



City-Regional Partnerships in Central Europe

Increasing Competitiveness through
Peri-Urban and Macro-Regional Cooperation

www.city-regions.eu



**CENTRAL
EUROPE**
COOPERATING FOR SUCCESS.



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND

Editor

STAATSMINISTERIUM
DES INNERN



Freistaat
SACHSEN

Free State of Saxony – Saxon State Ministry of the Interior
Division 45 | European spatial planning, regional development
Wilhelm-Buck-Straße 2, 01097 Dresden

as partner of the CENTRAL EUROPE project

City Regions – Increasing the Competitiveness of City Regions
through Integrated Urban-Rural Development

Project Partners



City of Leipzig, City Planning Office (Lead Partner)
Saxon State Ministry of the Interior



City of Wrocław, Wrocław Development Office
Lower Silesia Region, Institute for Territorial Development



City of Graz, Executive Office for Urban Planning,
Development and Construction
Regional Management Graz & Graz Region



Prague 9 City Council
Regional Development Agency of the Central
Bohemian Region (until 12/2013)



City of Torino
Torino Internazionale/Strategica

Project Secretariat

INFRASTRUKTUR & UMWELT
Professor Böhm und Partner
Gregor-Mendel-Straße 9, 14469 Potsdam

Project duration

07/2012 – 12/2014



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND

This project is implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE
Programme co-financed by the ERDF.



Bundesministerium
für Verkehr und
digitale Infrastruktur

The realisation of the project was supported by the Federal
Programme “Transnational Cooperation” of the Federal Ministry
of Transport and Digital Infrastructure.

www.city-regions.eu

CONTENT



02 Preface

04 Introduction

06 Part I: Urban-rural cooperation

08 Coordinated development of commercial areas in the Halle / Leipzig region

10 Facilitating cooperation for a high quality of life in the Wrocław metropolitan area

12 Supporting gentle mobility in the Graz urban region

14 Managing needs of transport in the Prague 9 district

16 Increasing sustainability through strategic planning in the Torino urban region

**18 EU Structural and Investment Funds and urban-rural partnerships
in the 2014-2020 funding period**

20 Outlook: Action programme 2015+

22 Part II: Macro-regional cooperation

24 EU macro-regional strategies – A brief review of the policy debate

26 Macro-regional cooperation in Central Europe – Challenges and opportunities

34 Are there arguments for a macro-regional strategy in Central Europe?

PREFACE



Dear Readers,

Europe needs cooperation. Only if we as Europeans develop common solutions, if we cooperate and exchange, we will be successful. This is the essential prerequisite for the further integration of Europe, and this is as well the starting point of cooperation projects such as City Regions.

In essence, the project was about the question: How can the competitiveness of European city regions be improved through better cooperation between core cities and surrounding municipalities? A sensible approach, since 70 per cent of the European population lives in cities, and many challenges of urban regions can be compared to each other.

On the one hand, there are thriving metropolises that attract companies and offer their residents rich opportunities in terms of workplaces and recreational facilities. Cities become increasingly centers of social interaction and driving forces for the economic development of entire regions. On the other hand, there are the surrounding rural areas, providing e.g. recreation and green living. However, they usually cannot tackle the provision of public services and infrastructure investments alone.

The balance between urban and rural areas will change in future as well. Responsibilities need to be clearly defined, and functions regarding the provision of services need to be shared between urban and rural areas. All parties involved must be consulted and need to cooperate very closely.

Also for the City Regions project these aspects were of importance. Suitable solutions and answers have been identified and are presented in this brochure. Since 2012, the partners from Halle/Leipzig, Graz, Torino, Prague and Wrocław exchanged experiences, aligned goals and deve-

loped new ways of cooperation. State and regional planning were actively lived as bottom-up approach.

The project has demonstrated that European city regions may rely on the experience of many years of good contacts and networking – and networking is, as mentioned, the main driver of European integration. For Saxony, this integration remains of outstanding importance. We are located in the heart of Europe, and we build on well-working relationships with our Czech and Polish neighbours. A lot of encouraging experience has been collected with this regard.

The enlargement of the European Union in 2004 has stimulated many activities. Economically, we have grown together during the recent years. Companies and authorities, cities and regions collaborate at all levels. We should activate this resource for the benefit of the strategic development of Central Europe. The Baltic Sea Region, the Danube Region, the Adriatic-Ionian Region and recently the Alpine Region have paved the way, and it is up to us to make use of experiences collected within these initiatives.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Ulbig', written in a cursive style.

Markus Ulbig
Saxon State Minister of the Interior



Dear Readers,

initially I would like to thank the Saxon State Ministry of the Interior and our partners from Graz, Torino, Prague and Wroclaw for two and a half years of fruitful cooperation within the City Regions project. Jointly we realised five pilot actions in the field of urban-rural cooperation, and we exchanged intensively on challenges and perspectives of functional cooperation at different scales.

The cities of Leipzig and Halle are close neighbours. Through the improvement of transport infrastructure the distance between both cities was continuously reduced throughout the centuries. In 2013 the regional system of commuter railways has been extended to large parts of the Central German Metropolitan Region, and the number of inhabitants of Leipzig and Halle is growing.

More inhabitants need more housing, more social infrastructure, better transport services and a sufficient offer of attractive workplaces. In this situation, more intermunicipal cooperation is a necessary precondition for sustainable development.

We decided to focus our efforts on the joint development and marketing of industrial and commercial areas. Since 1990 automotive and logistics companies have realised heavy investments in the Halle/Leipzig region. But we observe a lack of industrial and commercial areas for large investments, and available areas with locational disadvantages cannot be activated. Therefore we have created a regional pool of investment areas, with the aim to strengthen our competitiveness in a growing Europe.

City Regions has helped us to establish and to maintain the necessary structures of cooperation between the two core cities and surrounding municipalities. On 12 November 2014

we agreed with about 20 municipalities that our cooperation will be continued. This is a highly satisfying result, and it encourages us to continue our joint efforts.

Of course it is a permanent task to convince stakeholders and decision-makers that such a cooperation needs sufficient resources in terms of staff and finances. The transnational exchange realised within the project confirmed that our urban regions face similar challenges, and our joint experience will help us to find suitable solutions – even after the end of the project. New knowledge has been created, and membership in European networks such as EUROCITIES and METREX will help the partners to stay in touch.

The City of Leipzig has for a long time been actively participating in discussions regarding the design and programming of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). We will continue these efforts, and City Regions made us aware that the issue of urban-rural partnerships will be of increasing relevance. We share this point of view, and we will be happy to contribute as well in future to innovative actions and approaches, such as the project at hand.

Dorothee Dubrau
Deputy Mayor for Urban Development
and Construction of the City of Leipzig

INTRODUCTION TO THE CITY REGIONS PROJECT

The settlement structure of Central Europe is characterised by densely populated conurbations in which local economic power is concentrated. However, strengthening the functional relationships between these major cities and their hinterlands is essential when it comes to making the most of competitive advantages and promoting polycentric development.

The City Regions project, with its aim of reinforcing and institutionalising durable cooperation structures within selected action areas, is helping to get to grips with these challenges. Partnerships have been established between urban and rural areas, taking into account mutual interdependence and supporting the development of a balanced and polycentric system of cities within the European Union.

General approach

The City Regions project was a very concentrated and focused exercise. Within two years, from the kick-off meeting in October 2012 in Leipzig up until the International Expert Conference in September 2014 in Dresden, a comprehensive plan of work was carried out:

- In the partner regions five pilot actions aimed at the institutionalisation of durable cooperation structures were implemented.
- The positioning of urban regions in European strategies was investigated, giving particular consideration to the role of EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).
- Finally, the challenges and opportunities presented by macro-regional cooperation were evaluated, with particular attention given to the prospects of a macro-regional strategy for Central Europe.

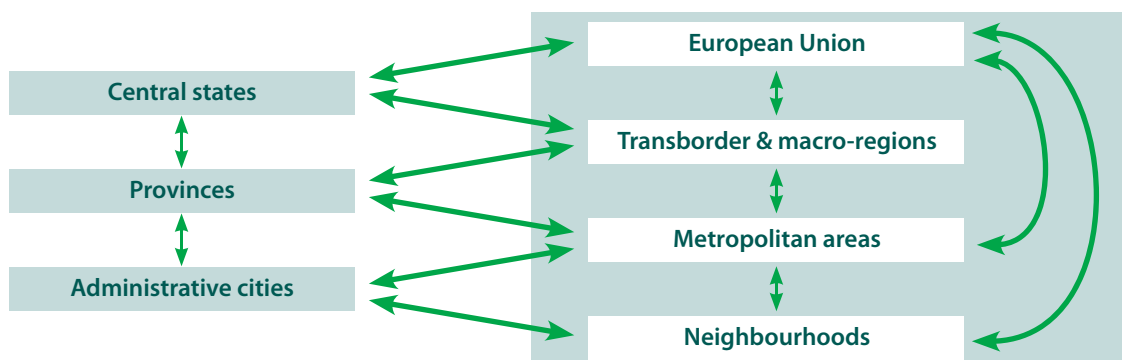
During the course of five transnational partner workshops, the partners discussed the progress of the regional pilots and evaluated the factors that facilitated cooperation. Site visits and sessions dedicated to particular themes supported the exchange of experiences.

Urban-rural cooperation

The pilot actions implemented as part of the City Regions project were aimed either at the development of existing cooperation structures or the establishment of new ones. At the beginning, good practices were jointly analysed, and the partners visited examples of successful cooperation in Hamburg, Bremen-Oldenburg, Brabantstad and Zurich.



From fixed to flexible boundaries; from government to governance



European Commission, DG Regional Policy (2011): Cities of tomorrow – Challenges, visions, ways forward, p. 87 (adapted from Jacquier 2010)

Taking into account the lessons learnt, guiding questions were formulated for each pilot action. The partners analysed the network of stakeholders, evaluated experiences and capacities with regard to peri-urban cooperation and mapped existing cooperation structures. Each intervention was accompanied by an intensive exchange with stakeholders. Key actors were invited to engage in close cooperation, and communication and dissemination activities were tailored to local audiences, taking into account specific needs and habits.

The partners kept in constant contact with European networks. Information on the project was provided to the relevant working groups of METREX and EUROCITIES. A particular highlight was a seminar on Metropolitan Cities, held during the EUROCITIES Economic Development Forum in April 2013 in Torino.

Macro-regional cooperation

Since ongoing discussions about the region's identity and coverage suggest that "Central Europe" is not a clearly defined region, the approach has been to review existing cooperation initiatives and to gather views from actors and stakeholders regarding priorities and topics for transboundary cooperation through a series of qualitative interviews. In addition, key trends of spatial development, EU policies of spatial relevance and existing forms of transnational and sub-regional cooperation have been analysed. The results of joint research were compiled in a position paper, and the results discussed with key actors and experts during the final conference of the project.

Transnational group of experts

All activities were supported by a transnational group of experts, which comprised external experts and experts working at partner institutions. With regard to macro-regional cooperation, the experts took over the role of national experts, contributing their knowledge and experience to the elaboration of reports and position papers. They realised qualitative interviews with stakeholders, and they assisted in the comparative analysis of the possibilities of EU funding for urban-rural partnerships in the 2014-2020 funding period. Fi-

nally, the experts organised regional workshops to analyse the European dimension of local cooperation activities and drafted working papers, summarising the results and findings of their work.

What remains to be done?

At the time of publication of this brochure, all pilot actions have been finalised, and agreements on the future cooperation of stakeholders are under discussion. Of course, the establishment of durable governance structures is an ongoing task, and it is necessary to adapt the agenda of cooperation as well as organisational arrangements regularly to the problems and challenges of peri-urban development.

However, there is also a need for a broad analysis of any conclusions and lessons learnt. Suitable platforms for this task are provided by the relevant working groups of the METREX and EUROCITIES networks, and, as far as European Structural and Investment Funds are concerned, the Urban Intergroup of the European Parliament should be involved as well. Finally, to facilitate the discussion of macro-regional strategies among German federal states, the sub-project "City Regions Makro" has been launched. Results from this initiative will be available in 2015.



TOWARDS DURABLE COOPERATION IN URBAN REGIONS

RESULTS AND FINDINGS FROM REGIONAL PILOTS

Local and regional authorities find themselves increasingly faced with challenges which they cannot meet alone. Demographic change, and challenges relating to energy and climate change, for example, call for integrated spatial approaches. The pressure of economic competition is on the increase, and the organisation of infrastructure and transport, as well as the development of residential and commercial areas, require cities and their surrounding municipalities to cooperate with each other.

Urban-rural partnerships can help to tackle these challenges while leaving the formal competencies of territorial authorities, defined according to particular legal and administrative systems, unaffected. The City Regions project aims at the promotion of cooperation between cities and their surrounding municipalities. In five regional pilots, the partner cities and regions tested methods of cooperation for developing existing partnerships further.



