

# Prospects of Cross-Border Cooperation in Europe: Capacity-Building and the Operating Principle of “Horizontal Subsidiarity”

UDK: 327(4)

Joachim Beck  
Euro-Institut, Germany  
Beck@euroinstitut.org

## ABSTRACT

Based on a reflection of the seven central challenges which all cross-border territories in Europe are facing in practice, the article analyses how cross-border cooperation in Europe could be improved in the future. Two central fields are interpreted in this regard: training/facilitating and applied interdisciplinary research. The article suggests that a more effective cross-border policy-making of the future depends on a systemic capacity-building, based on the new operating principle of »horizontal subsidiarity«. For the moment being, cross-border cooperation is only a functional sub-system, created by and largely depending on contributions coming from the states involved. Horizontal subsidiarity, combined with new approaches such as territorial impact assessment, multi-level governance or joint interest representation would allow for a better development of an integrated cross-border policy-making, based on the real challenges and potentialities of a 360° perspective on the cross-border territory.

*Key words:* border, cross-border policy-making, capacity-building, interdisciplinary research, training, European territorial cohesion

*JEL:* R58, H77

## 1 Introduction: The Seven Challenges of Cross-Border Co-Operation in Europe – A Need for Capacity Building

The horizontal analysis of the contributions of the joint research cycle carried out by the Euro-Institute and the University of Strasbourg with more than 100 contributions coming from both the academic field and from practitioners of cross-border cooperation (Wassenberg, 2010; Beck & Wassenberg, 2011; Wassenberg & Beck, 2011a, 2011b; Beck & Wassenberg, 2013a, 2013b) allowed to identify two generalized patterns of cross-border-policy-making in Europe. One first conclusion that we were able to formulate on this

basis (Beck, 2012) is the hypothesis of a certain convergence with regards to the practical functioning of cross-border cooperation (CBC) in Europe. This convergence is mainly caused by the procedural logic of the financial promotions programmes of the European Commission with regards to the ETC objective (INTERREG) leading to more or less unified practices regarding the implementation of elements like the partnership-principle, the principle of additionality, multi-annual programming based on SWOT-analysis, project-based policy-making, project-calls, financial control etc. As a consequence we can observe during the last two decades or so a general pattern of CBC policy-making that is characterized by a shift from informal exchanges to more concrete projects, from general planning to attempts for a more concrete policy implementation, from rather symbolic to real world action, from closed informal networks to more transparent and official institutions.

In addition the role and the perception of the very concept of the border has changed considerably: the separating function is less important today but more and more replaced by an integrated 360° perception of the cross-border territory and its unused potentials (Grossouvre & Maulin, 2009). At this level it is not so much the impact of the European programmes and their sometimes a bit too ambitious objectives as such, but rather the change in the perception of the local and regional actors themselves, which after years of sometimes frustrating experiences, leads to a certain positive pragmatism when it comes to cross-border issues: it becomes more and more evident, that cross-border institutions today are more platforms than real administrative units, allowing for the very pragmatic search for joint solutions to common local problems resulting from the increasing border-crossing socioeconomic dynamics (Wille, 2012; Beck, Thevenet & Wetzel, 2009), in areas such as transportation, spatial planning, environmental protection, risk prevention, citizen's advice and health cooperation, etc. rather than for the definition and implementation of big strategic ambitions.

The research project has on the other hand allowed to identify a second general pattern, which is represented by seven central challenges of CBC policy-making, determining and often still hindering – however with differences regarding their intensity and combination – the horizontal interaction in cross-border territories everywhere in Europe:

- **Developing functional equivalences between different politico-administrative systems:** How to develop functional interfaces that allow for successful cooperation between partners coming from different institutional domestic backgrounds with regards to distribution of power and resources, professional profiles and sometimes even the scope and the legitimacy for transnational action as such (Beck, 2008a)?
- **Creating effective knowledge-management for the cross-border territory:** How to generate and use valid information about the characteristics, the real world problems but also the potentialities of a cross-border territory in a 360° perspective, how to base future action

on a sound and integrated empirical basis and thus avoiding a negative »garbage can model« (Cohen, March & Olsen, 1972) practice of cross-border policy making (ad hoc solutions developed by individual actors, based on individual preferences in search for an ex post justification and a real world problem).

- **Transferring competencies from principals to agents:** How to reduce the dependency of cross-border actors and policy-making on the respective domestic context by identifying fields of cross-border action that best can be implemented by a transfer of real administrative and functional competence from the national jurisdictions towards cross-border bodies with sufficient administrative, financial personnel capacity, how to design decision-processes in this regard (Benz, Scharpf & Zintl, 1992)?
- **Optimizing the interaction between actors:** How to turn the confrontation of different cultures, attitudes, expectations, assumptions, values, interests etc. into a productive working context, which allows for the avoidance of mutual blockages and the development of innovation and real added-values instead (Demorgon, 2005; Eisenberg, 2007; Euro-Institut, 2007; Thedieck, 2007) how to integrate actors representing different sectors (public, private, societal) and cultures into existing patterns and structures of cooperation, how to create and manage inter-sectoral synergies in a cross-border perspective (Beck & Pradier, 2011)?
- **Finding the right level of organization and legal structure:** How to find the right degree of institutionalization and the right legal form for different cross-border tasks by developing a good balance between open network and classical organizational approaches when structuring the cross-border working context; how to avoid both the case of institutional sclerosis and informal/individual arbitrariness (Beck, 1997)?
- **Capturing and measuring the value added and the territorial impacts:** How to pre-assess cross-border impacts of different policy-options before taking action on the preferred one; how to develop and inform specific indicators allowing for a better demonstration of the specific value added of the integrated cross-border action compared to an action taken by the neighboring jurisdictions separately (Taillon, Beck & Rihm, 2011) ?
- **Increasing the sustainability beyond a simple multi-project approach:** How to avoid the case of multiple uncoordinated sectoral projects which creates fragmented cross-border activity for a certain time (funding) period only, by strengthening the target-orientation and selectiveness of cross-border policy-development based on integrated (eg. inter-sectoral) territorial development strategies (Casteigts, 2010).

It is evident, that the seven challenges cited above are at the same time the central fields for any capacity-building approach responding to the needs of a future multi-level-governance perspective of cross-border cooperation (Beck & Pradier, 2011; Beck & Wassenberg, 2011). This includes not only the question of how individual actors or members of institutions can better be trained in order to cope with these challenges. Rather the overall systemic question is on the agenda, e.g. how the entire cross-border cooperation-system can be improved and professionalized in order to reach a new level of quality which allows for a better development of the endogenous potentials of this type of territory within the context of the overall objective of territorial cohesion in Europe.

