Terms of Reference for a tender). Should this option be chosen, then it is advisable that an existing permanent cross-border co-operation structure is allocated a number of key activities which help to facilitate and coordinate the entire research process ([see box 6 below](#)).

Box 6: Potential tasks to be realised by an existing cross-border structure
<p>The secretariat / head office of an existing cross-border structure could in principle realise the followings tasks during the phase of elaborating a territorial situation analysis for the cross-border area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of a list of key actors from both sides of the border which should contribute to the process (i.e. cross-border structure, local/regional administrations, other public authorities/bodies holding expertise in this respect).• Establishment of a list of potential consultancies / research institutions which could be capable of elaborating the cross-border territorial analysis for the strategy.• Ex-ante gathering of already existing and relevant information / data sources for the territorial analysis.• On-going contact and support to all key actors who will be involved in the territorial analysis process (i.e. acting as a sort of “help-desk” for the ongoing analysis process).• On-going monitoring of the progress achieved with the territorial analysis process• Interface for informing the political actors in the cross-border area about the progress achieved with the territorial analysis (i.e. policy-level decision making for a of a cross-border structure, parliaments at regional & local level).

4.1. Preparing the “territorial analysis” for a cross-border development strategy

Irrespectively to the operational option actually chosen for elaborating a comprehensive territorial analysis, an important preparatory step which should precede the actual analysis is that the strategic key actors themselves establish a first and shared general understanding about the scope of development challenges and opportunities which are relevant for a given cross-border area. This can be organised as a bottom-up and multi-stakeholder driven “brainstorming process” which involves both information gathering and joint discussions.

Information gathering, e.g. through a questionnaire-based survey on a limited number of key questions, should be based upon the tacit and practical knowledge of the key stakeholders and explore

- the multidimensional reality of a border and of the associated border effects as well as their day-to-day practical implications for those living, working and acting in the cross-border area;
- the current territorial effects and implications of global or EU-wide macro trends (e.g. demographic change; globalisation, climate change & changing energy paradigms etc) and of the various Community-level policies (e.g. Cohesion Policy, agriculture, transport, R&D/innovation, enterprise policy, regulatory measures of Single Market policies, environment etc) on the cross-border territorial development.

Particular attention should be put on exploring the variety of real-life border effects which are associated to the multidimensional and simultaneously existing features of a given border (i.e. political nature of the border, geographic-natural characteristics, economic & socio-cultural characteristics), for which the analytical concept developed in the recently finalised ESPON study project “GEOSPECS” might present a good framework for orientation ([see table 1 below](#)).¹³

Table 1: General typology of border effects	
Type of border effect	Main reasons explaining the associated border effects
Effects associated with political borders	Different status of the political border & different degrees of “openness” for economic exchanges & inter-personal relationships, different legal systems and different governance structures (administrative units & powers), different policies meeting at a political border.
Effects associated with maritime boundaries	Different levels of certainty / clarity about the maritime boundaries existing between states, also affecting economic and policy-relevant activities off-shore and on shore.
Effects associated with natural obstacles	Existence or non-existence of a natural obstacle (e.g. high mountain, large river & lake, sea or large maritime separation) & varying significance of the “barrier effect” represented by an obstacle.
Effects associated with economic discontinuities	Significantly different levels of economic performance (i.e. observed with respect to the overall situation or a specific issue) between areas located along a common border, acting at the same time as potential “push factors” and “pull factors”.
Effects associated with socio-cultural dividing lines	Variations with respect to the general ethno-cultural & linguistic settings on either side of a border, different interpretation of the common historical legacy, different levels of inter-personal relationships existing between both sides of a border
Source: ESPON study “GEOSPECS” (2012), p. 124	

¹³ **ESPON (2012):** *GEOSPECS – Geographic specificities and development potentials in Europe*. Applied Research 2013/1/12. Draft Final Scientific Report. Version 23/03/2012 (pp.106-129). ESPON & University of Geneva.

The GEOSPECS study underlines that (...) *the multitude of political-administrative, natural, economic and socio-cultural border effects can have variable implications for the domestic and border-crossing exchange relationships (...) which can - according to the very nature of an effect – be allocated to two basic constellations:*¹⁴

- **“Closure effects”** exist if the political border (and maritime boundary) or other main features of the multidimensional reality function at the same time as a “discriminatory filter” and as a “barrier” between adjacent areas. Closure effects can originate from the presence of a major natural obstacle (e.g. territorial break or discontinuity) or different political and regulatory systems (e.g. contradictory policies, administrative obstacles, various legal restrictions), but also from considerably different economic conditions (e.g. import/export restrictions & other trade barriers) and socio-cultural settings (e.g. language barriers and/or mental barriers) on either side of a border. Common to all these influential factors is that they deliberately prohibit or tend to make impossible, or at least involuntarily hamper, flows and exchange relations between border areas, or generate other unwanted side-effects¹⁵ on one or both sides of the border.
- **“Opening effects”** exist if the political border (and maritime boundary) or other main features of the multidimensional reality function at the same time as a “discriminatory filter” and as an “interface” between adjacent areas. Positive effects can emerge due to the absence of a major natural obstacle (e.g. a highly permeable green border); different governance systems and economic settings which generate specific development opportunities or induce cross-border exchange relations¹⁶; or similar socio-cultural settings which tend to favour the emergence of common mental or behavioural patterns (i.e. a feeling of belonging together due to a shared historical roots/cultural traditions or because the same language is spoken). Common to all these different influential factors is that they induce border-crossing inter-action and exchange relationships and thus establish a contact zone between the political, economic or socio-cultural sub-systems existing on either side of the border.

¹⁴ ESPON (2012), op.cit., pp. 123-124

¹⁵ Borders may enhance a clearly illegal behaviour such as smuggling or illegal immigration. Also the provision of pornography, of prostitution, of alcohol and/or of narcotics may cluster around borders, ports and airports.

¹⁶ A border area may flourish on the provision of excise or of import–export services. Different regulations on either side of a border may encourage services to position themselves at or near a border. Special Economic Zones (SEZs) often tend to cluster near borders or maritime entry points (i.e. ports).

Once the information gathering is completed, also joint discussions should take place between key stakeholders of a cross-border area (e.g. by organising one or more workshops/seminars) in order to defining a number of strategic themes and more specific issues which need to be addressed by the forthcoming territorial situation analysis.

This preparatory step helps not only to achieve a shared position among the strategic actors about the wider ambition of the territorial analysis for the future cross-border strategy. It also provides more clarity about the required work-approach which has to be adopted for accomplishing the analytical work (i.e. internal delivery or externalisation of parts or all of the analysis) and about the necessary resource inputs (i.e. financial & human), which both are aspects that are relevant for elaborating adequate terms of references.

4.2. Elaborating the comprehensive “territorial analysis” for a cross-border development strategy

Once the preparatory step is completed, subsequent activities should then concentrate on actually elaborating the comprehensive territorial situation analysis for a cross-border development strategy which illustrates the main territorial structures and functional exchange relations existing in a cross-border area.

Various analytical approaches and techniques are nowadays available which can potentially be used during the elaboration process, but their actual mix is strongly depending upon the wider ambition and the overall scope of the cross-border territorial analysis (i.e. general themes & range of sub-themes to be addressed, analytical depth & geographic scale to be covered, time-perspective of the analysis etc).

Overall scope of the territorial analysis

The territorial analysis for a cross-border development strategy examines all sorts of useful information (e.g. region-specific quantitative data for specific indicators, qualitative information) in a cross-border perspective while taking into consideration also larger macro-societal developments and the implications of the European integration process. A territorial analysis must also adopt a clearly policy-oriented view (i.e. it is not a purely scientific study), because its conclusions should pave the way for deriving clear goals/objectives and related actions for the desired future development of the cross-border area (see: Chapter 5 of the Guide).

While taking into consideration the outcomes of the initial preparatory step (see: Section 4.1.), a comprehensive territorial analysis should in principle address a wide range of themes and related sub-themes which are potentially relevant for the territorial development of a cross-border area (**see box 7 below**). Taking into consideration such a wide range of themes and sub-topics is also justified because effective cross-border co-operation has per definition to address all sorts of aspects which can improve the daily life in a given co-operation area.

Box 7: Potential themes & sub-themes to be considered by a territorial analysis (non exhaustive list)
<p>(1) Basic territorial conditions of the cross-border area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General climatic features & related challenges • Geo-morphological nature of the border & existence of physical obstacles. • Main land cover features <p>(2) Main features of human presence on the cross-border territory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main land use patterns • Population density & settlement structure • Urban system/network & existence of cross-border metropolitan areas • Rural areas & the role of agriculture • Polycentric development & rural-urban relationship • Situation of the cross-border real estate market • Effect of EU-level policies & of EU-support programmes supporting cross-border co-operation <p>(3) Demographic characteristics & future evolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current population structure (age classes, gender) and population development (births, mortality, inward & outward migration) • Specific cross-border migration trends (pattern of cross-border residential migration & eventual situation of “in-commuting nationals”) • Effect of EU-level policies & of EU-support programmes supporting cross-border co-operation • Implications of long-term demographic change (i.e. projected future population development). <p>(4) Endowment with basic infrastructures & provision of general services of public interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport infrastructure (road, rail, air, water), transport flows & internal/external accessibility • Border crossing points & capacity • Public transport services & overall accessibility/inter-connectivity • Other communication infrastructures (ITC and esp. high-speed internet), levels of connectivity & public take up • Energy infrastructure • General services of public interest • Risk prevention and emergency services & levels of service provision (also cross-border) • Health care services & levels of service provision (also cross-border) • Environmental infrastructures (solid waste & waste water treatment) & levels of service provision (also cross-border) • Educational infrastructures & levels of service provision (also cross-border) • Other services of public interest & levels of service provision (also cross-border) • Effect of EU-level policies & of EU-support programmes supporting cross-border co-

operation

(5) Economic activities in the cross-border area

- Quality of location factors
- GDP/head of sub-areas
- Structural features of the economic fabric (e.g. employment per sector, productivity, size of enterprises etc)
- Cross-border economic activities (trade & provision of services)
- Research, technology & innovation
- Tourism
- Labour market (employment/unemployment, gender & age specific employment features etc) & cross-border commuting
- Education, training and qualification
- Cross-border consumer trends
- Effect of EU-level policies & of EU-support programmes supporting cross-border co-operation
- Implications of a further globalisation (e.g. pressure on structural change & industrial conversion etc)

(6) Socio-cultural settings in the cross-border area

- Historical legacy in the cross-border context
- General ethno-cultural & linguistic settings on either side of a border,
- Language use & foreign language proficiency
- Levels of inter-personal exchange relations between people on both sides of the border
- Persisting mental barriers or sources of misunderstandings
- Effect of EU-level policies & of EU-support programmes supporting cross-border co-operation

(7) Environment, natural/cultural heritage and energy use in the cross-border area

- Main environmental & natural assets
- Main cultural heritage assets
- Main sources of environmental pollution (water, air, soil, noise) & cross-border implications
- Existence of man-made risks & risk potentials
- Current energy use (fossil & renewable energy sources) & cross-border implications
- Effect of EU-level policies & of EU-support programmes supporting cross-border co-operation
- Implications of long-term climate change (e.g. specific pressure on certain areas, increase of specific natural risks or new natural hazard patterns etc)
- Implications of long-term changes in energy use (i.e. trend towards a low carbon economy & increased energy efficiency).

(8) The general governance context & intensity of cross-border co-operation:

- Practical implications resulting out of the different governance structures (administrative units & powers, different policies) which meet at the border
- Practical implications resulting out of the different legal & regulatory systems which meet at the border
- Legal framework conditions for decentralised cross-border co-operation
- Maturity & capacity of existing cross-border co-operation structure(s)
- Existence of other topical cross-border networks
- Intensity of co-operation & scope for improvement
- Effect of EU-level policies & of EU-support programmes supporting cross-border co-operation

The selected themes and sub-themes should then be analysed for the entire co-operation area, but it can also make sense to carry out a partial analysis for smaller sub-areas and sectors especially where those play a particularly important role (e.g. very dynamic cross-border urban agglomerations, larger natural reserves or other vulnerable ecological areas in mountains or along coasts, major transport corridors, cross-border river basins & water catchment areas etc).

The conclusions of the analysis should in general also emphasise very clearly whether an existing border-related problem or a cross-border development opportunity can potentially be eliminated or exploited in a satisfactory manner through a joint and time-limited action or - on the opposite – through a more continuous joint effort which has to be sustained over a longer time period.

Quantitative analysis

For the cross-border territorial assessment, a quantitative analysis should be carried out in relation a larger number of themes that are relevant for territorial development (e.g. land cover & land use patterns, economic structure, R&D/innovation, education, population & population development, employment & commuting etc), either for the entire co-operation area or – if useful – also for smaller sub-areas in the cross-border area.

