Social Capital and Governance in European Borderlands: A comparative study of Euroregions as policy actors

By Sara Svensson

Submitted to
Central European University
Doctoral School of Political Science, Public Policy and International Relations

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Supervisor: Dr. Andrew Cartwright

Budapest, Hungary

FINAL DRAFT – Comments welcome by January 25, 2013

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees, in any other institutions. The dissertation contains no materials previously written and/or published by any other person, except where appropriate acknowledgement is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

Sara Svensson
January 31, 2012

ABSTRACT

The dissertation contributes to the literature on multi-level governance in Europe and the literature on borderlands by investigating the mechanisms of local cross-border policy making. It focuses on motivation, participation and interaction patterns of one type of actors, the local governments that constitute the backbone of much institutionalized cross-border cooperation in Europe. As local governments, especially small ones, have frequently been neglected by researchers tending to focus on actors representing regional bodies or major towns, I argue that more attention to their attitudes and behavior can enhance our understanding of variance in function and performance of the type of institutions often referred to as Euroregions. The dissertation uses the concept of social capital (as understood by Coleman, 1990) and addresses two specific questions: (1) Why and how do local governments participate in cross-border cooperation institutions (Euroregions) and how do they interact? (2) Can motivation, participation and interaction patterns form social capital that influences how the Euroregions function and perform?

The dissertation relies on an extensive dataset consisting of more than 200 interviews. The core is 136 interviews with political representatives (mayors) and organizational representatives (Chairs and Managers) of six Euroregions located along three national borders that do not pose obstacles in terms of cultural-linguistic, economic development or politico-administrative differences, (Hungary/Slovakia, Sweden/Norway and Austria/Germany), thereby holding constant important factor that could affect the outcome. A mixed-method approach is used in the analysis of the data, combining qualitative analysis with social network analysis.

Results demonstrate that local governments' motivation for joining and maintaining membership in a Euroregion is more frequently based on normative than on instrumental factors. Dense participation and communication patterns, indicating presence of social capital, are not clearly associated with high cross-border cooperation intensity, but for Euroregions to be evaluated favorably by its own members, both within-group (domestic) and between-group (transnational) social capital matters. Inter-municipal cooperation is a resource that plays an important role both at the time of Euroregional formation and later into its operation, and dense communication networks on one side of the border are related to how actively and engaged the members become in the Euroregional organization. Moreoever, normative motivation is more

conducive for the creation of social capital than instrumental motivations; especially grant-driven expectations can lead to output legitimacy problems if not fulfilled.

The dissertation therefore argues that high levels of within-group social capital serve as a pre-condition for high levels of between-group social capital. However, evidence could not be found to support the expectation that a high-level of between-group social capital in the form of cross-border communication is associated with high organizational performance in the form of cross-border cooperation intensity. While social capital may still be important for Euroregional function and performance long-term (it is likely to enhance the chance for organizational survival), there is no clear evidence that it has an impact in the short time-span within which most Euroregions have operated so far.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is common in acknowledgments to compare a PhD period with a journey, but the metaphor used early on by my supervisor Andrew Cartwright was instead that of an empty room. My task was to bring material to this room, build some things from scratch, organize and decorate. It is now time for the first proper reception, and here I would like to thank all of you who kept me compay and visited me while there was still furniture missing, messy stuff was hidden behind unfitting curtains, and surfaces were cluttered with things I did not know where to place.

Thanks to Andrew, therefore, for not losing calm in the face of chaos, and for urging me to keep asking questions. Likewise, I want to thank the two other members of the supervisory panel, Thilo Bodenstein and Tamas Meszerics, for stimulating discussions.

Many thanks to my co-authors on various publication projects; much of our efforts is visible in these pages: to Gergo Medve-Balint, who worked with me for a while on the Hungarian-Slovak border, to Andreas Ojehag, who helped me analyze some of the empirical data from the Swedish-Norwegian border, and to Andrey Demidov, with whom I investigated policies of cooperation at the external borders of the European Union. Thanks also to Carl Nordlund, who was essential for the social network analysis, and with whom I hope to continue collaboration.

I also thank the more than two hundred interviewees in European borderlands who donated your time to this project. Thanks for many cups of coffee & tea! Some of the places I went to could be called peripheral, but will stay at the core of my recollection of the PhD experience.

Many colleagues and friends at the Central European University in Budapest helped me along the way, especially my co-students in the public policy track, Andreea Nastase and Elene Jibladze, but also Kristin, Vera, Stefan, Lucia, and many others. The writing-group that we formed in the last year helped me through the intensive wirite-up period: thanks go to Elene, Sanja, Anvar, Lisa, Philipp, Norbert and to Reka for convening it. Kriszta and Aniko provided valuable administrative support, and I am also grateful to the university as an institution for providing me with the grants that made these years possible and for offering such an overall stimulating environment.

The semester I spent at the Department of Historical and Political Studies at Karlstad University was very important for a critical perspective on new regionalism and regional studies. Special thanks to the PhD candidates for many discussions: Line, Andreas, David and Tomas.

Before enrolling in the PhD program I worked at the Center for Policy Studies, and the colleagues from there continued to be a great support. Special thanks to those of you who stepped in to help with final proof-reading: Lilla, Heni, and Bori.

Finally, many thanks to my family for bearing with me all this time. To my husband, Ádám, for his unfaltering belief in my ability to take this thing to an end. To my children, who often asked when 'the book' would be ready; Hanna started school at the same time as I enrolled in the PhD program and we used to compete on who had the heaviest school bag (she mostly won), David took a big interest in 'what I would become' after finishing and tried to scare me off a teacher's career ('you would have to be very stern with the students or they will misbehave, but when you are stern they won't like you any more'). Thanks to my brother Martin, for general pep talks and for bringing in a business perspective! Thanks to the rest of the family: my parents, parents-in-law, my uncle, and not the least to my grandmothers, who have been looking forward to coming to the ceremony where the degree will be conferred, and on that day no doubt will think about my grandfathers who were still alive when I started this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

'Cursed is the man who moves his neighbor's boundary stone', is a Bible quote (Deut. 27:17, New International Version) referring to mankind's ancient tendency to set, maintain and defend its borders and thereby its personal territorial space, but could just as well symbolize the nation-state's obsession with doing the same on a larger scale. However, in recent decades national borders have increasingly been seen as non-optimal or arbitrary, and there has been a remarkable shift towards addressing policy issues derived from that inadequacy with non-conflictual means. Under the umbrella terms 'globalization' and 'regionalization' scholars have analyzed processes of re-scaling, reformation of spaces and reterritorialization (Castells 2009a; Castells 2009b; Castells 2010; Iain Deas and Lord 2006; Harvey 2006) referring to how power has shifted away from national arenas to new territorial and non-territorial spaces. One manifestation on the ground is the proliferation of local cross-border alliances of public authorities around the world, which is especially notable in Europe, North America and Southeast Asia (Scott 1999).

Broadly, these alliances have been created for the purpose of public goods creation (e.g. economic development and conflict resolution), and they should not be taken as a sign that borders (or their importance) are vanishing. There seems to be consensus among borderland scholars that the opposite is true; human-created territorial borders are here to stay in the foreseeable future, and the length of heavily fortified 'wall-type' of borders have actually increased (Vallet and David 2009, 2012). However, the neo-liberal argument stating that national borders constitute barriers for economic development has undoubtedly been persuasive (Foucher 1998) and may be one driving reason for the creation of alliances that strive for ameliorating disadvantages created by barriers.

Nowhere has this gone further than in Europe, where the Council of Europe and the European Union has been pushing a cross-border cooperation agenda for decades. At every internal and external European border sub-national authorities have set up institutional cross-border cooperation bodies, something which makes Europe an ideal setting for investigating the mechanisms of local cross-border policy making, in other words, how does local cross-border cooperation work? This in itself is not an original observation. Corey M Johnson notes that "Europe provides an excellent laboratory for exploring how border regions offer new spaces of/for governance, cultural interaction and economic development" (Johnson 2009a, 177) and the same assumption seems to be underlying other research on cross-border cooperation initiatives in Europe as well. However, much of the literature is either single-case-based or sweepingly broad, and relatively little has been done in terms of using comparative empirical data in order to systematically study the processes of policy-making in borderlands (notable exceptions are Perkmann 2003, 2007a, 2007b, Blatter 2000, Koff 2007, Deas and Lord 2006, Scott 1993, 2012, see the literature review in Chapter 2). The dissertation is the result of an effort to tackle research questions related to cross-border cooperation in general, and formalized cross-border cooperation institutions in particular, in a manner that is both theory-driven and rich in empirical comparable data.

1.1. Key concepts

Before proceeding to further specify the research question stated above, I will briefly clarify some concepts and terms that are frequently used in the dissertation. Each of these will be discussed in-depth in connection with the literature review and analytical framework in Chapter 2, but they are summarized below to aid understanding.

Euroregion: Formalized cooperation initiative between sub-national authorities, often including private and non-profit actors, located close to a border in two or more countries in Europe. This understanding of Euroregions relies heavily on Perkmann's often-cited definition: "more or less institutionalized collaboration between contiguous sub-national authorities across national borders" (Perkmann 2002, 104). Formally, the members of Euroregions can be regions, local governments or a combination of both. The focus of this study is on the majority of Euroregions in which local governments are members.

Policy actor: Within the dissertation, Euroregions are understood both as networks and as a policy actor, which interacts within a broader network of actors involved in policy processes relevant to the cross-border space. Lacking executive powers, Euroregions are not policy-makers in the most traditional understanding of the word, but they are policy actors in that they have the potential to take part in all stages of the policy process (Lasswell 1958).

Local governments: The term refers to the lowest administrative unit, LAU 2, according to the territorial statistical system of the European Union, sometimes also referred to as NUTS 5. In the dissertation 'local government' is used interchangeably with municipality. The highest political representatives of local governments that are members of Euroregions constitute a key source of data. In the dissertation, I consistently refer to them as mayors, although the official title in Scandinavia is 'chairman of the municipal board".

Region: Unlike 'local government', 'region' is a term that often carries multiple meanings and different connotations. For instance, materialist-functionalist interpretations focus on regions as political and/or economic spaces, whereas constructivist interpretations stress the importance of shared perceptions of belonging and identity (Hettne 1994, Keating 1998, Blij and Murphy 2003). In the dissertation the term is either used as part of Euroregion, defined as above, or to

denote delineated administrative regions, such as NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 regions in the territorial statistical system of the European Union.

Social capital: A resource that may influence organizational performance and function, defined as a set of social relations of which a single or collective subject can make use at any given moment. The formulation of the definition draws on Trigilia (2001[1]), but the application builds primarily on Coleman (1988, 1990) as the focus in the dissertation is on social capital as a resource that is created and owned by a collective rather than an individual (compare Coleman 1988, rather than by an individual, compare Bourdieu 1986).

Institutional social capital: A collective resource created and owned by a group of organizations, in this case the resource created and owned by local governments in the borderlands. Within-group social capital (Grix and Knowles 2003) refers to the social capital of local governments on one side of the border, whereas between-group social capital refers to the social capital that is created and owned jointly by the local governments that are members of the crossborder institution.

Euroregional function and performance: The role Euroregions play in the cross-border governance landscape and how well they perform this task. Performance is assessed by reviewing organizational capacity, how the organization carries out the (metaphorical) roles of seismograph, loudspeaker, and display window, and the extent to which the Euroregion in question has a space in the cross-border governance landscape, i.e. the ability to appropriate policy space.

---

[1]The definition is paraphrased from the following full quote that needed to be shortened to enable convenient usage throughout the dissertation: "Social capital can be considered as a set of social relations of which a single subject (for instance, an entrepreneur or a worker) or a collective subject (either private or public) can make use at any give moment. (Trigila 2001:430)

1.2. Research questions

The starting point of the research project is the empirical observation that local governments located close to a national border in Europe increasingly tend to form or join organizations with local governments located on the other side of the border, and that the number of such organizations has risen sharply over the past two decades. In the academic literature this phenomenon has been noticed primarily due to its linkage to debates on European integration (e.g. Johnson 2009a, 177, Scott 2007: 53), how globalization should be interpreted and understood at the local level (e.g. Sassen 2006, 17), and to multi-level governance as a new mode of policy-making (Koff 2007:14). For all these strands a core question is if, and to what extent, the the nation-state is losing importance, and what that means in practice. The dissertation aims at contributing to these three bodies of literature, with a focus on the last, by adding understanding on how local cross-border political institutions work in a European setting.

As stated above, a review of the literature on cross-border cooperation reveals that much of it is case-based or sweepingly broad. Another observation is that the perspective of local governments that make up the bulk of the members of these organizations are curiously missing from most of the academic writing on the topic. Instead, empirical research tends to rely on interviews with so called 'key actors', which usually translates into a selection of actors from the regional level and the main urban center/s in the borderland in question.[2] I claim that uncovering the attitudes and behavior of local governments with the help of the theory of social capital will

---

[2] It is striking how little detail on underlying data is included in much writing on cross-border cooperation, and I am aware that it is therefore somewhat unfair here to take as example one of those which actually does provide specification. Nonetheless, an article on cooperation at the Finnish-Russian border is probably typical. An endnote specifies that the research is based on ten open interviews with 'key actors' from municipal, regional and national levels, and from expert institutions, i.e. the number of interviews with each of these would be one or two. Moreover the research in that case relied on 6 questionnaires from municipal governments, private companies and NGOs on one side of the border, and 11 on the other (Eskelinen and Kotilainen 2005).

enhance the understanding of how local cross-border cooperation works. This gives rise to two specific research questions:

(1) Why and how do local governments participate in cross-border cooperation institutions (Euroregions) and how do they interact?

This question focuses on the local government as the unit of analysis. The aim is to understand the motivations behind local governments' decisions to join and maintain membership in cross-border cooperation institutions, and how local governments relate to the organization and to each other. This includes sub-questions on local governments' motivations, the importance they attach to cross-border cooperation in different policy areas, the extent to which they take part in decision-making procedures, how often they are in contact with other members, and the degree to which this creates social capital.

(2) Can motivation and interaction patterns form social capital that influences how the Euroregions function and perform?

The knowledge gained by answering the first question is expected to play a crucial role in answering the second question, which focuses on the organization as the unit of analysis. It presupposes a mapping question (how do these institutions perform and function?), and it is expected to yield knowledge on the causal mechanism driving these cross-border cooperative institutions.

The dissertation's focus on local governments does not mean that I do not recognize the importance of private actors or other levels. Many policy decisions affecting borderlands are not taken locally, and regional integration initiatives (European integration) may spur the creation of Euroregions in a top-down fashion, although as Koff points out, cross-border integration does not always happen where there are regional pushes (Koff 2007, 28) Nevertheless, the in-depth focus

on the local public authority level enables insights within one project that could otherwise not be made.

1.3. Contribution and policy relevance

The proposed contribution of this dissertation is primarily to two bodies of literature and academic sub-fields: the specialized field of borderland studies, and the broader field of European governance studies.

First, the dissertation adds value to the growing stock of literature on borderlands by

(a) its truly comparative nature despite well-known challenges to such endeavors in this field due to language and access difficulties;

(b) the unusual research design in terms of the embedded cases incorporating both the organizational and membership levels of Euroregions;

(c) bringing in the theory on social capital in a more structured and empirical-connected way that has been done before.

Second, by going down to the lowest level of policy, the dissertation uncovers how governance in an integrating Europe works on the lowest level, and makes statements on the relative importance of the nation-state and day-to-day work in policy fields. This relates to literature on multi-level governance in relation to European integration and policy networks. The usage of the concept of social capital to denote network and trust settings has the advantage of distinguishing the resource of a network from a description that it exist. The focus is on the network of local governments in a Euroregion, but relations to external actors are also drawn in.

The dissertation is also policy-relevant in terms of shedding light on functioning mechanisms of Euroregions that can be of value for European or national policymakers seeking

to further promote cross-border integration. In addition, local policymakers can use the findings to assess the benefits and potential costs of stepping up their already existing membership in a Euroregion, or of joining one.[3]

1.4. Summary of research design

The dissertation draws on an embedded multiple-case design with multiple units of analysis (see below and Yin 2009, 46) selected to predict "contrasting results but for anticipatable reasons" (Yin 2009, 54). First, a dataset of all Euroregions was constructed, and then three national borders with known favorable preconditions for cooperation (in terms of cultural-linguistic, political-administrative similarity, and economic homogeneity) were selected. Finally, at each of these borders two Euroregions were included in order to check for variation along one border. This resulted in six cases: Ister-Granum and Hídverő at the Hungarian-Slovak border, Granskommitten Ostfold-Bohuslan-Dalsland (OstBoh) and Granskommitten Varmland-Ostfold (VarmOst) at the Norwegian-Swedish border and Euregio Inntal and Euregio Salzburg at the German-Austrian border.

The empirical data consists of more than 200 interviews, out of which 136 constitute the core data, i.e. interviews with members and managers of these Euroregions. The interviews generated three sets of material: (1) qualitative data on motivations, attitudes and assessments on cross-border cooperation in general and Euroregional cooperation in particular, (2) relational data on communicational patterns enabling social network analysis, (3) a limited set of quantitative data (closed questions). The dissertation adopts a mixed-method approach in the analysis of the

---

[3] Dissemination of research findings in the form of lectures or short papers have been offered to all participating interviewees and organizations, and several dissemination activities already took place in the course of 2011 and 2012.

data, in which qualitative research is complemented by the usage of tools from social network analysis to appraise the levels of institutional social capital held by local governments.

The research design is elaborated on at length in Chapter 3, in which justification for case selection and operationalization of variables is provided.

1.5. Structure of the dissertation

To answer the questions posed, Chapter two integrates the literature review with the presentation of the analytical framework. I relate the dissertation's research on European local cross-border cooperation between local governments to a larger literature on multi-level governance and policy networks, showing how answering the research question will contribute to this body of literature. I proceed to account for how Euroregions emerged as policy actors within such a multi-level governance space, and the roles they can perform within this space. After that, I outline the main parameters of the first level of analysis, that of the membership of Euroregions and their attitudes and behavior. This is divided into motivation, participation and interaction, and I review what existing literature says on these. Finally, I review what we know about how Euroregions perform as organizations, and how a model incorporating social capital can help explain performance.

Chapter three gives a detailed account of research design and the methods used for data collection and analysis. Special emphasis is put on case selection and operationalization of the dependent variable of the project. The chapter is not merely a technical account, but also sheds additional light on what these Euroregions are and what they do. In this way, the content of the method chapter complements the information given in the context of the literature review and analytical framework.

The following three chapters (chapter four through six) are devoted to the embedded case studies. Each is structured around the two levels of analysis (members as units of analysis and Euroregions as units of analysis) and aims to answer the two research questions applied to the borderland in question. Chapter 4 analyzes data collected at the Slovak-Hungarian border, chapter 5 data from the Swedish-Norwegian border, and chapter 6 draws on material from the Austrian-German border.

Chapter 7 addresses the same questions as the empirical case studies, but with a different method. Tools from social network analysis are used to map communication links between local governments of four of the studied Euroregions, and the data derived from that is used to test some of the theoretical expectations suggested in Chapter 2.

In chapter 8, I use the cross-case data to revisit the initial model and see whether the initial theoretical expectations hold up in light of the empirical data.

Finally, chapter 9 concludes by summarizing the dissertation, proposing venues for further research and offering some final remarks.

1.6. Research limitations

The dissertation focuses on local governments as members of Euroregions, and Euroregions with only regional membership will therefore not be considered. The rationale is that the voice of local governments, particularly those that are not major towns, has frequently been neglected in much research on 'local' cross-border cooperation.[4]

---

[4] See Demidov and Svensson 2012 for a discussion on the contested meaning of 'local' when it comes to cross-border cooperation at EU's external borders.

The dissertation does not deal directly with socio-economic integration and economic development in the cross-border regions, which may, or may not, follow from political co-operation within the kind of bodies this dissertation focuses on (Euroregions). Regional development is influenced by many factors, of which the level of cross-border cooperation and integration is likely to be one, and much is needed in terms of both theoretical foundation and improved statistical data availability on cross-border regional level[5] before any credible theory-building can link Euroregions to regional development. Cross-border socio-economic integration suffers from similar problems regarding comparable data, and more research of the kind carried out in this dissertation (on how institutionalized cross-border cooperation works) is needed in order to develop an analytical framework and suitable methods for investigating whether, and to what extent, Euroregions can contribute to socio-economic integration.

