
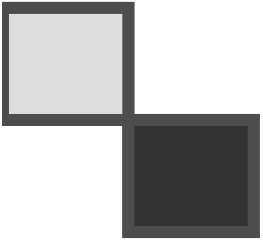



# Border regions' strategies on research and higher education cooperation


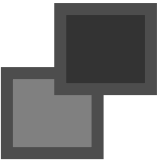



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- BEN project's aim is to promote spatial development and territorial integration in the Baltic Sea Region by strengthening Euroregions as competent partners with national authorities and international institutions, and by building a network of Euroregions.
  - A practical question that needs to be answered is how in the most effective way to promote the spatial development in the Baltic Sea Area and in its border regions through the science and higher education cooperation?
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## Objective – discuss the questions

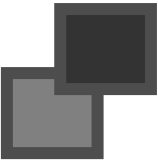
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- Q1: How science and higher education cross-border cooperation contributes to the spatial development and integration in the border areas?
  - Q2: How effective the cross-border cooperation in higher education and research and what factors affect the effectiveness of the cooperation? – What are the challenges? How to support this cooperation?
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**Q1: How science and higher education cross-border cooperation contributes to the spatial development and integration in the border areas?**




- Studies showed the regional development depends on the existence in regions of the knowledge base that is at universities and research institutes. The knowledge is replacing physical resources as the main drive for the economic development. OECD studies: between 1985 – 1997 the contribution of knowledge based industries to total added value increase in Germany from 51% to 59% and in UK from 45% to 51%. -> increase in the higher education and science market. Importance of supporting the knowledge base in border areas.

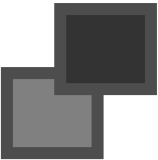




!: Multiple assessments of effectiveness of diverse cross-border cooperation activities showed that the cooperation on scientific research and education as well as cultural projects were among the most successful in border areas (see for instance an interim report by EXLINEA project, [www.exlinea.org](http://www.exlinea.org)).


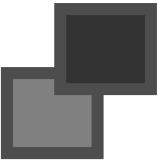


At a university level the learning experience of students and lecturers of working in a cross-border cooperation project is an important experience for their future carrier in their local region as well as if they work in future in other countries. – The science and higher education cooperation projects help to develop human capacity in border regions.





## **Q2: What are challenges to the science and higher education cross-border cooperation?**

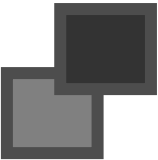
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- Border regions are different – histories, cultures, governance structures, economic development contexts; regions within the EU and on the external borders.
  - How to measure and compare scientific capacity? – different languages, different research agendas, different research work and publications styles, no one “meter” internationally, especially across the EU external border to measure the scientific capacity.
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## **Q2: What are challenges to the science and higher education cross-border cooperation?**


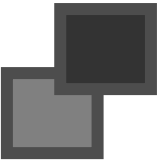


With whom to cooperate? – Who is a partner?

- The major factor that affects the CBC cooperation is that the cross-border cooperation occur on different governance levels in cross-border areas: supranational, national, regional and local.
  - The distribution of responsibilities between the new RDC and the existing decentralised government institutions is unclear and disputes on project implementation are quite common.
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## Who is responsible?

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- An increasing number of regions are focusing on science and technology as the main driver for regional competitiveness and build this concept into their regional policy strategies.
  - However, traditionally there has been a strong separation between policies dealing on the one hand with research excellence and industrial competitiveness (in terms of specific sectors), and on the other hand regional development and SMEs.
  - Generally, there has been **an argument that the regionalisation of science and technology policy would lead to a fragmentation of resources and competences.**
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## At the supranational (EU) level

- Geopolitics of co-operation (i.e. Wider Europe and the European Neighbourhood Policy) is evolving; the EU's new geopolitical agenda is also informed by national and regional perspectives on specific “neighbourhood” contexts - the “Northern” Dimensions of the Wider Europe agenda that affects local cooperation.
  - Europe also supports the 'big science' questions important across all Member States through the Framework Programme, the Member States build their national science and technology competence base,
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## Role of regions

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- Traditionally, development of border regions that was a responsibility of regional authorities, included issues of **economic development promoting trade, SME development**; setting up the physical infrastructure.
  - Also today the regions focus on innovation support structures for their regional SMEs. The region is increasingly seen as the level at which innovation occurs most effectively through networks of innovators, local clusters and the cross-fertilising effects of research institutions.
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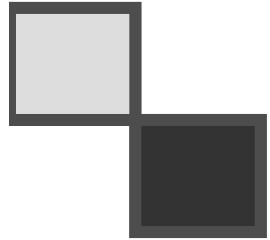
## Regional level

- In the context of the internationalisation of science and higher education, universities compete for students and research money. In certain cases it would be correct to say the cross-border interaction on the RTDI is about competition between universities, science parks, etc. located on different sides of the border and not about cross-border cooperation.

Cooperation occurs where shared interests exist.



## National level



- Support to RTD in border regions is left to responsibility of national governments. This includes policy development and implementation on the support to science and higher education.


## University level

- Concrete research and higher education projects and activities






# Conclusions and recommendation

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- In the border regions there are different actors on different levels involved. Each partner has its role to play in the science and higher education cooperation – universities, the national governments, the EU; regions support with physical infrastructure development and support to SMEs. It is very important to promote the cooperation between different actors with their different roles;
  - The national level is an important level and national authorities should be involved in the discussion of science and education cooperation in border areas – the policy dialogue is important to organise.
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## Conclusions and recommendation

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- The cooperation is much easier within the EU as the scientific capacities “meters” are the same; the agendas are similar. Much more difficult to achieve the cooperation on the external borders where specific strategies could be connected to the issues of regional social and economic development in border area;
  - Direct contacts between universities should be encouraged;
  - Be aware of the institutional basis and policies in the neighbouring region where a partner university is located – saves from additional stress and potential conflicts;
  - To discuss further on developing shared approaches to measuring scientific capacity.
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