**PILOT
STUDIES**

**EU
FUNDING
2014-2020**

**ACTION
PROGRAMME
2015+**

The approach, the results and the findings of these pilot actions are presented in this chapter. The goal was the preparation of durable governance structures and the development of recommendations for further action.

Additionally, a comparative analysis has been undertaken to investigate how the EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) can be used to support different forms of inter-municipal cooperation. Compared to earlier periods, the 2014-2020 funding period involves

a significant increase in the tools and possibilities enabling the support of urban-rural partnerships. The results of this investigation present an interesting picture of funding opportunities which will be available in the partner regions very soon.

COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL AREAS IN THE HALLE / LEIPZIG REGION

The Halle/Leipzig urban region is located in the heart of the Central German Metropolitan Region, at the border of the federal states of Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt. It has two main centres: the city of Leipzig, with 532,000 inhabitants, and the city of Halle (Saale), with 232,000 inhabitants. Including 32 surrounding municipalities, the urban region has approximately 1,090,000 inhabitants.

The region has achieved considerable success in attracting new companies, in particular in the automotive and automobile supply industries and logistics. However, there is an increasing shortage of large and attractive commercial and industrial sites. At the same time, there are numerous commercial areas which for years have not been used for investment. The challenge, therefore, is to develop adequate sites beyond the limits of existing administrative borders, creating a win-win situation for both cities and for the smaller municipalities in between.



Description of the pilot scheme

Since 1990, the urban region has developed into a dynamic and densely interlinked business region of European significance. In this respect, it is in competition with other strong economic areas, both within Germany itself and within Europe as a whole.

In 2009, therefore, a process of cooperation was launched between the cities and municipalities in the Halle/Leipzig urban region with the aim of coordinating the planning, development and marketing of commercial and industrial sites. Thanks to the cooperation across two federal states, the partners provide today a real estate offer with an enhanced profile, leading to increased competitiveness. Additionally, the pressure on municipal budgets has been reduced.

Since 2012, the cooperation has been supported through the City Regions project. The aim is the evaluation of options leading to the consolidation and possible extension of regional governance structures. Since many of the goals agreed on in the initial phase of the cooperation have been achieved, it is necessary to adapt the joint agenda to current challenges.

Process and organisation

To coordinate this cooperation, a steering group was established. Over the years, the number of its members has grown steadily. Today, the following authorities are represented:

- City of Leipzig and City of Halle, represented by city planning offices and offices for economic development;
- Municipalities of Schkeuditz and Municipality of Merseburg, as “voice” of the surrounding municipalities;
- Regional planning associations of Halle (Saxony-Anhalt) and Leipzig-West Saxony (Saxony);





- Saalekreis district, Leipzig district and Nordsachsen district;
- Regional government agencies of the federal states of Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt.

Regular meetings of the steering group ensure a high level of continuity in the exchange of information and facilitate agreement regarding the operational phases of the initiative. The meetings are chaired by the city planning offices of Leipzig and Halle. Additionally, three working groups were established, each entrusted with specific tasks related to the management of the joint database, planning and development, and regional marketing.

A highlight of the cooperation are regional conferences, which serve as a forum for mutual exchange and joint discussion. During the City Regions project, three regional conferences have been held in Braunsbedra, Lippendorf and Leipzig, each drawing around 60 participants.

Each conference delivers valuable input to the cooperation process in the form of studies and papers prepared by external experts and consultants. This model of work, which is based on external support and evaluation, is one of the factors that contribute to the success of the joint approach.

Another such factor is flexibility. All municipalities located in the Halle/Leipzig urban region are invited to cooperate, but cooperation is voluntary, and local authorities decide for themselves whether they wish to join the initiative.

Results

The results achieved within the City Regions project reflect the activities carried out since 2009. The partners share an understanding of spatial planning as an ongoing process, and they feel responsible for the preparation of “living” documents, which are broadly supported and applied in practice.

During the regional conference held in November 2014 in Leipzig the partners agreed to consolidate governance structures established so far. Rules and responsibilities for the provision of data and for the assignment of contact persons were specified, and a joint strategy paper was adopted as guideline for future cooperation.

“One of our goals is the development and marketing of the traditional economic region of Central Germany. The project „Intermunicipal development of commercial areas in the Halle/Leipzig region” helps to achieve this goal. That is why we support this project.”



Jörn-Heinrich Tobaben

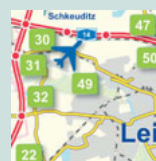
CEO of the Central German Metropolitan Region

“Until today we feel that the federal state border between Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt remains to be a certain barrier. Since 2010 municipalities, administrations, economic stakeholders and scientists cooperate intensively to evaluate available areas and to prepare efficiently for investments – if the search for areas would start with investors knocking at the door, we would reduce our chances due to intensive interregional competition.”



Prof. Dr. Andreas Berkner

Regional Planning Association Leipzig-West Saxony



Database of significant commercial areas

Areas for commercial and industrial investments of at least 5 ha of contiguous space have been evaluated in a database, based on requirements of branches of crucial relevance for the region.

Information on the data is published at the marketing portal for commercial sites managed by the Leipzig-Halle Economic Region (Wirtschaftsregion Leipzig-Halle).



Strategy paper for the development of commercial areas

The strategy paper summarises the approach of the intermunicipal cooperation aimed at the efficient development of commercial areas in the Halle/Leipzig urban region. It specifies the current aims of the initiative and describes tools applied or considered by the partners. Governance structures, tasks and responsibilities are explained, and next steps and milestones of the cooperation are outlined.

FACILITATING COOPERATION FOR A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE WROCLAW METROPOLITAN AREA

The Wrocław urban region is located in the eastern part of the Lower Silesia voivodeship. The city of Wrocław has 633,000 inhabitants, and the Wrocław Metropolitan Area with 27 surrounding municipalities has a population of around 1,180,000. Due to good access to internal markets and the European market, a well-qualified labour force and a successful economic transformation, Wrocław has become one of the leading cities in Poland.

Of course, political, social and economic change have significantly affected the development of the Wrocław urban region. The functional area of the Wrocław agglomeration has been formed, and a metropolitan identity has emerged.

These processes lead to new challenges for local authorities, since it is necessary to improve the competitiveness of the area, to ensure high standards of living and to keep up the pace of economic development.

Description of the pilot scheme

Within the scope of the project, three thematic interventions aimed at the improvement of the quality of life of the inhabitants of the Wrocław Metropolitan Area have been realised:

- Evaluation of transport needs with particular reference to the Park & Ride system;
- Development of a concept of coherent green infrastructure for various kinds of tourism and recreation;
- Improvement of the functioning and the availability of pre-school education and kindergarten institutions.

Commuters need a well-organised system of public transport which combines the benefits of public and individual transport in areas with low density of settlement. Therefore, local and regional authorities signed already in 2011 an agreement regarding the organisation and operation of public transport in the Wrocław agglomeration.

The negative effects of land degradation due to urban sprawl have forced local authorities to take another look at the functions and roles of open and green spaces in large urbanised areas. Coherent strategies to develop green infrastructure as a joint asset are needed to maintain the urban region as an attractive place to live and work.

Finally, taking into account processes of suburbanisation, new strategies for the provision of social services are needed. Depending on the location of settlements, there are many possibilities for intermunicipal cooperation in relation to pre-school education. However, efforts need to be coordinated, and the costs and benefits of investments need to be balanced.





Process and organisation

To support each intervention, thematic working groups were created, consisting of interested stakeholders from the relevant sectors (e.g. municipalities, railway companies, universities and units of higher education, NGOs). The working groups met several times at the beginning of the project, and they prepared and supported the elaboration of thematic studies and analyses by external experts.

At a later stage of implementation, workshops and conferences with a greater range of participation were held. For example, in April 2014 a regional conference in Wrocław addressed the possibilities of cooperation with regard to the implementation of the Park & Ride system and the protection of green and open spaces. More than 60 representatives from local government and regional authorities took part in this debate on current challenges and opportunities, promoting greater cooperation in the fulfilment of metropolitan functions.

At the same time, members of the Association of Municipalities and Districts of the Wrocław Agglomeration and further municipalities launched work on the practical improvement of the system of pre-school education. It was agreed to exchange experiences and information regarding the organisation of kindergarten institutions and to prepare a model for better organisation of services provided in this sector.

Results

Cooperation between local governments and the development of regional governance structures for the implementation of joint tasks require the involvement and the commitment of many stakeholders. As a result of various activities that have been undertaken so far, the Wrocław agglomeration is covered with a dense network of initiatives for cooperation in different fields of intervention.

Due to the lack of a binding legal framework for metropolitan governance, coordination of these activities remains a crucial challenge. A continuous dialogue between local and regional authorities is needed in order to moderate contradictory planning ambitions.

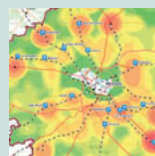
Therefore, scenarios for a model of management have been elaborated, specifying tasks, responsibilities and decisions yet to be made. These scenarios, and the results of findings of the thematic studies, were presented to stakeholders during a final event in December 2014.

“Current social and economic challenges in Europe demand new approaches to the development of large cities and surrounding areas. The role of suburban areas, determined by functional and spatial relations, has been strengthened. Durable cooperation between local authorities, as it is proposed by the City Regions project, is the adequate answer to this trend of development.”



Jacek Kowalski

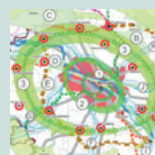
President of the Association of Municipalities and Districts of the Wrocław Agglomeration



Park & Ride system

The possibilities for the efficient operation of a Park & Ride system have been evaluated, based on the analysis of rail and bus services, spatial planning policies and trends of demographic development. Suitable locations for Park & Ride facilities were identified, and scenarios for the introduction of durable cooperation structures have been developed.

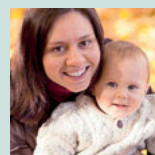
A draft action plan with an indicative timeline and success indicators allows to decide on the implementation of the system.



Green infrastructure management

Based on a concept of the spatial structure of natural and semi-natural areas in the Wrocław Metropolitan Area, guidelines and recommendations for green infrastructure deployment and the development of tourism have been elaborated.

They address urban planners, architects and local self-governments and encourage them not only to include green infrastructure components in planning studies and reports, but also to verify and to update existing documents on the development of green and open spaces.



Coordination of pre-school education

Based on the investigation of the current state and expected needs in the field of pre-school education, strategic recommendations and guidelines aimed at better functioning and improved availability of kindergarten institutions in the Wrocław agglomeration have been developed.

The organisational framework is provided by the Charter of the Association of Municipalities and Districts of the Wrocław Agglomeration. It specifies the rules of cooperation and defines the objectives of the Association, among others in the field of social affairs and education.

SUPPORTING GENTLE MOBILITY IN THE GRAZ URBAN REGION

The Graz urban region is located in the southern part of the province of Styria, not far from the border between Austria and Slovenia. The city of Graz has 280,000 inhabitants. It is the second largest city in Austria and the capital of Styria. With 57 surrounding municipalities included, the urban region has a population of around 460,000.

Graz is surrounded by hills and mountain ranges, except to the south. Here a green belt with forests and pastures offers to the citizens many possibilities for recreation.

The demographic development is highly dynamic, especially in the closer agglomeration of Graz. The growth of population is approximately 3 % per year – through migration from rural areas into cities, but also through immigration from South-East European countries.

Description of the pilot scheme

The growing population leads to urgent issues regarding urban mobility, e.g. the intensification of commuter flows. A suburban railway system has, therefore, been introduced by the province of Styria. At local traffic hubs, the suburban railways are integrated with bus and tram lines, and timetables are coordinated to assure efficient, fast and comfortable connections between the core city and its hinterland. Additionally, a system of integrated tickets has been introduced by the Styrian Traffic Association already 20 years ago.

Of course, not all municipalities are located in the catchment area of this highly efficient transport system. Today, these areas are linked to the city of Graz mostly through direct bus lines, providing comfortable connections for commuters and pupils at peak hours. However, during off-peak hours and due to a lack of transversal connections, public transport in rural areas is rather inadequate. Consequently, the use of private cars still prevails.

It is the aim of the regional pilot scheme to change this situation and to prepare a strategy for better urban-rural mobility. The accessibility of rural areas by public transport shall be improved without increasing the resources needed. Since many of these areas have a high recreational value, the inhabitants of the city of Graz and visitors to the area would also benefit from better and more flexible offers.

Process and organisation

The pilot area covers the southern parts of the city of Graz and the intermunicipal cooperation "GU 8", with eight municipalities located along the Mur river and the airport of Graz. Two municipi-





palities located outside the GU 8 area are functionally involved. Around 31,000 inhabitants live in the pilot area (without Graz).