The required data exist in various sources and formats. General or more specific complementary data which are useful for the territorial situation analysis can normally be found on both sides of a border in the official national, regional or local statistics, but also at intermediaries (i.e. chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture) and other professional organisations (e.g. trade unions, employers associations, educational organisations etc) or environmental associations.

Although such data can in principle be obtained by an external research team from the respective actors either for free or on a purchase basis, it is recommended that an existing cross-border co-operation structure coordinates or even pro-actively supports the cross-country data-gathering process. This is because it usually has a good overview on already existing information sources containing relevant territorial information¹⁷ and because it can much easier gather existing data due to its “privileged access” to its own member organisations or to other relevant non-member stakeholder organisations on both sides of the border.

¹⁷ National, regional or local spatial planning documents, sector-specific planning documents at national/regional/local levels, documents of inter-state cross-border spatial planning commissions (where existing), EU-wide studies with relevance for the cross-border area etc.

Having concluded the data gathering process, then a frequently observable problem faced by a cross-border territorial situation analysis is that for certain aspects quantitative data are not always available on one or both sides of the border and, more importantly even, that existing data sets are not comparable according to scientific criteria. Due to this, the research team should both quantitatively and qualitatively “pre-examine” the available data material and agree with the commissioning authority(ies) a set of indicators on ground of which the territorial analysis is subsequently carried out.

What should in any case be avoided in the context of a territorial analysis for a cross-border development strategy is that new data is extensively and costly gathered by the researchers (e.g. elaboration of cross-border data bases etc) or that existing data are made comparable through complex and long-lasting scientific work processes. Observing these practical recommendations helps to ensure that the analysis remains primarily oriented towards the needs of the end-user (i.e. the commissioning authority/ies) and not towards a wider scientific interest.

For overcoming problems related to data-availability and data comparability, one can in principle use EU-level data which might be available for several aspects in the statistics of Eurostat, in specific EU-wide studies carried out by various Directorate Generals of the European Commission or in the context of the EU-wide territorial research programme ESPON.

Practical experience shows, however, that these data often show a number of weaknesses which restrict their usability in the context of a cross-border territorial situation analysis. The most prominent ones are:

- Although very useful EU-level spatial data exist which are in many cases also innovative if compared to the usual domestic data sets,¹⁸ they are most often presented at the NUTS 2 or 3 levels which are often too large for conducting a sufficiently differentiated territorial analysis.
- For the lower territorial levels (LAU 1 and 2), however, sufficiently diversified and homogenous spatial data are not yet available.
- Finally, also specific cross-border flow data (& analyses) for various strategic sub-topics relevant for cross-border development are not yet available (e.g. traffic flows transiting the cross-border area, cross-border traffic flows within the co-operation area, cross-border labour market commuting, volume of goods & services exchanged within a cross-border area etc.)

¹⁸ Especially when it comes to data-sets relating to “composite indicators” which often provide novel insights into more complex aspects of territorial development and which - in this form - are not existing in the domestic context.

Some of these weaknesses also came to the fore within the ULYSSES project, which had as one of its main objectives to test and promote the use of applied research results produced by ESPON as a yardstick for elaborating decentralised cross-border territorial development strategies. ULYSSES used the data gathered by the ESPON database project, specific territorial concepts or typologies developed by various ESPON projects (see: Annex 2) and other ESPON tools such as the mapping guide or the GIS files. The researchers observed significant shortcomings and gaps of the current ESPON data which are related to the strategic themes that were addressed by the cross-border territorial analyses (i.e. demography, polycentricity, urban-rural relationship, accessibility & connectivity, Lisbon/Europe 2020 & Gothenburg Strategy objectives), thus requiring a latter completion of this data with other European and regional/local data on each of the themes. Moreover, they also stresses the importance of carrying out further analytical work which should lead to an adaptation of many of the analytical territorial concepts developed under ESPON, mainly for better seizing their manifestations at lower geographical scales and for furthering a deeper understanding of the territorial processes and their causes (see box 8 below).

Despite these limitations, one should not overlook that such EU-level data is still very useful for carrying out a macroscopic positioning of a given cross-border area in the EU-wider context because they allow – even at NUTS II and III levels – to establish a comparison with other domestic or cross-border areas.

Box 8: Using ESPON applied research results for elaborating cross-border territorial analyses – experiences from the ULYSSES project
<p>A first major issue is the adaptation of many of the ESPON data and concepts to lower geographical scales: In fact, many of the ESPON projects have been established at the European level and are poorly suited for evaluating local or even regional realities out of the broader context. When analysing cross border realities this issue becomes clear in several aspects. One of them is that much of the data has been treated at the NUTS 3 level. As NUTS 3 units in many countries cover large areas, they can include border areas, as well as areas that can hardly be classified as such. Therefore, for analysing specific border effects, data at least at the LAU 1 level becomes necessary.</p> <p>A related aspect is that often the concepts themselves are more suited for an EU-wide analysis. For example, when looking at the two major projects that have dealt with polycentricity (i.e. ESPON project 1.1.1 & ESPON project 1.4.3), it becomes clear that the most elementary unit on which this concept was based – the Functional Urban Area (FUA) – is already formatted for a large scale analysis. In the ESPON project 1.4.3, the FUA have been established by aggregating LAU 1 and LAU 2 that form a densely populated continuum, set to minimum threshold regarding its inhabitants. Therefore, the small urban centres that characterise many of the low population density cross-border areas are completely left out of this kind of analysis. These centres, while not being relevant at the European level, are certainly relevant for the regional level.</p> <p>A second major issue is the need for more frequent data updates: Much of the ESPON data has been produced by the 2006 projects and uses data from the late nineties and early</p>

two thousand. Often, the NUTS delimitation of 1999 was used, which has been subject to significant changes in many countries, further limiting its usability. There have been, nonetheless, some noteworthy efforts to update some selected indicators, namely the composite Lisbon Strategy performance benchmark and the potential accessibility indicators for different modes of transportation.

A third major issue is the further improvement of the data coverage on some of the main themes that have been analysed by the ESPON: As the ESPON programme is not focused on primary data collection, data insufficiency cannot really be attributed to the programme, but is more related: (i) to general difficulties in guaranteeing uniform procedures in data collection and treatment at the European level; (ii) the simple absence of data on some themes even at the national levels, and; (iii) difficulties in getting major agents to share the data they possess.

Good examples of these situations are the cases of the connectivity or urban-rural relationship. Concerning **connectivity**, even straightforward indicators such as internet connections by household, are rarely available for low geographical scale. Essentially, there seems to be a great difficulty in establishing a uniform procedure for getting the data from the different agents in the telecommunication markets (namely the Internet Service Providers) throughout Europe and making it available for the wider public in a frequent manner. As for the **urban-rural relationship**, and although the theme has been subjected to many studies, namely in the ESPON program, there is still no data available at the European level to actually evaluate the interaction between rural and urban areas (meaning the flow of people, capital, goods and information). This means that the analysis of this theme is essentially dependent on structural indicators, such as land cover patterns or the distribution of employment and GVA by economic sectors that are commonly linked to rural or urban lifestyles. At least, the land cover data is available through GIS and can therefore be adapted to different geographical scales. But, since the urban-rural typologies established by the ESPON and by the EUROSTAT are only available at the NUTS 3 level, it is not possible to link these indicators with rural or urban realities at the scales that would be desirable.

Other examples of significant shortcomings in the data coverage can also be found regarding polycentricity and economic integration. In **polycentricity** the FUA classification should essentially encompass a morphological dimension, which deals with the distribution of urban areas in a given territory, and a relational, which is based on the networks of flows and cooperation between urban areas at different levels. But, actually, the data is essentially based on morphological and structural indicators and the dynamic aspects of the city systems are very poorly covered. Therefore, although some attempts to differentiate FUA according to their functional specialization have been made, a sound analysis of how the different urban agglomerations articulate themselves and interact with their surroundings cannot be made. Regarding **economic integration**, although there have been some regional attempts to measure regional imports and exports by provenience and destination, this data is not available at a broad scale.

Conclusion: From what has been said until here it becomes clear that for a deeper understanding of the cross-border realities a qualitative leap in data availability is indispensable. Specifically, the following aspects could be considered:

- Try to measure **economic flows** that occur between the different sides of the border, namely by analysing importation and exportation by region of origin/destination (this information is available only in a very partial manner).
- Measure the significance, direction and motivation of **cross-border commuting** at low geographical scales (the actual EUROSTAT data is only available at NUTS 2 level and has gaps), to see if it plays an important role in mitigating international labour marked asymmetries and, if so, whether the further integration of the transport systems would be justified.
- In parallel to cross-border commuting, more detailed **information on migration** would also be very useful, particularly in/in-out migration on low geographical scales by region of origin, as well as other socio-demographic indicators (age, sex, education level, etc.).
- Try to understand the former two points in relation to **wages, unemployment rates**

and other regional asymmetries.

- Understand the **urban-rural relationship** at a cross border level: it would, for example, be very interesting to analyse if the urban areas on one side of the border are being used for service provision or as regional markets for rural areas on the other side of the border.
- Study the possibility for deepening joint **public service provision** to limit redundancies: in many cross border areas there are protocols in place for sharing public infrastructures, such as health facilities; a deeper knowledge of their extend, reach and nature could be an important aspect in understanding and benchmarking cross border integration.

Qualitative analysis

Qualitative approaches should in general be used for assessing those issues which can not be properly quantified but which are important problems/constraints or development opportunities and thus of relevance for the elaboration of a cross-border territorial situation analysis.

This holds in particular true for the territorial implications of the manifold border effects associated to the multidimensional reality of a given border (e.g. physical, political, economic and socio-cultural features), which can not be fully appraised because quantitative data either does not exist at all or only for particular aspects of the more complex problem.¹⁹ Some concrete examples for such border effects are shown below ([see box 9 below](#)).

A comprehensive assessment of the actual scope and significance of such border effects, as well as of their concrete border-regional and cross-border implications, therefore always requires a more profound qualitative analysis which is complemented - where possible - by a quantitative analysis of specific aspects.

The qualitative analysis should, in particular, not only explore the specific nature of such effects, but also shed further light on the primary “cause-and-effect relationships” and the complex interplay or cross-influence between the various primary border effects (i.e. secondary effects).²⁰

¹⁹ See on this matter also the recently published ESPON-study report of the project GEOSPECS, which also covered the situation of border areas: **ESPON (2012): GEOSPECS – Geographic specificities and development potentials in Europe**. Applied Research 2013/1/12. Draft Final Scientific Report (Version 23/03/2012). ESPON & University of Geneva.

²⁰ See on this matter also the recently published ESPON-study report of the project GEOSPECS, which also covered the situation of border areas: **ESPON (2012): GEOSPECS – Geographic specificities and development potentials in Europe**. Applied Research 2013/1/12. Draft Final Scientific Report (Version 23/03/2012). ESPON & University of Geneva.

Box 9:
Border effects which require a comprehensive qualitative analysis

- A lack of coordination/cooperation and joint planning in the field of public policies due to different administrative structures and powers.
- Obstacles for cross-border mobility & labour market commuting (i.e. existence of labour market restrictions, different taxation & social systems, different other administrative/regulatory requirements governing e.g. the access to vocational training & further training, lacking information on job opportunities or on required levels of formations/graduations).
- Obstacles for independent professions (e.g. doctors, lawyers, architects etc) due to different legislations or an insufficient de-jure or de-facto recognition of degrees, diploma or other qualifications.
- Obstacles for border-crossing business activities (esp. for SMEs & small crafts undertakings) due to different legislations on tax, social welfare and education/vocational training or different technical standards & other formal requirements (e.g. special permits, mandatory membership in intermediate professional organisations etc).
- Different environmental legislations/standards or practices, leading to unwanted developments (e.g. pollution of air, soil and water, noise disturbances) which also negatively affect the quality of life on one or both sides of a border.
- Limited admission into a hospital or consultation of a doctor on the other side of the border, due to different health care systems and insurance regulations.
- Curtailed civil rights of foreigners living as permanent residents on the other side of a border (e.g. voting rights in the home country) or of residents in a border region with respect to aspects on the other side affecting their own quality of life (e.g. installation of waste disposal / incineration facilities, nuclear power plants).
- Varying quality in terms of tackling major emergencies, accidents with a cross-border impact due to different legislations and organisation of rescue & disaster prevention services.
- Varying levels of crime prevention and public security on either side of the border, due to different legislation & organisation of police forces.
- Existence of negative instinctive attitudes (e.g. mental barriers/misunderstandings, mistrust, lack of genuine motivation), due to different cultural/moral concepts and behavioural patterns.
- Existence of different official languages and a lack of language proficiency (multi-linguism) on both sides of the border which lead to a communicative barrier among individuals, to difficulties in accessing jobs and to more complicated customs / administrative procedures.
- Existence of negative instinctive attitudes (e.g. traditional prejudices, mistrust / misinformation, a lack of mutual knowledge/understanding or ignorance) due to negative historic experiences and/or the non-existence of common historic ties.