## **2 Training/Facilitation: The Euro-Institute Approach and TEIN**

A key bottleneck preventing the deepening of cross-border cooperation in Europe is the lack of knowledge and understanding of the political and administrative systems of the neighbouring countries. A successful cross-border cooperation needs qualified actors who are able to close the gap between the subsystem and its specific functional characteristics and the functional preconditions provided by the different domestic jurisdictions involved (Jann, 2002; Beck & Thedieck, 2008). One approach, which has been very successful for 20 years now, is the creation of a specific institution, which exclusively works on CBC training – the *Euro-Institute Kehl/Strasbourg* (Beck, 2008b). This bi-national institution contributes to the improvement of cross-border cooperation by continuing education and training and provides practical advice and coaching to practitioners in the cross-border field. In this way, the Institute has become a facilitator for successful cross-border cooperation in the Upper Rhine region and in Europe with regard to public policies, and contributes actively to the resolution of problems resulting from different legal and administrative systems.

Based on the Euro-Institute's experience, training in a cross-border context as part of an overall capacity-building approach should develop at least three levels of personal skills:

### **Basic training on cross-sectoral competences**

The basic component of such a training approach is the development of the cross-sectoral skills and competences necessary for any cross-border and/or inter-regional cooperation. The main objective here is to provide those involved with the necessary institutional and legal knowledge about the politico-administrative system of the neighbouring states and about the system of cross-border cooperation itself. In addition, the relevant instrumental, methodological and linguistic skills must be trained in order to prepare and structure the proposed cross-border activity in advance. It is very important to sensitise the future actors about the importance of the intercultural factor and to provide them with the necessary tools and methods of intercultural

management. Courses should also provide participants with the specifics of managing cross-border projects in terms of planning, financing, organisation of meetings, monitoring and evaluation.

### **Specialised training**

A cross-border training programme should then also provide specialised training courses which are more oriented towards representatives from the different administrative sectors in the neighbouring states. The content of these courses consists of selected policy-oriented topics within cross-border cooperation. The aim is to provide a neutral platform for exchanges between specialists from the different countries so that they can better understand the specific sectoral competences and organisational structures in the other countries, and identify differences and similarities with their own – or just allow them to get current information and analysis on policy developments and good practice in the neighbouring state. At the Euro-Institute, this training mainly consists of two day seminars, including informal exchanges during an evening event on the first day. As most cross-border problems have a sectoral or thematic component, and thus require cooperation between the relevant sectoral services, these specialist seminars are very often the starting point for future joint projects, and sometimes even lead to the establishment of bilateral or trilateral standing working groups.

### **Developing competences on European affairs for local and regional authorities**

At the third level, it seems necessary to enhance the capacities of national public administrations with regards to European integration. Most local and regional administrations take a very pragmatic view and see Europe mainly as an opportunity to access EU financial support programmes like INTERREG. This is a legitimate position which raises numerous practical questions: how to find the right partner across the border; how to fill in the application form; how to set up a project's organisation; how to manage a cross-border budget; how to justify expenses; how to define good progress and impact indicators, and how to make a project-oriented monitoring and evaluation system work. Although the INTERREG secretariats of the relevant Operational Programmes usually do a very good job, practical experience shows that local and regional partners are very often overloaded by the complexity of the reporting and accounting demands, imposed on them by the funder. In addition, project partners coming from different jurisdictions often have different perceptions of these demands, and have to deal in the day-to-day running of a cross-border project with national administrations with quite different administrative cultures. This is why the Euro Institute, using its own extensive experience of such projects, provides adaptable practical coaching to both the individual project leader and the bi- or tri-national project teams as an intercultural group. This contributes to the smooth functioning of the project teams, helps to avoid blockages, and thus facilitates both project and programme implementation.

Under the EU-objective of territorial cohesion, more and more local and regional authorities want to participate in inter-regional or even trans-national projects, and are developing partnerships with other European regions. In this context the question of good practice in international network management arises: how to build and maintain a solid international partnership; what is the relative position of the actors in the network; how to prepare and manage international meetings and so on. Here the Euro-Institute also provides practical assistance.

Last but not least, the local and regional authorities are increasingly realising to what extent they are affected by European legislation. The fact that in Germany, for example, 70% of all local administrative action is more or less determined by EU law, rises the question of how to become more actively involved in the preparation of this law and how to better represent local and regional interests in its formulation. Based on the wide practical experience of its Director, who has since 2004 been an accredited trainer on Impact Assessment for the European Commission's Secretariat General, the Institute helps local and regional actors to become more familiar with the relevant procedures at EU-level and teaches them how to contribute actively to stakeholder consultations and ex ante impact assessments, which increasingly have to consider regional and/or trans-regional dimensions (Taillon, Beck & Rihm, 2011).

The success of this Euro-Institute approach has recently led to the creation of a new European actor: the transfrontier *Euro-Institut-network* ([www.transfrontier.eu](http://www.transfrontier.eu)) – TEIN which aims to built up training capacity on cross-border questions at an EU-wide level. 12 partner-institutions coming from 9 different cross-border contexts all over Europe decided to propose a coordinated answer to the increasing need for knowledge, competences, tools and support on cross-border affaires. Regarding the rising awareness of the importance of cohesion policy in Europe, the idea of the Network is to build capacities in cross-border and transfrontier contexts and this way strengthening the European integration. In order to achieve this goal and to have an extensive overall view of the territorial specificities in Europe, the project coordinator has been careful to invite partners from different parts of Europe to participate in the project. Hence, the partners involved in this project come from »maritime borders«, »old European borders«, »new eastern borders«, »post-conflict borders«, »external borders«, as well as »overseas borders between outermost regions«. As such, the partnership will be able to gain a comprehensive overview of the need for the professionalization of actors in cross-border cooperation and also gain insight into the current situation regarding transfrontier cooperation.

The TEIN gathers training organizations and universities and aims at facilitating cross-border cooperation and at giving concrete answers to the need of Europe for professionalizing actors on transfrontier issues. The »identity and reference grids« of all the partners testify from the quality and the great

experience of each partner. The partners of the TEIN exchange best practices, analyse the specificity of training and research on cross-border issues/in cross-border contexts, capitalize on and draw synergies from the different local initiatives, work on new products like transferable training modules (training for cross-border project managers, etc.), methods (need-analysis methods in cross-border regions, etc.), tools (impact assessment toolkit, etc.), produce valuable research in this field and assure that newest research results within this field are disseminated to actors involved in transfrontier cooperation. TEIN will develop a joint certification system for cross-border training in Europe and will also enable bilateral projects in fields of common interest (exchange of learning units, of lecturers, common research programme, involvement in conferences, etc.) and an increased knowledge and awareness of cross-border issues (at local, regional, national and European level) by producing higher quality work in this field.

