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BORDER REGIONS IN A RE-INTEGRATED EUROPE

The role of borderlands in the European integration process is discussed in this paper. The actual political geographic issues of the continent are considered at the outset, based on three fundamental elements: territoriality, borders and integration. The argument continues with a presentation of the different levels of "borderness" in the EU member countries and the structure of different types of European borderlands, together with the main factors of differentiation. Subsequently, an examination of the institutional and functional aspects of cross-border cooperation in Europe is presented, with special emphasis on the organization of the so-called Euroregions, and on European cross-border initiatives and policies. In conclusion, there is a brief summary of several case studies in Slovenia, most typical of the European border countries, and the final discussion concerns the changeable status of borderlands in the context of a re-integrated Europe.

Waldemar Gorzým-WILKOWSKI

EUROREGIONS IN POLAND

Euroregions along the Polish borders have been formed since the early 1990s. At present there are seventeen of them, formed along the whole Polish land border. As far as the Polish side is concerned, Euroregions usually consist of council unions. The activity of the Euroregions involves cross-border integration, as well as socioeconomic development in the broadest sense of the word. Main barriers to the efficient activity of Euroregions are financial restrictions. Additionally, in the east of Poland there are difficulties with passing the border, as it is simultaneously the eastern border of the European Union.

Marián HALÁS

DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AND CREATION OF EUROREGIONS IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Cross-border cooperation, which has existed in Western Europe since the 1950s, has developed in Central and Eastern Europe only after 1990. This paper provides basic information about the development of cross-border cooperation and the formation of Euroregions in the Slovak Republic. This process is at the stage of formation and institutionalisation, due to legislative obstacles. The stage of realising concrete forms of cooperation can begin only after the stabilization of new regional self-government. The spatial differentiation and regionalization of Slovak border regions is accounted for, in this study, primarily by the relations between the given territory to that on the other side of the State border.

Tamás HARDI

EUROREGIONS IN HUNGARY

Hungary is bordered by seven countries, and its location in the middle of a basin makes cross-border cooperation really important. Many Euroregions were and are established with Hungarian participation. The number of participants is large and there are many kinds of them, but the activity of these institutions is blocked by many factors. Besides characterizing the border regions, this study presents a typification of these organisations, their tasks and the scope of their activities.

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SOME ASPECTS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN EUROREGIONS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC ON EXAMPLE OF THE ŠUMAVA REGION

The complexity of the issues of cross-border cooperation in the Czech Republic is explained in this study, and it makes use of the Šumava region as an example. At the outset, a brief description of some major milestones in a relatively complicated (and sometimes not idyllic) historical development is presented: these milestones had an essential influence on the formation of the initial situation in this region in 1989. A detailed description and analysis of the subsequent [from 1989 to present] types of cooperation within the Šumava Euroregion is then presented. In the third section, the focus is turned to those functional arrangements in which mechanisms of cross-border cooperation have not been fully implemented, yet which might constitute some potential for future cross-border cooperation. The final section of the paper outlines, in a tentative fashion, possible conclusions and recommendations resulting from the case study.