---

[5] Several cross-border regions in Scandinavia have worked consistently to improve cross-border data but there is much to do even in that limited geographical context. On the European level, evaluation of European support programs have also been hindered by lack of data (reference).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this chapter is to present the analytical framework that will structure the empirical investigation, and to integrate this with a review of the relevant literature including definitions and elaborations on important concepts. As stated in Chapter 1, the dissertation aims to provide new knowledge on what happens on the ground in local government cross-border cooperation organizations (Euroregions), especially on the link between the activity of local government that are members of Euroregions and the capacity of these organizations to establish themselves as important policy actors in cross-border governance arrangements. I will therefore start by outlining how the dissertation relates to the literature on multi-level governance and policy networks (section 2.1.). I continue with an in-depth elaboration on Euroregions as policy actors, drawing on a specialized inter-disciplinary literature on borderlands and borderlands institutions (section 2.2). In section 2.3 I focus on the first level of analysis, i.e. the members of the organizations, and outline how the literature on network resources, especially the literature on social capital, will provide a hitherto largely missing perspective with the potential to explain organizational function and performance. The section is divided into sub-sections on motivation, participation and interaction, which also will structure the empirical analysis. The next section (2.4) returns to Euroregions as organizations; it reviews what previous research has established when it comes to factors impacting on cross-border integration and cross-border cooperation, and suggests an explanatory model, which incorporates a bottom-up social capital perspective. I also spell out the theoretical expectations that can be formulated based on the literature and suggest what complementary knowledge is needed for further theory-building. Finally (section 2.5.), I summarize the implications of the analytical framework for the research process and the structure of the dissertation.

2.1. Cross-border governance through networks

The times are gone when public policy could be understood by studying decisions of nation-state political institutions, such as cabinets, parliaments, and presidents. Since the last decades of the 20th century the claim that worldwide the political system is changing, and that other political actors need to be considered, has gained virtually general agreement in the scholarly community. The focus of the debate has therefore not been whether a change is taking place, but on how this change should be conceptualized, and to what extent it is happening. In the 1990s, Manuel Castell's trilogy on the 'network society' received much attention, both within and beyond the scholarly community; one central thesis was that globalization entailed a shift from 'spaces of places' (government tied to specific geographic boundaries) to 'spaces of flows' (functional-based governance) (Castells 1996).

Another term indicating interdependencies and interactions between local and global levels was 'glocalization' (Courchene 1995). In the 1990s, British scholars started referring to the state as 'hollowing-out', because power shifted up-wards (to EU), down-wards (to sub-national units) and side-wards (to non-state or quasi-state actors) (Jessop 1993, Rhodes 1994), and this label was quickly taken up by scholars elsewhere as well. For scholars studying public policy processes in Europe, 'multi-level governance' (MLG) has come to be the most widely used label for this new political system (the term was coined by Gary Marks, see 1993:392 and 402-403, who further developed it with Liesbet Hooghe, see Hooghe and Marks 2001). It derived from studies of the European structural funds disbursement regime, but soon was applied across policy fields. Decomposing the term, the notion of 'level' refers to the hierarchy of European, national and sub-

national levels, whereas the 'governance' aspect refers to cross-sectoral inclusion of non-state or semi-state actors into governance systems (Bache 2012).[6]

If public policy in the 21st century is made and implemented within such a multi-level governance framework, a logical consequence is that there is a multitude of organizational actors involved. To understand the system, there is a need to "describe and analyze interactions among all significant policy actors, from legislative parties and government ministries to business associations, labor unions, professional societies, and public interest groups" (Knoke et al. 1996). Knoke and Laumann have called this an 'organizational state approach' (Knoke and Laumann 1987), which in Europe was adopted by adding European Union actors as well.

It should be emphasized that the idea of policy networks per se is not new. It can be traced to the literature strand on pluralism and its study of 'iron triangles' and 'issue networks' in the US, e.g. Lowi 1964, Heclo and Wildawsky 1974, Heclo 1978, or neo-corporatism's investigation of exclusive governmental links with powerful organized labor interests in some European and Latin American countries (Schmitter and Lehmbruch 1979). However, the modern focus on policy networks has sought to overcome the cleavage between pluralism and corporatism, and claim governance by networks to be different from (and possibly better than) market or hierarchy based government. Policy networks are thus seen "as a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests

---

[6] Later, a distinction was made between two types of MLG arrangements, called Type 1 and Type 2 (Hooghe and Marks 2003), where Type 1 governance "describes system-wide governing arrangements in which the dispersion of authority is restricted to a limited number of clearly defined, non-overlapping jurisdictions at a limited number of territorial levels, each of which has responsibility for a 'bundle' of functions. By contrast, Type II describes governing arrangements in which the jurisdiction of authority is task-specific, where jurisdictions operate at numerous territorial levels and may be overlapping" (Bache 2012: 630). Cross-border governance would be a typical arrangement of a Type II arrangement.

acknowledging that co-operation is the best way to achieve common goals." (Borzel 1998: 254).[7] As noted by Christopoulous, networks have been shown to "(1) facilitate coalition building; (2) ameliorate shocks from institutional transformation; (3) facilitate efficient sourcing and allocation of resources; (4) apply a filter to the information reaching actors; and (5) ameliorate risks and therefore lead to impunity of higher risk-taking" (Christopoulous 2006: 786). At the same time governance as networks has been criticized for obfuscating issues of power, and disbursing accountability into unclarity (see e.g. Lynn 2012).

The overarching changes outlined above are of great importance for local cross-border regions, for at least three reasons:

First, the existence of local cross-border governance institutions can be seen as a proof of systemic transformation. (In the words of Joachim Blatter: "[]transnational integration and domestic decentralization/regionalization are challenging the dominance of national administrations in governing cross-border regions", Blatter 2004:532.)[8] Much research on cross-border regions in the 1990s and early 2000s focused on capturing the extent of this transformation and understanding the relative powers between the nation states and borderlands (e.g. Scott 1999, van Houtum 2000, 64 and 66; O'Dowd 2003; Perkmann 2003).

Second, the study of borderlands and borders also accentuate how the research paradigm of globalization can be challenged by a competing paradigm of securitization. According to human geographer and border scholar David Newman, borders are never 'lines in the sand or on a map", but constructed and evolving institutions "through which territories and people are

---

[7] Another definition states that policy networks are "sets of formal institutional and informal linkages between governmental and other actors structured around shared if endlessly negotiated beliefs and interests in public policy making and implementation. These actors are interdependent and policy emerges from the interactions between them." (Rhodes 2006: 426)

[8] Note the emphasis here on the existence of cross-border organizations as a symptom of MLG arrangements, not a consequence. I concur with Koff's argument that "border integration is not simply a logical outcome of globalization or multi-level governance" (Koff 2007: 21).

respectively included or excluded within a hierarchical network of groups, affiliations and identities" (Newman 2003:13). While cross-border cooperation generally is increasing in the world (Vallet and David 2012) borders are in discourse and practice viewed and handled through two different paradigms, which can be referred to in shorthand as globalization and securitization (Newman 2006) or parallel processes of de-bordering and bordering (see e.g. Varwick and Lang 2007, 61). Globalization is expected to lead towards a 'world society' (Castells 2009, Albrow 1990) "where common belonging transcends the notion of a world which is highly compartmentalized and categorized" (Newman 2006: 177). Hence, borders are interpreted as harmful barriers and cross-border cooperation as a means to control and reduce damage, thereby strengthening economic development and social cohesion in border areas and beyond. In the paradigm of securitization, on the other hand, borders are spaces of weakness, prone to penetration of 'dangerous' elements such as 'criminals' and 'terrorists'. Thus, cooperation is desirable only as far as it does not threaten security, and as a consequence we see walls being erected at an increasing number of places (e.g. US/Mexico, Israel/Palestine, etc), and borders are made more difficult to cross (e.g. external Schengen borders).[9]

Third, to understand the political power of Euroregions over policy issues in a particular cross-border area, it is helpful to view the Euroregion as one policy actor within a network of actors with different competencies and interests in relation to the policy issues of relevance to borderlands. The Euroregion is, in turn, also a network consisting of public authorities, sometimes including non-state actors. Euroregions thereby fit neatly into what researchers on

---

[9] I have earlier elaborated (Demidov and Svensson 2011) on how developments in the last decade, especially the 2004 enlargement and recent instability in northern Africa, have accentuated the dilemma European Union policymakers face in relation to handling the EU's external borders. The problem is straightforward to express, but hard to solve; on the one hand, the Union seeks to strengthen its border controls in order to prevent unwanted penetration (mainly illegal immigration and criminal activities), on the other hand, policy measures in this direction often harm economic development and social cohesion in the border areas. The Union must, therefore, seek ways to get around this, and the European Neighbourhood Policy contains much of these dilemmas.

regions have labeled 'new regionalism', where the "prefix 'new' marks a conceptual and practical departure from the conventional and planning-related territoriality, defined by using specific criteria and indices." (Herrschel and Tallberg 2011:8).

The purpose of the next section is to define and describe Euroregions in relation to these aspects. I will elaborate further on how the emergence and role of Euroregions link in with both the globalization paradigm and the network-based approach to understanding policy-making.

2.2. Euroregions as policy actors

'Crossborder alliances', 'crossborder micro-regions', 'EU-regios', 'crossborder working communities' - many names circulate among practitioners and academics for the phenomenon I investigate in the dissertation, but the term I use is 'Euroregion'. This I define as a *formalized cooperation initiative between sub-national authorities, potentially including private and non-profit actors, located close to a border in two or more countries in Europe*. This understanding of Euroregions relies heavily on Perkmann's frequently cited definition: "more or less institutionalized collaboration between contiguous subnational authorities across national borders" (Perkmann 2002, 104). However, I prefer 'formalized' rather than 'institutionalized', to distinguish it from new institutionalism's view of institutions as 'rules of the game together with their enforcement, arrangements" (North 1990: 3). 'Formalized' in this context refers to collaboration taking place within a separate association or resting on some sort of memorandum of understanding between the parties. Euroregions are therefore *organizations*, i.e. "collectivities whose participants share a common interest in the survival of the system and who engage in collective activities, informal structures, to secure this end." (W. Richard Scott 2002, 23).

Two further clarifications deserve to be made regarding the definition. First, although Euroregions are defined as organizations, it is sometimes useful to refer to the Euroregion as the *geographical space* within which the Euroregion operates, i.e. the territorial coverage of the local governments and regions that are its members (Medeiros 2011). This is analogous to how states and municipalities depending on context can be understood both as organizations and as territorial space. Second, "Euroregion" has a macro-regional connotation, but the core of the definition transcends Europe and could be used in other territorial contexts as well. For such studies, the term 'cross-border micro-region' is the closest and preferable equivalent.

2.2.1. Historical and legal context

The first Euroregion – the Dutch-German EU-Regio – was initiated in 1958, the same year as the creation of the European Economic Community. This Euroregion started its operation via a memorandum of understanding between municipal associations on each side of the border, pointing at specific policy problems – especially within infrastructure – and suggesting solutions to these. When the EU-region later formed a joint decision-making it was officially supported by Prince Claus of the royal family, who saw Euroregions as capable of articulating and representing the interests of a cross-border region (Muller and Hoebink 2003). Some more Euroregions were founded in the 1960s and 1970s, especially in the Scandinavian countries, for instance the Öresund Committee in 1964 and the Gränskommitten Östfold-Bohuslän/Dalsland in 1980. A rapid expansion started from the late 1990s, and today there are up to 200 such initiatives in Europe (see chapter 3 for the universe of cases considered in this dissertation).

How the Euroregions would fit into the ideas and structures of public administration was not self-evident, and efforts to coordinate policy around this were coordinated by the Council of Europe rather than the European Community. This resulted in the so called 'Madrid Convention' (European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities[10]), signed in 1980 and mandating signatories to promote and support cross-border cooperation between local and regional authorities. To facilitate the integration into public administration structures, model agreements on intrastate and local level were included.[11]. Until the late 1980s the European Union was not an active actor, but since 1990 substantive financial contributions have been distributed via regional policy structural funds, from 2007 through the European Territorial Cooperation program[12]. In addition, a new legal instrument was launched in 2007, the "European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)". The EGTC is promoted as 'a new European legal instrument designed to facilitate and promote cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation". (European Union Regional Policy Website, 2012) The EGTC is a legal entity and as such, enables local authorities and other public bodies from different member states to set up cooperation groupings with a legal personality. It was intended to be an instrument with the potential to overcome messy or disadvantageous legal situations; Euroregions have registered as various kinds of non-profit associations, sometimes with artificial structures of similar associations being created on each side of the border bound together only by a

---

[10] See the full text at[http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/106.htm]. The language of the treaty hints at how Euroregions are seen as principally being about 'peace and prosperity', built upon the assumption that cooperation between authorities in a range of policy areas can facilitate mobility of goods, services and people in regions that stretch borders, which in turn is thought to lead to economic growth and social cohesion. See for instance the Preamble: "[C]o-operation between local and regional authorities in Europe makes it easier for them to carry out their tasks effectively and contributes in particular to the improvement and development of frontier regions". Hence, the underlying discourse is similar to the one surrounding macro-regional (supranational cooperation) such as the European Union

[11] However, as stated in Article 3, first paragraph, second sub-paragraph, of the Convention, the model and outline agreements, statutes and contracts are intended for guidance only and have no treaty value.

[12] The cross-border cooperation strand disbursed 5.6 million EUR in the 2007-2012 budget cycle. For detailed information about objectives and designated areas see the website at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/cooperation/index_en.cfm (accessed November 24, 2012).

memorandum of understanding. It should be noted that according to my definition of Euroregions, the EGTC is a sub-type of this category and in 2012 less than 30 Euroregions had chosen to adopt this legal form.[13]

2.2.2. What Euroregions do: policy activities and the roles of seismograph, loudspeaker and display windows

As stated above, this dissertation views Euroregions as networks acting as policy actors within a broader network of actors involved in policy processes relevant to the cross-border space. The territories of Euroregions are not governed in a conventional, territorial sense (Perkmann and Sum 2002:15) if by being governed we understand the deference to decision-making made by one political (elected) body, and hence they are *not policy-makers* in the most traditional understanding of the word. However, as *policy actors* they can potentially take part in all stages of the policy process (Lasswell 1958). They can play important roles in the problem-formulation and agenda-setting stages, their local and regional members have competences to make decisions on some issues, they can be implementation organizations for certain policies, and would often be the only type of organization pushing for evaluating policies on a cross-border dimension.[14]

---

[13] For an overview of early challenges with the legal measure, see the report by the Committee of Regions. Official Journal of the European Union. Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on 'New perspectives for the revision of the EGTC Regulation' (own-initiative opinion). (2011/C 104/02). Accessed on June 7, 2011 at [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:104:0007:0012:EN:PDF]

[14] While the stages model of policy process is frequently rejected as being more of a heuristic device than an accurate theory of real policy processes, Euroregions would also be identified as policy actors in competing models, such as the garbage can model (Cohen, March and Olsen 1972) and its further development by Kingdon (the policy streams model (1984) or Sabatier (the advocacy coalition framework, 1987). With such approaches, an important role of Euroregions might for instance be to identify cross-border cooperation as a solution before other actors are aware that that there is a problem.

Using the terms Scharpf uses in reference to the various bodies of the European Union, a Euroregion can also be labeled as a policy-shaper, and not a policy-setter (Scharpf 1994:71).

Typical policy areas that Euroregions engage in include transport linkages, environmental protection, and tourism (Topaloglou et al 2012, Deas and Lord 2006,), but there are also many examples of involvement in economic, labor and social policies (Perkmann 2002). At European level they are represented primarily by the interest organization Association of European Border Regions,[15] which in turn works closely with the Committee of the Regions (CoR). The latter is a European assembly of local governments and regions, which is an advisory body to the European Parliament and Council of the European Body. Transnational networks, including local cross-border cooperation, is one of the areas in which consulting with the CoR is mandatory in the legislative process.[16] There is not any standardized model for how Euroregions should be involved in the management and implementation of European program funding, and this may therefore vary between Euroregions, from being charged with full implementation responsibility to being treated as a funding applicant among others.

As policy actors within their territories Euroregions function by taking on different roles that can be described using the three metaphors of seismographs, loudspeakers and display windows:[17]

The seismograph: A seismograph is an instrument for "detecting and recording the intensity, direction, and duration of a movement of the ground" (The Free Dictionary 2012) Often

---

[15] The Association of the European Border Regions (AEBR) provides a rich material of policy documents and studies on their website, www.aebr.eu [accessed November 19, 2012]. In 2012 it had 182 members. Not all of these would fall within the definition of Euroregions as adopted in this dissertation, though, as will be elaborated on in Chapter 3.

[16] See the website of the Committee of the Regions, http://cor.europa.eu [accessed November 19, 2012)

[17] I am much obliged to Christian Bidner, District Governor of Kufstein, Austria, and former Head of the South Tyrol Office in Brussels, for giving the inspiration to these metaphors.

it is used to detect earthquakes, but it also functions as a meter of normal ground movements. The 'ground movements' that are identified by a Euroregion can be different intensities in attitudes, preferences and perceptions that are not interpreted by local communities as something that can be formulated or addressed in a cross-border context. The Euroregion measures the intensity of attitudes and preferences with cross-border relevance, and can thereby convince its members of their existence. Taking the analogy further, it could also warn other actors of potential eruptions of conflict, and handle those in advance. This role can be related to both the polity/identification and the instrumental (grant-seeking or policy-based) motivations for founding a Euroregion as discussed in the introduction.

The loudspeaker: When 'movement on the ground' leads to the identification of gaps and needs pertaining to the cross-border area, the Euroregion can take on the role to make those heard by relevant policymakers at local, regional, national and European level. In other words, it performs advocacy work for resources or policy interventions. This role is primarily derived from the instrumental (grant-seeking or policy-problem) motivations for founding the Euroregion. Channels for exerting influence may include multiple positions of member representatives, within-party contacts to people in power, indirect representation via other organizations and partnerships with non-state actors. Modes of persuasion may include commissioning reports on the issue to be raised, arranging seminars or conferences dedicated to the issue to be raised, sending delegations to decision-makers and writing statements/resolutions in the name of the EGTC.

The display window: Representations of symbols and assets available within the territory of the local governments and regions forming the Euroregions can be brought together and showcased by the Euroregion, thereby strengthening the image of the Euroregion as a single destination for investors a and tourists alike. This conveyance of a realized region-building

project relates to notions of polity and community, which will be discussed in the section on membership below.

The fulfillment of these functions influence the capacity of the Euroregions to do what Perkmann (2007b) refer to as 'appropriation of policy space", i.e. the degree which they can "establish themselves as important players within the overall context of cross-border strategies in a given border area" (Perkmann 2007b: 867).

*

Before moving on to the membership of Euroregions (section 2.3) and how an analysis of membership can be expected to enhance understanding of how Euroregions work (section 2.4), the essence of the theoretical approach so far can be summarized as this: Euroregions are formalized cooperation initiatives between sub-national authorities located close to European borders. They are policy actors within a broader network of actors involved in policy processes relevant to the cross-border space. The increasing presence of Euroregions fits well with the interpretation of governance and political systems in Europe offered by the literatures on multi-level governance (Marks 1993, Hooghe and Marks 2001) and new regionalism (Keating 1998, Jeffery 2000, Brusis 2000), and is therefore literature that will be built on, not contested, in this dissertation.

2.3. The membership of Euroregions

As the dissertation seeks to establish if there is a link between membership patterns and Euroregional performance as policy actors, it is important to define the aspects that will be

crucial in the empirical research. These are the motivation for local governments to join and stay members of a Euroregion, the way they participate in the Euroregion as an organization, and the way they interact with other members within the Euroregional territory. All these three aspects can be related to the concept of social capital, and the literature on social capital will be drawn in as an additional resource.