To implement the pilot scheme, an inter-municipal working group met regularly to evaluate and to discuss the progress of work. A study of possible changes to the system of public transport was prepared by an external expert, who cooperated closely with all municipalities. A series of site visits facilitated the exchange with stakeholders and enabled the verification of possible measures.

In parallel, a discussion on the merger of municipalities was launched by the province of Styria. It influenced the operation of the pilot scheme due to the possible effects of mergers on the responsibilities and roles of the decision-makers involved. In the end, the consensus of all local authorities and all mayors is needed to change the public transport system, which is based on licensed bus lines.

Results

The main result of the pilot scheme is a mobility concept, which aims to increase the quality of transport offers. The focus of measures is on public transport, but pedestrian transport and bicycle transport have been analysed, too. Many measures for pedestrians and cyclists are in the planning stage or already in the implementation phase. There is still, however, a need to increase efforts with regard to the implementation of a coherent network of cycling routes.

According to the mobility concept, the system of bus lines offering direct lines to the city of Graz should remain as it is during peak hours. During off-peak hours, however, buses could serve the stations of the suburban railway system, offering change connections with nearly the same travel time. More capacity would become available for services in rural areas, and infrastructure and rolling stock would be used more efficiently. After the approval of proposals, implementation might take effect in 2015.

At the same time, for the region north of Graz a concept for connecting recreation sites through on-demand public transport services has been prepared within the Alpine Space project Rurbance (www.rurbance.eu). As part of a larger strategy for urban-rural mobility, both solutions for innovative public transport services might be transferred between the different parts of the Graz urban region.

“In my function as speaker for transport I welcome the efforts of the City of Graz and of the Regional Management Graz & Graz Region to improve public transport in our region GU 8. I hope that the project will be implemented soon.”



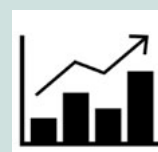
Heinrich Petritsch
Councillor in the Municipality of Unterpremstätten



Feasibility study on integrated transport

After establishing reliable contacts with stakeholders, the possibility to reorganise the offer of public transport in the pilot area was analysed. Spatial and legal conditions, involved stakeholders, financial effects and organisational responsibilities were evaluated.

Results show that a complex reorganisation of the bus network is possible, if broad consensus is reached. All involved stakeholders and decision-makers have to agree and to support the approach.



Analysis of future transport capacity needs

The region concerned is growing continuously, with a rate of approximately 3 % per year. Many new companies are expected to be founded, and mobility needs of the employees of these companies need to be satisfied.

Therefore, the offer of public transport must be adapted today to enable an environmentally friendly mobility tomorrow. Otherwise the negative impacts of traffic (noise, air pollution, consumption of land) might threaten the quality of life in the region.

MANAGING NEEDS OF TRANSPORT IN THE PRAGUE 9 DISTRICT

The Prague Metropolitan Region consists of the Capital City of Prague and a large part of the surrounding Central Bohemia region. The city of Prague has 1,243,000 inhabitants, and at least 284,000 inhabitants of Central Bohemia live in the Prague suburban zone.

The Capital City of Prague is statutorily defined as a single municipality, but it also includes 57 self-governing entities (city districts). The Central Bohemia region has at least 1,147 municipalities. In general, as a result of historical development, the Czech Republic holds a unique position in Europe, with a high degree of segmentation of internal administration.

This situation is a crucial challenge for the coordination of local authorities in the Prague Metropolitan Region. So far, the available cooperation structures that would allow for complex solutions to mutual relations turn out to be not sufficient yet.

Description of the pilot scheme

The district of Prague 9 is located in the north-east of Prague and has 54,000 inhabitants. It does not have a border with the Central Bohemia region, but it is an important destination and transit area for commuters. Several important interchange hubs between railways, regional bus transport and urban transport (metro, tram) are located here, and many commuters use the opportunity to change in this area from individual to public transport.

The traffic situation is steadily worsening due to the increasing intensity of road transport and the delayed completion of the high-level road system. Due to high numbers of passing and parked cars, the flow of traffic is reduced, and vehicles of surface public transport are slowed down.

Due to delayed trams and buses, the availability of cars, and the prevailing metropolitan lifestyle, there is a further shift from public transport to individual transport. Additionally, non-motorised modes of transport (walking, cycling) still lack a coherent infrastructure that would allow to travel across the district away from road corridors.

In parallel, there is an intensive process of revitalisation of brownfield sites. In the plans of developers, these areas appear as housing areas, possibly with mixed administrative or commercial functions. Either way, the secondary effect will be a growing need for transport.

To solve these problems, it is necessary to establish close cooperation between the district of Prague 9 and institutions and entities engaged in the long-term solution of traffic issues. Cooperation and mutual awareness need also to be





facilitated with regard to neighbouring districts, villages and towns located in the wider agglomeration zone surrounding the district of Prague 9.

Process and organisation

In order to organise the implementation of the regional pilot scheme and to support the work of external experts, a working group was established. The following institutions were represented with specialists:

- District of Prague 9, Department of Environment and Transport;
- Capital City of Prague, Department of Transport and Department of Spatial Planning;
- Technical Administration of Transportation of the Capital City of Prague (TSK), providing comprehensive information on road transport;
- Regional Organiser of Prague Integrated Transport (ROPID), providing comprehensive information on public transport;
- Institute for Planning and Development of the Capital City of Prague (IPR), providing comprehensive information on the development of the city of Prague and relations to the Prague Metropolitan Region.

Neighbouring city districts, selected municipalities from Central Bohemia, and the regional authority of the Central Bohemia region were invited to take part in the meetings and workshops of the working group.

Results

In order to effectively address transport issues and to gradually reduce the negative effects of transport, a “Master Plan for Road Transport” has been elaborated. The subject of the study is the analysis of transport in Prague 9, the assessment of future infrastructure needs and the processing of a so-called “Integrated Transport Management System” within this district.

The district of Prague 9 cannot solve the problems of transport alone, since a high share of the road network is managed by the city of Prague and subordinated bodies. However, with the “Master Plan” Prague 9 took the initiative to negotiate with all responsible authorities, preparing joint action towards the operation of local infrastructure networks at a 21st century level.

“We welcome the initiative of the Prague 9 City Council, because only cooperation at all levels – district, capital and region – can help to improve the conditions of transport in general, and of public transport in particular.”



Filip Drápal

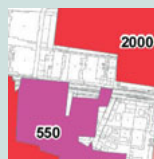
Regional Organiser of Prague Integrated Transport (ROPID)

“European projects help us to gain new experiences and to develop new perspectives and solutions with regard to traffic problems and problems of urban development in our city.”



Zdeněk Davídek

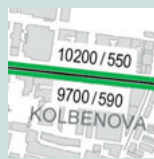
Councillor of the Prague 9 City Council



Analysis of traffic patterns and challenges

In the Prague 9 district significant growth is expected. The planned development of housing, commercial, administrative and business activities will strongly influence the demand for the transport capacity of transport networks.

The conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport need to be improved. The high-level road network is planned to be extended, but implementation of measures is delayed.



Assessment of future infrastructure needs

To improve the quality of public transport the removal of bottlenecks in the communication network is required, in particular at crossroads. Pedestrian crossings need to be improved, and a coherent network of cycling routes might improve the accessibility of residential areas and support this mode of transport.

Based on the modelling of traffic flows, solutions for stationary traffic have been developed, including proposals for the location of Park & Ride facilities.



Integrated Transport Management System

Considering the principles of sustainable mobility, a concept of measures and priorities of implementation has been elaborated. It allows to prepare and to implement an action plan for traffic engineering and traffic-organisational measures to reduce the negative impacts of transport in the district of Prague 9, focusing on pedestrians, cyclists, stationary traffic and the availability and quality of public transport.

INCREASING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE TORINO URBAN REGION

The Torino urban region is located near the Italian-French border in the foothills of the Alps. The city of Torino has 901,000 inhabitants: with 38 surrounding municipalities included, the urban region has around 2,000,000 inhabitants.

Since the early 1990s, beginning with the collapse of the Fordist model, Torino has defined new visions for the future. Building upon its industrial roots and the opportunities created by the 2006 Winter Olympic Games, Torino has been able to rally a very diverse range of stakeholders to develop project partnerships and to promote integrated urban policies.

Today, the metropolitan area of Torino and the region of Piedmont face tough challenges: the global economic crisis which hits Europe, and particularly Italy, hard; the dramatic cuts in public spending; the birth – not clearly defined yet – of a new administrative layer, the metropolitan city, with more than 300 municipalities, from the highest peaks of the Alps to the plain of the Po Valley.

Description of the pilot scheme

With public spending dwindling, an economic situation that remains precarious and a new legislative framework emerging, new challenges lie ahead. There is need to recover disused manufacturing plants, to upgrade obsolete infrastructure, to revitalise outer neighbourhoods and to improve the urban environment.

These elements shall become part of a metropolitan spatial strategy, which includes the entire urban region. Within the City Regions project, the consultation process for this new strategy was launched.

Based on the mapping of current urban transformations, stakeholders and decision-makers throughout the metropolitan area were activated to survey priorities and to develop joint visions and guidelines. All 38 municipalities in the peri-urban area of Torino were called upon to conceive and to agree on joint approaches through renewed participative patterns.

The process of strategic planning follows two previous exercises carried out in 2000 and 2006. These led to outstanding results and the deep transformation from a suffering post-industrial city to a vibrant city of culture with high quality of life and new economic sectors. The strategic plans also triggered the 2006 Winter Olympic Games and many other key projects on transport, science, urban transformation, etc.

The City Regions project also created opportunities to expand the scope of spatial visioning to a supra-regional and macro-regional level, i.e. towards a Milan-Turin megacity and towards the macro-region of the Alps.





Process and organisation

The pilot action focused on the backbone of the spatial strategy, with participatory mechanisms being the core of the process. External experts accompanied the consultation groups that worked on the spatial strategy, taking care for the design and sequencing of activities. The final phase of the pilot action was inaugurated in March 2014 through a regional workshop with 100 participants, which enabled a public debate on the national, regional and European positioning of the Torino spatial strategy.

Subsequently, three metropolitan workshops grouped stakeholders from peri-urban municipalities and districts of the city of Torino according to their geographical location. The workshops strengthened the connections between key actors, fostered the engagement of local politicians and representatives of local authorities and facilitated the dialogue with coordinating experts.

Finally, in late autumn 2014, five citizen-oriented “Metropolitan dialogues” were organised, bringing the results to a public audience. The sessions explored the meaning of “being metropolitan” with regard to green infrastructure, sustainable mobility, economic development hubs, quality of urban space, and attractiveness for tourists.

Results

The pilot project developed the framework and identified the main directions of a metropolitan spatial strategy for the Torino urban region. These directions are based on a set of core issues:

- New models for urban regeneration projects;
- Multi-functional metropolitan hubs;
- Management of the green infrastructure network;
- Technological innovation towards environmental sustainability and a smarter city;
- Comprehensive metropolitan mobility planning;
- Quality of public spaces and the built environment;
- Innovative financing and implementation strategies.

The proposal prepared within the project is an intellectual challenge which is not in competition with tools for spatial planning as defined by laws and regulations. A reference spatial strategy is an innovative approach, aiming to identify the regulatory and organisational framework, but without a timeframe for implementation. It is a selective agenda of priority policies and projects with a spatial scope, relying on networks of actors and financial framework provisions.

“The spatial strategy is the result of an intensive and broad consultation process. 38 municipalities, many local organisations, more than 200 people have been involved, supported by scientific evidence. It will be the main element to build a future project for the metropolitan area, connecting administrative, spatial, economic and social issues.”



Valentino Castellani

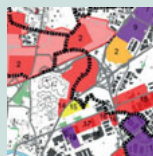
Vice-President of Torino Internazionale / Strategica, former Mayor of Torino

“The pilot project has helped local stakeholders to define and to share a new metropolitan and peri-urban geographic understanding that is a great advancement in local urban planning culture. A new spatial “green humanistic” vision allows us to consider nature and human environment as one main asset for the urban vision of the future.”



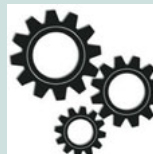
Ippolito Ostellino

General Manager of the Protected Areas of the Po and the Torino Hills



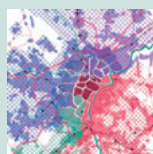
Mapping of metropolitan transformation

Analysis of ongoing physical transformation of the metropolitan area based on recent, current and planned urban development and redevelopment projects, which have a meaningful impact – housing and building projects, public spaces, green areas and brown-fields. The result is an interpretation of settlement trends at metropolitan level in terms of quality, quantities and spatial dimensions.