### **3 Applied Research: On the Necessity of an Inter-Disciplinary Approach**

Until now, the theme of cross-border cooperation was not dealt with by the scientific literature and research in Europe to a very significant extent. Of course, in different disciplines, we find in Continental Europe a large number of publications dealing with this subject from different angles: a census conducted by the University of Bayonne and the Euro-Institute as part of TEIN, edited by Michel Casteigts, identified more than 3,000 publications (Casteigts & Gollé, 2010).

However, it is still not possible to speak of a true object of scientific research in this regard (Beck, 2012a). This may be related firstly to the fact that cross-border cooperation is very strongly marked by a practice, which, moreover, has been compared to other policy areas, relatively little analyzed, both quantitatively and qualitatively so far. Moreover, cross-border cooperation as an object of research is inherently difficult to define. Thus, it is not surprising that we find especially in the scientific literature often case studies focused on the practice, which, moreover, are very often the work of practitioners. However, to date, science has not yet really taken hold of this material abundant.

To this is added the fact that in the studies and scientific literature available to date, two central features of cross-border cooperation in Europe can be identified: the strong plurality and diversity of cross-border regions in Europe and the multidimensional nature of the phenomenon of the border and the cooperation related to it. Therefore, the purpose of research is more difficult to define and delimit.

If one looks first to the wide variety of border areas in Europe, it may be noted that there is a wide spectrum of possible configurations. With reference to the territorial dimension, it is possible to distinguish between macro-regions

(area of the Baltic Sea, Danube area, Mediterranean, Black Sea etc.), the meso-regions (Upper Rhine, Lake Constance, Grande Région) and micro-regions (Euroregions, Eurodistricts). Moreover, the very nature of the border varies in Europe: there are maritime border regions, mountainous areas, internal and external borders of the EU, natural borders, urban and rural, central and peripheral border regions etc. In addition we have to consider the distinction between »old« border regions, like those of Western Europe, who were born in the 1950s, the »new« border regions, which appeared with the successive enlargements of the EU, and border areas that have emerged with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, such as the border area between Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. In the last twenty years, 26000 km of new borders were drawn in Europe and Central Asia (Foucher, 2007). Moreover, the nature of the border also varies depending on the territorial, political, cultural and historical context : we can find in Europe both configurations that can be described as »simple« (common language, points of common anchor in space and culture, politico-administrative systems comparable, for example in the case of cooperation around Lake Constance) and borders marked by a high degree of complexity, where the scars of recent history and the different administrative systems of the partner are sufficient to form significant barriers in practice (Lambertz, 2010).

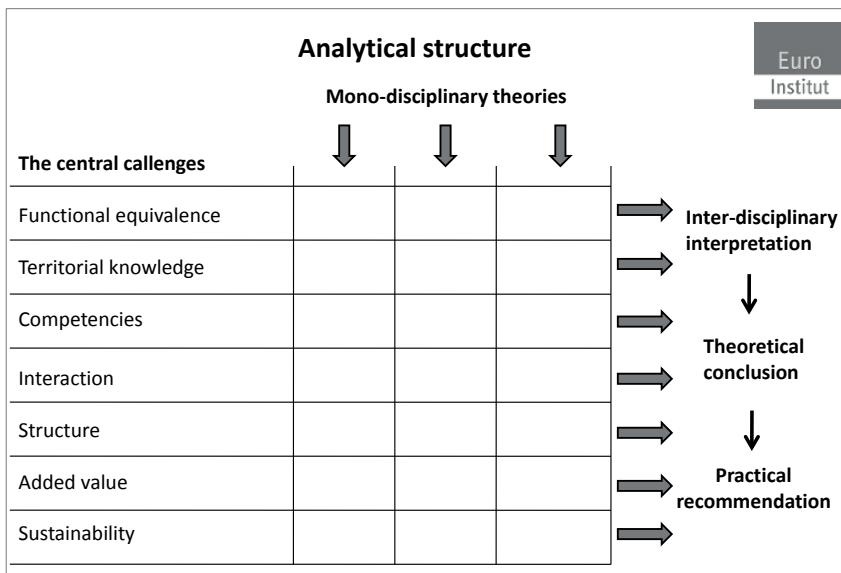
Various scientific disciplines have theories, methods and empirical studies at hand, which can be used to study the phenomenology of the border (Beck, 2010; Casteigts, 2013). An analysis of references shows that there are already lots of unidisciplinary reflections on the phenomenon of the border in general and cross-border cooperation in particular. However, no integrated vision, that is to say, interdisciplinary (Frodeman, Thompson Klein & Mitcham, 2010; Jung, Romfeld & Sukopp, 2010) has been developed until now. This is particularly true for the area of applied sciences, which is even more surprising with cross-border cooperation being a policy-field which very much depends on pragmatic solutions to be developed for concrete challenges.

At this stage of research, we cannot yet speak of the emergence of a theory of cross-border cooperation in the strict sense of the term (Thiel, 1996; Balzer & Heidelberger, 1983; Kuipers, 2001; Dordrecht et al., 2001; Kuhn, 1976), and it may even be questioned if such a theoretical approach would be feasible or even desirable. However, the above described seven challenges may be used as a reliable empirical basis for the purpose of further research in the field of applied sciences, allowing for the foundations of an epistemological view on the phenomenology of cross-border cooperation. However, for the formation of such a »middle-range« theory that allows to go at least beyond very knowledgeable and territorially nuanced empiricism and wants to generate prescriptive knowledge for future capacity-building, we need a more systematic and interdisciplinary approach which finds its programmatic foundations in the reference model of applied sciences. One idea that was emerging from the results of this research-cycle is to develop



an Interdisciplinary Handbook on cross-border cooperation. Here, it is not the territorial point of view as such that will be highlighted, but rather the interdisciplinary interpretation of the seven challenges mentioned above, based on different theories and models of scientific interpretation: How can the defined challenges be categorized and explained in terms of different scientific disciplines? What prescriptive interpretations can be drawn to guide the actors in the future – especially using interdisciplinary? What kind of methods can be applied in order to generate prescriptive knowledge for real world actors of cross-border cooperation? Complementary to the very comprehensive scientific reflection taken by Michel Casteigts (Casteigts, 2013) which can be located in the field of basic research, such a capacity-oriented interdisciplinary research-approach of applied sciences may be illustrated by the diagram in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Analytical structure of applied research on CBC**



Source: Beck (2012a)

## 4 Setting the Frame of a Systemic Capacity-Building for Cross-Border Cooperation

Cross-border co-operation in Europe is still confronted and finds itself sometimes even in conflict with the principle of territorial sovereignty of the respective national state (Beck, 1999). Even legal instruments aiming at a better structuring of the cross-border co-operation by creating co-operation groupings with a proper legal personality (Janssen, 2007) like for instance the European Grouping of Territorial Co-operation (EGTC) (Regulation (EC) No1082/2006), do not allow for an independent transnational scope of action: regarding budgetary rules, social law, taxation, legal supervision etc. the details of the practical functioning of an EGTC depend fully on the domestic law of the state, in which the transnational grouping has finally chosen to take its legal seat.