2.3.1. Motivation

Euroregions at European borders are usually seen from the perspective of globalization rather than securitization, at least if they all located in the Schengen passport-free area[18]. They are seen as closely intertwined with the regional integration process, which seeks to decrease the importance of borders, thereby generating a general expectation for "deeper levels of cross-border cooperation in Europe" (Koff 2007:19-20), although that expectation is not always realized on the ground.[19]

This is also emphasized by Joachim Blatter, who in the mid 1990s carried out extensive empirical research in four cross-border regions in Europe and North America resulting in a groundbreaking dissertation in 1998 (published in 2000). He argued that cross-border cooperation in Europe – on national, regional and local level and including both governmental and nongovernmental actors – had been primarily driven by 'polity' (identify-based community-

---

[18] The Schengen agreement was signed in 1985 and originally comprised 5 European Union countries. In December 2011, 26 countries were members of the Schengen area (The website of the European Union, accessed April 2, 2012.)

[19] Moreover, a critical observer of my research as it unfolded would probably have detected that initial motivation, assumptions and pre-conceptions were heavily influenced by this paradigm as well. Koff notes that "it seems that authors are forwarding normative judgments concerning the need for heightened border integration rather than explaining the processes that cause it. (Koff 2007:12) Nonetheless, that does not mean that it was impossible to question those assumptions and preconceptions later in the process.

building) as *leitmotif*, whereas cross-border cooperation in North America was driven by 'policy'

in terms of being primarily instrumental by following the theme of free trade without political

integration and responding to actual problems occurring out of that (Blatter 2000). The image of

cross-border cooperation institutions conveyed by Blatter is one of territorially bounded

consociations[20], increasingly dominated by regional actor networks (not national or local ones),

that are driven by visions of coherent local communities that are attached to the idea of European

integration. This is shown in the lower left box in Table 1, which depicts Blatter's four ideal

types.

Table 1. *Ideal types of cross-border cooperation regimes.*

	Formal	**Informal**
Policy: Instrumental	*COMMISSIONS* Expertise/rules Experts: engineers, lawyers	*CONNECTIONS* Information, material resources Brokers: Urban planners, economic and business developers
Polity: Identity-based	*CONSOCIATIONS* Affective symbols Integrators: leading regional politicians	*COALITIONS* Values, ideology Mobilizers: party leaders, association leaders

Source: Blatter 2000, 49 (my translation using vocabulary he applied in his English-language publications Blatter 1997 and Blatter 2004)

Table 2 combines the concepts of Newman and Blatter, taking into account the numerous

Euroregions that in the 1990s and 2000s were created along borders that were or became external

Schengen borders. It depicts predictions as to the distribution of Euroregions according to these

authors' arguments. Note that this does not correspond to European Union portrayal of

Euroregions as primarily responding to local or regional policy problems that cannot be dealt

---

[20] Blatter followed Duchacek in the use of the term consociation, seeing transborder cooperation confederalist consociations of subnations (Duchacek 1986, 103; Duchacek 1984, 9). This is not in line with the classical definition of consociations by Arendt Lijphart, who used the term to describe power-sharing in ethnically or linguistically divided societies (Lijphart 1977) .

within the national contexts, referred to as 'filling the gaps' (European Commission Regional Policy, website 2012).

Table 2. *The interplay between border paradigms and leitmotifs for cross-border cooperation.*

| | | Leading idea (Blatter) | |
		Polity	Policy
Border paradigm (Newman)	**Securitization**	External Schengen borders: few Euroregions	External Schengen borders: most Euroregions
	Globalization	Internal Schengen: most Euroregions	Internal Schengen: few Euroregions

Source: author

This theory is based on a macro-level (top-down approach), not taking into consideration which actors were responding to these discourses and how (bottom-up approach) The dissertation looks, however, at one type of actors that had clear decision-making powers to respond to these different perspectives, the leaders of local governments that had the choice whether to join a Euroregion and not, and later, whether to stay in these organizations or not. The theory above can be used to construct competing theoretical expectations regarding the motivation of these leaders. The expectations will be spelled out later in this chapter (section 2.4.3.), and are based on two 'camps' of grounds of motivation.

Normative explanations: Following Blatter (2000), identification is a key driver in Europe, and actors (local governments) would therefore follow a *logic of appropriateness*, using the well-known label of March and Olsen (1989) for behavior that is based on what you should do in a specific situation.. Examples of such a basis for joining or maintaining membership in a Euroregion would include adherence to European values (this is something expected of a local government in modern Europe), but can also be belief in a common ethnic basis across the border.

Instrumental explanation: The main alternative to this is instrumental explanations, which follows a *logic of consequences* (again March and Olsen 1989), in which local governments act upon the expectations of clear instrumental goals. As expressed by Koff, "border communities are not unlike other polities where political decisions are based on the short-term interests of political entrepreneurs" (Koff 2007:22), and political leaders "are rational actors that compete within political and economic systems for various resources" (Koff 2007:21). In my analysis, I distinguish between two major strands of instrumental incentives in the border setting. The first is motivation based on accessing funding (grants from European or national sources dedicated to cross-border cooperation, see Perkmann 2003), or motivation based on common policy needs, the ground frequently conveyed by the European Union as 'filling the gaps' ((European Commission Regional Policy, website 2012) and also frequently expressed in academic literature, e.g. "territorial co-operation offers the grounds for functional cooperation towards problem-solving and challenge-tackling" (Topaloglou *et al* 2012:1)[21]

It would be possible to develop these categories further; for instance, in writings on Central and Eastern Europe I have further differed between incentives and obstacles, and whether action is induced by local or external actors (Medve-Balint 2008, Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012a, Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012b, and Medve-Balint and Svensson, 2013). For the purpose of the dissertation, it is, however, enough, to distinguish between the categories of instrumental versus normative motivations. As will be elaborated on in section 2.4.2 and 2.4.3., membership based on the normative identity dimension could be expected to create higher levels of social capital among actors.

---

[21] It can be added that grant-seeking coalitions may be rational on part of the actors, but it leads to a situation that resembles non-rational depictions of policy processes (Cohen, March, and Olsen; Kingdon 1984) in the sense that cooperation as a *solution* is identified *before* the problem. If, on the other hand, an existing recognized policy problem is the leading factor, cross-border cooperation constitutes a mean to devise appropriate solutions. This aligns with a traditional rational view of policymaking fashion.

2.3.2. Participation and interaction

Local governments that are members of Euroregions can participate in the organizational life of Euroregions in different ways. They may be detached, i.e. rarely participating in meetings or events and receive information rather in writing than in person. They may be listeners that regularly attend meetings and events to get information on 'what is going on' in terms of possibilities, but without a strategic objective for their membership. project and funding opportunities. Finally, they can also be active members that regularly attend meetings and events with a strategic approach, thereby contributing to the agenda of the Euroregion as a policy actor. It can be expected that having more active members will create higher levels of social capital within the organization. Research on new regionalization in domestic contexts have shown that both local and central governments often prefer low-level activism and 'thin' institutions, for two reasons, first, because it looks less like expanding bureaucracy to voters, and two, because the regions then are perceived less as competing power bases (Tallberg and Herrschel 2011:11)

Euroregions are also essentially *democratic political* policy actors, in that most members are local governments and regions, represented in Euroregions by elected officials. Euroregions are thereby typical of modern governance perspectives, in that the line between public and private is increasingly blurred (Ostrander 1987:7), and that public and private can be seen as a spectrum rather than as a dichotomy. The Euroregion in itself is not a state actor, but represent state actors and therefore the study of Euroregions imply a focus on elected officials rather than civil society. Due to the Euroregion's composition of politicians, they could on the one hand be expected to be well equipped to deal with policy problems with inherent conflictual potentials (conflicts about

resources). On the other hand, this also depends on whether there is a climate of consensus-seeking or politicization within the organizations.

That policy actors talk to each other is both a condition for, and a result of, coordination and cooperation on policy in different forms. The question is if cross-border communication takes place on one side of the border only, or if it also takes place across the border. Moreover, if this not only takes place within the framework of events arranged by the Euroregion, it indicates the presence of opportunities going beyond those directly created by the Euroregion.

2.3.3. Motivation, participation and interaction as institutional social capital of Euroregions

The three aspects outlined above – the motivation, participation and interaction –affect the *institutional social capital* of the Euroregions, and this section aims at defining how this concept is used in the dissertation in relation to the broader theory of social capital.

A rich body of knowledge has been accumulated over a relatively short period of time on how social capital can help us understand phenomena and developments where other factors, such as economic resources or classical political institutions, do not. That makes the concept attractive to use in the borderland setting, which as outlined above lack joint institutions that have legal-political authority. The possibility that resources can be created via the combination and recombination of inter-human and inter-institutional relations is a promising path for better understanding organizational performance. For the analysis of local government involvement in Euroregions I will argue that a Coleman-based understanding (Coleman 1990) of social capital will offer a valuable contribution to the literature on borderlands and cross-border cooperation, in

which the concept of social capital - when it has been applied - has frequently been ill-defined. Below I will first give examples of earlier usage of social capital in borderlands studies, before positioning the dissertation in relation to the wider debates on social capital.

2.3.3.1. Social capital in the literature on borderlands and cross-border relations

In order to demonstrate that it is possible to deploy social capital as a conceptual tool in borderlands studies I will review three texts where that has been done. Each of these also serves to highlight how the concept needs to be handled with precision and care.

Arguably the most important piece of work is Jonathan Grix and Vanda Knowles' 2003 essay on the Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina at the Polish-German border as a bridging organization[22] for improving the accessibility and maximization of social capital. Grix and Knowles define social capital as "the product of interaction between actors" (Grix and Knowles 2003:154), whereas the level of social capital is determined by the quality of these relations, which means that they see social capital as primarily a collective asset. The article takes a direct stance against Putnam's quantitative approach to studying social capital (by measuring proxies such as voter turnout and number of associations or survey results indicating dispositions towards trust, Putnam 2000) and instead advocates the investigation of social context and structures when it comes to the "development, mobilization and existence of trust relationship between actors" (ibid:157). Especially useful is their distinction between within-group social capital (stocks of social capital on either side of the border, such as personal or official networks among municipalities in one country) and between-group social capital (relations across the border that

---

[22] Thereby referring to Putnam's distinction between bridging and bonding social capital, briefly summarized in section 2.3.2.

ultimately create a "healthy transboundary civic community", ibid: 158).[23]). Importantly, they highlight that the low levels of within-group social capital seem to limit the development of between-group social capital. In fact, the Euroregion might even hinder the access or maximization of social capital by focusing too exclusively on between-group social capital, and neglect the development of within-group social capital or even encourage/not hinder rivalry between local actors.

In addition to within-group and between-group social capital, the authors see European social capital as a third level of analysis, a level incorporating links to other actors within European governance networks (including but not limited to actors in 'Brussels'). Although this is not described as such, this is equivalent to the linking social capital mentioned in section 2.3.3. At all three levels, there may exist a stock of social capital, which the Euroregion can facilitate the access to, or maximize in the sense of raising the 'liquidity' of the social capital. The latter is an apt reference to the metaphorical analogue with physical and financial capital that motivated the creation of the social capital concept.

Sonja Deppisch (2008) partly builds on Grix and Knowles in her investigation of the governance process and level of cooperation in the Austrian-German Euroregion[24] 'Via Salina'. Deppisch characterizes Via Salina as having 'a low level of action' (Deppish: 78). The explanation for this lack of activity is sought in the lack of existing social capital, but also in the lack of investment in social capital formation. Unfortunately, the role and meaning of social capital change throughout the text. It is not operationalized or defined in other terms than being

---

[23] The definition of group is simple in their account; 'group' refers to the resident population on either side of the border or the combined population. It is worth noting that they do not problematize what constitutes one "side" of the border, although there is no simple way to tell how close someone has to be to the border to be border-close.

[24] Deppisch uses the term 'Euregio', but for the sake of coherence I use Euroregion throughout this paper for any reference to formalized cooperation between sub-national authorities, frequently extended to include private and non-profit actors, located close to a border in two or more countries. This definition includes both large and small-scale cross-border regions (for the opposing view that only micro cross-border regions correspond to the original meaning of Euroregion, see Perkmann 2003).

'cooperation among localities', a definition that brings forward a risk of tautology since cross-border cooperation is also part of the object of study. At one point in the text, she considers social capital to be a theoretical background which in combination with the theory of actor-centered institutionalism and regional governance can explain performance, while she also describes social capital as constituting both an independent variable (pre-existing stocks of social capital) and intervening variable (stocks of social capital created in the cooperation process). The latter statement I consider a more accurate reflection of the analysis she actually conducts. She thereby differs from Grix and Knowles (2003) who use social capital as a dependent variable in their study.

Her findings, based on interviews and document analysis, indicates that the weak state and meager accomplishments of the Euroregion mainly can be explained by lack of interest, difficulties between members on the German side, but also by insufficient levels and use of social capital[25]. "Almost no trans-boundary social capital has been added to that existing among the mayors of neighboring local authorities" in Bavaria.

If Grix and Knowles, as well as Deppisch, concentrated on the network aspect of social capital, Jouni Häkli (2009) considers trust to be the key component of social capital and analyzes it in relation to cross-border cooperation along the Tornio River at the Swedish-Finnish border. He makes clear that he is interested in trust as existing in interactions, not as a personal disposition, thereby distancing himself from the stocks of 'generalized trust' that is captured by surveys of individuals, such as the World Values Survey[26]. Instead he uses actor-network theory in his investigation of whether the Tornio River can serve as a boundary object with an agency of

---

[25] It should be mentioned that she also considers other factors (situational, actors, internal and external institutional context, cooperation processes) as influencing cross-border governance, thereby dealing with a set of independent variables.

[26] Data and descriptions available at http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/ (accessed September 8, 2009)

its own, sometimes being a 'force of divergence', and at other times a 'point of contact'. He declares the river to be both a concrete and an immaterial manifestation of bridging social capital.[27] Further, he points out that the tight links between officials have not been matched by links or trust between the local populations, thereby leaving "the achieved transnational landscape hanging in the air […] without deeper rooting in the borderlanders' social and political fabric" (ibid:237). However, efforts to mitigate the flooding of the unregulated river have made the river into a 'bridge' which in itself contributes to trust-building.

The reviewed three texts put social capital and its two key components – networks and trust – at the forefront of discussion, but it should be emphasized that social capital may sometimes be a smaller piece of a larger analytical jigsaw. References can for instance be made to past social capital that enforcements of stricter border regimes tore apart, or social capital can be mentioned in passing when analyzing or describing cross-border cooperation. A quote by Liam O'Dowd might be seen as typical for these kinds of commentaries: "Close analysis of existing cross-border cooperation shows clearly that the reality often falls short of the rhetoric. It reveals insufficient resources, mismatched competencies, duplication of effort, 'back to back' rather than genuinely integrated projects, inter-agency conflicts over resource allocation, erratic funding patterns and excessive emphasis on physical infrastructure and 'hard' economic outcomes, rather than on 'soft factors' like *social capital and trust*" (O'Dowd 2003:24, my emphasis). In such writings, social capital is often uncritically regarded as something good, what James Wesley Scott (2003) describes as a "primary goal of local and regional development" (Scott 2003:150) but without elaborating on the consequences thereof. Scott also comments on the difficulty in assessing the role of transnational regionalism. "It is not easy to 'measure' the governance contributions of

---

[27] He rightly criticizes Putnam both for never clarifying what would be evidence of bridging social capital.

transnational regionalism. Detractors might point to the lack of concrete results in terms of investments or physical development. On the other hand, the mere existence of networks and working groups across borders could be seen as helping create the *social capital*" (Scott 2003:136, my emphasis). References to the potential dark sides of social capital are much rarer. An exception is Sophie Bouwen's observation that increased economic integration of border regions in the form of labor commuting might be harmful for individuals' networks and trust relationships (Bouwens 2004), which means that social capital stocks (within-group social capital to use the terminology suggested by Grix and Knowles) might actually decrease as a consequence of practices that are generally considered 'good' for cross-border integration development or between-group social capital creation.

The review of these texts demonstrate that when social capital has been used in borderlands studies it has frequently failed to clarify whether social capital is the independent or dependent variable of the research, used slippery references to the groups that are the owners of social capital, and did not state clear theoretical expectations. In order to avoid that, I will therefore provide a background to the development of the concept of social capital and the debates it has sparked, and position the dissertation in relation to these. This will then be used to construct a theoretical model and theoretical expectations to be explored during the empirical research.

2.3.3.2. Key debates on social capital

The concept of social capital is usually attributed to three 'founding fathers'- Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert D. Putnam. Whereas Bourdieu saw social capital as an individual

asset, a resource unproportionally held by members of the privileged classes[28] (Bourdieu 1983), Coleman saw social capital as a collective non-divisible good, and stated that "unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structures of relations between actors and among actors" (Coleman 1988:S98). Putnam defined social capital as "social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity and trust" (Putnam 2002:xxi), and utilized the concept in his studies of how regional development in Italy could be explained by variations in the stock of social capital, by which he meant density of social networks combined with the degree of trust in other people and authorities (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti 1993). Compared to Coleman his focus is more on civil participation and the importance of associations, rather than the relations between actors. (Putnam 2000).

For the purpose of the dissertation (*how does cross-border cooperation between local governments work?),* neither the class-based perspective of Bourdieu nor Putnam's focus on civic engagement holds significant analytical promise. Production and reproduction of social, economic and political power in borderlands is an area where more research is needed, but is not in focus of this dissertation. Likewise, while social capital in the form of civic engagement (membership in associations, etc) may indirectly contribute to good governance[29] in the borderlands (as well as in other settings), this dissertation's focus on cooperation in Euroregion first requires more theoretical development regarding these organizations' internal and external relations. Therefore, Coleman's advocacy for explanation of social systems (e.g. a Euroregional

---

[28] Bourdieu distinguished between economic, cultural and social capital, Bourdieu 1986

[29] According to Putnam, social capital contributes to a well-working democracy (and good governance) by two parallel mechanisms. The first is a mechanism that is external to the individual and that consists of improved flows of political information when people freely express their demands on government, and these demands and interests are channeled through associations that in neo-Toquevillian fashion are assumed to lend the represented views a 'clearer shape'. The second is an internal capacity-building mechanism residing in the individuals that engage in civic engagement, resulting in their acquiring "habits of cooperation and public-spiritedness, as well as the practical skills necessary to partake in public life" (Putnam 2000:338).

organization) through the examination of processes internal to the system fits the two-level approach of this dissertation.

> "Explanation of the behavior of social systems entails examining processes internal to the system, involving its component parts, or units at a level below that of the system. The prototypical case is that in which the component parts are individuals who are members of the social system. In other cases the component parts may be institutions within the systems or subgroups that are part of the system. "(Coleman 1990:2)

Following Coleman I therefore define social capital as *a set of social relations in which a single or a collective subject can make use of any given moment*. It should here be noted that Coleman does not express the definition this succinctly, neither in his 1988 seminal article or his 1990 book on social theory, and my definition is therefore an abbreviation taken from Carlo Trigilia's comment on Coleman's work.

> "a set of social relations of which a single subject (for instance, an entrepreneur or a worker) or a collective subject (either private or public) can make use at any given moment. Through the availability of this capital of relations, cognitive resources – such as information or normative resources such as trust – allow actors to realize objectives which would not otherwise be realized or which could only be obtained at a much higher cost." (Trigilia 2001:430).

This Triglia quote parsimoniously captures the mechanisms (cognitive resources such as information, and normative resources such as trust) whereby social capital in Coleman's understanding is expected to contribute to well-functioning social systems, i.e. collective enterprises such as the Euroregion in this dissertation. This links in with the debate on how social capital is originally created (or destructed), where Adler and Kwon (2002) point to two main arguments. Does it emerge as a result of the structure of links in a social network, or is it the content of those links (norms) that is crucial? Adler and Kwon suggest that both these might be necessary, and that the main factors that ought to be present for social capital to emerge is opportunity, motivation and ability (Adler and Kwon 2002:23-27). *Opportunity* is related to the

structure of the network in terms of number of links, presence of sub-groups within the network. *Motivation* (understood as norms) focuses on the content on the link, especially on general reciprocity as the norm that can create the trust that is necessary for social capital (see also Putnam 1996:220). Likewise, *ability* refers to the content of links between actors in terms of the capacity to act upon such norms. Motivation and ability are strongly related, as ability is probably a precondition for motivation (Olsson 2012).