Mapping of metropolitan cooperation

Analysis of inter-municipal cooperation projects, with special emphasis on recent and successful initiatives. During the last fifteen years inter-municipal cooperation has flourished in specific functional areas, and in particular with regard to non-personal services (transportation, sanitation, water, etc.). The analysis of experiences contributes to the process of strategic planning of the metropolitan area.



Towards a metropolitan spatial strategy

A policy study and guidance document outlining the scope of a metropolitan spatial strategy, including guidelines to trigger the elaboration of a medium-term innovative strategy for the metropolitan area. The document is the result of extensive debates among the 38 municipalities involved, the 10 districts of the city of Torino, the Piedmont region, the Province of Torino, local academia and researchers.

EU STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS AND URBAN-RURAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE 2014-2020 FUNDING PERIOD

For all partner regions, a comparative analysis has been done to investigate how the EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) can be used to support city-regional development projects and metropolitan cooperation. The study has been realised by the German Association for Housing, Urban and Spatial Development.



Władysław Piskorz, Head of the Competence Centre Inclusive Growth, Urban and Territorial Development at the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, during the International Expert Conference on 24.09.2014 in Dresden

Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI)

An ITI allows the pooling of different funding sources to support projects within a territorial development strategy. Any geographical area with particular features can be the subject of an ITI. To use this tool, an indicative budget and a coherent strategy have to be incorporated into related Operational Programmes. As a top-down instrument it can be used for different types of area, e.g. metropolitan areas, cities or neighbourhoods.

Community-led local development (CLLD)

CLLD reflects the LEADER approach generated from the European rural development policy which has now been opened to all funds. Unlike ITI, CLLD is a bottom-up instrument for smaller territories (e.g. neighbourhoods, smaller cities). A local action group with a majority of private stakeholders decides on the content of the local development strategy and the financing of operations and interventions.

Legal regulations

The legislative package adopted by the EU institutions in December 2013 for the 2014-2020 funding period provides a flexible framework, which includes several possibilities and instruments for the support of urban-rural partnerships:

- Sector-oriented approach: Support of sector-specific projects (e.g. energy, transport, business-oriented infrastructure, environment), organised in the form of an intermunicipal or urban-rural partnership.
- Article 7 of the ERDF regulation: Support of integrated urban and urban-rural development projects as own priority axis or multi-thematic priority axis, own operational programme, or own investment priority.
- Application of new territorial instruments: Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) and Community-led local development (CLLD).
- Article 8 of the ERDF regulation: Innovative actions, directly financed by the European Commission to identify and test new solutions and forms of governance related to sustainable urban development.

Results of the comparative analysis

During the 2007-2013 funding period, there were no significant opportunities to support urban-rural partnerships through EU Structural Funds. Notable exceptions were the urban region of Graz, with the URBAN PLUS programme (www.urban-plus.at), and the urban region of Torino, with the "Corona Verde" project for the development of the regional landscape. In both cases, EU Structural Funds were applied to deal with issues of urban-rural cooperation.

In the 2014-2020 funding period, a significant increase in tools and funding opportunities for urban-rural partnerships can be observed, but solutions vary considerably according to the traditions and experiences available. For example, the "new" Member States Poland and the Czech Republic will use ITI to facilitate urban-rural development projects. At the same time, in Germany, Italy and Austria ITI will rarely be applied.

There are particular challenges relating to the combination of different Operational Programmes. For example, within the Halle/Leipzig and Prague urban regions different funding categories apply (more developed regions vs. transition regions and less developed regions), leading to different funding regimes.

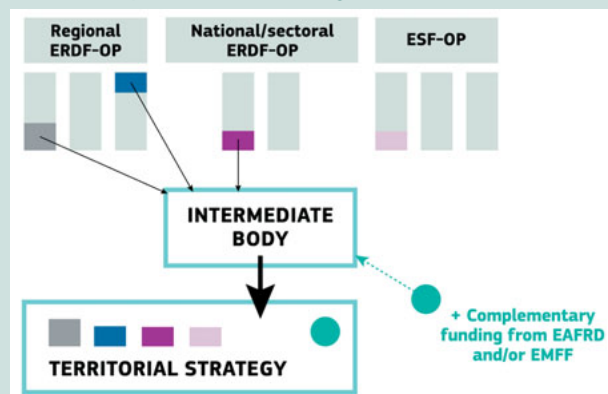


Funding opportunities in partner regions

The table below provides an overview of the tools and funding opportunities for urban-rural partnership in the 2014-2020 funding period. It shows that there is a wide range of funding approaches in the partner regions. Local actors are encouraged to use these options and opportunities to implement projects and initiatives aimed at better cooperation between urban and rural areas.

By applying these tools, they also decide on the scope of tools and instruments offered in future funding periods. In the end, it is up to all stakeholders – including the Member States and authorities in charge of programming of EU Structural and Investment Funds – to make the best use of the legislative and financial framework offered by EU institutions.

Possible implementation arrangement of an ITI



European Commission, DG Regional Policy (2014): Integrated Territorial Investment. Factsheet

Tools and funding opportunities for urban-rural partnerships in the 2014-2020 funding period

<p>Halle/Leipzig Federal state of Saxony Federal state of Saxony-Anhalt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saxony: Multi-thematic priority axis for integrated urban development on e.g. brownfield revitalisation and CO₂-reduction measures • Saxony-Anhalt: Multi-thematic priority axis for integrated urban-rural development aimed at a) the protection of the climate and the environment, b) the reduction of functional deficiencies of historical cities and c) the revitalisation of brownfields • In Saxony-Anhalt multi-fund CLLD approach for local development (except in core areas of Halle and Magdeburg) • Conclusion: Interesting developments in Saxony-Anhalt, but joint projects with Saxony difficult. Innovative actions according to Article 8 of the ERDF regulation might be of interest
<p>Wrocław Lower Silesia Region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 5 % of ERDF funds ring-fenced for functional urban areas; three multi-fund ITI in Lower Silesia, including the Wrocław agglomeration • Institutionalised partnership, ITI strategy and ITI agreement are being prepared • Conclusion: Interesting multi-fund approach with ITI, enabling the realisation of integrated territorial projects covering the entire functional area
<p>Graz Province of Styria</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National ERDF OP with multi-level management structure; multi-thematic priority axis dedicated to both the urban and the territorial dimension • Support of urban-rural partnerships (development of strategies and implementation of pilot actions); no ITIs, CLLD only as pilot initiative in Tyrol • Conclusion: Valuable experience due to the URBAN PLUS programme, continued support of urban-rural partnerships. Innovative actions according to Article 8 of the ERDF regulation might be of interest
<p>Prague Capital City of Prague Central Bohemian Region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital City of Prague manages own multi-fund OP "Growth Pole of the Czech Republic" • ITI planned for Prague and Central Bohemia, ITI strategy is being prepared. Topics under discussion: mobility, environment (flood protection), education • Conclusion: ITI approach supports urban-rural development. Administrative structure complex; ITI tool facilitates the dialogue between relevant actors and authorities
<p>Torino Piedmont Region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National ERDF OP for 14 Metropolitan Cities, covering core cities and surrounding areas; the ITI approach is being investigated • Significant experience with the LEADER approach; CLLD could be a possible instrument for sub-urban areas • Conclusion: So far no particular focus on urban-rural partnerships, but potential for implementation due to the national OP for metropolitan development. Innovative actions according to Article 8 of the ERDF regulation might be of interest

Due to the delay of the programming process for the 2014-2020 funding period, the majority of information received was based on draft documents and might be subject to change.

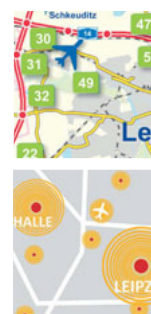
OUTLOOK: ACTION PROGRAMME 2015+

The topics tackled within the City Regions project will remain on the agenda. Draft action programmes have been prepared for all participating urban regions, outlining the framework for future cooperation. Each action programme has been tailored to the local situation, taking into account the experience of stakeholders, current tasks and challenges for cooperative approaches and expected developments.

In the very end, each regional pilot shall contribute to the durable optimisation of cooperation and the improvement of efficient land-use management in the participating urban regions.

Halle / Leipzig

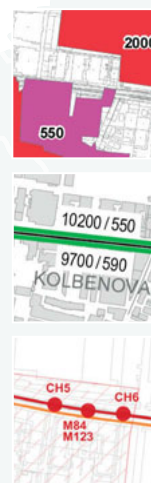
- Intensification of cooperation with the Central German Metropolitan Region
- Adoption of the joint strategy paper as framework for future action, regular update of data on the use and the status of commercial areas (monitoring)
- Consideration of the joint strategy paper during the update of plans and programmes, which are prepared in the responsibility of partners



Format: Joint declaration of municipalities

Prague 9 City Council:

- Increasing the knowledge on the aims of the "Master Plan for Road Transport" among stakeholders on all levels, continuation of implementation
- Enhancement of implementation strategies, evaluation of influence on decisions taken by stakeholders
- Review of competences in the administration of the Prague 9 City Council



Format: Approval of the "Road Master Plan" by the Prague 9 City Council, joint letter of intent of stakeholders

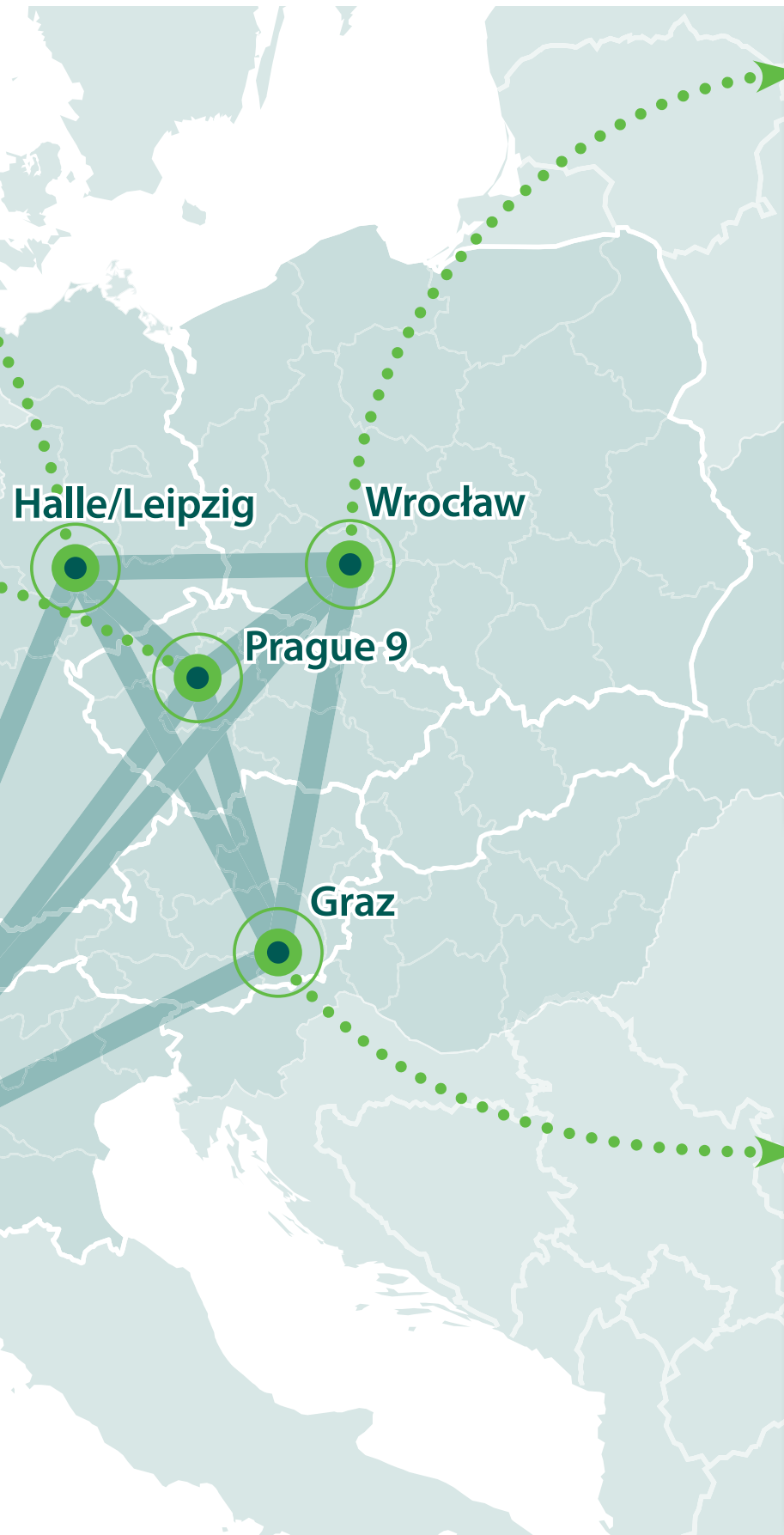
Torino:

- Promotion of pilot results among stakeholders on all levels, paving the way towards the metropolitan strategy Torino 2025
- Investigation of models for the coordination of a spatial strategy for the future Metropolitan City established by law and comprising 315 municipalities
- Identification and selection of medium-term strategic projects in the fields of metropolitan mobility, green infrastructures, local development hubs, etc.