Even in those regions where the degree of co-operation is well developed, cross-border co-operation is therefore rather a transnational politico-administrative subsystem, created by and composed of the respective »domestic« national partners involved. Both, institutions, procedures, programmes and projects of cross-border co-operation depend – in practice – on decisions, which are still often taken outside the closer context of direct bi- or multilateral horizontal co-operation. In most transnational constellations – also where federalist states are participating – cross-border policy-making cannot be based on a transparent delegation of proper competences from the domestic partners towards the transnational actors, but the domestic partners must still rather recruit, persuade and justify their actions and their legal and financial support for each and every individual case. The »external« influence on such a sub-system of co-operation is relatively important. Cross-border co-operation can therefore be interpreted as a typical principal-agent constellation ( Czada, 1994; Chrisholm, 1989; Jansen & Schubert, 1995): with the principals being the national institutional partners of this co-operation (regions, state organisations, local authorities etc.), representing the legal, administrative, financial and decisional competences and interests of their partial region, and the agents being the actors (cross-border project partners, members of transnational bodies or specific institutions, programme officers and co-ordination officers etc.) responsible for the preparation, the design and the implementation of the integrated cross-border policy (Beck, 1997). Cross-border co-operation thus has always both an inter-institutional and an inter-personal dimension, requiring the co-operation of both, corporate and individual actors with their specific functional logic, motivated by special interests in each case.

In addition to the training/facilitation and research approaches that have been presented in more detail above, four further components of such a systemic cross-border capacity-building seem to be of particular strategic interest for the future:

**Strengthening the evidence base of cross-border policy-making:** One central weakness of most cross-border policy-making consists in the lack of tangible base-line information regarding both the real world strengths/weaknesses and the potentials of the cross-border territory in question. The national and regional statistics often suffer from a lack of comparability and specific analysis on the characteristics and the magnitude of the socio-economic cross-border phenomenon (be it mobility of citizens, economic exchanges and relations, transport and traffic movements, exchanges between universities, students, associations etc) suffers both from the challenge of quantification and qualification. In addition, the results of the SWOT-analysis carried out at the beginning of a new programming period, are often not really binding later on, when the selection of project applications actually takes place. In turn, both the programme and the project level have difficulties to describe and capture the specific cross-border added-value of the actions that were funded – mostly due to the absence of credible impact-indicators and a data generation that requires specific qualitative and quantitative methods.

Under the new generation of the cohesion policy, the idea of evidence based policy-making has a prominent place. Cross-border territories will have to strengthen their efforts to creating and proceeding tangible impact information in the near future. This is also a prerequisite for any cross-border policy-approach that wants to become more strategic in the sense of a more focused and concentrated pattern that concentrates on the integrated development of territorial potentials (360° perspective) instead of multiplying disconnected sectorial projects.

With the Impact Assessment toolkit for cross-border cooperation the Centre for Cross Border Studies in Ireland and the Euro-Institute have developed an instrument that can be very significant in this regard, allowing for a much more evidence based policy- and project development in the future.

**Developing a multi-level-governance based on subsidiarity:** In the perspective of a systemic capacity-building approach it seems desirable to strengthen and enlarge the scope of action of the sub-system of cross-border-cooperation in Europe. Overcoming the seven challenges cited above would require multi-level governance that leads both to a much closer and more integrated cooperation and a much clearer functional division of labour between the different levels of cooperation. In such a perspective the EU-level would anticipate impacts of future EU-initiatives on the cross-border territories at an early stage and would allow for a better inter-sectoral coordination between the different thematic policy-areas and institutional competences which have a logical border crossing dimension. Integrated policy-making would require, for instance, standing inter-service groups on cross-border cooperation, which are them themselves interlinked with relevant groups of the Committee of the Regions and the European Council and Parliament.

The member states (and their territorial subdivisions) would on the other hand support cross-border cooperation actively and would allow for flexible solutions to be developed on the borders. This would lead to a new operating principle, which I described recently as »horizontal subsidiarity« (Beck, 2012b): Whenever a policy-field that is relevant for horizontal exchange, cannot be harmonized at the European level, member states should then at least try to setting the frame via direct coordination with their neighboring states. The term »horizontal subsidiarity« means in this respect, that with regards to cross-border policy issues the »smaller« cross-border unit should have the possibility to solve a problem or handle a question prior to the intervention of the »bigger« national jurisdiction. This would then require that the smaller unit will become enabled by the provision of the necessary legal flexibility: experimental and opening clauses in thematic regulations and exemptions based on *de minimis* rules (whenever a cross-border phenomenon does not exceed a certain level of magnitude – e.g. 5% of the population being commuters, 3% of the students studying at the neighbouring university, 2% of patients asking for medical treatment with a doctor beyond the border – an exception to the national rules will be allowed).

The local and regional actors on the other hand would have to develop shared cross-border services (Tomkinson, 2007; AT Kaerny, 2005) and transfer domestic local/regional competencies to joint cross-border bodies with real administrative competencies for concrete missions within relevant cross-border fields. Instead of building or maintaining relatively expensive public infrastructures separately on both sides of the border in service areas such as health, leisure time, schools, kindergarden, fairs, libraries but also transport operators, hospitals, fire department or civil protection etc., local and regional actors would develop complementary fields of specialization and share their infrastructures with local and regional actors from the neighboring state. This could give cross-border cooperation a completely new finality, allowing not only to save scarce resources but also to symbolize both the permeability and the added-value of the »joint« cross-border territory from the point of view of the ordinary citizen.