In the dissertation, this would translate into how dense communication (*opportunity*) among local governments partaking in a Euroregion, based on willingness to trust each other and aim to achieve joint goals (*motivation* and *ability*), creates the resource that will help those goals to be established. Such a resource is created regardless of whether communication is strictly project-related or is on other topics. The social capital of interest in this dissertation is therefore the social capital at the 'institutional' level, i.e. as the collective asset of a group of public sub-national authorities, and not the social capital at what I call the 'population level', i.e. it is social capital as the collective asset of a group that is 'the people'.

Numerous claims have been done with respect to the different forms that social capital may take. The most common is the distinction between bonding, bridging and linking social capital. Bonding social capital refers to ties existing in closed networks – the frequently cited example is the mafia or other criminal gang, but it can just as well be other types of homogeneous networks that are more or less difficult for outsiders to join. It can be simply "connections to people like you (family, relatives, kinship)" (Woolcock and Sweetser 2002, 26). Bridging and linking social capital both emphasize links outside the immediate community. The first refers to social networks in or between groups that are socially heterogeneous. The latter is similar, but it should be connections to people or institutions that have informal or formal powers (Dahal and Adhikari 2009; Woolcock 2001; Mayoux 2001). Bonding social capital has often been portrayed as 'the

dark side of social capital' (Baron, Field, and Tom Schuller 2002, 10-11), whereas bridging and linking social capital is supposedly normatively preferable.

As is natural for a concept that has gained terrain so quickly, the use of social capital as explanatory factor or study variable in social sciences has been criticized on many grounds, more than can be explored in this section.[30] I will, however, briefly comment on three points of criticism.

The first would be that there is nothing 'new' with social capital; social science has always been interested in questions of social interaction, networks, and the results of that. Coleman's response, which this dissertation seeks to reinforce, is that the:

> "value of the concept lies primarily in the fact that it identifies certain aspects of social structure by their function, just as the concept 'chair' identifies certain physical objects by their function, disregarding differences in form, appearance, and construction. The function identified by the concept 'social capital' is the value of those aspects of social structure to actors, as resources than can be used by the actors to realize their interests" (1990: 305).

The second would be that there is an element of circularity in much theory on social capital, in which social capital is presented as both a precondition for and as an outcome of phenomena such as development or good governance. However, as long as the concept is clearly applied this does not need to be a analytical problem. As will be seen in section 2.4, this dissertation will investigate along the premises that cross-border social capital *is* mutually reinforcing (circular), but that differentiation between within-group and between-group social capital, where the second is one dimension of Euroregional function, helps addresses this when it comes to analytically distinguishing cause from effect. While I will further elaborated on this in the next section where the model guiding the research is presented, the main claim to take away from this section is that

---

[30] For critical essays on social capital in general, see essays in (Baron, Field, and Schuller 2000). For criticism on Putnam, excellent essays can be found in.(McLean, Schultz, and Steger 2002).

dense communication patterns between political representatives of local governments according to the theory of social capital would create a latent resource for further development.

A third point of criticism is that social capital has been deliberately used by a neo-liberal hegemonic power exercised by world institutions such as IMF, World bank etc (Harris 2001), to de-politicize development in poor countries by holding communities responsible for their own poverty (*they should create more social capital*) and by obfuscate issues such as the need for redistribution of resources, zero-sum political trade-offs, and class-based power. This is a strong argument, and the issue of de-politicized discourses in cross-border regionalism will be a part of the empirical investigation.

To sum up the argument so far: social capital is a convenient shorthand for the resource that may emerge from motivation, participation and interaction patterns among the local governments that constitute the basis of most Euroregions. This actor type (local governments) and this approach (interaction-based) have received little attention in the growing literature on borderlands (see literature review above). Drawing on Coleman (1988, 1990, interpreted by Trigilia 2001) I define it as set of social relations in which a single or a collective subject can make use of any given moment, and in the dissertation I investigate the relation of *institutional social capital as a collective asset*, i.e. the joint social capital of public authorities (local governments) taking part in Euroregions, to Euroregion function and performance. This does not mean that individual social capital, or population-level social capital as a collective asset might not matter as well, but the role of these will have to be taken on by future research, due to time and resource limitations. In the model in the next section I will also rely on one distinction taken from the literature on cross-border cooperation, namely Grix and Knowles distinction between *within-group* and *between-group* social capital, where the former refers to social capital on one side of the border whereas the latter refers to the social capital of the whole border area.

2.4. Understanding Euroregional performance

The purpose of investigating the local government membership of Euroregions, applying the concept of social capital, is to contribute to the literature on what impacts on the performance and functions of formalized cross-border cooperation between sub-national authorities (Euroregions).[31] How has this question been approached before and by whom? The continuous literature review that was part of the work on this dissertation by necessity had to be broad and interdisciplinary. The phenomenon of cooperation and interaction across national borders has captured the attention of geographers, economists, political scientists, anthropologists and political science. Below, I have made a narrow selection of relevant contributions that help identify three relevant factors (or independent variables) from the literature in relation to performance and function of Euroregions.

2.4.1. Factors influencing Euroregional performance

As the number of Euoregions has grown rapidly in the last decades, discussions have also intensified around cross-border integration, what has caused the growth of the Euroregional type of organization, as well as what may influence their chances for long-term viability and institutionalization.

Euroregions and the corresponding phenomena in other parts of the world have been the focus of academic study and debate for several decades. As pointed out by Jukarainen there is a disconnect between an abundance of case studies and theory on this matter (Jukarainen 2006), but

---

[31] In the dissertation, well-performing and well-functioning Euroregions are in turn assumed to have a positive impact on cross-border social and economic integration, and probably on social-economic development, although that is outside the scope of study.

a conceptual article by Henk van Houtum (Van Houtum 2000) distinguishing between three theoretical strands of debate has been widely cited: the 'flow approach', the 'cross-border cooperation approach' and 'the people approach'. Of these, the first will be used to identify one factor of importance and I will therefore briefly recount his argument. The 'flow approach' is linked to classical and neoclassical economics and has a distinct rationality-based notion to it with '*Homo Economicus'* as both the role model and assumption of human behavior. Borders are seen as a barrier hindering 'free flowing'; state borders are 'distortions in the market networks' which leads to inefficient or sub-optimal economic spaces.

However, the 'flow approach' overlooks the fact that economic theory can make two opposing predictions for cross-border economic cohesion; removed barriers can be expected to lead to increased economic activity and mobility, but at the same time borders can act as a 'friction' creating dynamism between areas with different economic conditions through a push-and-pull mechanism. For example, a study on the cross-border labor market at the Dutch-German border indicates that European policies to promote integrated cross-border labor markets are likely to fail "since it is not economic similarities, but (large) differences related to the existence of borders that seem to cause cross-border commuting" (Bouwens 2004:148-149). It follows from this that smooth flows across the border, i.e. economic cohesion, can be seen as both a facilitating factor for cooperation, or they may be they catalyst for cooperation (see also authors such as Lösch 1940, Hansen 1977, Castells 1996-1998, Martinez 1990). The permeability of the border is a relatively constant factor across Europe and therefore that in itself is not an independent variable. However, what varies significantly is the extent to which socio-economic levels vary between the two countries. Economic heterogeneity or homogeneity is therefore likely to be a factor impacting cooperation. While the literature is not clear as to which of these could be expected to further cooperation, I argue that differences in economic levels would cause

tensions that would influence trust levels and willingness to communicate across the border, which would be inhibiting for the function and performance of the Euroregions. Hence, the first variable is *economic homogeneity, which refers to similarity* in terms of the level of economic development (GDP).[32]

Another factor that draws both upon literature and common-sense is the favorable effect of cultural-linguistic proximity. In other words: if the people on each side of the border speak the same or similar language and identify themselves as having a similar culture, that will facilitate cooperation (e.g. Anderson and Wever 2003). The second variable, *cultural-linguistic proximity*, is captured by a constructivist and post-modern approach, labeled the 'people approach' in the summary of the debate mentioned above (Van Houtum 2000).[33]

Administrative settings have received less attention, but Perkmann 2003 did test for the importance of the administrative system and found that decentralization in general was a favorable factor, and furthermore that similar systems in the cooperating countries were key (see also Herrschel 2011: 171) While it can be assumed that decentralization in general is favorable, it is therefore even safer to state that *politico-administrative similarity* constitutes a favorable condition, which is hence a third variable.

2.4.2. The added value of including local institutional networks (social capital)

---

[32] Note that it does not refer to differences or similarities in terms of economic sectors. Two economies can be equally 'well off' but depend on different sectors (services, industry, etc).

[33] Other relevant work include that of (Olivier Kramsch and Hooper 2004; Strassoldo 1982; Newman 2003; Jessop 2002). Social constructivism, spatial identity approaches and action approaches have been applied to for instance understand and describe cognitive distances and cognitive perceptions of realities.

Still, it would be naïve to expect the level of cultural-linguistic affinity, economic homogeneity and administrative similarities to predict how Euroregions can perform. If so, Euroregions located at the Polish-German, the Spanish-French, or the Slovenian-Italian Euroregions, not to speak of cross-border micro-regions outside Europe, could not be expected to work efficiently under any circumstances.[34]

This dissertation contributes to a small body of literature that looks at the importance of networks, although these works up to now rarely have been specific in how this impact would work. This can take the form of analyzing region or European-wide policy networks to trace the increasingly institutionalized support and funding for borderland cooperation, but it can also be to study policy networks in a specific case (Clatter 1997, Leibenath and Knippschild 2005,Kramsch, van Houtum and Zierhofer 2005, Walther and Reithel 2012, Dorry and Decoville 2012). A social capital approach a la Putnam would try to assess population-level social capital by measuring *civic engagement* (participation in voluntary associations, etc, Putnam 1994, 2000).

However, the novelty of the dissertation is that it looks specifically at the resources of the local government members that make up the Euroregions. It assesses why and how local governments engage in Euroregions, and how they interact; close contacts and active participation indicates higher levels of social capital, and the dissertation investigates how that relates to organizational performance. It also looks at if this is preceded by similar endowments of social capital in domestic local government communities.

Based on the building blocks presented in this section, a model (Figure 1) of Euroregional functioning and performance can be assembled, indicating both its causes and consequences.

---

[34] The limitation of external conditions as explanatory factors was pointed out in Koff 2007, who asked why "integration fails in areas where supranational initiatives are present whereas it succeeds in places where such strategies are absent" (Koff 2007:28)? Although that question was based more on empirical differences in socio-economic borderland integration (not Euroregional functioning) between Europe and North America, this line of thinking is valid here as well.

Figure 1. *Model of hypothesized relationship.*
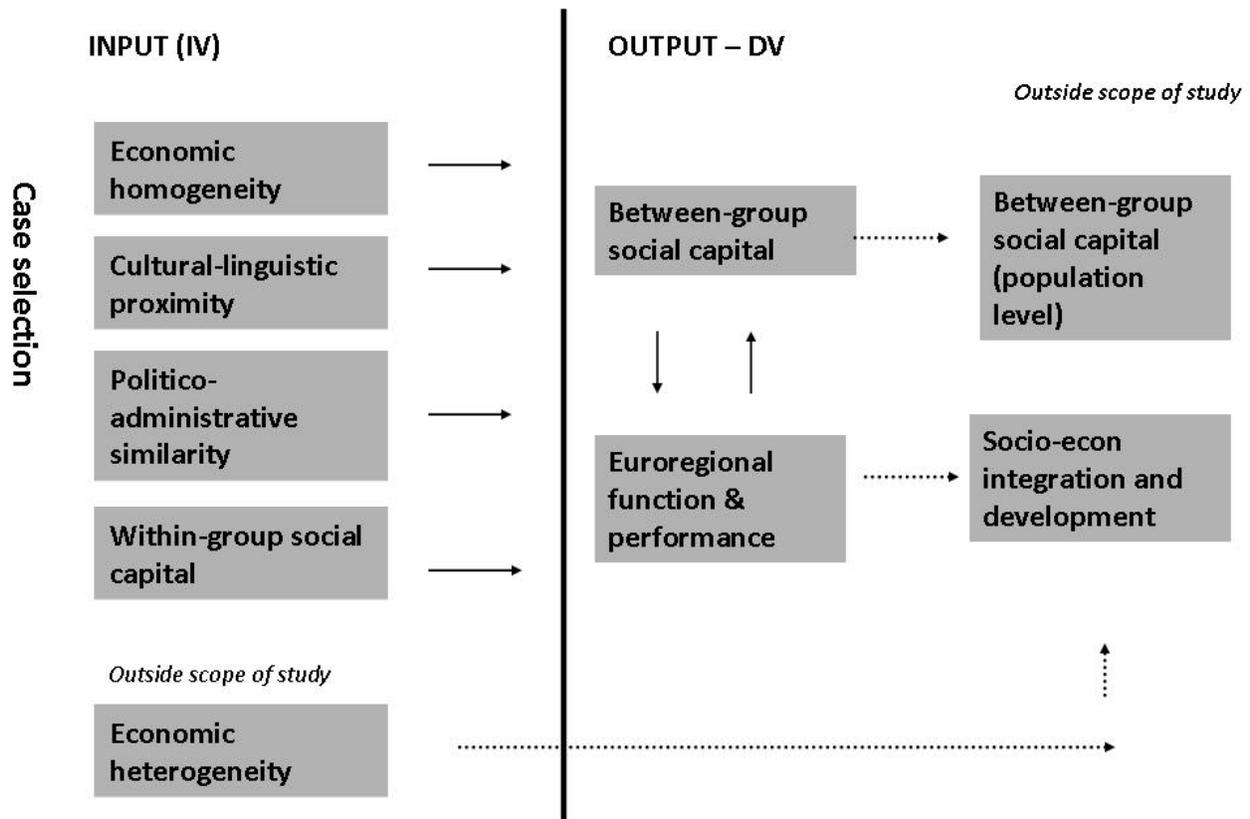
Source: author

The model's vertical line emphasizes the main distinction between the input and the output side. Three factors are depicted as known conditions favorable for cross-border cooperation (formalized in Euroregion), integration and development: cultural-linguistic proximity, which refers to the possibility of involved actors to 'speak the same language' in its both metaphorical and literal sense, political-administrative similarity referring to the actors operating within broadly similar politico-administrative contexts, and economic homogeneity, referring to broadly similar levels of economic development. It should be noted that case selection may control for these, see Chapter 3 on research design and methods.

The model also includes within-group institutional social capital, i.e. social capital held by domestic sub-national local governments as a group. On the output-side the model contains a two-dimensional dependent variable. This is to recognize the mutually reinforcing connection between the trans-national (between-group) institutional social capital and cross-border cooperation intensity in terms of organizational capacity of the Euroregion. These two are in turn expected to influence overall socio-economic development and integration, and also lead to peaceful relations among inhabitants (population-level social capital). The latter is outside the scope of the present study (indicated by dashed line), as is the possibility that economic heterogeneity would impact integration.

The advantage of the model and the differentiation between within-group an between-group social capital (building on Grix and Knowles 2003, Deppisch 2008) is that it avoids tautological reasoning, while recognizing the close association between between-group social capital and Euroregional performance.

2.4.3. Theoretical expectations

With the reviewed literature and the suggested model in mind it is possible to spell out some theoretical expectations that will be in focus of the study. However, it should be emphasized that in the dissertation I do not limit myself to examining these theoretical expectations (i.e. hypothesis-testing), but I will also seek to refine and build theory in relation to the overall research question (hypothesis-generation).

The first set of expectations relates to the motivation, participation and interaction of local governments in Euroregions.

- *1: Local governments' motivation for joining and maintaining membership in a Euroregion is based primarily on normative identity-based incentives.*

- *2: Cross-border cooperation draws on the experience of increased inter-municipal cooperation within the national state.*

- *3: The national state is increasingly irrelevant, and the existence of a state border therefore does not significantly affect the likelihood that communication between political actors located on different sides of a border will take place.*

It should be emphasized that for each of these statements, rivaling hypotheses can be formulated: Collective action within a Euroregion may be based on rational-instrumental incentives[35]. Inter-municipal cooperation on one side of the border may have nothing to do with cross-border cooperation. That the nation-state only influences the extent of communication in a local transnational area may be a neoliberal exaggerated expectation[36]. A second reservation is that the expectations are deliberately made in dichotomous 'black and white', whereas reality may be continuous shades of grey. Nonetheless, these expectations serve as a relief against which the empirical data should be read.

The second set of expectations relate to the second research question, which includes causality. Again, a few words about circularity and possibly tautology are here in order. When it comes to between-group social capital, this is clearly something that can be related to the goal of

---

[35] See Perkmann 2003 and Koff 2007. "When entrepreneurs, including elected officials, NGO representatives, businesses, economic organizations, unions, etc, find it in their interest to create cross-border communities, then integration occurs, even when external conditions are not favourable. Conversely, when favorable conditions exist due to the presence of supranational programs, such as those enacted by the EU border integration does not necessarily come about because local actors do not rationally find these strategies to be coherent with their individual interests." (Koff 2007:22)

[36] "Of course, empirical evidence does not seem to support exaggerated neo-liberal conclusions that point to the erosion of borders and thus, nation-state sovereignty. However, it could support the claim that borders have become increasingly permeable through the selective lowering of various barriers." (Koff 2007:20) There is a need to revisit this over time, and with new data related to a specific set of actors.

Euroregions in general (creating links and identities) between people. We *should* therefore find between-group social capital where there is a successfully implemented Euroregion. The theoretical expectation of the role of different forms of social capital is instead that within-group social capital serves as a *pre-condition* for between-group social capital. It is certainly reconcilable with general theory to find a region with a dense informal cross-border network and/or trust which still fails to achieve any cooperation goals across the border. However, I do not expect to see informal networks if the respective communities do not have high levels of within-group social capital. This give rise to the following expectations:

- *4: A high level of institutional social capital in the form of network communication on at one side of the border (within-group social capital) increases the likelihood for a high level of institutional between-group social capital. In other words, strong local domestic networks increase the likelihood for strong local transnational networks.*
- *5: A high level of between-group social capital is associated with high organizational performance of Euroregions. In other words, high cross-border communication intensity between Euroregional members is association with a Euroregion's cross-border cooperation intensity.*

For both, the rivaling hypotheses would simply be that no association between these conditions exists. In addition to examining these expectations, the research is expected to further add to theory by adding knowledge on the relation between motivation and social capital, give details on the interests and priorities of local governments that are members of Euroregions, and refine measurements of Euroregional performance.

2.5. Conclusion

The introduction established the relevance of adding to the knowledge on the local cross-border cooperation organizations between sub-national authorities (Euroregions), which have increased dramatically in numbers over the past two decades. This chapter situated the study within the literature on policy networks and multi-level governance. The chapter then utilized specialized literature on cross-border cooperation to map out the factors that are known to impact performance, while emphasizing why these cannot be expected to explain all variance. It then identified the theory of social capital as a useful shorthand for a perspective that has been largely missing, the resources latent in the local government membership network. It pointed out how studying motivation, participation and interaction add up to social capital that can be divided into within-group and between-group assets depending on whether it is the resource of the community on one side of the border or across it, and it finally suggested a model that brings this together and will guide the further research.

It should be clear from this chapter what the dissertation does not do. It does not investigate the social capital of individual actors, neither does it investigate the social capital of the borderlanders, i.e. the population living in these areas, and the effect that might have on performance. It will focus on local governments as members, and not on regional authorities, and will not look outside Europe although much cross-border cooperation is taking place there as well.

How the function and performance of Euroregions, as well as levels of social capital, will be assessed will be discussed in the next chapter, which gives a comprehensive overview of the research design and methodology of the dissertation.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

What is the best way to investigate factors associated with a new type of political institutions in the European governance landscape? Methodological concerns by necessity accompany any dissertation project from its onset to its completion, each having its own difficulties. While I from the literature had identified factors that were likely to be conducive for efficient functioning and performance (see previous chapter), I assumed that the processes and operations within these Euroregions would also be context-dependent. I knew that the possibility to adequately answer my set of questions was constrained by practical issues such as resources, access and language, and I also knew that statistical data on cross-border regions in general were patchy, to say the least, and that there was virtually no accumulated data on the Euroregions as institutions. The value of quantitative data would therefore be limited, and to some extent relying on qualitative data imperative. The use of the case study research method, defined by Yin as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin 2009, 18)", appeared to be the best option. As the inquiry was still theory-driven, I chose an *embedded multiple-case design* with multiple units of analysis (see below and Yin 2009, 46) selected as to predict "contrasting results but for anticipatable reasons" (Yin 2009, 54).