Format: Partnership agreement presented to the main metropolitan stakeholders and signed by key actors

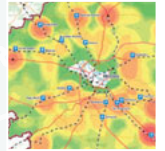
Torino



Wrocław / Lower Silesia:

Park & Ride system / Green infrastructure:

- Agreement on objectives and a management model, definition of alternative scenarios to achieve the defined objectives
- Selection of locations, realisation and evaluation of pilot investments
- Set-up of an implementation plan, including a marketing programme and a system for monitoring and evaluation



Format: Agreement of municipalities located in functional areas of intervention

Pre-school education:

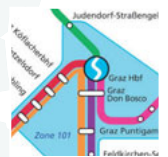
- Intensification of the exchange of experiences and information on the organisation and functioning of the system of pre-school education
- Identification of suitable solutions for problems and needs in selected municipalities of the agglomeration (pilot implementation)
- Elaboration of rules for the organisation, financing and management of a joint system of pre-school education



Format: Agreement of members of the Association of Municipalities and Districts of the Wrocław Agglomeration

Graz:

- Evaluation of the effects of the merger of municipalities on the principles of cooperation
- Elaboration of a master plan for the Metropolitan Area of Styria (in cooperation with all stakeholders)
- Elaboration of a strategy for the improvement of public transport in the suburban area, taking into account the experiences of pilot studies



Format: Joint letter of intent of GU 8 municipalities

MACRO-REGIONAL COOPERATION IN CENTRAL EUROPE

RESULTS AND FINDINGS OF TRANSNATIONAL DISCUSSION

Territorial cooperation, whether at a city-regional or metropolitan-regional scale, a cross-border scale or a transnational (macro-regional) scale, is considered an important means of responding to larger-scale functional challenges that territorial-administrative authorities cannot adequately address alone. By definition, each functional interrelationship will have a different reach and geographical extension, depending on the issue under consideration.

The City Regions project seeks to provide an input into the discussion surrounding the nature of these transnational issues in Central Europe and how they might be addressed. What are the large-scale spatial development issues that require cooperation between nation-states and regions in Central Europe? Are there arguments for an EU macro-regional strategy for Central Europe to address these key transnational issues effectively? If so, what would the suitable delineation be for this transnational region?



**POLICY
REVIEW**

**INTERNATIONAL
EXPERT
CONFERENCE**

**CON-
CLUSIONS**

These were the questions that guided research and discussion conducted by a transnational group of experts established as part of the project. The results and findings of the joint work are presented in this chapter. It includes the documentation of a panel discussion on macro-regional cooperation held during the International Expert Conference “Positioning of urban regions in European strategies” on 24.09.2014 in Dresden, a brief policy review of the debate on EU macro-regional strategies and the conclusions drawn from transnational research.

More detailed information is available in the final report, which has been edited by Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr from the Radboud University Nijmegen with the help of the transnational group of experts.

EU MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGIES – A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE POLICY DEBATE

Since the late 1990s, with the financial support of the EU through the INTERREG initiative, transnational cooperation in large contiguous areas has become a regular feature in the European policy discourse. Considering alternative territories to those of nation-states to address transnational policy challenges and to establish cooperative governance arrangements involving different countries and regions around shared agendas has received even more political attention with the launch of EU macro-regional strategies.

EU macro-regional strategies are, on request of the European Council, prepared by the European Commission jointly with stakeholders and actors in the regions. They cover large areas including several countries and are aimed at achieving better coordination of actors, policies and resources. The strategies to date cover both Member States and Third Countries, and they are framed around an ecosystems-based argument of seas, river basins and mountain ranges. These are seen as the “connective tissue” to achieve cohesion and coordination inside the EU, as well as to provide a bridge to non-EU members.

Macro-regional strategies developed so far

The first macro-regional strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, adopted in 2009, was developed to address the increasingly serious degradation of the Baltic Sea but also the disparate development paths of the countries in the region. A similar transnational rationale is provided for the EU macro-regional strategy for the Danube Region, adopted in 2010. Two other macro-regional strategies, for the Adriatic-Ionian Region and the Alpine Region, are in preparation, and others are under discussion. The result may be a network of partly overlapping cooperation spaces covering the European continent.

Initially it was emphasised that EU macro-regional strategies would not be supported by new funds, new legislation or new institutions (principle of Three No’s). Instead, actors should make use of the wide range of EU funding sources to achieve the agreed joint objectives.

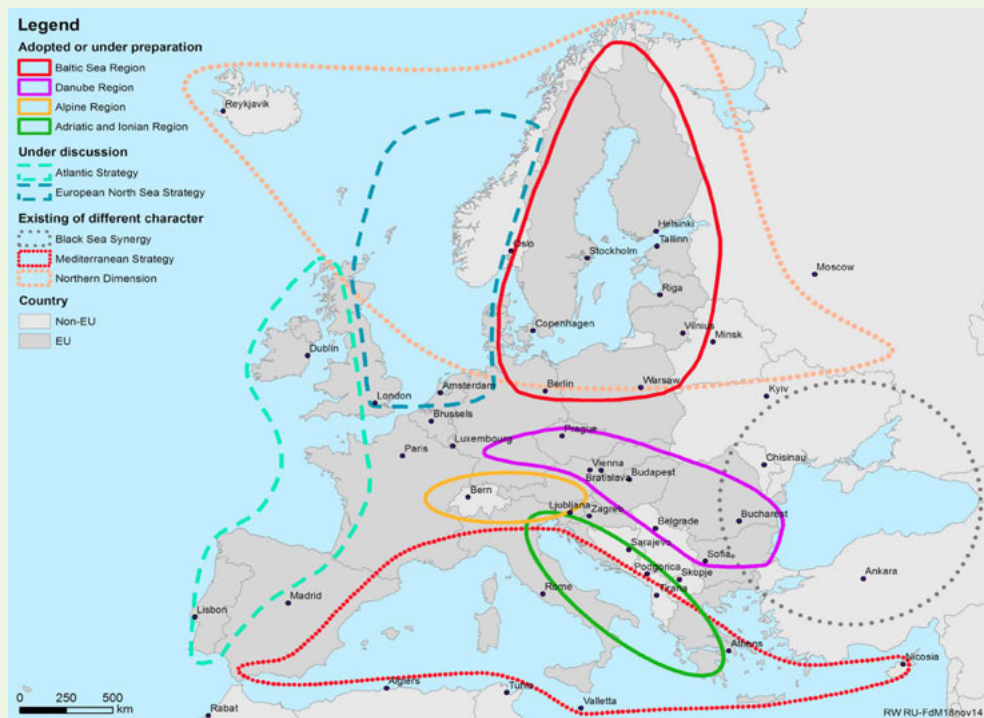
Despite these stated intentions, concerns have been early raised by actors about the difficulty of aligning EU macro-regional strategy objectives with existing EU funding programmes (which are targeted towards specific objectives and usually organised around national or regional, rather than transnational, priorities). In response to such concerns, the decision has been taken for the funding period 2014–2020 to adjust the transnational INTERREG programme areas to the delineation of the EU macro-regional strategies.

Challenges of transnational coordination

While greeted enthusiastically by many as a possible way out of the EU’s “coordination trap”, the prioritisation of actions for transnational spaces is proving a political challenge. Identifying issues for cooperation at the supra-national scale inevitably involves struggles over the prioritising of interests, rights and claims for policy attention. Yet the filtering is a crucial process, because if strategies are to inspire and motivate a range of actors over a long period of time, they need to be more than merely an aggregation of issues.¹

The experience with the transnational INTERREG programmes has shown that broad frameworks with largely generic funding priorities rarely result in projects of real significance for the transnational region.² Also the EU macro-regional strategies for the Baltic Sea and Danube regions have been criticised for presenting overly long lists of projects and actions, many of which not being specific to the transnational region.

Macro-regional strategy areas of the European Union



Based on European Commission reports and BBSR; visualisation: S. Dühr and R. Wunderink

The added-value of EU macro-regional strategies, thus, is arguably greatest for those issues which countries or regions cannot solve or satisfactorily address by acting alone, but which require joint responses. Policy priorities and actions specific to the macro-region and resulting from a shared transnational agenda will more likely result in lasting commitment than a mere replica of EU policy objectives or cooperation around issues that are largely regional or local in focus.

Requirements for future strategies

Based on a review of the existing macro-regional strategies and responding to the widespread enthusiasm for this approach, in 2013 the European Commission has formulated clearer criteria for the launch of new macro-regional strategies.³ In future, EU support through policy and political attention and a coordination role of the European Commission will only be provided for initiatives

- that demonstrate a clear need or rationale for cooperation,
- and that can draw on relevant political support and existing (“bottom-up”) transnational arrangements, as those are seen as indicating a recognised need for transnational cooperation in this region.

And while the European Commission has initially taken an active and leading role in the development and implementation of EU macro-regional strategies, a recent Communication emphasises the need for stronger ownership of the counties and regions concerned to ensure the lasting success of these arrangements.⁴

Given the considerable effort involved in setting up and implementing EU macro-regional strategies, and the availability of numerous other instruments of informal as well as more formal nature to organise territorial cooperation around shared agendas, both the rationale and the political support for such a rather complex instrument should therefore be thoroughly considered.

¹ Healey, P. (2007): Urban Complexity and Spatial Strategies: Towards a Relational Planning of Our Times
² Panteia et al. (2010): Ex-Post Evaluation of the INTERREG III Community Initiative 2000-2006 (No. 2008.CE.16.0.AT.016). Final report
³ European Commission (2013): Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the EESC and the CoR concerning the added-value of macro-regional strategies. COM(2013) 468 final
⁴ European Commission (2014): Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the EESC and the CoR concerning the governance of macro-regional strategies. COM(2014) 284 final

MACRO-REGIONAL COOPERATION IN CENTRAL EUROPE – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

During the International Expert Conference “Positioning of urban regions in European strategies” on 24.09.2014 in Dresden, the possible prospects of macro-regional cooperation in Central Europe were the subject of a thematic panel discussion with the following participants:

Vladimír Bláha - Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, European Policy Coordination Department, Prague

Davide Donati - Office of the Piedmont Region, Brussels

Dr. Wilfried Görmar - Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development, Bonn

Ugo Poli - Central European Initiative, Trieste

Andreu Ulied - MCRIT, Lead Partner of the ET2050 project, Barcelona

The discussion was moderated by **Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr** from the Radboud University Nijmegen, who opened by presenting the results of research done as part of the project.



Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Taking into account your experience, how would you describe cooperation needs in Central Europe? And how can they be approached, from your point of view? I suggest starting off with national views, and then moving up to the transnational and European levels.



Dr. Wilfried Görmar: The area of the European Union (EU) is covered by transnational cooperation programmes, representing a broad diversity of different spaces. For some of these cooperation areas, macro-regional strategies are in place: for the Baltic Sea Region, for the Danube Region, for the Adriatic-Ionian Region, and, in the future, for the Alpine Region as well. Interestingly, all macro-regional strategies facilitate the cooperation between “new” and “old” Member States.

There are discussions regarding macro-regional cooperation in the Atlantic and North Sea Regions, and there are further strategies of a different character, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Black Sea Synergy and the Northern Dimension. As it turns out, Central Europe is also covered by these strategies somehow, but there is no separate strategy for the area.

In my opinion, a macro-regional strategy for Central Europe might strengthen the area, but we do not know exactly what Central Europe is, and different areas are in question. In medieval times, Central Europe was the economic and cultural heart of Europe. The awareness of this joint identity has been lost.

We do not know if it is possible to create a new identity. In my experience, the interaction between macro-regional strategies and transnational cooperation programmes can be of mutual benefit. In the Baltic Sea Region, the macro-regional strategy was “sold” through cooperation projects, and cooperation projects took advantage of being part of a larger strategy.



The conference was a local event of the
12th European Week of Regions and Cities

I do not want to guess at the future of macro-regional strategies, since we have to wait until we have reliable experience. There are certainly many positive aspects, such as increased visibility and the matching up of many stakeholders. Maybe it would be better not to try to coordinate everything, but to focus efforts on a limited number of strategic interventions of cross-sectoral character.

The future of Central Europe as an economic centre and a prosperous area will depend very much on cooperation with Eastern Europe

If Central Europe is to become an economic centre and a prosperous area, this will depend very much, I would say, on cooperation with Eastern Europe. Only then Central Europe might become a core area and a powerhouse of a polycentric Europe. So, if we want to push Central Europe forward, we have to look to the North, to the South and to the West, but we also have to look to the East.