Source: ESPON (2012): *GEOSPECS – Geographic specificities and development potentials in Europe*. Annexes to the draft scientific report of the ESPON GEOSPECS project (pp. 43-44). ESPON & University of Geneva.

Visualisation & mapping

Another important methodological aspect is the visualisation approach which is adopted by the cross-border territorial analysis. A use of cartography tools and map-based representations of certain issues in the territorial analysis helps in general to raise the awareness and understanding about complex territorial situations or development trends and avoids lengthy text-based descriptions.

In early cross-border territorial development strategies (i.e. those of the late 1990s), especially the use of maps was still very seldom or even not practiced at all. This situation has evolved significantly in more recent times, because a larger number of IT-based mapping tools are now available which makes the elaboration of topical or complex maps much easier.

Prospective analysis

As already mentioned under the overall principles to be observed ([see: Chapter 3](#)), a cross-border territorial development strategy should preferably also include information about the future trends and characteristics of the cross-border co-operation area in order to establish also a prospective view for future territorial development in a medium and long-term perspective.

This type of information can usually be generated by making use of linear or more complex / cyclic analytical approaches such as projections and forecasts (modelling) or prospective investigations (scenarios, speculative research). In the past, however, one could frequently observe that the methods used for preparing a cross-border territorial development strategy were less sophisticated in nature and do not go beyond usual static or dynamic quantitative analysis.

It should, however, be mentioned that prospective analysis can be quite demanding in terms of research input and time. As a consequence, such approaches might require that parallel and/or follow-up projects are realised which complement or further deepen certain aspects that are addressed by a cross-border territorial development strategy.

Good examples for such complementary or follow-up approaches can be found along some borders.

- In the PAMINA cross-border area, a multimodal traffic study for the region upper Rhine was produced in parallel to the elaboration of the cross-border territorial development strategy. The study project started in a first phase already under INTERREG II, while the two last phases were realised with support from INTERREG III. The project focuses on a conceptualisation and comparison of scenarios (i.e. analysis of possible complementarities between the transport systems & testing of these complementarities thanks to the definition and evaluation of prospective scenarios) and the suggestion of recommendations for

action in a cross-border perspective to answer the future demand for transport of goods and persons.²¹

- After the finalisation of the territorial development perspective for the cross-border metropolitan region Bayonne-San Sebastian in 2000 (i.e. "White Paper of the Basque Eurocity Bayonne-San Sebastian"), various follow up-activities were carried out which realised – on ground of extensive quantitative analyses - very sophisticated prospective exercises and scenario development activities in relation to specific themes of cross-border relevance (e.g. transport, waste treatment, public services, cross-border mobility).²²
- In the Øresund-Region, several projects involving substantial prospective analysis and scenario development were carried out which aimed to prepare and support strategic policy-level decision-making in relation to infrastructure, urban development and transport for better coping with the expected future growth of population, economy and transport flows in this dynamic cross-border metropolitan region (**see: boxes 10 & 11 below**). These remarkable initiatives in the Øresund-Region have also received twice a wider European recognition because they won in 2010 and 2011 the AEBR "Sail of Papenburg Cross-Border Award" which is endowed by the Ems Dollart Region (EDR).

²¹ **ESPON-INTERACT (2006):** Polycentric Urban Development and Rural-Urban Partnership – Thematic Study of INTERREG and ESPON activities. Esch-sur-Alzette.

²² Study on local public services in the Eurocity (December 2000). Study on the cross-border treatment of waste (2002). Prospective study on transport infrastructures (June 2004). Cross-border Mobility Study (2004).

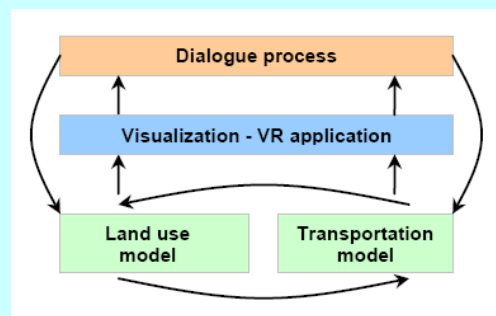
**Box 10:
Visualization of Infrastructure & Sustainable development in Øresund
(the project VISÖ)**

The project VISÖ created planning tools and methods for shaping decisions on future land use and transport structures and for contributing to the propagation of sustainable urban development in a cross-border regional context. The tools and methods of the VISÖ-project consist of three components:

1. An integrated land use and transportation model which consists of a "land use model" that calculates and shows future demand for housing and workplace and of a "transportation model" that calculates and shows preferred travel mode, choice of transportation and travel times.
2. A visual presentation of the different scenarios and outcomes from the combined land use and transportation model in real time and with high resolution for major regional areas as well as for small local areas.
3. A dialogue process, during which the outcomes of the previous components are presented, interpreted and discussed in a series of public dialogues.

The combined application of these components allowed that the effects and implications of various development scenarios could be more easily calculated, distilled and presented in a legible way.

The basic models and tools were defined and developed during 2009, while in 2010 alternative future scenarios in real planning cases were modelled, visualised and discussed in dialogue form.



The planning cases and scenarios were then varied according to the goals pronounced by participating planners, politicians and citizens and, following the public dialogues, the results and impacts of the tools and methods were summarised and disseminated. Ultimately, this process enabled the involved partner organisations, politicians, the affected communities and individuals to better understand and shape development-related decisions which improve the quality of life and strengthen the economic development while simultaneously also improving the service quality in the regions build environment. After the first three years of the project, it is expected that the cross-border partnership will continue and carry forward the use, development and maintenance of the shared tools and methods.

Source: Hultén, J./ Schantz, P./ Andersson, B. (2011): VISÖ – Visualization of Infrastructure and Sustainable development in Öresund. Proceedings from the Annual Transport Conference at Aalborg University.

**Box 11:
Infrastructure & urban development in the Øresund
(the projects ØRIB and IBU-Øresund)**

The earlier **ØRIB project** developed alternative scenarios for infrastructure and urban development, first, for the time period until 2045 (ØRIB I sub-project) and then for the time period until 2025 (ØRIB II sub-project). The latter project characterised the current conditions/development tendencies and also concretised future physical impacts for housing, enterprise and transport conditions in two scenarios.

- The “**Baseline Scenario 2025**” (Map 1) illustrates a super-regional structure of cities, terminals and business environments connected by the rail network that will exist according to current plans for investments up to about 2025 (extrapolation from the existing trend).
- The “**Competitiveness Scenario 2025**” (Map 2) assumes full integration of the Øresund Region and also proactive initiatives to strengthen its international competitiveness and illustrates a super-regional structure of cities, terminals and business environments connected by the rail network that could exist in 2025 (i.e. after expansion of fast land connections north of the Fehmarn Belt, Ring 5 and the HH connection). Through the improved regional accessibility in large parts of the Øresund Region, more places gain a central position and may become good alternatives for companies that would otherwise choose to set up operations in central Copenhagen. This would contribute to mitigating road traffic on access roads to Copenhagen.

Map 1:



Map 2:



The **IBU-Øresund project** built upon the findings of the previous ØRIB-project and the work lasted over two and a half years. The project had the purpose of creating a new knowledge-base with respect to the challenges and opportunities that will be the result of an increased integration of the Øresund Region by 2030 and of uniting key stakeholders from the cross-border area and from the rest of Sweden and Denmark around the required serious efforts and joint actions.

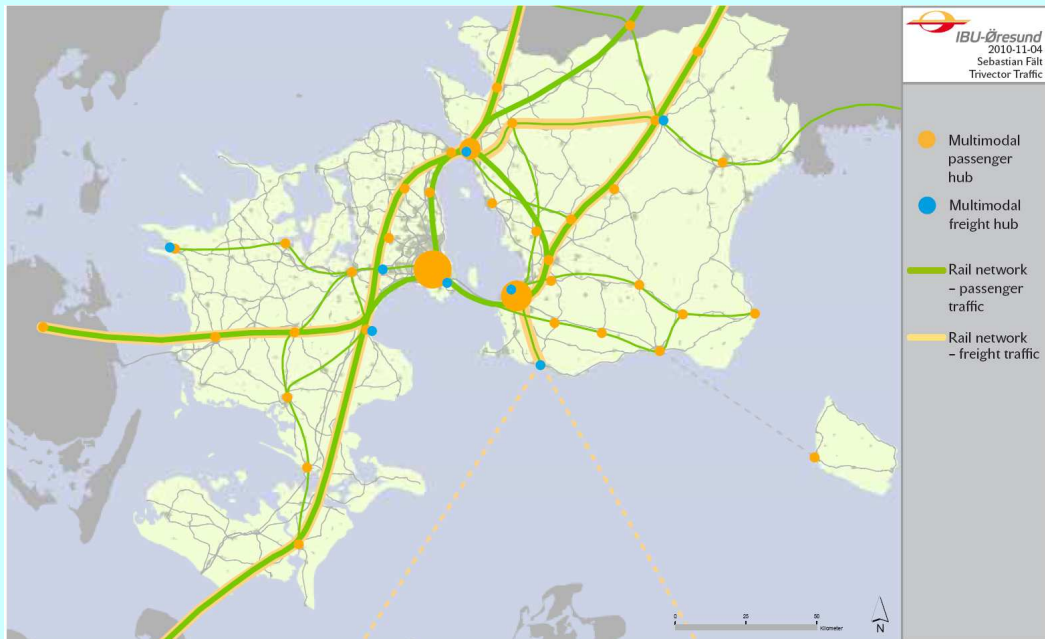
For ensuring that good and reliable communications exist throughout the region and across the Øresund as a prerequisite for continued future growth, the project

- identified the planning challenges in relation to different aspects of infrastructure or urban development in the Øresund Region (i.e. urban development & public transport infrastructure, Øresund as an international multimodal transport hub; the Fehmarn-Øresund corridor; traffic analyses in the Øresund Region),
- highlighted solutions and proposed measures which will promote growth in the region,

make it more competitive in international markets and tie it closer together;

- supported qualified discussions about the required large-scale investments in (transport) infrastructure on both sides of the Øresund, because their planning and implementation of will take time.

Vital steps to be achieved in the Øresund Region up to 2030 include a fixed link between Helsingborg and Helsingör, a fifth ring road west of Copenhagen, maximising the use of the Fehmarn Belt Link, strengthening and promoting Copenhagen Airport as a multimodal hub and ensuring that the entire region is linked through a fast cross-border regional rail network.



Sources: ØRIB –Phase II (no date mentioned): The Øresund Region in 2025 - Scenarios for Traffic and Urban Development An Abridged Version. IBU-Øresund (2010): Infrastructure and urban development in the Öresund region (Short version of the finale report, December 2010).

Analysis of the cross-border governance context

A comprehensive territorial analysis for a cross-border development strategy should also include an assessment of the multi-level governance context prevailing in the co-operation area.

This governance analysis can briefly examine the different administrative structures and policies existing on either side of a common border, but one has to be aware of the fact that the hierarchies of domestic administrative structures as well as their different competences in a cross-border context can not be changed.

It is therefore not helpful to compare competences or to explore ways of cooperating at equal competence levels, because issue-specific competences often do not exist at the same administrative levels or with equal contents on

both sides of a border. If this is nonetheless done, this means in practice that the lowest common denominator would be applied as a mutual basis of work as everyone can only act within the framework of his own competences. If the governance systems on both sides are examined, more important is

- to highlight the practical implications which the different governance and legal systems have for the day-to-day activities in a cross-border area;
- to examine how co-operation should take place for eliminating border problems which result of these systemic differences.

The governance analysis should therefore first and foremost focus on thoroughly assessing the overall situation of decentralised cross-border co-operation along a given border. Since the very beginning in 1958, decentralised cross-border co-operation is operating in a multi-level governance context because this was the only possible way to realise joint actions across state borders.

Over the past decades and despite the different domestic administrative structures and competences existing on either side, a large number of cross-border topical project partnerships or networks and also different types of permanent cross-border co-operation structures were established along all EU-borders. The latter, however, are up to now not disposing of own powers because national, regional or local bodies prefer to transfer tasks on a delegation basis to those structures (even to an EGTC) rather than formal competences. As a consequence, the analysis of decentralised cross-border co-operation should focus on assessing the practical functioning and quality/capacity of these variable co-operation initiatives and also clearly highlight persisting weaknesses or scope for further improvements.

An analysis of decentralised cross-border co-operation can, for example, be carried out in form of a simple SWOT analysis and review the current situation (strengths/weaknesses) and future perspectives (opportunities/threats) in relation to a number of issues such as the legal framework conditions cross-border co-operation, the maturity and capacity of existing cross-border co-operation structures or the density of other existing topical cross-border networks and co-operations.