**Subsidiarity within the cross-border territory:** In an area such as this, where there is freedom to undertake cross-border action strengthened by horizontal subsidiarity, two additional subsidiary perspectives must be taken into account. On the one hand, a vertical subsidiarity should be established within the cross-border areas of responsibility across the total spatial level (eg. the total territory of the Danube macro-region, the total territory of the Lake Constance Conference, the total territory of the tri-national metropolitan region of the Upper Rhine) which would only become operative when the smaller cross-border entities (inter-municipal cooperation, Eurodistricts, EUREGIOs, etc) receive excessive demands on their pragmatic, territorial expertise. Thus, distributions of functional and specific assignments on the proficiency scale could be developed in the cross-border area which would

be likely to reduce any duplication of work which has been observed, and which is still widespread today, between the different actors, institutions and territorial levels of cross-border cooperation.

On the other hand, the prospects of intersectoral subsidiarity should also be greatly strengthened. While today, in most cross-border territories in Europe, cross-border issues are primarily the responsibility of political and administrative actors (the current configuration of European aid programmes sustains this trend), subsidiary cross-border cooperation should support more strongly sectoral ownership of cross-border systems in economy, science and research, and civil society. Public action contributions would therefore be in these sectors that in the future would need to better arrange cross-border action amongst themselves, either in a catalytic (eg. to simulate project initiatives) or complementary way (eg. in the form of financial assistance to initiatives coming from these very sectors), however they should not replace them either (Grabher, 1994; Scharpf, 2006). In addition to the key public cross-border assignments (infrastructure, welfare, security against risks, etc), public actors could ultimately in such a perspective, divert the justifiable functional legitimacy to act from the long-term protection mission of posterity (Böhret, 1993; Dror, 2002) which should be visible in the integrated approaches of a cross-border sustainability strategy.

**Joint interest-representation:** From the perspective of cross-border territorial cohesion the frequently different implementations of EU law by the neighboring countries regularly lead to technical and political asymmetries, which often even reinforce structural differences rather than leveling them. It must be worrying that the comprehensive annual work output of the European Commission (on average, there are several thousand proposals for directives, policies, regulations, decisions, communications and reports, green papers, infringement procedures per year) does not explicitly consider possible impacts on the European cross-border territories so far – although it is evident how strongly they are affected by it. It therefore seems necessary that cross-border territories become more visible with regards to their specific implementation role and thus get more explicitly considered by the European policy-maker when developing key-initiatives in the context of the strategy »Europe 2020«. In the European Commission's impact assessment system (Europäische Kommission, 2009) a specific cross-border impact category is currently still lacking. However, cross-border territories could become ideal test-spaces for the ex-ante evaluation of future EU policies. On the other hand this would require a real awareness of cross-border territories to also actively engage in this in a coordinated manner, and – for instance – present joint opinions and impact analysis throughout official thematic consultations, launched by the European Commission. It is evident, that also a joint and coordinated thematic lobbying and advocacy activity of cross-border territories should be strengthened in this regard. The European macro-regions have shown how the interests of specific types of cross-border areas

may well find their way into European strategies. The Open Days regularly demonstrate how rich and exciting a joint presentation and reflection of different cross-border experiences can be.

## 5 Conclusion

After an experience of over 50 or (for the case of new member states) 20 years, we are now in Europe on the threshold of cross-border cooperation of a completely new quality (Beck, 2011). With the new cohesion policy of the European Union, which – in addition to a differentiation of governance both vertically and horizontally – attaches much greater importance to territorial cohesion and the extent of impacts actual cross-border actions (Taillon, Beck & Rihm, 2011), but also thanks to a new generation of actors (Botthegi, 2013), who are more interested in results than procedures, many border territories will have to redesign and strengthen their given pattern of cooperation (Casteigts, 2010). At the same time, cross-border cooperation should continue to be developed and enhanced by a capacity building structurally and functionally, so that it is up to the real importance of border territories for the future European integration process (Jakob, Friesecke, Beck & Bonnafoous, 2011).

The European support (INTERREG, EGTC, ...) of the past brought much progress to the field of cross-border cooperation, with the implementation of concrete projects instead of a discussion of nice ideas, with real partnerships including shared co-financing and responsibility instead of endless meetings, with integrated programmes instead of stand-alone approaches of different regional partners, with innovative structures instead of institutional sclerosis and a new and more holistic perception of cross-border territories seen under a 360° perspective: In many cross-border territories we can identify a shift from selective problem perception (and the generation of isolated sectoral project-approaches) towards a joint ambition allowing for an integrated development of given potentials of the cross-border territory. On the other hand, the seven main challenges of cross-border policy-making presented above still remain unsolved. It is evident, that a new quality of integrated cross-border cooperation needs a much more systemic capacity-building for and within cross-border territories, in order to actively develop the potentials of cross-border territories and strengthen their role as catalysts for horizontal European integration (Beck, 2011; Wassenberg & Beck, 2011a).

The TEIN / MOT / ABER partnership approach, that has been officially signed on 10 July in Brussels seems to be a very promising initiative in this regard. The added value of the partnership approach is to allow for a systemic capacity building for cross-border cooperation, operating at different levels: Concrete capacity-building actions at the level of the border, delivered by individual Euro-Institutes and supported by INTERREG A; actions at EU level between TEIN, AEBR and the Conference of European Cross-border and

Interregional City Networks CECICN (CECICN & AEBR, 2012), in synergy with network programs such as Interact, INTERREG B and C, ESPON, URBACT etc., but also actions at national level, with tools such as MOT or the CSCE Budapest Platform ([http://www.cesci-net.eu/budapest-platform\\_en](http://www.cesci-net.eu/budapest-platform_en)) which is composed of 4 national agencies supporting cross-border cooperation. This can result in a very significant contribution in supporting a new quality of cross-border cooperation in line with the architecture of the Cohesion Policy 2014–2020.

*Dr. Joachim Beck has been Director of the Franco-German Euro Institute in Kehl, near Strasbourg ([www.euroinstitut.org](http://www.euroinstitut.org)) since 2006. Before that he was Head of Public Management at the Swiss-based consultancy firm PROGNOSE AG and, in the 1990s, Managing Director of INFOBEST Strasbourg/Kehl, an agency providing cross-border citizens information. He has written and edited several books on public management, cross-border cooperation and administrative culture in Europe. Between 2009 and 2011 he was the scientific co-director of a joint research cycle on cross-border cooperation between the University of Strasbourg and the Euro-Institute. He is currently elaborating a prospective report on transfrontier cooperation for the Council of Europe and works as trainer on Impact Assessment for the Secretariat General of the European Commission.*