Maybe we are currently lacking a vision for Europe. We now have a territorial vision for the EU and, to some extent, a territorial vision for Europe from an EU perspective, but we lack a vision for Europe itself. If we manage to develop it, Central Europe might have a significant role.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Thank you very much. Mr. Bláha, what would you say from the Czech perspective and from the perspective of the Danube Region?



Vladimír Bláha: It is very interesting to discuss different maps of Europe, trying to define Central Europe. What we see is that the Czech Republic is an integral part of each definition. Ever since 1989, the Czech Republic has been attached to the notion of Central Europe, and, even in

Czech diplomacy and Czech politics, this concept is well known and still used today.

However, to start with, I would like to focus on three types of cooperation that the Czech Republic is currently part of at the Central European level.

The first type of cooperation is the Visegrád Group (V4). It is a kind of political arena for former communist countries,

including Poland, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Hungary. More and more within this V4 format, joint positions are negotiated and then pursued at EU level. This cooperation has a quite important role with this regard.

The macro-regional strategy for the Danube Region has proven to be a successful platform for pursuing joint positions and priorities

The second type is the macro-regional strategy for the Danube Region, where the Czech Republic jointly with Hungary coordinates the priority area "To encourage more sustainable energy". It has proven to be a successful platform for pursuing joint positions and priorities. We completed some very successful studies on the energy situation which point, for example, to missing links that need to be dealt with to ensure more energy independence. Especially in the current political situation, energy supply security is a topic that has to be addressed.

The final example of cooperation is the Carpathian Convention, a more "light" cooperation structure. Here, the Czech Republic addresses issues like the protection of nature through diversity. Connectivity is also addressed, with a particular emphasis on transport connectivity.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Thank you. Mr. Donati, what is your point of view, representing a more Western European – or Alpine European – perspective?



Davide Donati: I am in a very particular situation, because you talked before about the identity of Central Europe. But this means that in Central Europe cooperation is not an issue. Where cooperation is already in place, the situation is much easier.

I do not want to continue the debate on the geographical scope of Central Europe, because I also think that the current debate on macro-regional strategies goes beyond the scope of single strategies. Every single macro-regional strategy is different – the strategy for the Baltic Sea Region differs very much from the strategy for the Alpine Region.

Probably, there are two common features to each strategy. The first one is that you have to find a common – not a

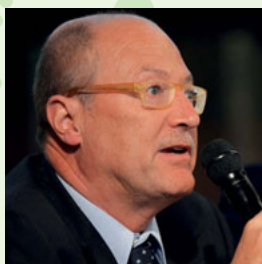
similar – issue. Issue means both, problem or opportunity. One issue or more, but at least one. Because no common issue means no added value. This is very important, and it is the difference between a macro-regional strategy and a traditional cooperation programme like INTERREG. It is very much the borderline between one type of exercise and the other.

The second common feature is the principle of the Three No's of the European Commission – no new institutions, no new funds, no new regulations. These are the two common features of every macro-regional strategy. Everything else is really different – the initiative, the partners, the way of organisation, the thematic priorities and so on.

Enough time should be spent on analysing whether a macro-regional strategy for Central Europe is needed or not. It could be a very good instrument, but it should correspond to real needs

My suggestion is to check very thoroughly if there is a common issue or not. Because if not, you are going to put yourself in a situation that consumes a great deal of time and effort, which is not easy at all. You have to bring together different levels of government, different countries, etc., to achieve results. So do not be afraid to spend enough time on analysing whether you really need a macro-regional strategy. And do not go for it only because everybody else wants a macro-regional strategy. Only go for it if you need it. It could be a very good instrument, but it should be an original one. And it should correspond to your real needs.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Thank you very much. Mr. Poli, we move now to the transnational level. If you could give us a few ideas regarding cooperation issues, and how you are addressing them in the Central European Initiative (CEI).



Ugo Poli: The CEI is maybe the oldest regional transnational organisation in Central Europe, founded in 1989 on the initiative of Italy, Austria, Hungary and the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It currently comprises 18 member states, and it is very evident how both

the CEI and the Central Europe cooperation programme include all the four existing or forthcoming macro-regional strategies on the spot in Europe.

In the current architecture of EU economic governance there is a lack of horizontal coordination and opportunity to exchange experiences at the level of national governments

But where is the problem? I think there is a big institutional hole in the current architecture of EU economic governance. Beyond the bilateral bargaining between countries and the European Commission, there is no horizontal coordination and opportunity to exchange experiences at the level of the national governments of Member States.

This is particularly evident in relation to the transnational but sub-European issues that macro-regional strategies are aiming to cope with. By doing the macro-regional programming exercise, a great consultative process was deployed, where the strategic choices were quite foggy. Instead, all kinds of transnational and national approaches of relevance in the territory of each strategy were collected. In the Danube Region, in each of the ten priority areas, between 100 and 500 priority projects were filed for strategy implementation.

Hence the main challenge remains to match resources and to provide added value by better use of available funds. We are well aware that the programmes of the transnational strand of the European Territorial Cooperation goal cannot solve the problems of macro-regional strategies. But I would like to invite everyone to consider their features in the light of an assessment of needs for the delivery of macro-regional strategies, which was provided by the European Commission: to share experience among macro-regions, to match funds from different sources, to involve civil society organisations and subsidiary institutional levels and to make the most of existing regional transnational organisations for the purpose of coordination.

The Central Europe programme could play the role of a platform connecting all existing macro-regional strategies in the field

In my opinion, it would be a great opportunity for the 2014-2020 Central Europe programme to play the role of the single and only platform currently and prospectively connecting countries of all the existing macro-regional strategies in the field. Due to the total mirroring of the macro-regional dimensions by the scope of the transnational programmes, there is a risk of macro-regional strategies becoming closed boxes rather than laboratories for better cohesion within the EU and integration of neighbouring countries.

Phase-based strategy towards increasing polycentricity, as investigated by the ET2050 project (www.et2050.eu)

Therefore, one option would be to provide guidelines for Central Europe projects, ranging, for example, from an inventory of different macro-regions in relation to similar issues up to the criterion to involve at least one partner by project from each macro-region crossing in the programme eligible territory. The outcome could be the creation of a unique platform for the joint stock-taking of different methodologies, experiences and results delivered in the programme area from the macro-regional level of the cohesion policy.

Let's see what will become possible, but in the CEI Secretariat we feel there is the risk of a substantial separation between ETC stakeholders, that would contradict what was jointly achieved in almost twenty years of transnational cooperation. Thus, as the CEI, we are also considering establishing a "CEI regional dimension" as a platform or a clearing house where regional institutions of each country might have dialogue and an exchange of experience with regard to their own positions and roles within the relevant macro-regions.

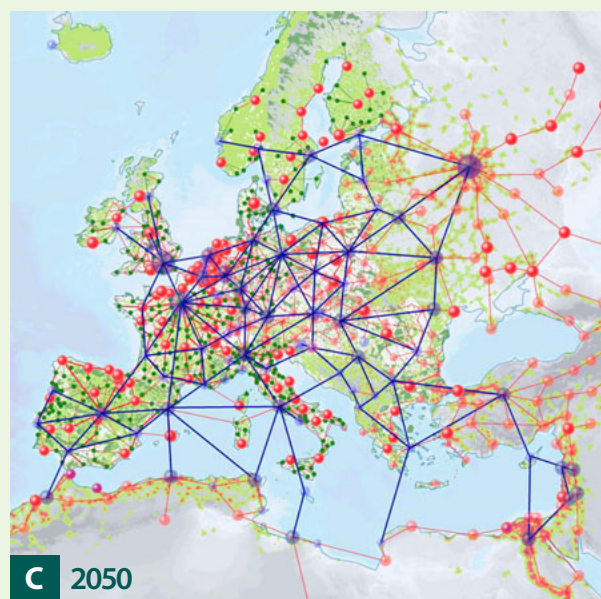
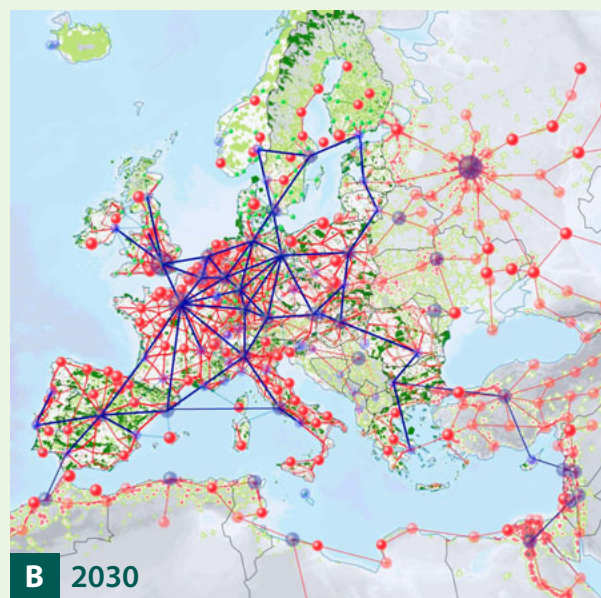
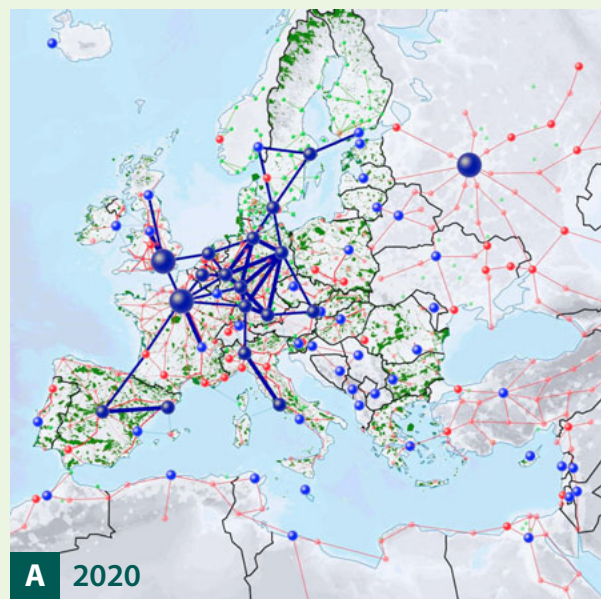
Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Thank you. Mr. Ulied, what would you like to add to the discussion, taking into account the visions and scenarios elaborated in the ET2050 project?



Andreu Ulied: When Milan Kundera, one of the most famous European writers from Prague, moved in the 70s of the last century to Paris, he was very angry that many people thought that Prague was very far away and closer to Moscow than to Munich. Regarding the idea of Central Europe, if he were here, he would probably say, "Finally, you realised the obvious thing: you should begin with the cultural dimension".

With a first workshop devoted to Kafka, a second to the Baroque, etc. Let us begin with the cultural dimension, and the pragmatic things will come easily. But, looking at the maps of Central Europe projected at the beginning of the discussion, I thought as well of very different people – e.g. French right-wing politicians – who will not like a map of Europe with Germany being the core of a larger macro-region. In a certain context, this is a kind of taboo in Europe.

In the end, the question is: What borders do we need in Europe? In the vision for 2050 elaborated by the ET2050 project, there are no borders on the map – it is a borderless Europe, a free space of cooperation. There are no costs for non-Europeans, in the sense that cooperation is free. And



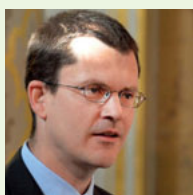
there are as many provisory and fuzzy borders as needed to solve common problems and to improve the welfare of European citizens. So, there is not only one, there are five possibilities for cooperation, depending on the subject.

In the vision for 2050 elaborated by the ET2050 project, there are no borders on the map – it is a borderless Europe, a free space of cooperation

This is an extremely promising way of working, and I think Europe needs it. Let us start with culture, and then move on to many other things. It is a strategic choice for Europe to follow this way of thinking. In 2050, for our children, borders will be instrumental.

The well-being of people and cultural nations are, of course, very important for the identity of the people. But the identification of national borders and of national culture is a fairly recent European invention. I am not sure if this will work for the last part of the 21st century. So, for me, the discussion is about which borders we really need.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Thank you very much, these are very interesting views. We talked about identity at the transnational level and also about the question of borders. In an EU without borders, what would be the issues on which we would cooperate? And, from today's perspective, what are the issues we need to cooperate on to overcome the disadvantages and the challenges that borders present to us? The floor is open to the audience.



Christophe Ebermann, Central Europe Joint Technical Secretariat:

Since we have been talking a lot about Central Europe, I would like to add something from the perspective of the Central Europe cooperation programme. The discussion is very interesting and very much in line with what we have been doing on the programme level for the past few years.