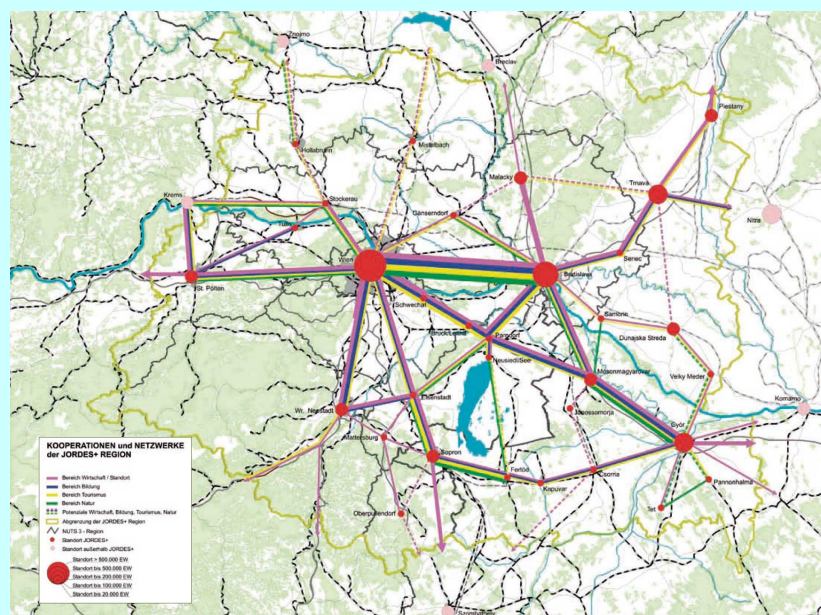
But also other analytical techniques with a wider or thematically more focussed approach are thinkable, as illustrate the following examples below:

- The cross-border territorial development strategies of the late 1990s which were elaborated for the Euregio Rhein-Waal (D/NL), the Euroregion Viadrina (D/PL) the PAMINA co-operation area (D/F) and the Eurocité Basque (E/F) and examined more in depth by the ESPON-

INTERACT study on spatial visions and scenarios carried out an extensive but simple stock-taking analysis of the current state of cross-border co-operation and of the level of integration achieved up to now.

- Another example is the “Joint Regional Development Strategy for the Vienna-Bratislava-Győr Region” (JORDES+), which examined and visually presented the existing co-operations and networks in the cross-border co-operation area as well as future development potentials (see [box 12 below](#)).

**Box 12:
Analysis of existing & future co-operations and networks
in the Vienna-Bratislava-Győr Region**



- The line colours represent the different co-operation topics: Economy (lavender), education (blue), tourism (yellow) and nature (green).
- The “thickness” of the lines represents the intensity & importance of the examined networks & co-operations.
- Continuous lines represent already existing networks & co-operations of institutions and actors in the cross-border area.
- Non-continuous lines represent future or further extendable networks & co-operations of institutions and actors in the cross-border area.

Source: “Joint Regional Development Strategy for the Vienna- Bratislava-Győr Region” (JORDES +). Vienna 2005.

- Also the ULYSSES project carried out a comprehensive cross-border institutional analysis for each of the six cross-border areas which were examined more in-depth. This analysis captured, on the one hand, the overall “*structural dimension*” which can be hardly influenced by the

cross-border cooperation partners²³ and, on the other hand, the “*activity dimension*” which addressed the intensity and continuity of institutionalised regional cross-border cooperation.²⁴

4.3. Presentation and final validation of the cross-border territorial analysis

The territorial analysis realised for a wide range of themes and sub-themes should - for a first presentation - be “merged” into cross-cutting and also more policy-oriented headings in order to avoid lengthy descriptions in the related section of the future cross-border territorial development strategy (**see box 13 below**).

Box 13:
Cross-cutting themes chosen for presenting a territorial analysis

The “**PAMINA territorial development strategy**” (D/F) was based upon a comprehensive diagnosis of the cross-border area which was a precursor for identifying and formulating the 5 strategic themes for a development of the PAMINA cross-border area.

1. General factors: features of basic geography, the urban framework, public administration and the overall population.
2. Analysis of the population regarding age, demographic evolution and the role of migration (e.g. newly arriving foreigners).
3. Analysis of the labour market: unemployment, employment and migration.
4. Framework for economic development: real estate market, education, telecommunication and transport infrastructures.
5. Economic structure: industrial structure, companies and spatial distribution of development areas.

The presentation under these headings should mainly summarise the important key findings of the thematic analyses and – most importantly – bring together eventual “bi-national” facts and views in a clear cross-border perspective for better highlighting mutual inter-connections and exchange relations. In doing so, particular emphasis should also be put on pinpointing key problems and development opportunities which are of cross-border

²³ For the sake of simplicity and applicability, the structural dimension examined factors like (i) the political status of the border (e.g. EU membership / historicity, Schengen status), (ii) the existing planning systems (i.e. the planning culture family), (iii) the physical status of a border (e.g. geomorphology) and (iv) the existing linguistic settings (i.e. number of languages existing in the area). These factors have been combined in a synthesis score which allowed determining a border function as separation, interface or even as a link.

²⁴ The *activity dimension* has taken into account (i) the historicity of cross-border cooperation in general (i.e. earliest founding date of cross-border cooperation), (ii) the maturity of cross-border cooperation (i.e. INTERREG III participation), (iii) the institutional thickness in cross-border cooperation (i.e. number of permanent institutionalisations), (iv) the current activity in terms of operative EGTCs, (v) existing cross-border spatial development on regional level (e.g. joint GIS tools) and (vi) the existing cross-border transport projects (e.g. TEN-T corridors crossing the border). These domains were combined in a synthesis score that classified the borders function as *integration, cooperation or separation*.

relevance (i.e. those on which future cross-border co-operation could be focussed on), while also stressing potential other problems or development needs which are of cross-border relevance that require mostly one-sided and complementary local/regional/national actions.

Once this first version of the cross-border territorial analysis is elaborated, it should then undergo **a validation process** which involves a broad range of stakeholders from the co-operation area.

This validation process should involve a “**commenting phase**” (i.e. by circulating the draft analysis to the respective stakeholders) and subsequently also a “**discussion phase**” in order to allow for a direct and critical exchange of views on the draft presented (e.g. by organising several thematic workshops which bring together the research team, the relevant strategic stakeholders concerned and also regional/local or even national-level politicians). Based upon the outcomes of this validation process, the final version of the territorial analysis is then elaborated by the editing team.

5. Elaborating the policy programme and the application framework for a cross-border development strategy (Phase II)

Once having finalised the territorial analysis which provides a better understanding of the spatial structures and functional interactions in a given cross-border area, the time has come to accomplish two important steps for finalising a cross-border territorial development strategy:

1. The elaboration of a “policy programme” for territorial development which serves the long term good.
2. The elaboration of an “application framework” for actually translating territorial development goals and policy aims into concrete action.

The technical details of the policy programme and the application framework of a cross-border development strategy should primarily be elaborated by a smaller core group of competent planning professionals which are working for both an already existing permanent cross-border structure and/or for the administration of the local/regional authorities making up the cross-border co-operation area.

At the same time, however, also a wider range of other public, semi-public or private key stakeholders from the cross-border area need to be pro-actively involved in this phase of the elaboration process before the strategy document is finally published (e.g. through thematic workshops & seminars or consultation procedures etc). This involvement allows the core group of planning professionals to gather additional specialist contributions and to validate already elaborated suggestions for potential goals/objectives and application instruments, thus creating already at this stage an extended “functional legitimacy” for the future strategy document (bottom-up approach).

5.1. The “policy programme” of a cross-border development strategy

The policy programme of a cross-border development strategy is jointly elaborated on ground of the key findings resulting out of the territorial analysis and sets out the shared normative provisions for territorial development which will be jointly pursued by all target groups of a given cross-border area, while making the most optimal use of all available resources and instruments.

The policy programme defines the desired long-term territorial development situation (i.e. the overall vision statement) and specifies how existing development problems can be overcome or alleviated and how potential

development opportunities can be jointly exploited (i.e. the development goals & operational objectives, other principles & guidelines etc).

The overall vision statement

The overall vision statement briefly summarises the desired future territorial development situation or status which is to be reached in a long-term perspective (see box 13 below).

The vision statement should – at the same time – set out the desired long-term territorial development path within the cross-border area (“inward-looking” perspective) and also position the cross-border area with respect to the wider European context by taking into consideration important macro-societal challenges and processes such as globalisation, demographic change or climate change (i.e. the “outward-looking” perspective)

Box 13: Examples for vision statements in cross-border territorial development strategies
<p>In the PAMINA cross-border territorial development concept, the overall vision statement reads as follows: <i>The PAMINA-area is pre-designated to become a European cross-border model area. The cross-border dimension creates its specificity and allocates to the area a particular attractiveness: decisions on both sides of the border are jointly supported, policy shapes the common future in a co-ordinated manner, PAMINA occupies a singular position in the wider Upper Rhine area and positions itself in the global competition. Little by little, the jointly defined development perspectives will be integrated into planning efforts realised at different levels of subsequently be implemented. The joint cross-border development objectives will be backed by a "cross-border local purpose association" established alongside the provisions of the Karlsruhe-Agreement and new perspectives for a realisation of these objectives will emerge with a further development of legal instruments of European level.</i> The basic elements of this development vision and already existing spatial development objectives formulated at different levels have served to derive three principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principle 1: Sustainable development of the PAMINA-area.• Principle 2: Co-ordinated action in the PAMINA-area.• Principle 3: The European dimension of the PAMINA-area. <p>In the "Cross-border development and action concept 2000-2010" for the Euregio Rhein-Waal, the over-arching development vision was formulated as follows: <i>Sustainable development of a European region without borders - the Rhein-Waal region as an area for living and economic activities that is secure in the future and competitive and characterised by a high quality of the conditions for location and living within the inter-metropolitan core area of North-West Europe.</i> This general development vision was further specified alongside the following four keywords:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Sustainability": regional development with a balanced consideration of ecological, economic and social aspects.• "Integration": region-internal cohesion conceived around economic, social, cultural and political aspects.• "Networking": access to resources of other regions in the European and global context.• "Competence": knowledge and job skills that are networked and mobilised for the global knowledge-based economy.• "Identity": preservation of (sub-) regional identities and coexistence of the variety of particularities existing throughout the different areas.

The strategic goals & operational objectives for territorial development

The overall vision is then made more concrete by a number of normative provisions which should

- directly address the cross-border problems and development opportunities as identified beforehand by the territorial analysis;
- pro-actively specify in relation to those aspects the desired medium- and long-term territorial development situation which is to be reached in the cross-border area.

The strategic goals should be relatively few in number, but they should also be sufficiently meaningful for being able to “direct” the future cross-border development in form of a territorially integrated process (e.g. by adopting a cross-thematic or cross-sector perspective). In relation to those goals, a larger number of operational objectives should then be elaborated from which the concrete joint measures and initiatives for the strategy’s application framework are later on derived (see below).

Where useful and required, one might also add to these normative provisions a number of other more focussed objectives which can relate to a specific sector of particular importance (e.g. transport, environment, agriculture & fisheries, specific economic sectors etc) or to one or more sub-areas in the cross-border region which play a crucial role in the wider territorial development process (e.g. cross-border metropolitan areas, natural reserves and other ecologically vulnerable areas).

Other principles or guidelines

A cross-border territorial development strategy can also include a number of general “principles” or “guidelines” for framing the future territorial development process in the cross-border area.

Such provisions can set out qualitative orientations for the desired future cross-border co-operation process (e.g. nature & intensity of co-operation; types of joint interventions) or formulate indicative recommendations for structural and sector-specific policies which are implemented in the cross-border area (i.e. local & regional-level policies; national & EU-level policies) in order to show how they could best contribute to the wider cross-border territorial development process.

Visualisation of the policy programme

If technically feasible, the policy programme of a cross-border territorial development strategy should also contain elements of visualisation and mapping. This usually helps to better understand the territorial orientation of the strategic goals and policy objectives which were defined to achieve the desired long-term territorial development status of the cross-border area.

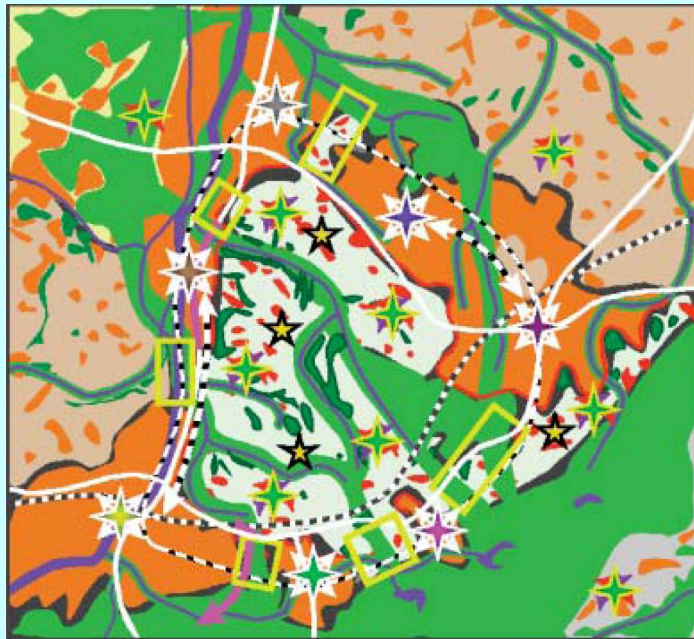
In practice, however, one can observe that only very few cross-border territorial development strategies make use of such a visualisation approach. This is mostly a deliberate choice, because the cross-border stakeholders want to avoid potential conflicts with already existing visualisations in local regional or national spatial planning schemes (e.g. spatial planning schemes, regional development plans, local land use plans etc) or other sector-specific and horizontal schemes (e.g. transport, environment etc).