## References

- AT KAERNY (2005). *Shared services in government. Turning private-sector lessons into public-sector best practices*. Chicago.
- Balzer, W., & Heidelberger, M. (Eds.). (1983). *Zur Logik empirischer Theorien*. Berlin/New York.
- Beck, J. (1997). *Netzwerke in der transnationalen Regionalpolitik. Rahmenbedingungen, Funktionsweise, Folgen*. Baden-Baden.
- Beck, J. (1999). Cross-border Cooperation in Europe – The Example of the Upper-Rhine. In K. Köng & R. S. Fosler (Eds.), *Regionalization below State-level in Germany and the United States*. Speyerer Forschungsberichte 197. Speyer.
- Beck, J., & Thedieck, F. (Eds.). (2008). *The European Dimension of Administrative Culture*. Schriften der Deutschen Sektion des Internationalen Instituts für Verwaltungswissenschaften, Band 33. Baden-Baden.
- Beck, J. (2008a). Patterns of Administrative Culture in Cross-Border Cooperation. In J. Beck & F. Thedieck (Eds.), *The European Dimension of Administrative Culture* (pp. 179–213). Baden-Baden.
- Beck, J. (2008b). Lessons from an Institute for Cross-Border Cooperation on the Franco-German Border. *The Journal of Cross-Border Studies in Ireland*, 3, 38–49.
- Beck, J., Thevenet, A., & Wetzels, Ch. (Eds.). (2009). *Europa ohne Grenzen – 15 Jahre gelebte Wirklichkeit am Oberrhein / L'Europe sans frontières – 15 ans de réalité dans le Rhin supérieur*. Zürich/Baden-Baden: Dike/NOMOS.
- Beck, J. (2010). La coopération transfrontalière, objet de recherche interdisciplinaire: Quelques réflexions sur un programme de travail scientifique. In B. Wassenberg (Ed.), *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (Volume 1): les régions françaises* (pp. 21–47). Stuttgart.
- Beck, J., & Pradier, E. (2011). Governance in der transnationalen Regionalpolitik : Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven der Kooperationsbeziehungen in grenzüberschreitenden Verflechtungsräumen. In J. Beck & B. Wassenberg (Eds.), *Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit erforschen und leben (Band 2): Governance in deutschen Grenzregionen* (pp. 107– 35). Stuttgart: Steiner.
- Beck, J., & Wassenberg, B. (Eds.). (2011). *Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit erforschen und leben (Band 2): Governance in deutschen Grenzregionen*. Stuttgart: Steiner.
- Beck, J. (2011). Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit im Prozess der Europäischen Integration, In B. Wassenberg & J. Beck (Eds.), *Living and researching cross-border cooperation (Vol. 3): The European Dimension of Cross-Border Cooperation* (pp. 129–148). Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag.
- Beck, J. (2012). Les enjeux d'une approche interdisciplinaire de la coopération transfrontalière en Europe. In B. Wassenberg (Ed.), *Les espaces de voisinage de proximité, cahier fare n 5*. Strasbourg.
- Beck, J. (2012). European cross-border cooperation of the future: capacity-building and the principle of "horizontal" subsidiarity. Paper presented at the *Annual ABS conference in Lisbon* (pp.13–16).
- Beck, J., & Wassenberg, B. (Eds.). (2013a). *Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit erforschen und leben (Band 5), Integration und (trans-)regionale Identitäten*. Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag.
- Beck, J., & Wassenberg, B. (Eds.). (2013b). *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (Vol. 6), Vers une cohésion territoriale transfrontalière?* Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag.



- Benz, A., Scharpf, F. W., & Zintl, R. (1992). *Horizontale Politikverflechtung. Zur Theorie von Verhandlungssystemen*. Frankfurt.
- Böhret, C. (1993). *Funktionaler Staat. Ein Konzept für die Jahrtausendwende?* Frankfurt/Main.
- Botthegei, R. (2013). *Coopération territoriale transfrontalière : construire le futur. Formations et insertion professionnelle*. In : J. Beck. & B. Wassenberg (Eds.), *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (Volume 6) : Vers une cohésion territoriale?* Stuttgart.
- Casteigts, M., & Gollé, A.-E. (2010). *First census of research in the field of cross-border dynamics and territorial cooperation*. Bayonne/Kehl, October 2010.
- Casteigts, M. (2010). La mise en cohérence des politiques publiques en territoire transfrontalier. In B. Wassenberg (Ed.), *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (Volume I): les régions françaises* (pp. 307–321). Stuttgart.
- Casteigts, M. (2013). Pour un programme de recherches interdisciplinaires sur les dynamiques transfrontalières et la coopération territoriale – Enjeux épistémologiques et repères méthodologiques. In J. Beck. & B. Wassenberg (Eds.), *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (Vol. 6), Vers une cohésion territoriale transfrontalière?* Stuttgart.
- Chrisholm, D. (1989). *Coordination Without Hierarchy. Informal Structures in Multiorganizational Systems*. Berkeley.
- Cohen, M. D., March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1972). A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17(1), 1–25.
- CECICN & ABER (Eds.) (2012). *Strategic document on Smart cooperation: Territorial Cooperation fostering European integration: Cities and Regions linking across borders*. Paris/Gronau.
- Czada, R. (1994). Vertretung und Verhandlung. Einige Überlegungen zur Mehrebenenanalyse – besonders zu der Frage der Trennung oder Verflechtung von Entscheidungskompetenzen korporativer Akteure. Paper zum *Workshop der DVPW-Sektion Staatslehre und Politische Verwaltung*, July 1994 in Konstanz.
- Demorgon, J. (2005). *Critique de l'interculturel. L'horizon de la sociologie*. Paris: Economica.
- Dror, Y. (2002). *The capacity to govern – a report to the Club of Rome*. New York: Roudledge.
- Eisenberg, E. (2007). Learning from cultural experiences and interactions: Cross-border administrative cultures. In F. Thedieck (Ed.), *Foundations of Administrative Culture in Europe* (pp. 183–193). Baden-Baden.
- Euro-Institut (Ed.). (2007). *Interkultureller Leitfaden zur Moderation grenzüberschreitender Sitzungen, Baden-Baden / Guide interculturel pour l'animation de réunions transfrontalières*. Luxembourg.
- Europäische Kommission (Ed.). (2009). *Leitlinien zur Folgenabschätzung, 15.1.2009, SEK(2009) 92*. Retrieved on 2. 1. 2011, from [http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/index_en.htm).
- Foucher, M. (2007). *L'obsession des frontières*. Paris.
- Frodeman, R., Thompson Klein, J., & Mitcham, C. (Eds.). (2010). *The Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Grabher, G. (1994). *Lob der Verschwendung. Redundanz in der Regionalentwicklung: Ein sozioökonomisches Plädoyer*. Berlin.
- Grossouvre, H. D., & Maulin, E. (Eds.). (2009). *EURO-DISTRICT Strasbourg-Ortenau. La construction de l'Europe réelle*. Vévèy.