The primary aim of this chapter is to be transparent as to how I conducted this study, and I therefore take considerable effort to detail crucial elements such as case selection and operationalizations. However, it is also an intended secondary effect that this endeavor should not be merely a technical account, but should also shed additional light on what these Euroregions

are and what they do. In this way, the content of this chapter complements the information given in the preceding chapter and will give the reader a deeper understanding of the topic.

3.1. Selection of cases

The universe of cases of institutionalized cross-border cooperation structures of any kind would be in the tens of thousands. Even when we only count formalized cooperation between public authorities, the number would be very high. While an encompassing effort to categorize and compare these for commonalities and differences would surely be a rewarding endeavor, it was beyond the aims of the current project. Instead, it focused on a part of the world where the development towards removing borders as obstacles has gone furthest, namely Europe and its 'Euroregions'.

For the research aims in general and the case-selection process in particular it is necessary to know how many such Euroregions there are, and where they are located. This, in turn, depends on the interpretation of especially two parts of my definition of a Euroregion (*formalized cooperation between sub-national authorities in Europe, frequently extended to include private and non-private actors, located close to a border in two or more countries*), namely what it means that cross-border cooperation is *formalized* and what it means that the sub-national authorities involved should be in the *proximity* of a border.

Starting from an inclusive interpretation I constructed a dataset of Euroregions merging records from the database of the Association of European Border Regions[37]with the listings of Perkmann (Perkmann 2003) and Deas and Lord (Deas and Lord 2006) resulting in a list of 190 organizations. Using online sources I incorporated basic facts on countries covered, type of members (local, regional, national), year of establishment, number of inhabitants in the region, area covered, website address and secretariat contact details into the dataset. This list also contained large-scale cross-border cooperation in the form of Working Communities that might span sizable portions of the European continent (examples of cross-border structures thereby excluded are "The Working Community of Danube Countries", "Euroregion Black Sea", "The Nordic Council of Ministers" and the "Carpathian Euroregion"). As I intended to investigate the role of local patterns of involvement and participation, as a first step I excluded such macro initiatives and included only what by Perkmann (2003) is referred to as 'micro cross-border regions' usually covering areas in a 50-200 km proximity to a border.

The second step involved interpreting formalization, which is harder to pin down, although Perkmann's listing (ibid.) differentiation between "integrated" and "emerging" micro cross-border regions served as a good starting point. In order for an organization to be formalized I deemed that it must have a formal agreement towards institutional independence (the formation of an organization) and to have a minimal institutional independent history. The thresholds I selected for this was a 5-year cut-off point (i.e. as the case selection was done in 2009, I did not include organizations established after 2004), and organizational independence (i.e. not being

---

[37] Used with the permission of AEBR president, Martin Guillermo-Ramirez (2009).

projects or short-term spin-offs from regional agencies, but note that this requirement does not require that the organization should be based on any specific kind of legal entity).[38]

To sum up,

- The universe of cases is comprised of *formalized* cooperation between sub-national authorities in Europe, frequently extended to include private and non-profit actors, located *close* to a border in two or more countries,

- The comprehensive term used for these in the project is Euroregions;

- To qualify for consideration as cases the Euroregions should fulfill several scope conditions derived from the definition. They should be:

     (1) *micro* cross-border region and not large Working Communities;

     (2) established in 2004, i.e. at the time of case selection (2009) have a five-year institutional history;

     (3) organizationally independent with a long-term mission, i.e. not project-based;

This resulted in a reduced dataset comprising 91 cases listed in Annex A. The setting of scope conditions to clarify and list the universe of cases was a necessary preparation for the process of assessing the independent variables. The next step contained a serious resource constraint, since a detailed, nuanced and fully accurate assessment would not be possible even for the reduced number of 91 cases, due to the extensive use of primary and secondary source that would have been needed. At the same time it can be argued that even a superficial assessment adds to the validity of the case selection, as well as to the knowledge-building of the investigator (me), and hence a certain time-investment was justified. Bearing in mind that the tables presented

---

[38] Some listings in the AEBR database were also excluded because of being uni-lateral initiatives for improving cross-border relations. According to my definition there needs to be membership from at least two countries, which is the usual understanding of cross-border cooperation.

in this section by no means constitute a final 'truth' or should be used as evidence in any other context, the reader is invited to make a critical judgment of the procedure as such.

First, each case of the 91 was assigned a dichotomous value ('high' or 'low') for the factors that the literature review had identified as facilitating factors: 'cultural-linguistic proximity' (ethnic, linguistic and historical ties), economic homogeneity (similarity in economic development), and politico-administrative similarity (similarity in terms of territorial governing). I used relative crude, but yet intuitive, indicators to assign values: ability to understand the minority or majority language on the 'other' side of the border, federal or unitary political-administrative systems, GDP in 2008.

One weakness of the indicators is that that the data was inferred from national rather than regional level and that low pre-existing knowledge of individual Euroregional cases made differentiation between Euroregions along the same border impossible. It is possible that a growth region in a particular region in an otherwise weak country can approach the level of economic activity of a lagging region on the other side, and the other way around. It is also clear that there may be cases of small Euroregions that constitute partly separate economic systems, so that the differences would be higher or lower than for another Euroregion along the same border. The same may be said for cultural-linguistic proximity. While this very likely has given rise to wrongly assigned values in some cases, I still argue that the large number of cases included is high enough to allow for some degree of error. The procedure was also more transparent and open for replication than many other small-N case-based studies undertaken for PhD projects.

The table of the 91 cases was the basis for the final selection of which Euroregions to include as case studies. They were selected according to the well-known case selection technique of the 'Method of Difference' technique (also known as the "Most Similar Systems Design) - dating back at least until John Stuart Mill (1858) – mandating the selection of cases that are

similar in every respect but one, the study variable (see also George and Bennett 2005). If the outcome is different, the study variable can be assumed to play a role. Relationships are hence established by mimicking experimental research, not by the performance of statistical analysis.

In the context of the dissertation project in focus in this paper, this implies selecting from cases that resemble each other on the three variables above. Table 3 was created based on the table resulting from the work described in the previous section. It sorts the cases according to cultural-linguistic proximity and economic homogeneity, and highlights cases with disparate administrative systems in grey. To clarify, administrative asymmetry refers to major mismatches, such as when a region in a federal (or devolved) state should cooperate with a significantly weaker region of a unitary state or when levels of fiscal and legal decentralization differ widely.

Table 3. *Patterns of cultural-linguistic proximity and economic homogeneity in European Euroregions.*

	High 'cultural –linguistic proximity'	Low 'cultural-linguistic proximity'
Low economic homogeneity	Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Bohmerwald-Sumava AT/CZ/DE Euregio Egrensis D/CZ Euregio Helsinki-Tallinn FI EE Euregio Silva Nortica AT/CZ Euroregion Elbe/Labe DE, CZ Euroregion Erzgebirge Krusnohori DE/CZ **N=6**	Euregio Weinviertel-Sudmahren/West-Slovakia AT/CZ/SK Euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa DE/CZ/PL Euroregion Pomerania DE PL Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina DE PL Euroregion Saule LT/LV/RU/SE Euroregion Spree-Neisse-Bober DE PL Hungarian-Austrian Cross-border Regional Council (West-Pannon Region') HU/AT **N=7**
High economic homogeneity	Arko Co-operation SE NO Comite regional franco-genevois-canton de geneve region rhone alpes CH/FR Conseil du Leman CH/FR Danube-Körös-Maros-Tisza Euroregion HU/RO East Border Region Committees GB/IE Euregio Inntal AT/DE Euregio Pskov-Livonia EE LV RU Euregio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein AT/DE Euregio Steiermark - Slowenien AT SI	L'Espace Mont-Blanc CH/IT Castilla y León - Regiáo Centro ES/PT Castilla y León - Regiáo Norte ES/PT Communidade de Trabalho Regiao Norte de Portugal-Galicia ES/PT Comunidad de Trabajo Extremadure-Alentejo ES/PT Conference des Alpes franco-italiennes CAFI, IT/FR Conference des Hautes Vallees FR/IT conseil Valais-Valee d'aoste du Grand St. Bernard IT/FR

Euregio TriRhena CH/DE/FR	Ems Dollart Region DE/NL
Euregio Via Salina AT DE	EUREGIO DE/NL
Euregio Zugspitze-Wetterstein-Karwendel AT	Euregio Maas-Rhein BE/DE/NL
Europaregion Tirol AT/IT	Euregio Rhein-Maas Nord DE NL
Euroregio Neogradiensis HU/SK	Euregio Rhein-Waal DE NL
Euroregion Bile-Biele-Karpaty CZ/SK	Euregio SaarLorLuxRhein DE/FR/LU
Euroregion Bug PL/BY/UA	Euregion Tesinske Slezsko - Slask Cieszynski CZ/PL
Euroregion Country of Lakes - Ezeru Zeme BY LV LT	Euroregion Beskidy-Beskydy PL/CZ/SK
Euroregion Delta - Rhodopi BG/GR	Euroregion Euskadi-Navarre-Aquatiaine ES/FR
Euroregion Evros - Meric - Maritsa BG/TR/GR	Euroregion Glacensis CZ, PL
Euroregion Ipel HU/SK	Euroregion Lower Danube MD/RO/UA
Euroregion Nemunas -Niemen-Hemah BY/LT/PL/RU	Euroregion Middle Danube-Iron Gates + Euroregion Danube 21 BG/RO/SRB
Euroregion Nestos-Mesta BG/GR	Euroregion Morava-Pcinja-Struma BG/MK/SRB
Euroregion Oberrhein (Trirhena plus Pamina) CH/DE/FR	Euroregion Praded - Pradziad CZ/PL
Euroregion Podunajsky Trojspolok / Harmas Duna-videk Euroregio HU/SK Duna-Hídverő Euroregion	Euroregion Puszcza Bialowieska PL BY
Euroregion Sajo - Rima - Slaná - Rimava HU/SK	Euroregion Silesia CZ PL
Euroregion Sesupe LT PL RU	Euroregion Tatry SK/PL
Euroregion Siret-Prut-Nistru MD/RO	Extremadura - Centro ES/PT
Fehmarnbelt region DE DK	Inn-Salzach-Euregio AT/DE
Granskommitteen Østfold - Bohuslan /Dalsland SE NO	Kvarkenradet FI/SE
Granskommitteen Østfold - Varmland	Mittnorden FI NO SE
Hajdu-Bihar-Bihor Euroregio HU/SK	Nordkalottrådet FI NO SE
Hochrheinkommission CH/DE	Pyrenees Mediterranean Euroregion ES/FR
Ipoly Euroregion HU/SK	Region Insubrica CH/IT
Irish Central Border Area Network - ICBAN GB/IE	Scheldemond BE/FR/NL
Ister-Granum Euroregio HU/SK Duna (Hídverő Euregio) HU/SK	Skargardssamarbetet ('Archipelago') SE FI
Lille Eurometropole franco-belge FR/BE	
North West Region Cross Border Group GB/IE	
Oresundskomiten SE DK	
PAMINA DE/FR	
Sonderjylland-Slesvig DE DK	
Tornedalsradet FI SE	
Transmanche Euroregion BE/FR/UK	
Zemplen Euroregion HU/SK	
N=44	**N=34**

Note: Grey shading indicates differences in political-administrative systems. N=91
Source: author

The selection of cases was therefore to be made among the non-shaded cases in the lower left box, which contains cases operating in areas with similar linguistic-cultural, administrative

and economic conditions. (As established in Chapter 2, these constitute favorable preconditions for cooperation, and the cases are therefore 'most-likely' cases for social capital theory testing.) It can be added that as the Method of Difference also implies that the cases must display variance on the study variable (Euroregional function and performance); a preliminary examination of all cases drawing on familiarity with national contexts and existing cases studies of some of the Euroregions indicated that there would indeed be variety in terms of local institutional networks (between-group social capital) and organization performance.

In order for the project to produce added value beyond the theoretical advancements, some geographical spread was preferable, especially between Old and New Member States. At the same time, I was cautious about the accuracy on the local level of the case selection. As showed in table 3 the Euroregions from the same national border fall in the same boxes due to the crude estimation of the values of the indicators. As mentioned above, more accurate values were not available. For more precise knowledge the case studies themselves would have been needed, i.e. implying a Catch 22 scenario in which I could not have selected a case until I knew the independent and dependent variables, and I could not have known these fully until I would have done the case study.

The strategy to deal with this was to select three national borders from the identified cell in the table, and from each of these borders to select two case study organizations to allow for the examination of variation within the same context. At three national borders[39] I therefore first selected three cases that had some coverage in the literature on cross-border cooperation or in European promotion materials: Granskommitten Ostfold-Bohuslan at the Swedish-Norwegian border, the Ister-Granum EGTC at the Hungarian-Slovak border and the Salzburg Euregio at the

---

[39] The final decision was also based on language knowledge and resource issues. I would be able to conduct interviews in the Scandinavian languages, English, Hungarian and German, but would need interpreters for any Slavic languages.

Austrian-German border.I then selected the Euroregion located next to each of them, to control for variation along one national border. The cases that were selected are depicted in Figure 2.

What makes this an embedded multiple-case research design is that the Euroregion itself constitutes the first unit of analysis, but each member is another unit of analysis, together comprising a second level of analysis. I considered the focus on members essential in order to appropriately take the political nature of these institutions into account.

Figure 2. *The case study design*
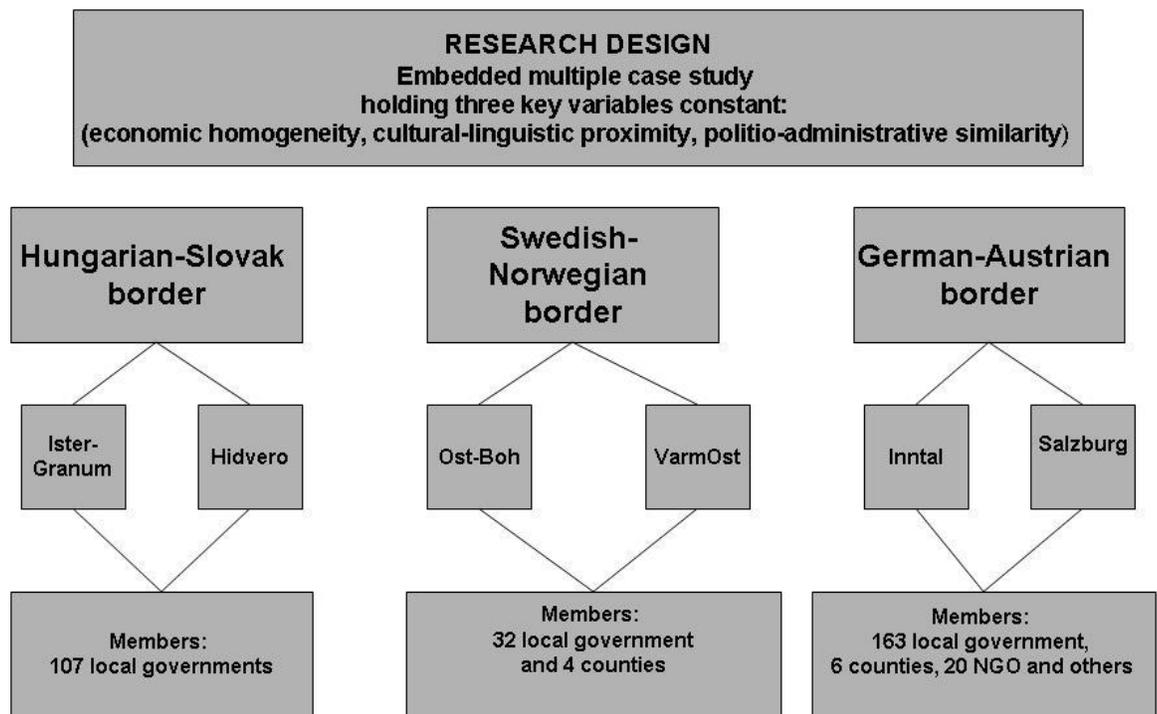
Source: author

In the next section I will elaborate on what kind of data that was extracted from these case studies and how it was collected.

3.2. Type of data and data collection process

Sharing Scott's definition of organizations as "collectivities whose participants share a common interest in the survival of the system and who engage in collective activities, informal structures, to secure this end." (Scott 2002, 23)[40], the members of an organization constitute an important unit of analysis. The majority of Euroregions have local governments as members (LAU 1 or 2), although there are also many Euroregions consisting of regions (NUTS II or NUTS III).

Much research on cross-border cooperation has worked with selective empirical data, often focusing on a small number of key actors, such as managers and representatives of major towns (see for instance Haase and Wust 2004; Eskelinen and Kotilainen 2005; Knippschild 2008 for example of micro-level case studies relying on this type of data.) Such an approach means that the bulk of the members are left out of the investigation, with potential loss of valuable data as a consequence. It also neglects the political aspect of the membership. As can be inferred from going through the websites of Euroregions (as was done in the case selection phase), they have mostly small administrative offices, and binding decisions are taken by the highest political representatives of each member. (Moreover, in the present study, gathering the voices and behavior patterns of the local members is of special importance, since I seek to identify the

---

[40] Note that Scott defines organizations differently whether they are related to rational, natural or open systems. The definition above is for what he refers to as natural systems, i.e. systems working in a changing world and which must secure survival and reproduction.

resources resident in the combinations and re-combinations of links between the actors that constitute the organization.)

According to Travers, qualitative researchers may employ one or several of five main methods for gathering data: observation, interviewing, ethnographic fieldwork, discourse analysis and textual analysis (Travers 2001, 2). While the term 'gathering data' can be challenged[41], and it can be questioned whether discourse analysis and textual analysis is a way to gather data or a way to interpret it, it is worth elaborating on the modes of getting data, regardless of whether this is a collection or a creative endeavor.

A large number of interviews have been conducted for the study. All in all, 206 interviews were made. According to Esaiasson et al, interviewees can be divided into informants and respondents, where informants are seen as witnesses that are able to report about reality, whereas with respondents thoughts and perceptions are more important (Esaiasson et al. 2007). While this distinction is analytically clear, in reality one interviewee can fruitfully be treated as both. Especially early in the process it is important to get "truths" in the form of facts (how often does the board of the organization meet? How often do you attend meetings? Which projects are currently running?), but at the same time the purpose of the interviews was to tap into their thoughts and perceptions as well, thereby generating knowledge in interaction between me as researcher and the interviewee (Mason 2002, 63). Out of this large material in the analytical phase, 138 interviews were treated as core material. These were interviews with the highest political representatives (usually mayors) of member organizations, or the administrative leadership of the six studied organizations (see List A in Annex C).

---

[41] According to Richards (2005), the term collecting data "carries the implication that data are lying around, like autumn leaves, ready to be swept into heaps. If you are working qualitatively, you need to be aware of your part in making these data" (Richards 2005: 37)

About half of the remaining interviews (see List B in Annex C) were done in the context of a related study conducted with a PhD colleague, where we were also interested in the attitudes of local governments that could potentially be members of Euroregions but are not (see Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012). Although they were valuable for giving context on cross-border contacts in general, they have not been systematically analyzed in this project. The same goes for a number of interviews I have carried out with actors at other authorities (regional, grant-giving organizations etc.), and interviews with actors in or from Euroregions that were eventually not selected.

The highest political representatives of Euroregion members (mayors) were first contacted by email followed by one reminder and then phone calls in case of non-response. Most of the interviews resulting from this took place in the offices of the interviewee, although about thirty interviews with member organizations in the Hungarian-Slovak and four interviews with Norwegian mayors were conducted via phone. The interview guide with member representatives contained three parts: one on their general attitudes towards cross-border cooperation, one on their specific experience of their Euroregion involvement and one on their communication relations with other members of the Euroregion. The interview guide contained both open and closed questions.[42] The interviews were semi-structured; in addition to open questions the questionnaire included quite a large number of quantitative assessment questions and also a network part. Interviews generally lasted about 45 minutes, with variations between 30 minutes and 1.5 hours. While the questionnaire was standardized, an accumulative effect took place in that if one informant/respondent emphasized one aspect in a specific question, this could be

---

[42] Asking respondents to assign a value to the importance of cross-border cooperation in different policy fields, or the level of partisanship within the organization, served well in order to make them also take stances and motivate their decisions. It also made the note-taking easier.

raised in later interviews (Trost 2005)[43]. One overhaul was done of the questionnaire after a pilot study in the Hungarian-Slovak borderlands in the spring months of April-May 2010 (six members were interviewed and six local governments that were not members of a Euroregion) (see final version in Annex D). Chairs and managers of Euroregions were twice, once within the first round of empirical research, and once by phone towards the end of the research period to solidify findings and elaborate on certain key concepts (see interview guide for the repeat interviews in Annex D).