The preparation of the cooperation programme for the 2014-2020 funding period started more or less two and a half years ago. And on exactly the same questions – namely, where to draw a line, where is Central Europe – we started a territorial analysis with inputs from more than 1,000 stakeholders. We continued with surveys and meetings at the national and transnational levels, and, again, we received inputs from another 1,000 people, supporting the expertise of the Member States and of external experts during the programming process.

We did not find a clear-cut answer to the question of identity. But we could see – confirmed by socio-economic data – that there is still a gap between “older” and “newer” Member States. So we understand the programme and the need for the programme to bridge this gap. And we also see it as bridging the gap between different macro-regional strategies.

The gap was clearly visible in the field of accessibility, but we got a lot of interest also in the field of innovation and economic cooperation, which was actually among the top responses we received. Further aspects were nature, environment and also the topic of culture, e.g. how to position the cultural roots and the joint historic experience of Central Europe. So, there are a lot of themes where Central Europe has an identity, but it definitely also has the need for further cooperation.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: From your point of view and your experience, is it possible to raise five or maybe three top issues, which really require cooperation at a transnational level?

Christophe Ebermann: It is a tricky question. Of course, there are some top issues which cannot be tackled at a national level alone. For example, flood protection, environment protection, transport, greater accessibility, energy networks, etc. But the process has also shown that fields where you would not expect transnational cooperation to play a relevant role were considered very important.

In the field of innovation, for example, it is considered important that cooperation across national borders is also possible between three or four countries. Take the example of the area consisting of Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, where there is a large concentration of economic power, but no cross-border programme enabling work in this field. Or take the example of the Centrope area which is comprised of four countries. Here you need transnational cooperation too.

From a worldwide perspective it is necessary to think beyond borders, trying to position territories with common interests

If you look at many of the European areas from a worldwide perspective, then you have to go in the direction of what we have heard before, namely thinking beyond borders and trying to position territories which have common interests. These common interests are also apparent in the fields of innovation or culture, going beyond the classic areas where you think that transnational cooperation would be needed.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Ok, thank you. Any other voices from the audience? Of course, we don't have all countries represented on the panel. So, if you'd like to add anything from your regional or national perspective ...

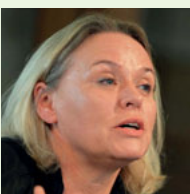


Marco Santangelo, Polytechnical University of Torino: What is interesting in Central Europe is the flexibility that we have had until now. Proximity is important; if there is a chance for neighbouring partners to cooperate, they will do it, regardless of whether a macro-regional

strategy exists or not. At the same time, Central Europe as a co-operation programme allows, for example, Torino to be in a partnership, which otherwise would not be possible. I think this flexibility is very important.

The creation of a European macro-region could have the effect of boxing in Central Europe. The transnational cooperation programme delivers more flexibility

As was already said, the creation of a European macro-region could have the effect of boxing in Central Europe, so that everything is enclosed within the same space. But we are already within the European space, and I do not see the need for another box within a larger box. For me, the transnational cooperation programme is the best solution.



Dr. Magdalena Belof, Institute for Territorial Development, Wrocław:

First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Görmar for his statement that we need a vision for Europe. For 20 years now, nobody has been brave enough to put forward a new vision for Europe, and

the European territorial cooperation, all these strategies are based on very old documents from the mid 1990s. The latest documents, such as the Territorial Agenda, are just a few pages of text, without a map or a spatial vision. So maybe it is time to develop a new vision, integrating the spatial context as well.

Maybe it is time to develop a new vision for Europe, integrating the spatial context as well

My country – Poland – was not involved in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), and the Vision Planet project was the only attempt at transnational spatial strategy-making in this region since the very beginning of

INTERREG. We still refer back to these documents, but everything has changed, really everything.

Think of the context of internal relations within Europe, or the context of Europe in larger space – its relations to Asia and new opportunities, e.g. via the Northern Sea Route. Maybe it is time for completely new thinking – to look at the map and to see the new connection.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Thank you. I would like to go back to our panel. Any issues which you think should really be tackled within this space, however we define it? Maybe we can start with Mr. Bláha. You are involved in very many forms of cooperation, but is there still something missing?

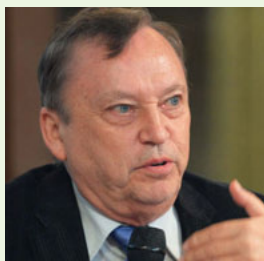


Vladimir Bláha: I would like to respond to your previous question regarding the top five priorities that should be tackled. Politically, it is a very sensitive issue, but I think in Central Europe and in the Danube Region we should pay more attention to the integration of the Roma people, just to add a social dimension to the economic and territorial dimensions.

Taking the example of the Danube Region and its priority area on more sustainable energy, it is a very interesting experience to start the cooperation – not at the EU-28 level, but at the level of two countries, the Czech Republic and Hungary – and to coordinate the remaining countries. Sometimes it is very complicated, since we have diverse countries in a diverse region. Just to remind you, it is 14 countries, nine countries inside the EU and five countries outside the EU. There are candidate countries, and there are Third Countries like Ukraine and Moldova. So it is hard, sometimes, simply to get results.

We have to think global, but to act regional

But, after four years of implementation, we succeeded in pointing out the most important elements to be tackled in the next phase, which will hopefully start now: the phase of real and concrete implementation. However, we need financing, which is not obvious in the current framework. But I think in the field of energy it will change, since we are definitely in need of energy. We have to think global, but to act regional.



Dr. Wilfried Görmar: I like many of the ideas which Mr. Poli presented, especially the thought that transnational cooperation programmes are not the only and not the most important funding source for transnational issues, due to low financial volumes. They can provide a framework, they can push things ahead. They are very important, but not in terms of real investment. But they may, of course, influence investment.

But I have some doubts concerning the power of transnational projects to coordinate between different macro-regional strategy areas. I am afraid that we would overburden the projects. Already now, we ask the projects to work not only in a one-sectoral dimension, but cross-sectorally, and even that is difficult.

A macro-regional strategy could help to make Central Europe a growth area among other growth areas, but it needs to be fostered by the people in the area

I agree very much with the statement that we should not create a framework at the very beginning, but that we should rather start by defining the content. From my point of view, the task is to make Central Europe a real central part of a polycentric Europe, a growth area among other growth areas. The Baltic Sea Region very much needs a strong Central Europe, but, since this area is still quite weak, we need coordinated efforts, e.g. to help small enterprises to act more internationally, to combine networks, or to promote cooperation between cities.

From my point of view, a macro-regional strategy could help development in that direction, but it needs to be fostered by the people in the area, and it needs some prominent driving forces. If only officials and scientists sit together and talk, that will not work.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Mr. Donati, is there anything that is worthwhile for Italy to cooperate on?



Davide Donati: I would like to respond to the fascinating picture that Mr. Ulied gave us of a borderless Europe. How can you imagine governing a Europe without borders? We have already forgotten the idea of borders that our parents had, and,

for our children, borders virtually do not exist when travelling without even showing an ID card.

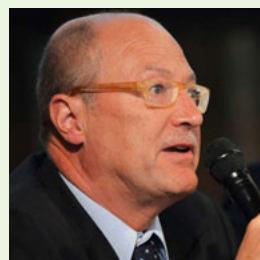
Maybe we should think about redefining our understanding of borders. A borderless Europe could drive us to think of a centralised Europe, and probably this is not the Europe we want. I am going a bit far, maybe, but someone may look at macro-regional strategies not only as different spaces of cooperation but as the source of something new. Are we moving from the national states of Europe to a different Europe? That could be much more fascinating, probably, and it would go further than a Europe without borders. But we should not forget that, only 70 years ago, a border was meant to divide enemy peoples.

We probably have to reconsider how things are set up inside the box called Europe. Having several closed and not communicating boxes in Europe is no longer an issue, thanks to the European level. We have to consider that the European Commission is involved in every single macro-regional strategy, and it is really difficult to imagine that what is happening in the Baltic Sea Region Strategy or in the Danube Region Strategy will not influence what is going to happen in the Alpine Region Strategy.

Central Europe could play the role of a very useful roundabout, bringing together the positive results emerging from every single macro-regional strategy

I think that, like in a city, which needs avenues, parks, streets and roundabouts, as well in Europe, every space of cooperation has its own place. And probably Central Europe, rather than becoming a macro-regional strategy, should play the role of a very useful roundabout where every single existing and future macro-regional strategy could influence each other and bring together the positive results that emerge from each of them.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Mr. Poli, you, of course, are doing a lot of cooperation based across many countries. Is there something that you would really like to do, which you have not been able to do so far?



Ugo Poli: I am very happy to take part in such a qualified and open-minded discussion, because, actually, there are many question marks and many different solutions. But I have a much shorter perspective and consider in practice what we have to do in the future up to 2020, i.e. during the current programming period.

Macro-regions are a very positive and credible laboratory, but there are as well uncertainties and conflicts about how to develop the macro-regional dimension

I feel there is a great challenge and a big problem regarding the actual implementation and effectiveness of multi-level governance, in particular with respect to the sub-European inter-country dialogue. Macro-regions are a very positive and credible laboratory, but we should be aware of some uncertainties and maybe political conflict about how to develop the macro-regional dimension.

In January 2014, I listened to Commissioner Hahn addressing the national coordinators of the Central European Initiative, saying that the Commission needs the collaboration of existing regional organisations in order to achieve better inclusion of subsidiary institutions – in fact regional authorities – and civil society since macro-regions should bring European policies and their implementation nearer to the citizens.

This is somewhat different from the developments that we experience in practice. I have worked in a contract with the DG Enlargement when they were setting up the SEE 2020 Strategy mirroring Europe 2020 in Southeast Europe, as the backbone supporting the regional level of the integration process of the candidate countries. But there was no dialogue between DG Enlargement and DG Regio, and the programming process remained different from the national programming of Member States located in South East Europe. Such a practice is simply wasting the chance to be more effective and quicker in achieving results.

That is the problem. I think it is very important that, in the short-term, the Central Europe programme is going to deliver four functional areas for displaying a common regional role. If you would like to play this role also for the benefit of the macro-regions crossing the programme area, please look at the possibility of providing additional value to your results.



Andreu Ulied: Regarding the present situation and the coming years, I am quite pessimistic. I see what is happening across borders and I believe that all the places that have always cooperated will keep cooperating anyway, but there are also areas which have not experienced much cross-border cooperation until now. If you cross many

of the European borders, you will still experience two different worlds, like 20 years ago. So it was a failure from the point of view of what we have done until now.

Borders in the future should play a more instrumental role. On the map of 2050, the question is what kind of borders should be drawn

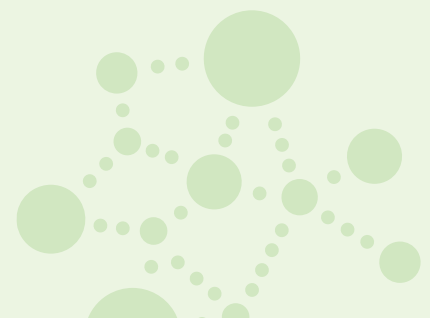
The idea of the vision of Europe 2050 is to desacralize borders. The borders in the future should play a more instrumental role, not like a situation where you have a pre-existing border and then have to find a problem to solve within that border. So, on the map of 2050, the question is what kind of borders we should draw. If you like the idea, you are invited to be part of Central Europe. Maybe the following year you leave to become part of the Alpine Region, and then you come back again. So it is a tool for the common good.

We say we do not know which borders will exist in the future. Of course, borders are needed, because governments need the territorial jurisdiction, but maybe the metropolitan level and the European level, which are the weakest today, have to be reinforced. But we are not going to draw the limits of the metropolitan areas or city regions. Maybe a municipality will want to be included in one region in relation to transportation, and maybe for health it prefers to belong to another region.

Of course, the difference between the reality and the wish is huge, so maybe instead of 40 years we need 400. I recognise that.

Prof. Dr. Stefanie Dühr: Thank you very much. I think we should really make good use of the flexibility that the INTER-REG programme offers for discussion of the agenda of future cooperation, and perhaps more development of thoughts about where we are going from here and what the issues are for cooperation.

I would like to thank the panel members for their input and for giving us plenty of food for thought, and the audience for its contribution to the discussion.



ARE THERE ARGUMENTS FOR A MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGY IN CENTRAL EUROPE?

The discussion on macro-regional strategies invites a discussion on the suitable scale for action for certain policy problems. As well in Central Europe, there are many examples of voluntary transboundary governance arrangements in place, which have been initiated by the nations or regions concerned in response to shared problems and potentials.

Yet, the definition of a relevant space for action is not just based on functional logic. Rather, the emergence and evolution of “transnational regions” relies on ongoing political support and leadership. It is a process of social construction by key actors and different interests to determine at which level an issue will be managed, and through which awareness for the transboundary agenda grows and becomes shared.