- Jakob, E., Friesecke, M., Beck, J., & Bonnafoos, M. (Eds.). (2011). Bildung, Forschung und Innovation am Oberrhein. *Dokumente zum 12. Dreiländerkongress vom 2. Dezember 2010 in Basel – Formation, recherche et innovation dans la région du Rhin supérieur. Documents du 12ème Congrès Tripartite du 2 décembre 2010 à Bâle*. Zürich/Baden-Baden: Dike/NOMOS.
- Jann, W. (2002). Verwaltungskultur. Ein Überblick über den Stand der empirischen und international vergleichenden Forschung. In Klaus König (Ed.), *Deutsche Verwaltung an der Wende zum 21. Jahrhundert* (pp. 425–447). Baden-Baden.
- Jansen, D. & Schubert, K. (Eds.). (1995). *Netzwerke und Politikproduktion. Konzepte, Methoden, Perspektiven*. Marburg.
- Janssen, G. (2007). Grenzüberschreitende Regional Kooperation. Europäische Verbände für territoriale Zusammenarbeit. *OSTEUROPA*, 57(2–3), 133–144.
- Jung, M., Romfeld, E., Sukopp, Th., & Voigt, U. (Eds.). (2010). Interdisziplinarität. Theorie, Praxis, Probleme. Darmstadt.
- Kuhn, Th. S. (1976). *Die Struktur wissenschaftlicher Revolutionen*. Frankfurt am M.
- Kuipers, A. F. (2001). *Structures in Science. Heuristic Patterns Based on Cognitive Structures*. Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publisher.
- Lambertz, K.-H. (Ed.). (2010). *Die Grenzregionen als Labor und Motor kontinentaler Entwicklungen in Europa*. Berichte und Dokumente des Europarates sowie Reden zur grenzüberschreitenden Zusammenarbeit in Europa. Zürich/Baden-Baden.
- Regulation (EC) No1082/2006 on a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.
- Scharpf, F.W. (2006). *Interaktionsformen. Akteurszentrierter Institutionalismus in der Politikforschung*. Wiesbaden.
- Taillon, R., Beck, J., & Rihm, S. (2011). *Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross-Border Cooperation*. Armagh/Kehl.
- Thedieck, F. (Ed.). (2007). *Foundations of Administrative Culture in Europe*. Baden-Baden.
- Thiel, C. (1996). Art. "Theorie". In J. Mittelstraß (Ed.), *Enzyklopädie Philosophie und Wissenschaftstheorie, Bd. 4* (pp. 260–270). Stuttgart/Weimar.
- Tomkinson, R. (2007). *Shared services in Local Government. Improving Service Delivery*. Surrey/London.
- Wassenberg, B. (2007). *Vers une eurorégion? La coopération transfrontalière franco-germano-suisse dans l'espace du Rhin supérieur de 1975 à 2000*. Bruxelles.
- Wassenberg, B. (Ed.). (2010). *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (Volume 1): les régions françaises*. Stuttgart.
- Wassenberg, B. & Beck, J. (Eds.). (2011a). *Living and researching cross-border cooperation (Vol. 3): The European Dimension of Cross-border Cooperation*. Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag.
- Wassenberg, B. & Beck, J. (Eds.). (2011b). *Vivre et penser la coopération transfrontalière (Vol.4) : Les régions sensibles*. Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag.
- Wille, Ch. (2012). *Grenzgänger und Räume der Grenze. Raumkonstruktionen in der Großregion SaarLorLux*. Frankfurt am Main.

POVZETEK

## **PRIHODNOST ČEZMEJNEGA SODELOVANJA V EVROPI: KREPITEV ZMOGLJIVOSTI IN UVEDBA NAČELA HORIZONTALNE SUBSIDIARNOSTI**

*Ključne besede: meja, oblikovanje čezmejne politike, krepitev zmogljivosti, interdisciplinarne raziskave, izobraževanje, evropska teritorialna kohezija*

Izhodišče članka je analiza sedmih osrednjih izzivov, s katerimi se v praksi soočajo vsa čezmejna evropska ozemlja. To so: razvijanje funkcionalne enakovrednosti med različnimi politično-upravnimi sistemi; vzpostavljanje učinkovitega upravljanja znanja za čezmejna ozemlja; prenašanje pristojnosti iz glavnega nosilca na zastopnika; optimizacija vzajemnega delovanja med udeleženci; iskanje prave ravni organizacije in pravne strukture; zajemanje in merjenje dodane vrednosti in ozemeljski vplivov; povečanje trajnosti preprostega večprojektnega pristopa.

Članek navaja, da je teh sedem izzivov hkrati osrednje polje za uspešno krepitev zmogljivosti, kar je nujno potrebno za prihodnost večstopenjskega upravljanja čezmejnega sodelovanja v Evropi. Odgovore na vprašanja glede prihodnjega razvoja bi morali oblikovati čim prej; tako na primer, kako se lahko izboljša celotni čezmejni sistem sodelovanja in profesionalizira, tako da bi dosegel novo raven kakovosti, ki bi omogočala boljši razvoj endogenih potencialov tovrstnih območjih v okviru celotnega cilja teritorialne kohezije v Evropi. V zvezi s tem sta analizirani dve osrednji področji: usposabljanje/pospeševanje in uporabne interdisciplinarne raziskave.

Ključno ozko grlo, ki preprečuje poglobljanje čezmejnega sodelovanja v Evropi, je pomanjkanje znanja in nerazumevanje političnih in upravnih sistemov v sosednjih državah. Uspešno čezmejno sodelovanje potrebuje usposobljene akterje, ki bi bili sposobni zapreti vrzel med podsistemom in njegovimi specifičnimi funkcionalnimi lastnostmi ter funkcionalnimi pogoji, ki jih zagotavlja ustrezna domača zakonodaja. V zadnjih 20 letih je bila zelo uspešna ustanovitev posebne ustanove Euro-Institut v Kehl /Strasbourg, ki omogoča usposabljanje za čezmejno sodelovanje. Uspeh delovanja Euro-Instituta je nedavno privedel tudi do oblikovanja novega evropskega akterja: transnacionalnega omrežja Euro-Instituta ([www.transfrontier.eu](http://www.transfrontier.eu)) TEIN, katerega cilj je zgraditi zmogljivosti za usposabljanje o čezmejnih vprašanjih na vseevropski ravni. 12 partnerskih ustanov, ki prihajajo iz 9 različnih čezmejnih okolij po vsej Evropi, se je odločilo oblikovati usklajeno rešitev za naraščajočo potrebo po znanju, sposobnostih, orodjih in podpori za čezmejna vprašanja. Glede na vedno večje zavedanje o pomenu kohezijske politike v Evropi, je namen TEIN-a povečati zmogljivosti v kontekstu čezmejnega in transnacionalnega sodelovanja ter na ta način okrepiti evropsko integracijo.