An example for a map-based representation of the overall development vision can be found in the “Three Countries Park Development Perspective” (DE/NL/BE) which is an instrument for the harmonisation of policy in the field of land-use planning and nature and for the development of joint projects to protect and strengthen the ‘green heart’ of the Euregio Maas-Rhein. This admittedly very schematic map ([see: Map 2](#)) was elaborated by taking the current territorial characteristics as a point of departure and by superposing to them the desired topical features of spatial development to be achieved in a long term perspective. (i.e. for landscape, cultural assets, nature, water, environment, agriculture, tourism, urbanisation and infrastructure).

A good example for a visualisation of strategic development goals can be found in the PAMINA cross-border territorial development concept. Three maps illustrate the specific key messages of each strategic priority having a territorial character (i.e. Map 1 on the PAMINA landscape park. Map 2 on communication and networked areas. Map 3 on a balanced development of location factors), while a fourth map represents an "overlap" of the three aforementioned ones ([see: Map 3](#)). This comprehensive map illustrates the entire territorial development approach promoted by the cross-border strategy and its primary benefit is

- to represent the various cross-border development needs in a systematic way,
- to illustrate the necessary further steps for a joint and coherent territorial development of the cooperation area,
- to provide an orientation-function for spatial planning at the regional, sub-regional and local levels.

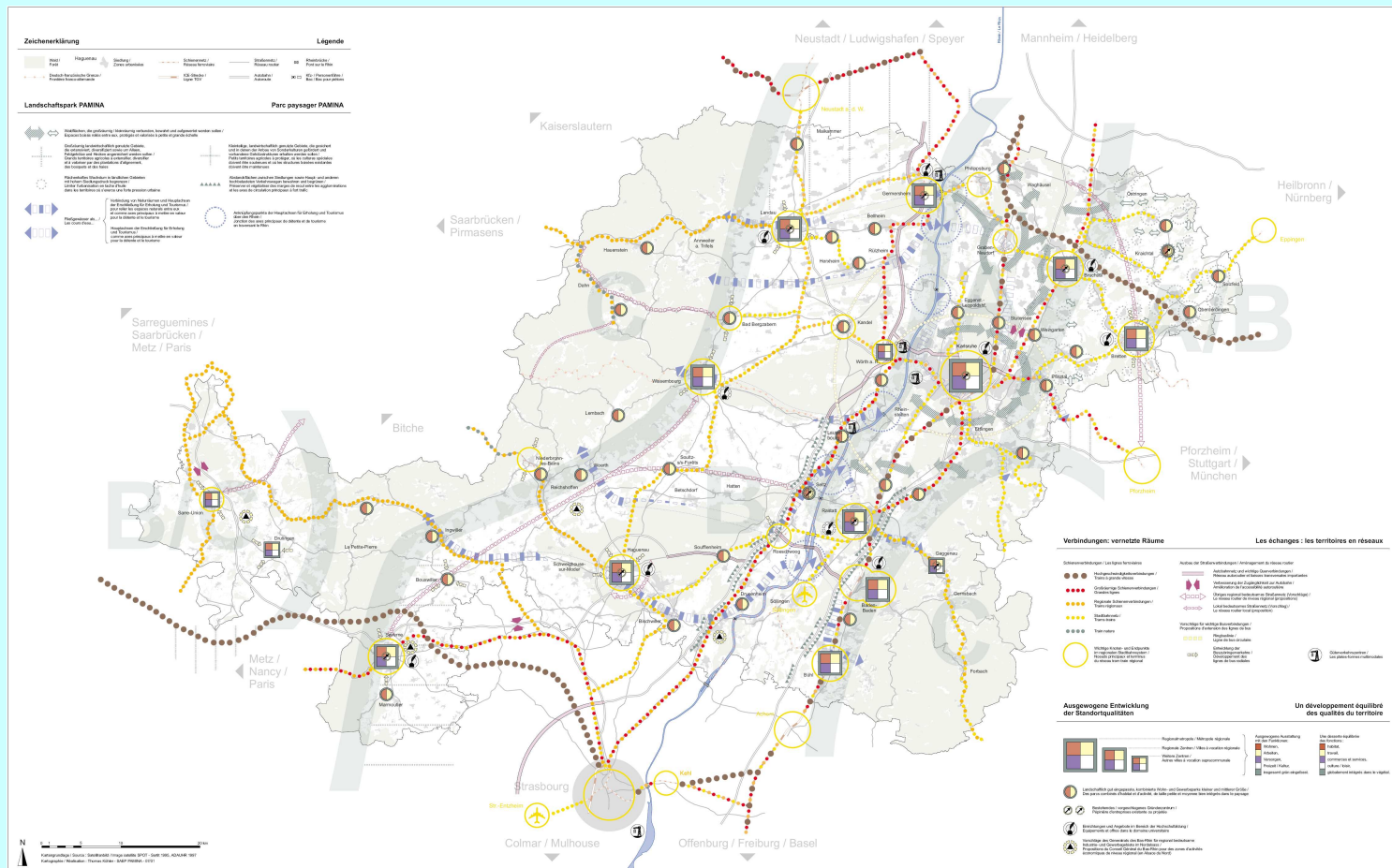
**Map 2:
Cartographic representation of the long-term development vision for the
“Three Countries Park” in the Euregio Maas Rhein**



Entwicklungsperspektive

-  *Puffergebiete*
-  *Städtische Identitäten verstärken und bewirtschaften*
-  *Stadträndern Gestalt geben*
-  *Problembereiche Infrastruktur*
-  *Bessere Eisenbahnverbindungen*
-  *Renaturierung von Flusstälern und Verstärkung von Waldhängen und Kalkgrasflächen*
-  *Touristische Attraktionen im Städtering*
-  *Klein strukturierte Erholung in den ländlichen Gebieten*
-  *Landwirtschaft mit "grünen Diensten" (Landschaft- und Naturschutz) und Entwicklung von Regionalprodukten*

Map 3: Cartographic representation of the strategic development goals for the PAMINA cross-border area



5.2. The “application framework” of a cross-border development strategy

The application framework is a crucial element of any cross-border territorial development strategy because it translates the provisions of the policy programme (i.e. the strategic goals & objectives) into practical actions which are able to support the desired territorial development processes in a short-, medium- and long-term perspective.

Conceptualisation of the application framework

Practice shows that there is no single best way for conceptualising such an application framework because its basic structure and level of detail is strongly conditioned by the overall ambition and focus of a cross-border territorial development strategy.

One can find cross-border development strategies which suggest only a relatively small number of strategic measures or pilot projects, while others develop a very extensive set of potential measures and project ideas at various levels of detail. Good examples for the latter case are the "Cross-border development and action concept 2000-2010" for the Euregio Rhein-Waal ([see: Annex 3](#)) and the PAMINA cross-border territorial development concept ([see: Annex 4](#)).

Despite this rather heterogeneous overall situation, it is generally advised to observe a number of principles during the conceptualisation process of an application framework:

- The application framework should be vertically consistent: This means that each of the suggested actions is clearly related to one or more of the operational objectives and strategic goals which were previously defined in the policy programme of a cross-border development strategy.
- The application framework should be well-differentiated: This means that ideas for cross-border initiatives and projects are developed for the entire co-operation area (e.g. in form of strategic initiatives or framework projects) and also for specific sub-zones or sectors if they are of particular relevance for the future territorial development of the co-operation area.
- The application framework should be sufficiently concrete: This means that for each cross-border initiative or project idea also first indications about the potential stakeholders who can possibly implement those actions are given.

- The application framework should be horizontally well-integrated: This means that also some complementary measures should be defined which do not require cross-border co-operation but which are nonetheless important for the future cross-border territorial development process. Such measures help to establish more systematic links to other policies which are implemented by various governance levels in the cross-border area (e.g. EU, national, regional, local) and also allow to achieve synergy or spin-off effects with particular interventions.

Procedural aspects

The conceptualisation of an application framework also requires that concrete measures or project ideas are identified and actually selected, for which an appropriate procedure should be put into place.

This identification and selection procedure should be conceived by reflecting as closely as possible the general principles for successful decentralised cross-border co-operation ([see box 14 below](#)). This will also help to achieve a clear “stakeholder orientation” of the application framework and also contribute to establish a strong “mental ownership” in relation to the actions which are promoted by the future cross-border development strategy.

Box 14: General principles for successful decentralised cross-border cooperation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership and subsidiarity: The regional/local level has turned out to be the best and most successful one for cross-border cooperation, but an internal partnership with a wide range of other regional/local stakeholders on both sides of the border as well as an external partnership with national governments is necessary in order to mobilise the knowledge of all those actors for cross-border cooperation. • A proximity to the citizens living in border areas: Given that citizens on either side of the border are concerned in their day-to-day life by the various border effects which result from systemic differences, they desire that cross-border co-operation produces solutions to those difficulties. • Involvement of politicians: If policy is made in a cross-border context, then also the active support of local, regional, national and European politicians from both sides of the border is needed. • Cross-border co-operation structures: Permanent co-operation structures with joint bodies, a joint office and a joint budget are the best suited instruments for enhanced cooperation, but they should not be self-serving. 	

By taking into consideration the above said, a **“two-phase model procedure”** is now sketched out which could be applied during the elaboration of an application framework. Both phases of this model procedure should ideally be coordinated and run by an existing permanent cross-border structure, because it is the best-placed actor which can ensure that the cross-border interest prevails over the manifold other particular interests which exist in practice.

- The procedure should, during a first phase, foresee a **“bottom-up driven identification process”**: This phase should intensively involve all important public key actors as well as a wide range other more sector- or theme-specific stakeholder organisations (i.e. public, semi-public, private) from both sides of the border, because they usually hold important practical knowledge on how border-related difficulties or new development possibilities could potentially be solved or addressed in a cross-border context. Due to this, they should be given sufficient time to reflect upon the various objectives of the cross-border strategy and to develop own suggestions for initiatives and projects which can potentially contribute to achieve the strategy objectives.
- During second phase, however, the procedure should also establish a kind of **“top-down oriented selection process”**: Such an approach is required for actually realising a policy-level orientation and steering with respect to the many bottom-up initiatives/projects suggested by the stakeholders. These suggestions have to be assessed with respect to their overall relevance for the strategy objectives and should also be prioritised in some way (e.g. by using specific criteria determining their basic nature, the scope of the intervention or the geographic focus). Furthermore, it might also be necessary to conceive new or additional initiatives in relation to those strategy objectives for which concrete bottom-up proposals are still lacking. Finally, this phase should also provide for a wider discussion on the selected measures and projects in order to inform the concerned stakeholders and the public, but also for already getting support from politicians and the concerned administrative decision making levels.