Textual data included primary data such as statutes, by-laws, strategy documents and web sites. (A vast amount of additional textual material was also gathered during the fieldwork, such as brochures on cross-border projects or institutions, and also on single local governments and their profiles. This material was gathered relatively randomly, and while it was later catalogued and categorized, it was not included in the analysis, see methods of analysis in section 3.4.)

Finally, some data was gathered through participant observations of meetings and arrangements by the Euroregions. While at some of these events the observation part was emphasized more, in others I did become a participant, as for instance when I presented my research at a Euroregional meeting at the Swedish-Norwegian border. These observations resulted in fieldnotes that were afterwards worked into "small stories" in English on the events.

In connection with both interviews and observations, a lot of related material was collected, much of which was never used directly in the analytical stage. This includes a number of books, brochures and CD-ROMs on cross-border relevant projects as well as on the different local governments, but also the occasional souvenir gift. How I dealt with the analytical and ethical implications of this is referred to in section 3.4.1 and 3.5.

---

[43] Also add reference to elite interviews from (Burnham et al. 2008, 205')

3.3. The dependent variable and its operationalization

Before proceeding to how the data was analyzed, it is here necessary to take a step back and look at how I approached the dependent variable of the project, the function and performance of Euroregions in the context of how cross-border cooperation in general has been – and can be – assessed and evaluated. As mentioned above, the literature on 'borderlands' has grown steadily over the past decades (Stoddard 1986, Kolossov 2005) and the diverse academic disciplines involved is reflected in the variety of 'outcomes' that are studied. Geographers might look at the emergence of transnational landscapes or how mental images of space correspond to territorial delimitations in a borderland context (e.g. Stoddard 1986, Martinez 1990, Kramsch and Hooper 2004, Kramsch and Mamadou 2003), while anthropologists and sociologists investigate the degree to which there are specific borderland practices, interactions and identities (e.g. Lyndhurst 1998, Schack 2001), often portrayed in terms of 'periphery' versus 'core' mentalities. As can be expected, economists rely on economic performance as the dependent variable, and especially have focused on the extent to which state borders constitute barriers that hinder and reduce economic output (Lösch 1940). Naturally, these disciplines use methods that differ in how an outcome is defined and assessed from those practiced within political science and its sub-disciplines; the qualitative constructivist approaches that dominate geography and anthropology, or econometric methods, are only marginally useful when establishing the success of institutions of political-administration cooperation across borders.

This section aims to review how the literature has attempted the latter, an effort that has been hampered by the tendency of single-case studies not to problematize this aspect, and the relative scarcity of comparative studies. The larger body of evaluations and reports carried out on regional integration is therefore also considered, although the structures these focus on are

slightly different and studies are thereby included in which the existence of Euroregion (i.e. institutional cross-border political-administrative cooperation) is one of several independent variables that may contribute to the dependent variable (i.e. cross-border socio-economic integration).

As mentioned, there are few authors who have undertaken systematic comparative undertakings focusing on Euroregions as institutions. Perkmann (2002, 2003 and 2007) is the author who has done most to conceptualize and operationalize what a well-functioning Euroregion would entail (Blatter 2000, Deas and Lord 2006, and Gabbe and von Malchus 2008 should also be noted). In a 2007 article, Perkman made an assessment in terms of the capacity of Euroregions to become established as policy entrepreneurs. He uses three indicators – organizational development[44], diversification of resource base[45], and degree of appropriating cross-border policy activities within their areas[46]. In an 2003 article, he uses another proxy for success, namely co-operation intensity, measured by three indicators: cooperation should be based on a legal arrangement and have a common permanent secretariat controlling its own resources, a documented development strategy should exist and there should be a "broad scope of co-operation in multiple policy areas, similar to conventional local or regional authorities" (Perkmann 2003:159-160). The article assesses 73 Euroregions using these criteria and suggests a

---

[44] "To acquire a relative degree of strategic and operational autonomy *vis-á-vis* 'ordinary' border authorities, successful Euroregions need to develop as independent organisations with a clear specialisation in CBR matters." (Perkmann 2007:12)

[45] The justification for the inclusion of this criteria is that Euroregions relying entirely or almost exclusively on EU funding may be skewed towards instrumental behavior preventing strategic visioning, and that they thereby become implementing agencies for EU regional policy instead of being a forum for independent discussions on policies.

[46] Within this dimension Perkmann assessed the ability of Euroregions to stand out as important players in the cross-border policy-making area, compared with other agents such as public or semi-public authorities, commercial entities or civil society organizations. (Perkmann 2007:12)

typology, and concludes that Euroregions around Germany and in Scandinavia are overrepresented among the successful examples[47].

Perkmann's indicators capture essentials of organizational capacity (notably, he does not deal with the larger picture of cross-border socio-economic integration), but his use of dichotomous categories is problematic in several respects. A nuanced assessment seems to be more appropriate than dichotomous categories for some of the indicators such as the 'legal basis of cooperation'. Whether there is a legal agreement or not is irrelevant, since having some sort of legalistic document (at least a Memorandum of Understanding) is a basic condition for being 'formalized', in the definition of Euroregions I apply. What is relevant is the strength of the legal base, with a Memorandum of Understanding indicating weakness in comparison to having parallel registered legal entities in the concerned countries (common option) or even a common entity, for instance via the recently adopted instrument European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation. A similar argument can be made for the development strategy, where the importance is not if a document like that exists (it is rather the rule than the exception among Euroregions judging by their websites), but if it is implemented or not. In addition, the cut-off points for the continuous index (the 'broad scope of co-operation in multiple policy areas') is not clear.

Gabbe and von Malchus tries to avoid these problem, by using a tri-partite scale in their assessment of the same variable, "intensity of cross-border cooperation", for which they use the indicators legal capacity, scope of actors involved, range of themes covered and involvement in management in EU structural funds (Gabbe and von Malchus 2008: 93).

---

[47] This paper to the best of my knowledge contains the only causal link of success proven empirically, namely that the degree of decentralization or federalism in a country has a positive effect on high-intensity cooperation (Perkmann 2003). However, as noted by Johnson (2009:183), the variable does not explain the marked difference between Germany's western and eastern Euroregions, even using Perkmann's own data.

A fundamentally different standpoint is taken by Blatter (1998), who argues forcefully against the use of common indicators in his comparative study of two Euroregions with cross-border cooperation in two North American regions. In his view, the 'dependent variable' is extraordinarily complex due to the forms of cross-border cooperation varying according to their different functional logics, and that indicators cannot be coded in easy dichotomous categories[48] (Blatter 1998:71).

It is worth noting how the issue of what would constitute a well-working Euroregion is often treated in passing in the literature. The following are just a few examples from various edited volumes and journal articles on cross-border cooperation. Szabó and Koncz (2006) take the 'awareness and perceptions' of members and local actors on the activities of the Euroregion as signifiers of success. This is related to 'visibility' in the larger community (does the population know that the Euroregion exist as such?) and 'social embeddness' used by Baranyi, along with 'ability to promote cooperation activities' and 'tangible results' (2006). Deppisch assesses an Austrian-German Euroregion in terms of, among other factors, being 'proactive' rather than 'reactive', having 'stable structures capable of making decisions' and pursuing a 'wide range of thematic fields' (Deppisch 2008:70). Other examples include 'added value' (Scott 2006) and an interesting aspect elaborated on by Sparke (2002), namely of regions that may be 'hyped' by academics, policymakers, think tanks and media outlets as up and coming regions, but which have very little to show for it. To what extent should such 'hype', or in other words 'effective framing', be considered constituent of success?

---

[48] The example he gives is the existence or non-existence of produced satellite maps marking the cross-border regions, which in a European context would mark an emergent sense of cohesive 'regionness', whereas in the Northern American context can be a working tool against unwanted mobility across the border (Blatter 1998:71). As it happens, this is also a telling example of how indicators 'age', as the mere existence of such a map is even more void of meaning in the age of GPS and Google Earth, making a discursive non-dichotomous approach to any map imperative.

Some of the factors mentioned above, such as 'tangible results,' refer more to factors of regional socio-economic development in general or socio-economic integration, than political-administrative cooperation, and I now turn to others who have studied socio-economic development or integration. In a series of working papers on the Portuguese-Spanish and Swedish-Norwegian borderlands, Medeiros (2009a, 2009b, 2009c) seeks to establish a correlation between EU funding for cross-border cooperation and the socio-economic performance of these regions. The constructed index of socio-economic development used in the study on the Swedish-Norwegian border consists of three economic cohesion indicators (GNP per capita, activity rate, companies per 10,000 inhabitants) and three social cohesion indicators (proportion of population with higher education, physicians per 1,000 inhabitants and libraries per 10,000 inhabitants). The index is correlated with the amounts of invested Interreg funds for the border area compared with the overall Scandinavian peninsula, as well as for each participating region. While the effect of externally funded projects on socio-economic performance is an important issue, several of the severe challenges connected with this are demonstrated by these studies. Firstly, the challenge is daunting when it comes to establishing a causal relation between implementation of cross-border projects and socio-economic development. The Medeiros studies did not control for any other factors, although a list of competing independent variables would be lengthy. Second, by using an instrumental approach to what constitutes the "border-region" (the national administrative areas eligible for support), the analyzed area does not always correspond to a perceived 'border area', e.g. the city of Gothenburg is included by virtue of being situated in the large Västra Götaland region. Third, the choice of indicators is a crude one. While the number of physicians per 10,000 inhabitants is an internationally used indicator of development, it does not necessarily reflect welfare shortages in

a developed country. In remote areas staff turn-over or extra costs associated with recruiting staff would be a better indicator.

Despite the obvious difficulties in asserting a causal mechanism between cross-border cooperation projects and integration outcomes, this is surprisingly often attempted. To cite another example, Krok and Smętkowski in the introduction to a case study states that "in order to determine the impact of cross-border cooperation, we have analyzed official data on border traffic and foreign trade and conducted field research in seven selected towns of the border area" (Krok and Smętkowski (2006:180).

Similar indicators would be used by studies that do not try to establish this causal link but set out to map the general state of integration. An example of a consultancy report that extensively discusses methodological aspects of measuring cross-border integration is a report on the Oresund region covering parts of Denmark and Sweden (Oresundskompass 2004).[49] It suggests 14 indicators covering six areas: labor market (commuting, attitude towards commuting and number of contacts with the official labor agency dealing with the region), traffic & infrastructure (people's travel patterns and traffic patterns), trade & economy (company activities and establishment of new companies), housing (movement), culture & tourism (hotel nights, media usage patterns, cooperation between civil organizations), and education & research (number of registered student loans for studies in the other country, volume of commuting for study purposes and research cooperation) (Oresundskompass 2004:11). While these indicators do give a good picture of overall indicators in the Oresund region, they have limited transferability. A larger comparative study encompassing a range of European regions would have to consider

---

[49]This consultancy report expresses well the belief that enhanced welfare follows socio-economic cross-border integration, as displayed in Figure 1: "the ambition to create an integrated Oresund region rests on the persuasion that a bigger and more integrated region gives rise to increased growth and more welfare from both economic, cultural and social perspective' (Oresund Committee 2004:8, my translation).

the varying availability of public statistics and survey data. Short-comings in this area have been

cited as one of the main reasons for the difficulties in evaluating the impact of European funding

on cross-border integration.

> "A general characteristic of INTERREG/CBC specific indicators, like the ones
> presented in the illustrative examples accompanying this chapter, is that they tend
> to require special gathering of information, e.g. from surveys. There might be a
> few examples when general statistical sources can be used (e.g. workers' cross-
> border commuting) but the frequency of updating and level of detail are unlikely
> to suit the INTERREG cycle. […] The sources of information represent a major
> constrain with serious implications such as high costs […] need to be selective
> when it comes to indicators, special data should be planned so that it is easy to
> repeat" (AEBR and European Commission 2000:61).

In fact, the vast evaluation machinery of the European Union has met with a number of

inhibiting factors when it comes to evaluating funds for cross-border cooperation. The report

quoted above advocates the use of "mixed packages of quantitative and qualitative methods" and

"more complex and subtle set of 'measurements'" to deal with the "intermediate nature of many

of the results/impacts" (AEBR and European Commission 2000:59). The document suggests a

number of indicators[50] for assessing the cross-border funding program Interreg, out of which the

indicators grouped under 'institutional situation' is of special relevance for this dissertation

project. This category includes the percent of organizations with informal contacts, ad hoc

forums, cooperation agreements (e.g. between fire services) and formal cross-border structures),

and equivalent for "degree of cooperation in other fields", which is the percentage of

---

[50] These were grouped into the following categories: (1) Institutional situation (2) Physical situation, (3) Socio-economic situation, (4) Promotion of urban, rural and coastal development, (4) Development of entrepreneurship, (5) Integration of labor market and promotion of social inclusion, (6) cooperation in the domains of RTD, training, culture and health, (7) Environmental protection and renewable energies, (7) Basic infrastructure and cross-border interest, (8) Legal and administrative cooperation, (9) Cooperation between citizens and institutions (AEBR and European Commission 2000:66-71).

organizations with informal contacts, ad hoc forums, cooperation agreements, formal cross-border structures. (AEBR and European Commission 2000:66).

The ex-post evaluations of the Interreg cycles have also emphasized the measurement difficulties and lack of literature. An interim report of Interreg III 2000-2006 (Pandeia/1st interim Expost 2009) developed a 'synthetic indicator' that allows 'the depth and intensity of territorial co-operation" achieved under the various INTERREG III programs to be measured. The indicator is based on six different components, out of which the 'historical pre-Interreg situation' is of interest to the project. It consists of three indicators: (1) Number of years there has been a 'structured and visible cross-border cooperation, i.e. one or more Euroregions, within the area (quantitative), (2) Nature and quality of the directly applicable legal instrument that can be used for cooperation within parts or all of the program area (qualitative), (3) "Nature and quality of existing permanent cross-border cooperation structures" (qualitative) (Pandeia/1st Interim Expost 2009:252). However, it follows from the descriptions of these criteria that the two latter ones mainly deal with the legal space in which cooperation institutions may operate. The evaluation relies on self-reported values based on a electronic survey, but a sample size was checked and assessed independently by the evaluation teams. Consistent with Perkmann's findings, German and Scandinavian border areas generally have higher scores than southern European or Eastern European (Pandeia/1st interim Expost 2009:258).

For convenience, Table 4 below contains a table listing the different concepts and indicators included in this review of the academic and policy literature. While surely not exhaustive, it shows the diversity of factors that can be taken into account, while also displaying that many are lacking in operationalization.

Table 4. *Select list of different measurements of 'success' as appearing in academic and policy literature*

Conditions, concepts & indicators associated with institutional cooperation by the Euroregion	added value, perceived 'regionness', Ability to promote cooperation activities, Visibility, social embeddedness, local actors perceptions and knowledge about Euroregion activities, orientation towards the interest of the other side, policy entrepreneurship capacity, wide range of thematic fields, stable structures capable of making decisions, organizational development, diversification of resource base, degree of appropriating cross-border policy activities within their areas, legal arrangement basis, existence of a common permanent secretariat controlling its own resources, existence of a documented development strategy, existence of a broad scope of co-operation in multiple policy areas, legal capacity, scope of actors involved, involvement in management and implementation of EU-programmes, similar to conventional local or regional authorities, percent of organizations with informal contacts, no. of ad hoc forums, no. of cooperation agreements, no. of years the structured and visible cross-border cooperation exists within parts or all of the program area, nature and quality of the directly applicable legal instrument that can be used for cooperation within parts or all of the program area, nature and quality of existing permanent cross-border cooperation structures established between territorial authorities that operate in part or all of the program area
Conditions, concepts & indicators associated with socio-economic *integration*	border traffic, foreign trade, commuting, attitude towards commuting, no. of contacts with the official labor agency dealing with the region, people's travel patterns and traffic patterns, company activities and establishment of new companies, housing (movement of residency), hotel nights, media usage patterns, cooperation between civil organizations, number of registered student loans for studies in the other country, volume of commuting for study purposes and research cooperation, physical situation (time saved and convenience gained in travel time), promotion of urban, rural and coastal development, cooperation in the domains of RTD, training, culture and health, development of entrepreneurship, legal and administrative cooperation on obstacles, reduction of isolation (transport), improvement to the productive fabric, residents participating in cultural activities on other side of the border, common spatial planning, percent of population speaking other country's language,
Conditions, concepts & indicators associated with socio-economic *development*	Tangible results, GNP per capita, activity rate, companies per 10,000 inhabitants, proportion of population with higher education, physicians per 1,000 inhabitants, libraries per 10,000 inhabitants, environmental protection and renewable energies, improvement of the quality of life

Source: author

To sum up, bearing in mind that Euroregions have attracted significant scholarly attention from a variety of disciplines, including sociology, geography, anthropology and political science (sometimes bundled together as 'borderlands studies'), much of which has been occupied with the importance of these new institutions in some way or the other, the relatively little guidance offered by the literature on evaluation and assessment is striking. As demonstrated by several decades of implementation studies in public policy, obvious questions are raised by including

'success' or related concepts in general; it is frequently unclear what the dependent variable in implementation studies should be (goal achievement? outcome? output? governing capacity?) and the related issue what constitutes success is even more complicated (e.g. Hill and Hupe 2002, Winter 2006). This is especially the case when there are multiple actors involved, which is true for Euroregions. The scarcity of discussions around this issue in borderlands studies in general may be due to the bulk of the work being single case studies, at most with a summarizing chapter if published in an edited volume. More guidance and materials for reflection can be derived from evaluations carried out or ordered by main actors involved in cross-border cooperation, including actors on Community, national and local level, although these evaluations usually have a somewhat different baseline (i.e. evaluating the impact of Community funding).

In the light of the review above, the dissertation takes the following approach:

Tthe dissertation is interested in investigating the performance and function of Euroregions, i.e. the institutional cooperation within Euroregions as policy actors (organizations), whereas socio-economic integration and development within the Euroregions as territories is outside the scope of the study.

The label '**intensity of cross-border cooperation'** used by Perkmann 2003 and Gabbe and von Malchus 2008 (see in detail above), well captures the performance aspect of institutional cooperation, and will therefore be used throughout the dissertation.[51] This will assessed by a tri-partite scale to allow for some comparison with the work of Gabbe and von Malchus and avoid the pitfalls of the dichotomous scale used by Perkmann. Intensity of cross-border cooperation is operationalized via the use of six indicators drawn from both Gabbe and von Malchus and Perkmann's work, as the literature review above has shown these to be most in line with the aim

---

[51] While I have elsewhere (Medve-Balint and Svensson, forthcoming) used also Perkmann's 2007 term 'policy entrepreneurs', this will not be applied in the present study due to controversy around whether policy entrepreneurship can be attributed to collective actors or not (Mintrom 1997 used policy entrepreneurs as a label of individuals, not collective actors).

of this dissertation. These indicators are legal capacity, robustness of administrative arrangement, meeting activity, adherence to development strategy and mission statement, budget size and project size, and will be elaborate on below.

Legal capacity refers to the legal arrangement of the Euroregion, where not having independent legal personality yields the assessment 'low', having any variation of legal personality based on national law yields the assessment 'medium' and the adoption of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation yields the assessment 'high'. The latter is due to the heavy promotion of this instrument by the European Union, and its higher potential for making the Euroregion a funding implementation agency.

Robustness of administrative arrangement refers to the existence and size of an administrative secretariat. When a Euroregion does not have an independent secretariat, but relies on the administrative resources of one of its member it yields the assessment 'low', having an secretariat with 1-3 employees yields the assessment medium, and a with more than 5 employees the assessment 'high'.