Therefore, the idea of such a “transnational region” must first be summoned up in a discursive process, whereby convincing narratives are established that can support the development of a transnational regional identity. So, summarising the activities of the City Regions project, what is the common ground for strategy-making in Central Europe?

Issues for transnational cooperation

According to research done within the project, the awareness for transnational issues for cooperation varies significantly among stakeholders. Mostly the starting point for discussion is the domestic agenda (national, regional and local) and connections with directly neighbouring territories, often without considering the wider perspective.

The situation differs in relation to issues which are clearly transnational in nature and require national or federal engagement. Notably, this is the case for the field of transport infrastructure, and development corridors more generally (also relating to issues of economic development and trade connections).

A key concern in Central Europe is freight transportation, extending along development axes as well beyond the Central European space. Also for passenger transport, improving rail and airport connections are considered fundamental for tourism development and business connections. Further issues mentioned by stakeholders include water management and flood risk management along large rivers, ecological corridors, and the new policy agenda on (renewable) energy networks and energy security.

Additionally there are many issues of common concern that would benefit from cooperation, for example demographic change (ageing); migration flows from rural to metropolitan areas; shortages of skilled labour; integration of the Roma population; education; innovation and transnational research clusters; climate change policy; as well as security policy, cross-border crime and trafficking.



Governance challenges

When addressing issues of transnational cooperation, challenges are arising from different governance and institutional arrangements, cultural and linguistic differences, and varying political attention to cooperation requirements. Despite – or perhaps because of – such challenges, stakeholders express concern over the need to better coordinate policies and actors across different levels, sectors and borders. So there is demand for new approaches and instruments to address coordination needs more effectively.

In terms of the appropriate scale for addressing the identified cooperation needs, the opinion prevails that the Central European space is too diverse to lend itself easily for an agreement on a transnational cooperation agenda. Instead, a more issue-specific and scale-flexible cooperation is considered more appropriate, which takes into account the different geography and functional nature of transnational issues.

In particular, the added-value of a macro-regional strategy vis-à-vis existing cooperation arrangements is questioned, and stakeholders point out that a clear identification of the common needs and visions, starting from bottom-up cooperation, is necessary before discussing through which approach and instruments the cooperation needs should be addressed.

It is therefore suggested to start with the key sectoral issues of transnational relevance and to consider these from a spatial development perspective as the core of a “network strategy”, which forms the basis for an agenda for transnational cooperation. Such an approach would allow to prioritise actions and to discuss how cooperation would be most fruitfully organised, i.e. at which level of scale and by which actors the cooperation needs should be addressed.

Resources and potentials

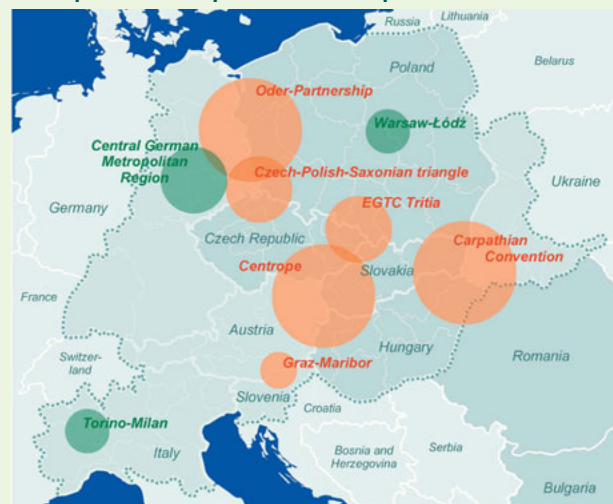
The INTERREG programme for Central Europe is seen as a useful platform for cooperation with many and different partners. But at the same time, due to its character as transnational cooperation programme it offers little guidance on clarifying the transnational strategy for the region.

For actors and stakeholders involved, existing cross-border cooperation structures and intergovernmental arrangements, like the Visegrád Group or the Central European Initiative (CEI), present an important and adequate framework for cooperation on the needs that these actors have identified. In general, shared history and common agendas (e.g.

Transnational spaces of cooperation



Sub-spaces of cooperation (examples)



in relation to transition processes) are seen as an important “glue” for processes of cooperation.

Several examples of spatial development studies in border regions (e.g. Czech-German, or Polish-Czech borders) have the potential to feed into joint development strategies. For those stakeholders directly involved in the EU macro-regional strategies for the Baltic Sea Region, the Danube Region, the Adriatic-Ionian Region and the Alpine Region these approaches have become an important frame of reference for their work.

In line with the argument for a more issue-specific and scale-flexible approach, a number of “sub-spaces” appears around particular functions and projects, which show greater commonalities and coherence than the Central European space as a whole. Such sub-spaces for cooperation involve different actor groups, policy communities, and funding regimes. What seems to be missing at present, however, is a clear overview of the cooperation needs that arise from this range of initiatives, and the potential (spatial) impacts the various cooperation projects and investments have.

Conclusions

Summarising the results of research and discussion, it can be concluded that there is currently a lack of clear and self-evident arguments in a favour of a comprehensive and integrated strategy for the large area of the Central European space. This is because the region is very diverse, and there is no clear transnational rationale or “core issue” around which cooperation could be structured and which would guarantee longer-term political interest.

However, this does not mean that there is no demand for improved coordination and thus for a focused discussion on transboundary cooperation:

- Considering the position of Central Europe within the greater European space, it can be seen that the region is an important “hinge zone” between the Baltic Sea, the Adriatic Sea and the Black Sea, and between Eastern and Western Europe.
- Several macro-regional strategies overlap in Central Europe. There is a need to discuss how these strategies might be linked to each other, how exchange between these macro-regional strategies might be facilitated and how positive results might be turned to the benefit of the region.
- Existing bottom-up cooperation structures and sub-spaces can be important arenas for a wider discussion on transnational cooperation in Central Europe, its rationale and identity.

The question, therefore, is what the (politically agreed) issues for transnational cooperation in Central Europe and its sub-spaces are, and how these cooperation needs can best be addressed.

With regard to this, the INTERREG programme for Central Europe provides a useful platform for actors to engage in discussions on cooperation needs, priorities and agendas, which may result in more strategic action. The role of this programme with regard to surrounding macro-regional strategies still needs to be defined.

At which level cooperation would be most beneficial and how it would be organised requires more reflection. Therefore, clarifying the agenda for cooperation first, starting with sectoral issues and problems and “unravelling” their spatial effects would be a useful start:

- The spatial strategy prepared by the countries of the Visegrád Group in cooperation with Romania and Bulgaria (www.v4plus2.eu) provides an excellent starting point for the elaboration of a territorial vision for Central Europe.
- Useful results and insights, which are still relevant today, have been provided by the VISION Planet project (1998-2000, INTERREG IIC) and the Planet CenSE project (2004-2006, INTERREG IIIB CADSES). It might be a fruitful experience to evaluate these results with regard to current challenges.

If a macro-regional strategy for Central Europe were to be fostered by the stakeholders concerned, it could, of course, support the revitalisation of Central Europe as an economic core area within the European space.

Crucial challenges and prerequisites would be:

- a) a clear and consensual strategy towards cooperation with Eastern Europe,**
- b) clear aims, delivering clear value-added outcomes,**
- c) the definition of adequate levels and networks of cooperation, taking into account the nature of the issues concerned and the principles of subsidiarity.**

In general, it remains an open question whether the increasing interrelation between macro-regional strategies and transnational INTERREG programmes through the adjustment of programme areas to macro-regional strategy areas will pose a competitive challenge to regions not included in any macro-regional strategy.

To facilitate the discussion on macro-regional strategies as well as with regard to further spaces of cooperation such as North-West Europe (NWE), the Saxon State Ministry of the Interior has launched an exchange among German federal states within the sub-project „City Regions Makro“. Results of this initiative are expected to be available in 2015.

List of abbreviations

BBSR	Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development
CADSES	Central, Adriatic, Danubian and South-Eastern European Space
CE	Central Europe
CEI	Central European Initiative
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLLD	Community-led local development
CoR	Committee of the Regions
DG	Directorate General
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU	European Union
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	EU Structural and Investment Funds
ET2050	ET2050 – Territorial Scenarios and Visions for Europe (ESPON project)
IPR	Institute for Planning and Development of the Capital City of Prague
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investments
LEADER	Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NWE	North-West Europe
OP	Operational Programme
ROPID	Regional Organiser of Prague Integrated Transport
SEE	South East Europe
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Networks
TSK	Technical Administration of Transportation of the Capital City of Prague
V4	Visegrád Group

Photo credits

Title page (from left to right): Leipzig © F. Seidel / fotolia.com Wrocław © ottoflick / fotolia.com Prague © QQ7 / fotolia.com Graz © manuelbischof / fotolia.com Torino © Marco Saracco / fotolia.com	15 16 16	Zdeněk Davídek © Zdeněk Davídek Workshop © Cosimo Maffione Workshop participant reading a brochure © Michele d'Ottavio / Torino Internazionale Association
02 Markus Ulbig © Saxon State Ministry of the Interior	17	Valentino Castellani © Michele d'Ottavio / Torino Internazionale Association
03 Dorothee Dubrau © City of Leipzig	17	Ippolito Ostellino © Michele d'Ottavio / Torino Internazionale Association
04 Regional workshop Lippendorf © Antje Kröger Photographie / City of Leipzig	18	Władysław Piskorz © Norbert Millauer / Saxon State Ministry of the Interior
04 Mapping exercise © Michele d'Ottavio / Torino Internazionale Association	21	Mother with child © Petr Kratochvil / publicdomainpictures.net
05 Reinhard Wölpert / Dirk Dreßler © Norbert Millauer / Saxon State Ministry of the Interior	26-33	Speakers during conference © Norbert Millauer / Saxon State Ministry of the Interior
08 Annual conference Leipzig © katacoon Film, Kathrin Falke / City of Leipzig	34	Conference banner and audience © Norbert Millauer / Saxon State Ministry of the Interior
08 Commercial area © Profiluftbild Henry Pfeifer / City of Leipzig		
09 Jörn-Heinrich Tobaben © Tom Schulze		
09 Andreas Berkner © Andreas Berkner		
10 Cycling tour © LuckyImages / fotolia.com		
10 Local train at Wrocław main station © Koleje Dolnośląskie		
11 Jacek Kowalski © Association of Municipalities and Districts of the Wrocław Agglomeration		
11 Mother with child © Petr Kratochvil / publicdomainpictures.net		
12 Regional bus © B.I.M. Mobilitätsconsulting & Engineering		
12 Suburban train © B.I.M. Mobilitätsconsulting & Engineering		
13 Heinrich Petritsch © Heinrich Petritsch		
14 Road crossing © DHV Haskoning / Prague 9 City Council		
14 Tram © DHV Haskoning / Prague 9 City Council		
14 Cycling path © DHV Haskoning / Prague 9 City Council		
15 Filip Drápal © Filip Drápal		

Copyright: This brochure is protected by copyright. All rights to the use of the text, pictures – including excerpts and the processing with electronic systems – are reserved by the publisher. A reproduction, even in part, is only allowed after previous permission from the publisher. This brochure was produced with the greatest possible care. No liability is assumed for its contents and their accuracy!

Distribution notification: This brochure is distributed free-of-charge and is not for sale. It may not be used for purposes of election advertising. Even without a temporal connection to an imminent election, it may not be used in such a way which could be interpreted as partisanship of the publishers in favour of any individual political group.

Contacts

City of Leipzig, City Planning Office

Martin-Luther-Ring 4-6, 04109 Leipzig
Reinhard Wölpert, Peggy Sacher
Phone: +49 341 123-4891
Fax: +49 341 123-4930
stadtplanungsamt@leipzig.de
www.leipzig.de/stadtplanung

Saxon State Ministry of the Interior

Division 45 | European spatial planning, regional development
Wilhelm-Buck-Straße 2, 01097 Dresden
Dirk Dreßler, Thomas Gneipelt, Regina Hille
Phone: +49 351 564-3456
Fax: +49 351 564-3459
regionalentwicklung-eu@smi.sachsen.de
www.smi.sachsen.de / www.landesentwicklung.sachsen.de

Realisation

INFRASTRUKTUR & UMWELT

Professor Böhm und Partner

Gregor-Mendel-Straße 9, 14469 Potsdam
Martin Reents, Dr. Jürgen Neumüller
Phone: +49 331 50581-0
Fax: +49 331 50581-20
mail@iu-info.de / www.iu-info.de

Typesetting and layout

apel-medien, Darmstadt

Linguistic support

Owain Davies, Leipzig

Printing

Brandenburgische Universitätsdruckerei, Potsdam

Editorial deadline

December 2014

Edition

1.000

www.city-regions.eu



STAATSMINISTERIUM
DES INNERN



Regionální Rozvojová Agentura
RRA
Střední Čechy