For the elaboration of the PAMINA cross-border territorial development concept, an interesting and transparent procedure was established which also reflects well the above-exposed model process. In an initial phase, suggestions for potential measures and project proposals were gathered by referring to (1) the requirements for action which were based upon the SWOT-analysis for the PAMINA area and (2) already existing development objectives for the entire PAMINA-area or for specific sub-areas, but also on ground of (3) actor-specific preferences. From this wider set of suggestions received, a

limited number pilot projects were subsequently selected through a “two-steps process”:

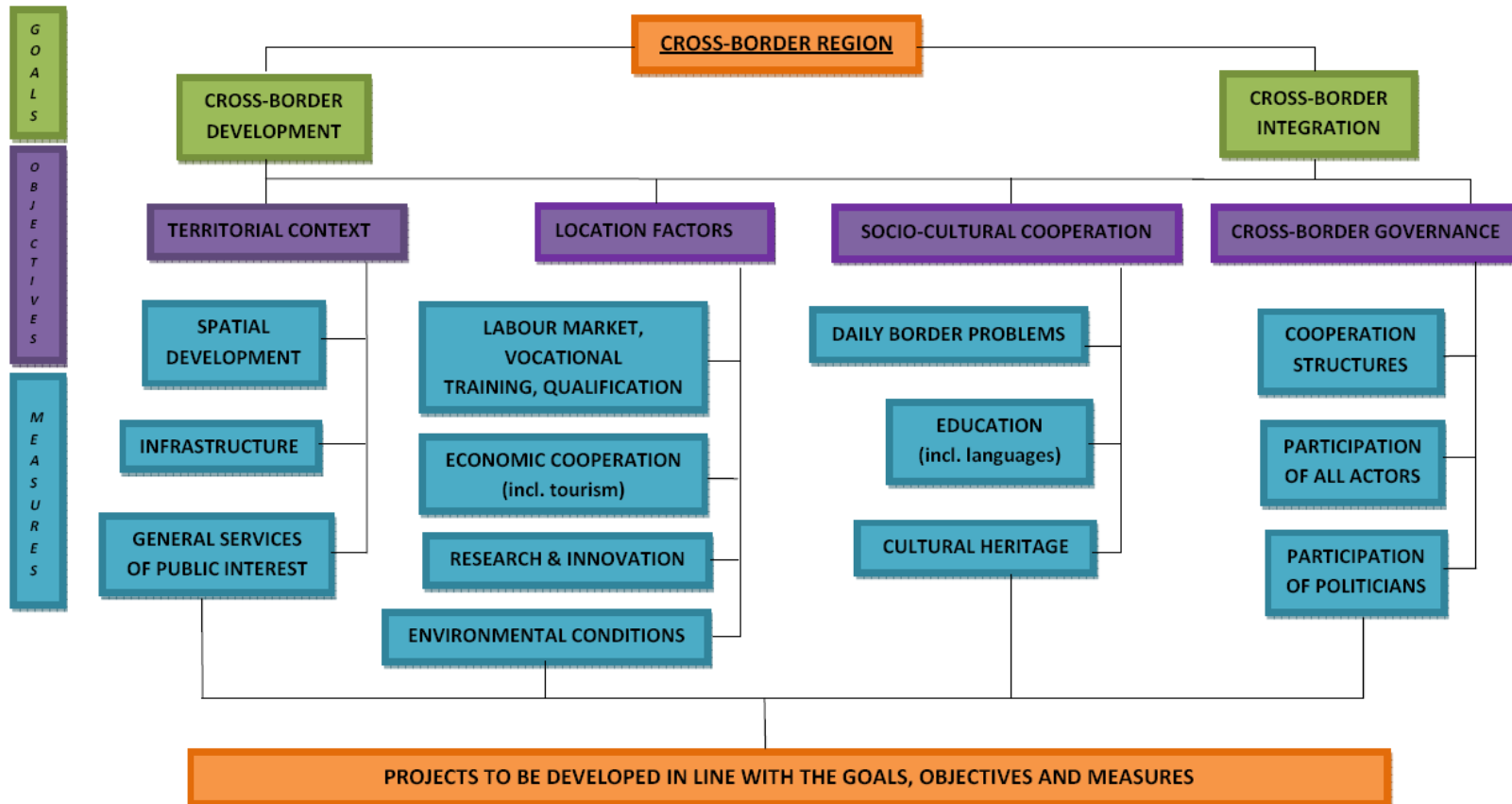
- During the first step of this process, specific “elimination criteria” were applied to the overall set of suggestions: Proposals were eliminated if projects had already been realised in this context or were currently implemented, or if an implementation was already tried and has subsequently failed or if proposals were not politically validated or if they were double-mentioned. The remaining proposals were allocated to the 6 strategic priorities of the strategy according to their respective implementation contribution.
- During the second step of the process, a number of pilot projects were selected among the remaining proposals which were particularly important for the PAMINA-area and which showed a specific relevance/need for related cross-border co-operation efforts. This selection of pilot projects was realised by applying eight different ‘filtering criteria’ ([see box 15 below](#)).

The 14 selected pilot projects were then further elaborated and finally included into the PAMINA cross-border territorial development concept.

Box 15: “Filtering criteria” used for selecting the 18 pilot projects for the PAMINA cross-border territorial development concept
<p>(a) Filtering criteria related to the character of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ F1. Demonstration- and lead function of the project and transferability of the approach.▪ F2. The project should not yet exist in this way in the respective area.▪ F3. The project should correspond to existing selection criteria for support (mainly in relation to INTERREG IIIA), in order to ease its implementation.▪ F4. The problem to be solved by the project should be important. <p>(b) Filtering criteria related to the project content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ F5. The cross-border interest for the project and the cross-border relevance of the project should exist.▪ F6. The theme of the project should have the ability to be well communicated to the wider public (e.g. transport-related projects) and the project should produce a concrete benefit for the wider public.▪ F7. The project should have a link to other projects/pilot projects in order to generate synergy effects. <p>(c) Filtering criteria related to the project results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ F8. The project should cover the various dimensions of the concept of sustainability.

Decentralised cross-border development strategy in one glance

(example)



6. Ensuring a cross-border development strategy's political anchorage, realisation and validity/usefulness over time (Phase III)

As already mentioned earlier, the primary purpose of a cross-border territorial development strategy is the provision of an interpretative framework which allows further improving and deepening cross-border co-operation in a medium- and long-term perspective. Its policy-level effect is thus more about communicating and guiding the conceptualisation of future joint actions rather than about regulating, because such a strategic document does not entail a legal enforcement power.

As a consequence of this, it becomes evident that also **appropriate follow-up activities** must be conceived for the time after its publication which

- create a solid political anchorage of the cross-border territorial development strategy,
- ensure that the cross-border territorial development strategy remains valid and useful over time for the wider group of key stakeholders addressed,
- put into practice the strategy's normative provisions (i.e. the policy programme) and suggested actions (i.e. the application framework) in the cross-border context.

6.1. Creating a solid political anchorage of a cross-border development strategy

Once finalised, a cross-border territorial development strategy should be provided with a solid political anchorage which can be achieved by initiating a political validation in the cross-border context. This validation creates an important “high-level” backing for the cross-border strategy which can later be used by cross-border actors or regional/local-level administrative practitioners for supporting the launching of new cross-border initiatives or for realising practical policy improvements.

The most appropriate “places” for such a political validation are certainly the joint political decision-making bodies of a permanent cross-border co-operation structure. They usually bring together all relevant regional/local politicians and/or high-level administrative officials from both sides of the border. This approach also helps to avoid an often lengthy “one-by-one validation process”, in which each territorial entity of the cross-border co-operation area has to give (or not) its consent to this document. Experience shows that it is also useful to invite – as observers - other regional or national

level politicians who are not forming part of these structures to such a formal validation.

Practice shows that in several cases such a formal joint validation of a cross-border development strategy was actually carried by the partners of existing permanent cross-border co-operation structures ([see box 16 below](#)).

Box 16: Examples for a formal political validation of cross-border territorial development strategies at Euroregional level
All “cross-border spatial development perspectives” which were elaborated for the EUREGIO (DE/NL) in were also subject to a formal cross-border political approval which took place in the Euregio Council (1972, 1987, 1998).
The finally elaborated territorial development concept for the Euroregion Viadrina (DE/PL) was subject to a formal cross-border political approval, which took place in the Council of the Euroregion at its 12th meeting in December 1999.
The cross-border spatial development perspective elaborated for the “Euregio West/Nyugat Pannonia” (AT/HU) was adopted by the EurRegio through a formal decision.
The "Cross-border development and action concept 2000-2010" for the Euregio Rhein-Waal (DE/NL) was validated by the Euregio Council in November 2001.
Already before its formal functioning as a public-law-based “cross-border local purpose association”, the members of the REGIO-PAMINA (DE/FR) have decided in 2002 to take over the results and recommendations of the “Spatial Planning Scheme for the PAMINA-region” in its future working programme.

6.2. Ensuring the validity and usefulness of a cross-border territorial development strategy over time

A finalised and politically validated cross-border territorial development strategy should not be considered a static outcome (which then is often easily put aside in a bookshelf), but rather be the starting point of a “continuous process” which aims to ensuring its future validity and usefulness for the wider group of key stakeholders addressed.

This follow-up process should, most optimally, already be conceived in the strategy document through specific procedural provisions for specific short- and medium-term activities which help to achieve this wider result.

Monitoring the application of a cross-border development strategy

A first element of such a continuous process should be a regular monitoring of the subsequent realisation of the actions suggested in the strategy’s application framework. This monitoring can be done in a medium-term perspective (e.g. every 2 to 3 years), wherefore it also clearly differs from the

kind of short-term progress monitoring which has to be realised in the context of EU-funded support programmes (e.g. ETC-programmes).

This monitoring process should be backed up by an adequate information gathering process (e.g. through data gathering and surveying activities, followed by desk research for exploiting the information) and organise regular seminars/workshops for result discussion which bring together representatives of an existing cross-border co-operation structure, high-ranking administrative officials responsible for spatial planning and regional development in the regional/local authorities of the cross-border area and politicians from the regional/local levels or even national-level politicians coming from the cross-border region.

Periodic up-dating of a cross-border development strategy

A second element of such a continuous process should be a further adaptation and fine-tuning of the cross-border territorial development strategy in order to ensure that the goals/objectives and the provisions in the application framework are still corresponding to the most recent situation of the cross-border territory. Such an up-dating process should ideally be launched every 6 to 8 years, because practical experience shows that in this time framework certain context settings being relevant for the territorial development of a cross-border area tend to change and that also more recent data and facts are then available for renewing or “re-freshing” the previous territorial situation analysis.

The up-dating process should review the previous territorial analysis (e.g. by using more recent data & by considering new territorial development patterns) in the light of the most recent information available and also lead – if needed – to an actualisation of parts of the strategy’s policy programme and application framework (i.e. the strategic goals & operational objectives; the suggested measures for applying the goals & objectives). And also during this process, a wide range of key stakeholders and politicians from the cross-border area should again be involved.

6.3. Ways of putting into practice a cross-border development strategy

There are in principle various ways by which a cross-border territorial development strategy can be put into practice: Certain development aspects raised in a cross-border development strategy can be addressed and tackled by the strategic actors in a cross-border area themselves (e.g. an existing permanent cross-border structure, the individual regional/local authorities, other sector-specific or topical stakeholder organisations & networks) either

through using own financial resources or with the help of national and EU-level funding programmes, while other development aspects can be put forward through influencing regional/local and national policies. However, the potential use of these options strongly depends upon the specific overall multilevel governance context settings prevailing in a given cross-border area (i.e. different administrative structures, competences & legal systems).

Realisation through an existing cross-border co-operation structure

A decentralised cross-border co-operation structure is in principle a particularly well-suited actor which can significantly contribute to put into practice a finalised cross-border development strategy because:

- it is a unique “advocate for cross-border issues” because it has the exclusive task of thinking in a cross-border manner (i.e. national authorities or local/regional authorities can’t do this as a matter of priority);
- it is a cross-border platform which can easily mobilise politicians, intermediaries or professional organisations and NGOs on both sides of a border;
- it has organisational elements providing for a joint policy-level decision-making among its members (i.e. local/regional authorities from both sides of the border) and also for a day-to-day management of its ongoing activities (e.g. through a jointly staffed secretariat/head office or executive structure);
- it has a comprehensive knowledge of the situation on both sides of the border and is used to conceive joint actions which are able to address and tackle practical problems which result out of the continuing existence of national borders (i.e. provision of specific “cross-border services” for citizens, economy, official instances and social partners on both sides);
- it knows – on ground of its day-to-day practical experiences - the important role which a cross-border development strategy can play for shaping and guiding long-term cross-border co-operation.

Although a cross-border co-operation structure is indeed most helpful for “bundling the strings” within a co-operation area and can also achieve a lot in practice, it should definitively not attempt to “implement” a cross-border development strategy oneself. There are several practical reasons for this:

- A first important reason is that a cross-border structure can not properly “implement” a cross-border development strategy or enforce specific aspects on a regulatory basis, because it is not a new “administration level” and does also not dispose of the formal powers/competences to do so. A cross-border structure is a pragmatic instrument for co-operation which executes specific tasks that are delegated to it by its members and

usually lacks also of substantial own financial means for carrying out alone proper interventions. This basic constellation only allows cross-border structures to formally endorse a cross-border development strategy (see “political validation” above) and to create by this some sort of “self-binding effect” for its own day-to-day work and probably also some informal guidance for the activities of its adherent member organisations (**see box 17 below**).

- Another practical reason is that successful cross-border co-operation should be based upon partnership and subsidiarity. A realisation of specific measures or projects of a development strategy should therefore remain the primary task of the most competent territorial authorities and of other public/semi-public or private organisations in the cross-border area.²⁵ This approach of realising a cross-border development strategy also helps to stimulate an active involvement of a wide range of actors being relevant for territorial development and avoids that a conflict on powers/competencies or disputes about the most adequate capacity (i.e. required specialist knowledge or technical capabilities) arise.