Meeting activity refers to the frequency of, and attendance rate, at statutory meetings and other events open to members and their inhabitants. The cut-off points for this category are not clear-cut based on quantitative points, but a low meeting activity would be where members' (as elected politicians, through working groups, or for inhabitants of the Euroregion) general attend meetings or events yearly or less often, medium would indicate regular activity, and high requires approximately monthly meetings.

Adherence to development strategy and/or mission statement refers both to whether a development strategy/mission statement exists, and to whether it is continuously followed up on. 'Low' assessment indicates absence of such a document and/or no consisentency with the

document. 'High' assessment indicates the presence of a detailed and realistic agenda, which is strategically pursued. "Medium' assessment is for cases falling in between those.

Size of budget refers to the organization's own budget. Budget's below 100,000 EUR a year are assessed low, and a Euroregion having more than 1 million EUR in own annual budget would yield a 'high' assessment.

Project intensity refers to projects not only carried out by the organization as project owner (included in the budget below), but also projects where the Euroregion is initiator or active advisor. This category again has no pre-set clear cut-off points, but a Euroregion that over the past years have not had or been in any way involved in more than one or two projects running at the same time would receive the 'assessment' low, whereas a Euroregion with a high number of projects spread over different themes would be assessed 'high'.

The reason for excluding 'range of themes' and 'range of actors' (Gabbe and Malchus 2008), is that most Euroregions have wide range of themes and involvement of actors on paper. De facto involvement for themes is included in the project intensity, with a caveat for the difficulty to compare minimal activity in one area with substantial efforts to directed to others.

In addition to assessing the intensity of cross-border cooperation, the dissertation also seeks to assess the **intensity of cross-border communication** and trust relationships, both on the domestic side and in the borderlands as a whole. This indicates the presence or absence of *within-group and between-group social capital*, respectively, as defined in Chapter 2.

Four indicators are used: strength of cross-border communications, perceived trend of contacts, levels of trust to the other side, and absence/presence of conflict (politisization of issues). In other words, the dissertation is interested in the social capital of participating members of Euroregions (between-group social capital), and measures cross-border communication between local governments as estimated by its political representatives, using the methods

outlined in the next section. The same method is applied to the presence of social capital among local governments on only one side of the border (within-group).

Finally, how Euroregions function as policy actors will in the research be discussed in terms of the extent to which they can appropriate policy space by carrying out the three roles of seismographs, loudspeakers and display windows. These are not further operationalized into indicators but are discussed as analytical categories, in accordance with the framework laid out in chapter 2.

3.4. Methods of analysis

3.4.1. Working with interviews and texts

As indicated in section 3.2 the interviews followed a rather standard formula, including quantitative questions but also allowing commentaries and including open-ended questions. Interview notes were taken via laptop during the interview and revised afterwards to enhance readability. After that I translated these notes into English. The interviews were generally not recorded, since the judgment made before fieldwork was that especially at the Hungarian-Slovak border a tape recorder might inhibit interviewees' willingness to talk due to the politically sensitive issue of minorities. Because the interviews were not transcribed, quotes are not verbatim. This might have caused some loss of possibility to analyze and interpret nuances in some instances. As Silverman notes: "It is simply impossible to remember (or even note at the time) such matters as pauses, overlaps, inbreaths and the like". (Silverman 2009, 240) But Silverman also adds: "Now whether you think that such things are important will depend upon

what you can show with or without them." (ibid.) In this case, I considered the importance of this loss very minor. It can be added that for the sake of checking reliability I recorded and transcribed all second-round interviews with Euroregion managers and chairs (especially used to assess cross-border cooperation intensity), and I could not distinguish any difference in usability of this data compared to the notes with members'.

On the other hand, there was one factor that might have caused serious loss in terms of nuance. Only a handful out of more than 200 interviews was conducted in English, and the rest needed to be translated from the original Hungarian, German, Swedish or Norwegian. Uncountable quotes by respondents that at a first glimpse seemed pregnant with analytical meaning turned out to be so more in the way the respondent had been witty or colorful in his/her phrasing, which was often close to impossible to translate. Moreover, there is always the possibility that I as a non-native speaker of all languages except Swedish might have missed an ambivalent meaning or misinterpreted a statement. There is therefore a certain loss of data in the English translations. On the other hand, at times during the analytical process this disadvantage turned into an advantage, stemming from having to work with responses in different languages, as during the process of translating I was able to reflect upon diverging understandings of words and detect patterns I might otherwise not have identified.

I also used primary data such as statutes, by-laws, strategy documents and web sites, in order to (1) gather facts and (2) analyze and interpret organizational aims and justification in relation to data gathered from the interviews. In contrast, the vast amounts of additional grey material in the form of brochures etc, was used primarily for fact-finding. The additional material also contained a limited number of non-textual gifts (postcards, mugs). These were not used in the analysis and are unlikely to have influenced the analysis indirectly for reasons that will be outlined in the section on ethics (2.5)

The analysis was conducted in two steps. In the first phase of the research I sorted the material using ordinary excel sheets based on topics directly derived from the questionnaire. In the second stage of the research I coded the material based on analytical categories with the help of the software AtlasTi. There were two sets of codes, one related to the members as units of analysis (examples of codes include 'instrumental motivation', 'normative motivation', 'information-seeker' and 'inter-municipal cooperation') and the other related to the organizations as units of analysis (examples of codes include the functional categories of 'seismograph', 'loudspeaker' and 'display window). Such a two-step approach to empirical data, going from topical to analytical coding, is in line with the recommendations of Richards (2005) when it comes to handling qualitative data.

3.4.2. Social network analysis

Positive or negative powers inherent in structures can be represented by sociometric graphs, something that was recognized already in the early post-WWII years (introduced by Jacob Moreno in the 1930s and complemented by the work of other German emigrées such as Kurt Lewin and Fritz Heider, see Scott 2000 (p. 9)[52] For two of the three national borders under study (Slovakia-Hungary and Sweden-Norway) I was able to collect comprehensive data on the communication patterns between members of the 4 Euroregions at these two borders. The data is

---

[52] "Lewin argued that "a social 'space' that comprises the group together with its surrounding environment. But the environment of the group is not seen as something purely external to and independent of the group. The environment that really matters to group members is the *perceived* environment. The perceived environment is what writers in the symbolic interactionist tradition called the 'definition of the situation', and its social meaning is actively constructed by group members on the basis of their perceptions and experiences of the contexts in which they act. The group and its environment are, therefore, elements within a single field of relations. The structural properties of this social space, Lewin argued, can be analysed through the mathematical techniques of topology and set theory." (John P Scott 2000, 11)

to the best of my knowledge the only relational dataset of members in a cross-border cooperation organization, although there are other relational datasets of cross-border policy networks, see chapter 2 and chapter 7. While it is used to answer specific questions in the dissertation, it has potential for addressing other research questions in the field of borderlands studies, especially if combined with network data on infrastructure or geographical distances.

Social network analysis offers a multiplicity of tools for various purposes, here only those directly relevant for these questions were applied. A similar full-scale data collection was not done at the Austrian-German border and social network analysis could therefore not be used on this data. However, in that case there were more secondary sources that dealt with inter-municipal and cross-border that could be consulted.

The relational data was analyzed with the help of the softwares UCINET, which has been widely used by social network analysts for the past decades, and the newer software CEUNet[53].

3.4.3. Descriptive statistics

The representatives of the members of the Euroregions were asked a number of questions on their attitudes that can be quantified, such as about their attitudes towards cross-border cooperation in various policy fields. This was primarily analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics, although this data for the Hungarian-Slovakian case can be taken further, as demonstrated by (Medve-Bálint and Svensson forthcoming).

---

[53] A software under development at the CEU Center for Network Studies. I am much obliged to the Center's Carl Nordlund for much help with the analysis of the data.

3.5. Ethical considerations

The ethical aspects of conducting social science research is receiving increasing attention, and the university to which this dissertation is submitted adopted a guideline for ethics in research during the period when I conducted my fieldwork. As those guidelines did not exist at the design stage, other sources were consulted that made it clear that the ethical considerations that needed to be made for this dissertation were relatively straight-forward. Looking for instance at the checklist provided by the British Economic and Social Research Council[54], the project did not include any components that would normally raise a warning flag: the project did not include children, vulnerable groups, psychological experiments etc.[55] The individuals involved as respondents or informants were mostly politicians (elected officials), who in this capacity can expect a higher level of scrutiny.

In general I followed general practice in social sciences that demands that research participants must participate voluntarily, confidentially must be respected if promised, participation must be voluntary, harm must be avoided, independence and impartiality of researchers must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit. (Silverman 2009, 155-156)

All respondents gave informed consent[56] to participate. This implied that I included information about the research project in the initial email and started each interview by retelling this information and offering to answer questions. I then asked the respondent whether he/she

---

[54]Guidelines 2010. http://www.esrc.ac.uk/_images/Framework_for_Research_Ethics_tcm8-4586.pdf

[55] The only question among the 18 that would have warranted an ethical review was that the research took place outside the UK. A more relevant question in my context would perhaps have been if the research takes place in Europe, which it does.

[56] See Warren 2002 and Marzano 2012 for critical discussions on the origins of the term 'informed consent' (how it has traveled from medical research to social science research in a relatively short post WWII-period) and on challenges related to acquiring 'true' informed consent.

agreed to let me use what they were saying in the research. Note that this consent was not given upon the condition of anonymity, and none of the respondents questioned this or required anonymity.

Whether to pay people to participate is frequently an issue in experimental research or for focus groups (Barbour 2007; Silverman 2009), but this was never an issue during the research process. Instead, I intended to "reward" participants for their time by sharing research results both directly after the interview and later when earlier versions of this dissertations were presented as conference papers and in other venues. However, as mentioned in the section on data, I was quite frequently presented with small gifts such as books, mementos with municipal logos etc, as well as refreshments (coffee, tea and a few times meals). Hence, I as a researcher benefiting from the process came up on a small scale. It is conceivable in principle that such gifts would influence the analysis in the way that I would have treated material generated by an interviewee "nicer" because he/she treated me with cake, but due to the small monetary value of these gifts in combination with my inability after 200 interviews to keep in mind who served what makes this rather unlikely.

3.6. Reliability, validity and replicability

Finally, a few words on reliability, validity and replicability. As with all qualitative (and most quantitative research) this project also contained the risk that assessments were inconsistent between interview respondents, and also that assessments would have been done differently by another observer. This is the problem of reliability, i.e. "the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions" (Hammersley 1992, 67). The reliability of the fieldwork was enhanced by

the fact that about a third of the interviews at the Slovak-Hungarian border were conducted in cooperation with a fellow researcher, which offered ample opportunity to compare our assessments. I further worked with more than one case in the same time period in order to avoid completely different evaluations. The consistency between respondents on factual issues was partially tested in the social network analysis, which showed that the majority of respondents would converge with their counterpart's assessment of communication frequency between them.

Validity refers to the "extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers" (Hammersley 1990, 57), something that can be understood both in terms of external and internal validity. One could for instance question whether mapping of communicational patterns really captures within-group and between-group social capital, or whether respondents' own recollections of motivations match a larger story of emergence. As I see it, there is no 'easy fix' for validity, and my way to deal with this has been to allow for a dialogue between theory and empirics, and constantly question and challenge the research process in which I have been engaged.

Finally, would this study be replicable? In principle, yes, it would be possible to go back to these six Euroregions, utilize the same questionnaire to the persons who would then be in office, or use my interviews to look for an alternative analysis. The underlying material will be kept on file for a number of years to come. Even though this replication is unlikely to happen, it would be feasible and gainful to replicate parts of the study with a different kind of case selection, and the results coming out of this would have bearing on the reliability and validity of the present results.

CHAPTER 4: A CASE STUDY OF TWO EUROREGIONS AT THE HUNGARIAN-SLOVAK BORDER[57]

On March 7, 2011, around 50 mayors were gathered in the ceremonial hall of the once-beautiful town hall of Esztergom. They had come from smaller and larger settlements in the surrounding area, where the Danube bends south after having served as a west-east border demarcation between Hungary and Slovakia for about 160 km. The reason to be there was to attend a special general meeting; the task of the day was to discard the manager and replace him with a new person. The atmosphere was tense, with heated discussions on procedural issues that might have been initiated to mask the larger problems underneath. Less than two years after the Ister-Granum had reconstituted itself as a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation – under much publicity and as one of the first Euroregions in Europe to utilize this new legal form - the organization was in serious difficulties. There was widespread discontent among its members with the manager and there were members wanting to leave organization or refusing to pay their dues. In the months to come it would also be clear that an EU-supported project that had already started was underfunded and would have to be terminated, at considerable costs.

Two weeks later, on March 25, 30 kilometers west on the other side of the Danube, a smaller group of mayors had an amicable morning session. Radvan nad Dunajom (or Dunaradvány in the language of the Hungarian majority in this settlement located in Slovakia) hosted a monthly meeting of the Hídverő Association. As usual, most of the 18 local government members were present and there were plenty of laughs and informal chats over plentiful

---

refreshments supplied by the host, the mayor of Radvan nad Dunajom/ Dunaradvány. The agenda dealt mainly with administrative issues on the Slovakian side, but the participants who had come from Hungary seemingly enjoyed the time for talking despite the fact that there were few issues related to a cross-border dimension.

Why did the Ister-Granum Euroregion arrive at the verge of disintegration, whereas the Hídverő one showed no such tendencies? They are both operating in a geographical area with similar economic, politico-administrative and ethno-cultural conditions.[58] In addition, in terms of institutional design, Ister-Granum clearly 'did things right': the organization adopted set-ups that had worked in other Euroregions and even went beyond that by adopting a legal form especially designed and promoted by the European Union (EU) for such organizations. Hídverő, on the other hand, works on the basis of an association based in one of the countries (Slovakia), with members from the other side (Hungary) technically being honorary members. Therefore, it is puzzling that the internal evaluations of the organizations was so different in 2011, and the aim of this chapter is to find out why, while at the same time seeking to answer the two research questions guiding the project: (1) Why and how do local governments participate in Euroregions and how do they interact? (2) Can motivation and interaction patterns form social capital that influences how the Euroregions function and perform?

In terms of method, as it was outlined in chapter 3, interviews and participant observation constituted the core of the data collection. In addition the statutes of the associations and the minutes from meetings have been analyzed; secondary literature has been used where available and appropriate. Seventy-eight interviews with organizational and member representatives were carried out. In addition, the study is informed by additional interviews made with non-members

---

[58] Hence, these two cases reflect on the micro-level the overall research design of this dissertation project.

on the Hungarian side (see Medve-Bálint and Svensson 2012a an 2012b) and a dozen interviews with other actors within Hungarian cross-border cooperation.

This and the following two empirical chapters have been built up in similar ways. Section 4.1 gives an overview of the region in terms of geographical, economic, historical and politico-administrative characteristics (partly relying on data gathered by interviews and partly on secondary literature and policy documents), while section 4.2 introduces basic facts about the two Euroregions. The analytical part of the chapter starts in section 4.3, which focuses on the motivation, participation and interaction of Euroregions (research question 1). Section 4.4 discusses the second research question, analyzing the performance and function of the two Euroregions beyond the snapshot that was given in this introduction. The conclusion links the two questions together, and points forward to the analysis in Chapter 8 of the relation between institutional endowments of domestic (within-group) and transnational (between-group) social capital.

4.1. The Hungarian-Slovak border area and the studied region

4.1.1. The European Union definition of border area as opposed to the territory in focus

The border between Hungary and Slovakia is 680 km long and is formed by water ways (the Danube and the Ipoly rivers) or mountains (the Carpathians). In the language of the European Union's program for cross-border cooperation support, five NUTS3[59] level counties on the Slovak side and eight on the Hungarian constitute one single border area. This area covers 61,500

---

[59] The territorial statistical system of the EU. Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics (see http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/introduction.

square kilometers, has a population of 8.7 million and includes the capitals of both countries. While such a technical definition of what a border area is can be useful (Medve-Bálint and Svensson 2012a), it is clear that it does include territory that is not considered to be close to a border in everyday thinking. For instance, while Bratislava defines itself as a border city ("the only capital to border two neighboring countries"[60]), Budapest tends to emphasize its core/center character ("lies in the centre of the Carpathian Basin in Europe"[61]). The present dissertation, on the other hand, seeks to explain processes at the micro-level, in the area in the immediate vicinity of the border. It focuses on the cooperation of local governments within Euroregions that, as argued in chapter 2, can be seen as *both* organizations *and* territories. For this purpose, I focused on a smaller territory surrounding the border where the Danube bends south; the administrative boundaries of this area are the Slovak district of Nitra, the Hungarian county of Komarom-Esztergom, and part of the Hungarian Pest county.

Currently, there are four Euroregions active in this area according to my definition: Vah-Danube-Ipel, Ister-Granum EGTC, Hídverő Association and Pons Danubii. However, the first is outside the scope of the study as it functions only at a county, not a local government, level. Pons Danubii, was only registered in 2010, and was therefore excluded from the population according to the criteria of 5-year "formalization and institutionalization" history (see chapter 3) in the case selection phase. The investigation therefore focuses on the Ister-Granum EGTC and the Hídverő Association.[62]

---

[60] A typical sentence from the Official Tourism and Travel Guide to Bratislava, accessed August 23, 2011, http://visit.bratislava.sk/en/vismo/dokumenty2.asp?id_org=700014&id=1179&p1=6463.

[61] A typical sentence from the Official Website of Budapest, accessed August 23, 2011. http://english.budapest.hu.

[62] It should be emphasized that although border area defined by the European Union has a clear west-east axis in terms of economic development, with the highest GDP produced at the western part (Interreg Hungary-Slovakia 2007, 14), the relation between the Hungarian and Slovak side is roughly the same along the border. Hence, this should not have had any bearing in terms of biased case selection.

The ability of local governments to cooperate on, and shape, policy, is both enabled and constrained by the political and institutional environment. In the case of Slovakia and Hungary, the combination of strong central government and a contested history has implications on the ground. Likewise, the local financial situation in the public and the private sector constitutes an economic environment (which in this case is relatively unfavorable) in which the Euroregional collaboration takes place. The next sections look at these factors in a way that contextualizes the first-step case selection, which was based on the requirement of similarity between the two sides of the border in terms of cultural-linguistic proximity, politico-administrative similarity, and economic homogeneity. None of these would have been expected to work very differently for the two Euroregions examined in this chapter, thereby creating the puzzle regarding their different standings.

4.1.2. History and ethnicity: asset and challenge

The frequent changes of state borders in Central and Eastern Europe in the 20th century made them contested frontiers heavily burdened with conflicts (Hardi 2005; van Houtum and James W Scott 2005). This was further complicated by the ethnic cleansing after WWII through which millions of people were driven from their homes in the pursuit of a 'one people one country' principle (Eriksonas 2006). These processes are heavily noticeable in the region under study, which belonged to the territory of "Great Hungary" during the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy. At the end of WWI the territory, in which the majority were ethnic Hungarians or spoke Hungarian, became a part of Czechoslovakia. During WWII, the borders temporarily changed again when Hungary sided with Germany, but at the end of the war the area was again reintegrated with Czechoslovakia. In the late 1940s, forced population swaps took place

(Markusse 2011: 365) that directly or indirectly affected thousands of people in what are today the Euroregions under study. (For a modern visitor the many expulsion memorial stones that in recent years have been raised in villages on the Slovak side of border constitute a reminiscence of this. On the Hungarian side memorial stones in villages and small towns tend instead to commemorate the perceived injustice of the WWI peace treaty.) In the decades following the war the Hungarian minority only partly assimilated. For example, Hungarians on both sides of the border refer to the villages and towns with their original Hungarian names: for instance, the town of Štúrovo is referred to as Párkány, and the villages Zlatná na Ostrove, Sokolce and Marcelová as Csallóközaranyos, Lakszakállas and Marcelháza, respectively. For that reason, site names are consistently given in both languages in this chapter. Another example is that Hungarian is still the dominant language of instruction in basic education in the area.