Do sedaj v Evropi znanstvena literatura in raziskave tematike čezmejnega sodelovanja niso obravnavale v veliki meri. Seveda najdemo na evropskem kontinentu v različnih disciplinah veliko število publikacij, ki obravnavajo to temo z različnih zornih kotov: popis, ki sta ga izvedla Univerza Bayonne in EURO-Institut kot del TEIN-a, in ga je uredil Michel Casteigts, je odkril več kot 3000 takih publikacij. Vendar članek v zvezi s tem navaja, da še vedno ni mogoče govoriti, da bi čezmejno sodelovanje postalo pravi predmet znanstvenih raziskav. Vsekakor se zgoraj opisani sedmi izzivi lahko uporabijo kot zanesljiva empirična podlaga za namene nadaljnje raziskave na področju uporabne znanosti, ki bi omogočale temelje epistemološkega pogleda na fenomenologijo čezmejnega sodelovanja. Vendar pa za nastanek teorije »srednjega dosega«, ki bi omogočala presežanje sedanjih, vendar ozemeljsko omejenih izkušenj in bi ustvarila perspektivno znanje za večje zmogljivosti v prihodnosti, potrebujemo bolj sistematičen in interdisciplinarni pristop, ki bi se oblikoval v referenčni model uporabne znanosti. Zamisel, ki je izhajala iz rezultatov tega ciklusa raziskav, je oblikovati Interdisciplinarni priročnik o čezmejnem sodelovanju.

Poleg usposabljanja/pospeševanja ter raziskovanja članek predlaga štiri praktične sestavine sistemske krepitve čezmejne zmogljivosti:

**Okrepitev evidenčne zbirke za oblikovanje čezmejne politike:** V okviru nove generacije kohezijske politike, je pomembna zamisel o otipljivi evidenčni zbirki za oblikovanje čezmejne politike. Čezmejna ozemlja morajo okrepiti svoja prizadevanja za ustvarjanje informacij o čezmejnih vplivih ter jih tudi posredovati drugim. To je tudi osnovni pogoj za kakršenkoli čezmejni politični pristop, ki naj bi postal bolj strateški z oblikovanjem bolj osredotočenega in zgoščenega vzorca in bi težil k celostnem razvoju teritorialnih potencialov, namesto da bi množil nepovezane sektorske projekte.

**Horizontalna subsidiarnost:** Z vidika sistemskega pristopa krepitve zmogljivosti je zaželeno okrepiti in povečati obseg delovanja podsistema čezmejnega sodelovanja v Evropi. Za premagovanje zgoraj navedenih sedmih izzivov bi bilo potrebno upravljanje na več ravneh, ki bi hkrati vodilo do tesnejših in bolj celostnih sodelovanj ter do veliko bolj jasne funkcionalne delitve dela med različnimi ravni sodelovanja. S tega vidika bi morale države članice (in njihovi ozemeljski deli) aktivno podpirati čezmejno sodelovanje in omogočati prilagodljive rešitve, ki bi jih bilo treba razviti na mejah. To bi privedlo do novega načela sodelovanja, ki je opisan kot »horizontalna subsidiarnost« (Beck, 2012b): kadarkoli področje politike, ki je pomembno za horizontalno izmenjavo, ne more biti usklajeno na evropski ravni, morajo države članice poskušati določiti okvir z neposrednim usklajevanjem sosednjih držav in tako omogočiti potrebno pravno prožnost: poskusne in začetne klavzule v tematskih uredbah in izjemah, ki temeljijo na pravilu čezmejnih de minimis pravil sodelovanja, bi na primer omogočale delovanje načela horizontalne subsidiarnosti.

**Subsidiarnost znotraj čezmejnega ozemlja:** Na področju, kjer je svoboda za opravljanje čezmejnih dejavnosti še okrepljena z horizontalno subsidiarnostjo, je treba upoštevati še dve dodatni pomožni perspektivi. Po eni strani bi bilo treba vzpostaviti vertikalno subsidiarnost znotraj čezmejnega področja odgovornosti po vsem skupnem prostoru. Po drugi strani pa je treba močno okrepiti možnost za medsektorsko subsidiarnost. Medtem ko danes v večini čezmejnih območij v Evropi o čezmejnih vprašanih predvsem odločajo politični in upravni akterji (ta trend ohranja trenutna ureditev evropskih programov pomoči), bi morala subsidiarnost čezmejnega sodelovanja bolj odločno podpirati sektorsko lastništvo čezmejnih sistemov v gospodarstvu, znanosti in raziskovanjih ter v civilni družbi.

**Predstavnštvo skupnega interesa:** Z vidika čezmejnega ozemeljske kohezije so pogoste različne izvedbe prava EU v sosednjih državah, kar vodi do tehničnih in političnih odstopanj, ki velikokrat celo okrepijo strukturne razlike, namesto da bi jih izenačile. Zaskrbljujoče je, da Evropska komisija v celotnem svojem letnem delovnem proizvodu (to so tisoči predlogi za direktive, pravila, uredbe, odločbe, sporočila in poročila, zeleni dokumenti, postopki za ugotavljanje kršitev na leto) do sedaj izrecno ni proučevala mogočih vplivov na evropskih čezmejnih ozemljih. Zato se zdi nujno potrebno, da bi čezmejna ozemlja postala bolj vidna v glede na njihovo specifično vlogo uvajanja in bi jih bolj izrecno obravnavali v okviru oblikovanja Evropske politike pri razvoju ključnih pobud v kontekstu strategije »Europe 2020«.

Članek ugotavlja, da smo po izkušnjah več kot 50, oziroma v primeru novih držav članic 20 let v Evropi na pragu čezmejnega sodelovanja povsem nove kakovosti. Z novo kohezijsko politiko Evropske unije, ki – poleg vertikalne in horizontalne diferenciacije vladanja – pripisuje precej večji pomen teritorialni koheziji in obsegu vplivov dejanskih čezmejnih dejavnosti, in tudi zahvaljujoč novi generaciji akterjev, ki so bolj zainteresirani za rezultate kot postopke, bodo morala mnoga mejna ozemlja preoblikovati in okrepiti svoj sedanji način sodelovanja. Hkrati bi bilo treba čezmejno sodelovanje še naprej razvijati in krepiti, strukturno in funkcionalno, tako da bi obmejna območja lahko pomembno prispevala k Evropskim integracijskim procesom.