Box 17: Creating a “self-binding effect” for realising a cross-border development strategy
<p>The “cross-border local purpose association REGIO PAMINA” (D/F) is a public-law based body which was established in 2003 on ground of Articles 11-15 of the Karlsruhe-Agreement and was re-labelled in 2008 as EURODISTRICT REGIO PAMINA. Among the formal tasks which are entrusted to it according to Article 6 of the statutes figures also the elaboration of different types of cross-border development concepts (i.e. on spatial development, economic development, natural resources & environmental protection, transport and on the use of primary resources) and of related recommendations to ensure a coherent development of the PAMINA area. In March 2005, the REGIO PAMINA has formally adopted a “catalogue of guideline objectives” for a balanced and sustainable development of the cross-border area (Leitziele für den PAMINA Raum – PAMINA Zukunftsregion in Europe), which was derived from the previously elaborated “Spatial Planning Scheme for the PAMINA-region”. These guideline objectives have a “self-binding effect” for REGIO PAMINA and an informal character for the cities and municipalities in the area.</p> <p>The “Three Countries Park Development Perspective” (D/NL/BE) sets out a number of policy guidelines for various sectors which constitute obligations that the concerned governments (Belgium: Walloon Region, Flemish Region, German-speaking Community, Province of Limburg; Germany: the Land North Rhine Westphalia & administrative district of Aachen, Netherlands: Province of Limburg) must fulfil to the best of their abilities. On the administrative level, more detailed agreements were reached on concrete development projects in 2004 and all of them should receive concrete form from 2005 onwards.</p>

²⁵ A cross-border co-operation structure can indeed itself act as project leader if it ensures the required quality and if this is the explicit wish of other concerned partners in the cross-border area.

Realisation through EU-level support programmes

Due to the afore-mentioned limitations, it is quite understandable why EU-level support programmes for cross-border co-operation (INTERREG or ETC programmes) have since their start been an interesting tool for putting into practice larger parts of a finalised cross-border development strategy. This has up to now basically happened in two ways:

- On the one hand, it can very frequently be observed that the territorial situation analysis and the normative/operational provisions of cross-border territorial development strategies were used for elaborating the specific medium-term intervention strategy of INTERREG-programmes or ETC-cross-border programmes. This has in several cases even led to an identical adaptation of the time-horizon of cross-border territorial development strategies (usually long-term between 10-15 years) to the respective medium-term Structural Funds planning period (e.g. “cross-border development & action concepts” for the Euroregions POMMERANIA, Pro Europa Viadrina, Spree-Neiße-Bober Elbe-Labe).
- On the other hand, the often quite substantial financial means which come along with these EU programmes are also a very attractive opportunity for realising many of the measures and project proposals which are suggested in a finalised cross-border territorial development strategy. Moreover, as shown throughout this Guide, most of the currently existing cross-border territorial development strategies were themselves elaborated with financial support from INTERREG programmes.

The use of EU-support programmes was thus indeed the most rational and also effective means for realising a cross-border development strategy. Although this option will remain generally valid in the future, one should also keep in mind that decentralised cross-border co-operation is more than only INTERREG programmes and that existing cross-border co-operation structures must have their own financial resources which enable them to support own cross-border initiatives without external EU-funding.

This is all the more important, as the EU Cohesion Policy’s support programmes for cross-border co-operation during the period 2014-2020 tend to become thematically more focussed in terms of their eligible interventions. This is partly due to the specific over-arching objectives pursued by the “Europe 2020 Strategy” (i.e. smart, sustainable & inclusive growth) which also strongly inspired the topical intervention priorities of the new EU-Cohesion

Policy in general²⁶, but partly also a consequence of the clearly voiced expectation in the draft ETC-goal related regulation that the (...) *selection of thematic objectives should be limited in order to maximise the impact of cohesion policy across the Union.*²⁷ Although the draft ETC-goal related regulation indeed contains a number of indications which try to offer a general solution to eventually emerging problems in this respect (see: Annex 5), a certain risk remains that not all fields of the very broad thematic scope which usually has to be covered by general cross-border cooperation can also be covered under the future ETC cross-border programmes.

This overall situation might, as a further consequence, also make it impossible to put into practice some objectives and actions of a finalised cross-border territorial development strategy by making use of future ETC cross-border programme funding. Therefore, cross-border co-operation structures must become more aware about the fact that they need to create own funding sources which then also allow them to realise complementary activities on their own. Otherwise, some of the previously involved key partners from the border and cross-border areas can quickly lose their interest in delivering a cross-border territorial development strategy or might even completely fall away from the wider co-operation process.

These aspects need to be carefully considered because cross-border co-operation will remain a key task even beyond 2020 which requires both a continuous effort and also caution. This is mainly due to the many border-related problems which originate from the past and which also will continue to emerge anew in the future (i.e. because of the many differences between domestic governance systems or legislations on taxation and social matters existing for decades & new problems which might unintentionally arise out of new national laws adopted).

Realisation through other local/regional or national development strategies

Certain aspects of a finalised cross-border development strategy can also be put into practice in the context of other local/regional or national development strategies.

²⁶ i.e. the 11 themes referred to under to Article 9 of the Commission's proposal for a regulation on common provisions for the "CSF Funds": (1) Strengthening research, technological development and innovation. (2) Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, information and communication technologies. (3) Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises. (4) Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors. (5) Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management. (6) Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency. (7) Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures. (8) Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility. (9) Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty. (10) Investing in education, skills & lifelong learning. (11) Enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration.

²⁷ Proposal for a regulation on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal, intend (16).

The most promising level of action should be the border and cross-border areas themselves, be this in a more narrow perspective (i.e. local authorities and provinces at NUTS III level) or in a wider one (i.e. the first level regions). Here, a cross-border development strategy should be promoted as widely as possible – also with the support of local/regional politicians – so that their goals/objectives and the suggested actions are better taken into consideration during eventual revisions of already existing spatial planning documents (i.e. land use planning, spatial planning schemes) or other sector-specific and horizontal regional planning schemes (e.g. plans for infrastructure and local/regional public transport, tourism development plans, health care & emergency plans, schemes for a classification of protected areas & for setting out biotope networks or natural reserves, water management plans, other environmental schemes, risk prevention or risk management plans etc) and in the ongoing delivery of all kinds of regional and local policies.

At the regional/local levels, one should also work towards including existing cross-border co-operation structures on a regular base as partners or observers into these ongoing planning processes. Through such a direct participation, they can also better introduce a cross-border view on an issue at stake or even suggest concrete initiatives in relation to specific aspects for which a joint cross-border solution would be more effective and less costly than a purely domestic approach (e.g. joint fresh water supply or sewage water treatment facilities; joint waste disposal sites or services, joint water management & flooding prevention measures along rivers, joint disaster prevention & rescue services, cross-border hospital access etc).

It should also be explored whether a more formal and on-going co-ordination process can be established between a cross-border development strategy and the various other regional/local spatial planning activities which exist on both sides of a border in a medium-term perspective (i.e. where not already existing). This could lead in the long-term to a horizontally more integrated type of spatial planning, which links together through a cross-country framework all cross-border territorial development planning activities and other domestic public planning activities that are legally binding for the concerned regional and local authorities.

Introducing the objectives and suggestions for action of a finalised cross-border development strategy into country-wide national planning schemes is of course also a potential option, but this is much more difficult to achieve and also requires that an effective country-wide “lobbying structure” which represents border-regional and cross-border interests in the domestic context is already in place (e.g. a national network of border areas or a formal

country-wide associative structure).²⁸ In the absence of such domestic corporative actors, one can alternatively also call upon the support from high-ranking border-regional politicians and elected representatives in national parliaments who come from border areas (irrespective of their political party).²⁹ They can be of an important help in such endeavours, especially in smaller EU Member States such as Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Malta, Cyprus or the Baltic Countries where more MPs are originating from border regions than from the centre of the country.

Both of the above-mentioned options should therefore be pro-actively pursued in a medium- and long-term perspective so as to meet the explicitly voiced expectations of the Member States' ministers responsible for spatial planning and regional development in the ESDP and in the subsequent "Territorial Agenda Process":

- Elaborated cross-border spatial planning models and concepts (or territorial development concepts) should be taken into consideration by national spatial development plans and other sector-specific plans;
- A regular co-ordination of all spatial planning activities;
- The set up joint cross-border regional - and where useful - land use plans as the most advanced form of cross-border spatial development policy.

²⁸ In addition to AEBR's lobbying activities at the European level, also more extensive domestic lobbying activities within the individual EU Member States and within the neighbouring Third Countries are required. This is something that AEBR can not do, only border and cross-border regions in the individual countries can make this happen.

²⁹ A single member of parliament can achieve very little. By contrast, mobilising all of the members of a parliament can make a greater impact.

7. Annexes

**Annex 1:
Examples for decentralised cross-border territorial development strategies elaborated during the INTERREG phase (1990-2006)**

EUREGIO (D/NL): 'Cross-border spatial development perspectives of the EUREGIO' with a time horizon up to 2015, elaborated between 1997 and 1998. This documents is a revision/updating of previously existing cross-border development concepts (1987, 1972).

Euregio rhein-maas-nord (D/NL): 'euregio-plan - cross-border spatial development perspectives' of January 1995.

Euregio Rhein-Waal (D/NL): 'Cross-border development and action concept of the Euregio Rhein-Waal' (1989) and revision/updating of the previous document by the 'Cross-border development and action concept 2000-2010 Euregio Rhein-Waal' (2001).

Euregio Meuse-Rhine (D/NL/BE): 'Three Countries Park Development Perspective', a common development perspective with regard to land-use planning and nature being an instrument for the harmonisation of policy and the development of joint projects to protect and strengthen the 'green heart' of the Euregio. Elaborated between 2001 and 2003.

PAMINA (D/F): 'Orientation Guidelines for the Economic and Spatial Development of the PAMINA-area' (1996) and the subsequent further elaboration/upgrading of this approach through the 'Spatial Planning Scheme for the PAMINA-region' (2002).

Border area between Germany (D), Austria (AT), Switzerland (CH) and Liechtenstein (LI): The INTERREG IIIA project 'Common regional development in the border area Germany-Switzerland-Austria-Liechtenstein' aimed at working out a development plan for the entire cross-border region.

Border between France and Spain (F/E): 'Livre Blanc de l'Eurocité Bayonne – San Sebastian', elaborated between 1998 and 2000.

Border between France and Italy (F/IT): "Mont-Blanc Spatial Sustainable Development Perspective", INTERREG IIIA project.

Øresund-Region (DK/SE): 'Joint Cross-border Regional Development Plan' (INTERREG IIA project) and a number of follow-up projects realising complementary prospective scenario development and/or forward planning for specific aspects (INTERREG IIIA projects).

Border area between Sweden (SK), Finland (FI) and Norway (NO): 'Torne Valley Development Concept' of 1999.

Euroregion POMMERANIA (D/PL/SE): 'Cross-border development and action concept of the Euroregion POMMERANIA' (1993) and revision/updating of the previous document by the 'Cross-border development and action concept of the Euroregion POMMERANIA 2000-2006' (1999).

Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina (D/PL): 'Development and action concept of the Euroregion Viadrina' (1999), which is a revision/updating of a previously existing cross-border development concept elaborated in 1993.

Euroregion Spree-Neiße-Bober (D/PL): 'Development and action concept of the Euroregion Spree-Neiße-Bober' (1999), which is a revision/updating of a previously existing cross-border development concept elaborated in 1993.

Euroregion Elbe-Labe (D/CZ): 'Cross-border development concept for the Euroregion Elbe-Labe' (1994).

Border area between Saxony (D), the Czech Republic (CZ): 'Development and action

concept for the Saxony-Czech border area' of 1999 (partly also covering Poland).

Border area between Bavaria (D) and the Czech Republic (CZ): 'INTERREG III-PHARE CBC spatial perspective for the Bavarian-Czech border region, elaborated between 1998 and 1999'.

Border area between Bavaria (D), the Czech Republic (CZ) and Austria (AT): 'Development concept Bayrischer Wald/Böhmerwald/Mühlviertel' of 1994, elaborated as an UNESCO pilot project.

Border area between Austria (AT) and Slovenia (SL): 'Cross-border development concept for the border between Austria and Slovenia'.

'Euregio West/Nyugat Pannonia' (AT/HU): With support from INTERREG IIIA, all Euroregional working groups and institutions have jointly elaborated a cross-border spatial development perspective which has been adopted by the EurRegio through a formal decision

Border area between Austria (AT), Slovakia (SLO) and Hungary (HU): The INTERREG IIIA project JORDES+ elaborated a common regional development strategy for the trilateral Vienna-Bratislava-Győr cross-border area, giving operational recommendations for political decisions and private investment.

Source: ESPON-INTERACT (2006): Thematic Study on Spatial Visions and Scenarios. Esch-sur-Alzette: ESPON.

Annex 2:

Territorial concepts & typologies developed by ESPON projects which were used under ULYSSES for elaborating territorial analyses for specific cross-border areas

Research projects supported by the ESPON 2006 programme (2000-2006):

- Project 1.1.1 "Urban areas as nodes in a polycentric development"
- Project 1.1.2 "Urban-rural relations in Europe"
- Project 1.1.3 "Enlargement of the EU"
- Project 1.1.4 "Spatial effects of demographic trends"
- Project 1.2.2 "Telecommunication services and networks"
- Project 1.3.1 "Spatial effects of natural and technological hazards"
- Project 1.3.2 "Territorial trends of the management of the natural heritage"
- Project 1.3.3 "Impacts of cultural heritage and identity"
- Project 2.1.1 "Territorial impact on EU transport policies"
- Project 2.4.2 "Integrated analysis on transnational and national territories"
- Project 3.2 "Spatial scenarios in the relation to the ESDP"
- Project 3.3 "Territorial dimension of the Lisbon-Gothenburg Process".
- ESPON-INTERACT study on cross-border cooperation

Research projects supported by the ESPON 2013 programme (2007-2013):

- Geospecs, Interim Report of 2010.

**Annex 3:
The application framework of the "Cross-border development and action concept
2000-2010" for the Euregio Rhein-Waal**

Based upon the overall vision statement, the overall development goal and the other objectives, the cross-border development and action concept formulates an application framework which consists of two levels:

At a **first level**, a large number of differentiated "**options for development & action**" are formulated which are related to the 6 strategic development themes of the strategy. These options for development & action refer to the territory of the Euregio Rhein-Waal and should – except a review from time to time - remain valid during the reference time period of the concept. From the list in Annex 2, one can see that they cover all aspects relevant to an integrated and sustainable development of the Euregio area. The concept states, however, that not all of these can be pro-actively addressed at the level of the Euregio, as many related strategic decisions are taken at higher government levels (e.g. regional, national, European). Due to this, some of them could also be used as a "content oriented support" if such higher-level decisions should be influenced from the Euregio perspective.

At a **second level**, numerous "**fields of actions**" are formulated in relation to the options for development & action which are not mentioned in the list below (in average 3 or 4 for each development option). They have a short and medium-term perspective and aim at making more concrete - in thematic or spatial terms - the related options for action (i.e. they should lead to concrete projects in order to build up a steering capacity).

List of "options for development & action":

(1) Spatial structure and accessibility: The objective is to support the Euregio's function as a "bridge-head" between the main seaports (e.g. Rotterdam, Antwerp) and the most important market areas (e.g. Rhine-Ruhr area, Rhein-Main area, eastern Germany). The related "options for development and action" are

- to highlight the central location in the closeness to major metropolitan areas as well as the quality of the landscape and the relatively cheap prices for living and economic surfaces,
- to support the spatial development in order to make available positive effects for the entire area of the Euregio,
- the development of the rural area and its important centres through using indigenous potentials as well as the preservation of the variety of existing service structures,
- to closer co-ordinate measures that aim at steering land development and location policy,
- to support of sub-area specific specialisation and the development of specific competencies around universities,
- to realise a cross-border division of labour/tasks in adapting social infrastructures to modern standards and increasing needs,
- to enhance greatest possible modal shift of freight transport from the road to rail or water; in the field of passenger transport towards public transport,
- to secure the supra-regional connectivity and the euroregional accessibility, while minimising the related negative effects,
- the development of and co-operation among logistics and service centres, joint marketing, further development of additional logistics and service centres,
- to optimise the cross-border public transport system and to secure the links of this system with the wider national/international long-distance traffic.

(2) Economy, technology and innovation: The objective is to support the economic development of the Euregio through using their proximity to markets and clients as well as the good provision with infrastructure, through maintaining and further developing locational factors and through improving the economic structure and the external image. The related "options for development and action" are

- the strengthening of the area's position as an integrated and multifunctional economic space,
- the continued support to processes of structural change, e.g. through reorientation of the economy, support to SMEs and cross-border land use management,
- the new location of enterprises in the area that becomes possible through their increasing independency with regard to traditional location factors,
- the opening up of product and knowledge markets,

- the strengthening of the cross-border co-operation and cluster building,
- the increased use of SMEs potentials for economic development and euroregional co-operation,
- the capturing of transit freight flows at logistical and service platforms in the Euregio, further development of value added logistics and diminishing of the role of the Euregio as a transit area,
- the development and support to new growth-oriented technologies in order to eliminate weaknesses with regard to innovation,
- the extension and increased use of research and development potentials and realisation of innovative / market-oriented products through research co-operation.

(3) Labour market and qualification: The objective is to develop an open and transparent Labour market in the Euregio and to support the future-oriented qualification of the workforce. The related "options for development and action" are

- the preparation of the workforce for an euroregional labour market through education, training and qualification and better coordination of supply and demand on the cross-border labour market,
- the harmonisation of the labour markets especially in fields of professional certificates and social security systems,
- to increase the knowledge on labour market-related legal systems on either side of the border (e.g. unemployment support systems, health insurance, pension/retirement systems),
- to increase the transparency of the cross-border labour market through information on structures and developments of the respective national labour markets on either side of the border,
- the building-up of the comprehensive information and support network in order to achieve further harmonisation of the very different national systems related to training and qualification,
- the cross-border extension of interfaces and contact points between schools, training indications and the economy and support to increase bilingualism,
- to support the cross-border mobility in order to create the preconditions for a cross-border labour market (e.g. through further extending public transport systems),
- the capturing of the highly qualified workforce in the area of the Euregio,
- the support to increase the share of employed women on the labour market.

(4) Culture and tourism: the objective is to support the "growing together" of the Euregio and a euroregional profile through culture and tourism activities. The related "options for development and action" are

- the securing of the common cultural heritage through a preservation of regional specificities,
- the creation of an euroregional identity through raising the awareness of people with regard to common cultural and historical aspects,
- the bundling and networking of existing forces and resources in the region in order to improve cultural activities and cultural services,
- the support of cultural exchange in order to further develop an euroregional thinking in different aspects,
- the creation of cross-border cultural networks in order to increase the financial capacity,
- the support to "soft tourism", daily tourism and cultural tourism,
- the creation / extension of specific cultural offers that address specific target groups,
- the increased accessibility of existing tourism offers (e.g. through supporting co-operation of suppliers and intermediaries) and preservation of the cultural/landscape heritage in order to maintain tourism related quality of the area,
- the joint cross-border implementation of tourism concepts and new ideas,
- the cross-border marketing and networking of the tourism offer.

(5) Nature, environment and agriculture: the objective is to achieve a cross-border protection of nature and environment, to network ecological main structures, to develop the agriculture and to support the rural cultural heritage. The related "options for development and action" are

- the cross-border protection/development of landscape and nature through networking ecological main structures,
- the nature-identical development of landscapes and surface water areas and the wider environment,
- the reaching of common solutions through co-operation with regard to land use management and coordination of programmes and projects,
- a better linking of agricultural objectives with the protection of the environment and landscapes, reduction of agricultural-related emissions in soil and water,
- a better use of the rich potentials related to the theme of "water" (e.g. existing rivers and lakes in the Euregio),

- an increased use of renewable energy,
- an increased cross-border co-operation in the field of public supply services, waste disposal/sewage water and recycling,
- to avoid inefficient land use and scattered settlement through an increased euroregional co-operation in the field of land use management,
- the preservation and support of the military structure in rural areas and preservation of the rural heritage, continued support to the creation of alternative income possibilities in the rural areas,
- the building-up of sustainable agricultural structures through increased ecological protection that is economically viable.

(6) Cross-border integration: the objective is to create a "euroregional consciousness / awareness" and to support the "growing together" of the Euregio Rhein-Waal also in the minds of the people. The related "options for development and action" are

- the strengthening of cross-border people-to-people contact,
- the reduction of the barrier-effects created by existing laws and legal guidelines,
- the reduction of language-related and mental barriers,
- the support to an euroregional division of tasks and labour with regard to fresh-water provisions, logistics and waste management,
- the cross-border co-operation in field such as water protection, police, fire brigades and rescue services,
- the creation of an open cross-border medical care system and a free cross-border access to health systems,
- an improved communication and public relations in order to diminish information deficits existing on either side of the border with regard to the neighbouring country,
- a horizontal respect of the principal of equal opportunities,
- a continuing work of the Euregio Rhein-Waal and its institutions as well as a bundling of forces between all other Euregios existing along the Dutch-German border.

Annex 4: The application framework of the PAMINA cross-border development concept			
Strategic Priority	Sub-objectives	Number of measures	Pilot-projects (P)
Strategic Priority A1: Landscape park PAMINA	Sub-objective A1-1: Sustainable and environment friendly management of natural resources	3	P1: Strengthening the role of the agriculture in the Region. P2: Greening the PAMINA-area and networking of open spaces and realisation of the „Blau concept“.
	Sub-objective A1-2: Preservation of cultural landscapes and improving their attractiveness for inhabitants and tourists	3	
	Sub-objective A1-3: Protection and quality improvement of the different environmental media and of the natural heritage	3	
Strategic Priority A2: Communication / networked spaces	Sub-objective A2-1: Improvement of the accessibility	5	P3: Development of a cross-border circular bus line that includes major region-internal urban centres (Karlsruhe, Rastatt, Wörth, Weißenburg). P4: Efficient and resource-saving freight transport management : development of a cross-border macro-logistical approach for PAMINA
	Sub-objective A2-2: Strengthening the functioning of networks	6	
	Sub-objective A2-3: Environmentally friendly and resource-saving transport and communication	1	
Strategic Priority A3: Balanced development of the location or factors	Sub-objective A3-1: Regionally and locally important infrastructures	1	P5: Energy park PAMINA with a specific energy-mix, related to the functions of living and economy. P6: Creation of the EUROZONE Lauterburg / Scheibenhard (cross-border business park); eventually also EUROZONE in Roppenheim and Söllingen; including a business-start-up centre. P7: Complementary co-operation of the inland-waterway ports of the PAMINA-area in order to increase the overall market share of sustainable inland waterway transport.
	Sub-objective A3-2: Needs-oriented and decentralised organisation of the functions living, working and services in order to generate the less possible transport movement and to support their harmonious integration into the landscape	5	
	Sub-objective A3-3: Future-oriented demonstration projects	4	
	Sub-objective A3-4: Demonstration projects with a cross-border added value	4	
Strategic Priority B1: Diversity and solidarity	Sub-objective B1-1: Using the diversity of different cultures: „La Mode de vie“	3	P8: Measures to increase the real estate property-ratio in the PAMINA-area; activities in the field of co-ordinated local land-use planning in the PAMINA-area (objective: lowering real-estate prices for individuals). P9: Strategies to retain / anchor enterprises and families in the region; development of high-quality social housing that is well-integrated in the rural environment.
	Sub-objective B1-2: Solidarity in the society	4	
	Sub-objective B1-3: Solidarity with respect to different generations – creating a long-term oriented capacity	5	
	Sub-objective B1-4: Spatial and cross-border solidarity	4	

			P10: Retail-sales concept for the PAMINA-area.
Strategic Priority B2: Europe-oriented, networked and co-operative	Sub-objective B2-1: Profiling as a European model region	6	P11: Cross-border database for offers / demands that is targeted e.g. towards crafts activities.
	Sub-objective B2-2: Development of cross-border networks	18	P12: Cross-border economic cycle „High-Tech / NATUR“ and regional information centre wood for PAMINA.
	Sub-objective B2-3: Exchange, know-how transfer and partnerships	3	P13: Regional monitoring / regional spatial observatory: Creation and accompaniment of regional and economy-related databases, including an environmental database for PAMINA.
Strategic Priority B3: Future chances through integration	Sub-objective B3-1: Support of the region-internal integration	12	P14: Radio PAMINA, bilingual music and information channel.
	Sub-objective B3-2: Gaining profile, showing profile	14	P15: Marketing and public relations for the PAMINA-area and the cross-border body REGIO PAMINA
	Sub-objective B3-3: Shaping the future and using the chances	5	P16: PAMINA-related signing at roads and cities/villages with and „entry gateway“ function etc.

**Annex 5:
Future ETC programmes and their relation to the “Europe 2020 Strategy”**

(17) In order to deliver on the targets and objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth set out in the Europe 2020 strategy, the ERDF should contribute under the European territorial cooperation goal to the thematic objectives of developing an economy based on knowledge, research and innovation, promoting a greener, more resource-efficient and competitive economy, fostering high employment that delivers social and territorial cohesion, and developing administrative capacity. However, the list of the investment priorities under the different thematic objectives should be adapted to the specific needs of the European territorial cooperation goal, in particular by allowing for the continuation under cross-border cooperation of legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions, of cooperation in the fields of employment, training and social inclusion in a cross-border perspective, by allowing for the continuation under transnational cooperation of maritime cross-border cooperation not covered by cross-border cooperation programmes, and by the development and implementation of macro-regional and sea basin strategies.

(18) It is necessary to adapt the content requirements of cooperation programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal to their specific needs. Therefore they also need to cover aspects necessary for effective implementation on the territory of participating Member States, such as the bodies responsible for audit and control, the procedure to set up a joint secretariat, and the allocation of liabilities in case of financial corrections. In addition, due to the horizontal character of interregional cooperation programmes, the content of such cooperation programmes should be adapted, especially as regards the definition of the beneficiary or beneficiaries under the current INTERACT and ESPON programmes.

(19) Consistent with the goal of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the Structural Funds should provide a more integrated and inclusive approach to tackling local problems. In order to strengthen this approach, support from the ERDF support in border regions should be coordinated with support from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and should, where appropriate, involve European groupings of territorial cooperation set up under Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) where local development figures among their objectives.

Source: Proposal for a regulation on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal.

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