The end of the Cold War had contradictory consequences for the Hungarian minority. On the one hand travelling in general and border-crossing in particular became easier; plans soon formed on restoring the bridge between Esztergom and Sturovo/Párkány that was destroyed during the war and the existing bridge between Komarom and Komarno/Révkomárom could more easily be used for personal travel. On the other hand, following the disintegration of Czechoslovakia, the proportion of Hungarian-speakers dramatically increased in relation to that of the majority, since most of the ethnic Hungarians lived in what became Slovakia. This had political ramifications in terms of Hungarian secessionism being perceived as a real threat by some Slovak politicians (e.g. Goldman 1999, 199). This, in turn, led to tensions between the Slovak and Hungarian government, which would be a recurrent issue through the 1990s and 2000s.[63]

---

[63] In the interviews made with local mayors references to national-level politics came up frequently on both sides of the border, often not related to any question asked in the questionnaire. "If these higher-ups could leave us alone to deal with things it would

On the Hungarian side, ethnicity is first and foremost an issue of mayors wanting to support the preservation of Hungarian culture on the other side. However, ethnicity is further complicated by the existence of numerous villages that preserved their Slovak or German character from the past: due to settlement policies during the Habsburg Monarchy, many villages of ethnic Slovak or German population were established centuries ago. In the county of Komárom-Esztergom 10 settlements had Slovak, while 22 had German 'minority self-governments' in 2010. In three places both minorities had their self-governments established[64]. (The number of German villages would have been higher if it were not for the expulsion of ethnic Germans after WWII.) Since these villages are mostly very small in terms of population, usually below 1,000 inhabitants, this still comes out at as a very low share of the population, between 1 and 3 percent (Interreg Hungary-Slovakia 2007, 11). Being German (referred to as Swabians, *svábok*) or Slovak had, however, minor importance compared to the Hungarian identity in Slovakia. Very few Germans and Slovaks use their ethnic tongue on a daily basis, despite efforts at revival via the introduction in the 1990s of self-governments referred to above (Vizi 2008, 124).

The cultural-linguistic proximity of the people living close to the border must be interpreted in the light of these larger historical changes. The proximity did contribute to the emergence of the two Euroregions (see Medve-Bálint and Svensson 2012a and 2013) and does act as a facilitating factor for political and administrative leaders, both in terms of communication capacity and communal identity. However, the proximity is at the same time a cause of national-level tensions that may inhibit cooperation at the local level, as will be seen in section 4 on performance and function.

---

much better" was a common comment. Yet, these references contrasted with the result of the direct question on the importance the central government puts on cross-border cooperation. The dominant answer here was that the "government does not care".

[64] information provided by the German and Slovak National Self-governments, 2010

4.1.3. The distribution of political and administrative powers

The typical member of any Euroregion along the Hungarian-Slovak border is a local government that is democratic, poor and small. In fact, these are the common characteristics of local governments in much of Eastern Europe, and in this section I will elaborate on each of these factors (local government political autonomy, resources, and size of local governments), as they are all of relevance for involvement in cross-border cooperation.

Reforming the political and administrative structure at the sub-national level was high on the agenda early on in the transition period. Developing a system with democratically elected local governments that would hold both policy setting and policy implementing powers was considered important for the stability and survival of the new democracies (Peteri 1991, 12, Elander & Gustafsson 1991:1, Wollmann 2007:17[65]). However, among the post-communist countries the reforms were carried through with varied speed. Both Slovakia and Hungary belonged to the "fast-movers", together with Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia (Soós et al. 2002). For instance, in Hungary, one of the first decisions of the new parliament in 1990 concerned the local governments, the adoption of Act LXV on Local Governments. In both Hungary and Slovakia the highest decision-making body is the local assembly, which is elected every four years, and the mayor is directly elected for the same period. Hungary differentiates in that local governments have the right to be active within any policy areas they find important, whereas Slovakian local governments can only set and implement policies within areas explicitly permitted by the state. (Lidström 2003, 124-130, Sopoci, Hrabovska and Buncak 2006:357).

---

[65] The local government expert Gabor Peteri wrote already in 1991: "Obviously local autonomy was the main issue in the revolutionary year of 1989 in East-Central Europe. The 'velvet Czechoslovakian, "negotiating" Hungarian revolutions destroying old institutions and regimes expressed – among others – their need for a modern local government system, built up from below." (Peteri 1991: 12). An international conference on local government was held in the same year, and the editors of the resulting publication claimed that local government reform might be more decisive for "stabilizing the post-socialist societies" than democratization of national political systems and capitalist transformation (Elander & Gustafsson 1991:1)

It can be added that the power of the regional level was reduced in the early days of transition in both countries, even in comparison with the condition under socialism[66]. Several subsequent reforms have strengthened the regions, but they are still comparably weak. The index of regional authority developed by Marks, Hooghe and Schakel (2010) assessed Slovakia's self-government regions (NUTS 3 level) as having an index value of 6 and the counties of Hungary as 9 (*samospravne kraje*, NUTS 3) and the Hungarian counties a value of 9 (*megyék*, NUTS 3).[67] For statistical purposes, Hungary has seven NUTS 2 regions (*tervezési-statisztikai régiók*) and Slovakia has four (*oblasti*). Both countries also allow, and encourage, local governments to form regional associations, for instance to take on public service duties that are difficult to carry out at local level.

Introducing local level elections and local competences in various areas was only one step towards functioning local democracy. As stated by the non-profit organization Local Government Initiative in its Annual Report 2008: "Freely electing mayors and councils are not enough. To deliver to their constituencies, local governments need clear and significant responsibilities, *commensurate financial resources*, and sufficient managerial skills." (LGI 2009, 11) Hence, while the local governments on paper seem fairly strong in both countries, especially in Hungary, their general capacity is inhibited by lack of funds (primarily caused by lack of taxraising powers) and managerial capacity.[68]

---

[66] During communism, there three-tier hierarchical political and administrative system, with each level being supervised by the one above. Gabor Soos writes: "As a backlash against the preceding centralizing role of counties, counties were weakened and their functions no longer overlapped those of local governments. Thus, counties and local governments, the two tiers enjoying local autonomy, became of equal rank and independent of each other" (Soos 2010: 112).

[67] The assessment is valid for 2006, and does not take subsequent developments into account. Hungary's counties receives the same value as the UK counties (9), whereas Slovakia's have the same value as Ireland. In a federal country like Germany the regions (lander) received a value of 21, whereas Catalonia in unitary but devolved Spain get 14.5. (Marks, Hoohe and Schakel 2010: 359)

[68] The respondents in this study frequently commented on their difficult financial situation, but at the direct question of how they saw the economy of their villages or towns, most answered "average", as they were aware that the situation is dire for almost everyone. Although , in the course of this fieldwork, I have seen many examples of how external funds – usually EU – has been

The third and last factor of importance for the study is the average small size of local governments. If we look at the area in which the Euroregions in this chapter are active, we see that Nitra in Slovakia consist of 350 local governments, and Pest and Komarom-Esztergom in Hungary consist of 187 and 76 local governments, respectively.[69] In both countries the number of local governments increased dramatically after communism and powers were conferred to the local units, in an effort to copy Western European levels and connect to pre-communist history (Lidström 2003, 219). In the mid-90s, the countries had stabilized at around 3,000 (3,130 and 2,875 respectively) local governments for a population of 10 million in Hungary and 5.4 million in Slovakia. (Lidström 2003, 183). In both countries, more than half of the local governments have less than 1,000 inhabitants (Swianeiwicz 2010, 2). Moreover, there is a concentration of extremely small local governments in central-south Slovakia (Klimovsky 2009), i.e. where the fieldwork took place. This explains why so many of the members of the Euroregions on both sides of the border are small; one local government that I visited for this project (Zalaba in Slovakia) had no more than 175 inhabitants.

The so called territorial fragmentation is an issue that has been heavily debated by policymakers, and the issue of the optimal size of local government is also a contested academic question. An overview and test of different arguments related to this can be found in Swianeiwicz (2010). While diverging assessments persist, the dominant view is that territorial fragmentation does hamper efficient policy making and delivery due to economy of scale. However, there has been heavy resistance to amalgamations both in Slovakia (Klimovsky 2009) and Hungary (Hajdú

---

used to repaint or conduct light renovation of a town hall, a playground or a school – the majority of the interviews have taken place in locations with maintenance needs decades overdue.

[69] Data obtained from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/local_administrative_units

1999; Hajdú 1999; Pfeil 2000; Horváth 2000) due to negative memories from socialist forced municipal restructuring.

Instead, in both countries, inter-municipal cooperation in various forms was early identified as a remedy for this. In Slovakia the process has been mainly bottom-up and entirely voluntary. There are four types of inter-communal cooperation: (1) national associations, (2) joint municipal offices, (3) voluntary institutionalized regional associations/micro-regions, and (4) specific-purpose associations. (Klimovsky 2009, 1107) Joint Municipal Offices exist in order to execute some specific competences such as garbage collection, whereas voluntary regional micro-regions can have more diverse tasks. In south-central Slovakia several voluntary institutionalized regional associations were formed in the 1990s and early 2000s, including the Déli Regio (south Region), the Érzsek-udvar region, and also the Hidverö region. The members of Déli Regio are also mostly members of the Ister-Granum region and formally, Hidverö is exactly such a formation of municipalities.[70]

In Hungary, the Act on Local Government in 1990 specified three ways in which municipalities could form associations.[71] Several subsequent changes were made, most importantly the Act on Regional Planning in 1996 that introduced regional development micro-regions consisting of local governments (Pfeil 2000). New legislation in 2004 (related to EU accession reforms) introduced the principle that territories without already existing voluntary micro-regions would be forced to organize. The number of micro-regions rose to 166, usually running at least three joint service provisions (OECD 2007).

---

[70] This explains why the Hungarian members are honorary members. In the Danube Euroregion from 2003 Hidverö was official partner on the Slovak side and Tata micro-region the partner on the Hungarian side. After the collapse of this only the engaged municipalities remained on the Hungairan side.

[71] Common body of representatives, official administrative associations, institutional management associations.

To sum up, on both sides of the border we find local governments that have been legally empowered in order to strengthen democracy, yet their poverty and small size make the relationship with the central state heavily unequal. In addition, the regional layers are weak, which makes the central states appear as even stronger.

4.1.4. Regional infrastructure and economic development

On the Slovakian side, the major urban centre is the city of Nitra in the north, whereas Komárno and Štúrovo are the largest towns right at the Hungarian border.[72] On the Hungarian side many of the inhabitants in the Pest county work in Budapest, whereas the county Komarom-Esztergom has several urban centers. These include the regional capital Tatabanya, as well as the border towns Esztergom, Komárom (located opposite Komarno in Slovakia, once one town) and Tata.[73]

The dominant historical reference point among political leaders on both sides is the Austrian-Hungarian dual monarchy pre-1918, at which time the whole area was a part of this vast empire. At that time, there was some regional cohesion around the church center of Esztergom, meaning that economic activity clustered around Esztergom with relatively similar economic conditions in the surrounding rural areas. Today, however, the economic situation differs starkly on the two sides. During the time of communism the Hungarian side had substantial industrial presence, which was followed by a significant inflow of foreign investment in the 1990s and 2000s. Two large foreign establishments played an important role for cross-border mobility, the Suzuki factory in Esztergom (Magyar Suzuki Corporation, subsidiary of Suzuki) and the Nokia

---

[72] Population in these three towns as of December 31, 2010: 83,444, 35,664 and 10,733 respectively (Slovak statistical office, http://portal.statistics.sk/, accessed September 6, 2011.

[73] Population in these four towns as of December 31, 2009: Tatabanya 76,644, Komarom 19,835, Esztergom 32,052 , Tata 25,644 . http://statinfo.ksh.hu, accessed September 6, 2011.

factory in Komárom (Nokia Komárom Kft, subsidiary of Nokia Corporation). Both these factories employ people from either side of the border, and generally are the only two 'cross-border employers' mentioned in the interview data. However, cross-border mobility was affected negatively as the county of Komarom-Esztergom was hit hard by the 2008 financial crisis, with unemployment rising from a low 5.5 % in early 2008 to 9.9 % by the third quarter of 2009. Unemployment rates have since then improved (7.9% in the first quarter of 2012[74]), but both Suzuki and Nokia have reduced their workforces compared to 2008, and the numbers of workers coming over from Slovakia has dropped significantly.

The bordering Slovak region of Nitra, especially the three districts ('*okres*') adjacent to Hungary, have a slightly different character with fewer urban centers and a regional economy more relying on agricultural production than in Komárom-Esztergom.[75] In 2011, 31.9% of agricultural output in the Slovak Republic was produced in the Nitra region (making it by far the country's most important agricultural region) whereas it produced only 8.7% of the industrial output. The financial crisis of 2008 made less of a difference for Nitra than for Komarom-Esztergom though. Unemployment peaked already in 2001, when 23.1% of the workforce was unemployed, compared with 12.5% in 2011.[76]

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

This overview of cultural-linguistic, politico-administrative and socio-economic conditions of the overall Slovak-Hungarian border area and the part where the case study organizations are located highlighted: (1) the possibility for cross-border cooperation to consist of cooperation

---

[74] Statistics from the Hungarian Statistical Office, http://www.ksh.hu. Accessed October 1, 2011, October 25, 2012.

[75] It is beyond the scope of the present study to explain these divergent economic paths, but it is clear from the interview data that a common perception is that south Czechoslovakia, and later south Slovakia, was neglected in development policy as a non-articulated punishment to the Hungarian minority in the region. As expressed by one mayor in the study: "We kept our nationality, and had to drink the soup that came with it." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum and Hídverő: #A58)

[76] Statistics from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, http://portal.statistics.sk, accessed October 25, 2012.

between ethnic Hungarians due to the presence of a Hungarian minority, (2) the similarity in terms of administrative set-ups with strong central states, weak regional layers and small local governments having significant constitutional powers but hampered by lack of financial and skill resources, and (3) the mixed economic picture with generally similar levels of living conditions but with different economic activities in the region under study. Having thus contextualized the earlier case-selection factors, I move on to introduce the two organizations that were investigated within the framework of this project.

4.2. The case study organizations

4.2.1. Ister-Granum EGTC

Ister-Granum EGTC is a Euroregion consisting of 82 local governments located around the rivers Danube, Ipel and Hron[77] at the central part of the Hungarian-Slovak border. The local governments cover an area of 2,200 km^2 (Eck, Jankai, and Ocskay 2007) and had approximately 175,000 inhabitants in 2011. The biggest towns are Esztergom in Hungary and Štúrovo (Párkány) in Slovakia, with 30,000 and 11,000 inhabitants respectively. For more than half a century, there was no permanent connection between those two twin cities (located on opposite sides of the Danube river), since the bridge between them was not rebuilt after having been destroyed during WWII. When in 1999 an agreement was reached between the two countries to rebuild the bridge, it was perceived as not only the necessary precondition for setting up a regional cross-border

---

[77] Ipoly and Garam in Hungarian. The name Ister-Granum refers to the Latin names for Danube and Hron.

cooperation framework, but also as an important symbol of unity. The bridge features frequently in tourism promotion materials from the area and in the logo of the Euroregion.[78]

It was therefore not a coincidence that the first declaration of intent to set up a cross-border co-operation was signed in 2000 by the Slovakian Juzný micro-region and the Hungarian Esztergom-Nyergesújfalu Microregional Development Association, which together covered 35 local governments across the border. After the preparatory stage, the Ister-Granum Euroregion was established in 2003 with more than 100 participating local governments from Komárom-Esztergom and the neighboring Pest county in Hungary and Nitra county in Slovakia. In 2008 the Euroregion adopted the legal instrument of European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC, EC 1082-2006, for more see section 1.2.1). This legal personality had been introduced via a regulation in 2006 and was intended to facilitate cross-border cooperation. The regulation had been actively lobbied for by, among others, Hungarian MEP István Pálfi. He was also active in promoting Hungarian-Hungarian cross-border cooperation, and had named Ister-Granum the "most exemplary and most comprehensive" cross-border cooperation in the border areas surrounding Hungary.[79] Thus, expectations for Ister-Granum to serve as a show-case, together with personal stakes related to the usage of the EGTC legal instrument, might have accelerated the discussion process around a legal reconstruction. Fourteen municipalities, primarily located in Slovakia, opted out of the EGTC, and a further four left in the following years, leaving the current membership at 82. (See more on this in section 4.3.)

---

[78] In the interview situations, the bridge was often referred to as well. One long-time mayor and early initiator of cross-border cooperation said: "The [idea of] Ister-Granum became interesting when the bridge [in Esztergom] was built. Before that you had to travel by ferry, which often stopped working when there was fog, or the wind was blowing, or there were big waves, or the ferry lads were not in the mood to work." (Mayor, Slovkia, Ister-Granum: #A87)

[79] Interview December 1, 2005. Replicated on the in memoriam web page dedicated to his work: http://www.palfiistvan.hu/index.php?go=cikk&cikkid=24

The highest decision-making power within the EGTC is held by representatives of its members, i.e. the mayor or deputy mayor of each local government, via the General Assembly, which should meet at least twice a year. Executive powers are in the hand of the Senate, consisting of eight members. The mayors of Esztergom and Sturovo (Parkany) take turns as Chair and Deputy Chair. The statutes list six working committees to deal with specific issues such as environment or culture, some of which had been in place before the legal reconstruction, but three years after the inauguration of the EGTC none of these had been set up or renewed.

Financially in 2010 the EGC had a turn-over of approximately 65,000 EURO, or 18,144,000 HUF, (Magyar Állam [Hungarian State] 2011, 7017-7018).[80] However, in spring 2011 the organization had more than 1.7 million HUF in unpaid memberships. Moreover, it had unpaid bills and difficulties to find the resources to cover the pre-financing of a project on tourism for which it had won support from the European Union's Interreg program.[81] The pre-financing subsequently had to be paid back to the EU as the project's financing solved.

4.2.2. The Hídverő Euroregion

The Hídverő Euroregion[82] consists of thirteen Slovak and five Hungarian settlements located west of the Ister-Granum Euroregion. The association is registered in Slovakia as an inter-municipal organization, which means that only the Slovak settlements can be full members, whereas the five Hungarian settlements[83] are officially 'honorary members'. In practice, there is

---

[80] A separate consultancy-oriented unit, the Ister-Granum Euroregion Ltd. had a turnover of about 75,000 EUR, 20,652,000 HUF ((Ister-Granum Euregio Fejlesztesi Ugynnoksegi Nonprofit Kft 2011, 8-9). This unit had been set up before the creation of EGTC, but was scheduled for liquidation and merge with the EGTC as soon as it could be legally arranged.

[81] This was the background to the difficult situation narrated in the introduction: the situation was frequently described both in interviews and in the minutes as a crisis, or a very difficult situation.

[82] Between 2003-2008 known as the Danube Euroregion, but in this chapter referred to as Hídverő.

[83] Almásfüzitő, Dunaalmás, Kocs, Neszmély and Süttő.

little differentiation made between full and honorary members, but one consequence is that the Chair is always from Slovakia and regular meetings are always held there. The territory covered by the Euroregion is non-contiguous on the Hungarian side, i.e. the local governments are not located next to each other. The participating local governments are all small in size, ranging from 300 inhabitants (Virt) to 3,800 (Marcelova/Marcelhaza), and the population of the whole area does not exceed 30,000 inhabitants. The organization does not have any regular income except a membership fee of 0.30 EUR per inhabitant, making the annual budget a meager 10,000 EUR. Any activities that cannot be covered by this need to be covered by external project money. The organization does not have any employees, which means that administrative tasks have to be undertaken by the staff belonging to the Chair (the mayor of one of the members on the Slovak side) of the organization.

In the early 1990s, villages located along the Danube in the area stretching between the towns Komárom–Komarno (Révkomárom) and Esztergom-Sturovo (Párkány) began to organize annual cultural events called 'Hídverő napok' ('Bridge building days'), which was made possible due to new policies regarding border crossings following the change of regime in 1990. These days offered entertainment, handicraft and commerce with a special focus on the common Hungarian language and heritage. Often, links were forged that became bilateral partnerships between Hungarian and Slovakian villages. This was a time that was characterized both by the openness following the fall of the socialist block, but also by Slovak nation-building, as described above.[84]

---

[84] A mayor who took office in 1994 referred in one of the fieldwork interviews to this as the "worst time of Mečiar", prime minister at the time, who in his opinion tried to prevent connections with Hungary. "They forbade the contact with the mother country, and we saw the opportunity to break out of this, we joined with 12 other settlements towards the mother country. We always thought that what once broke has to grow together." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: #A70) Vladimir Mečiar was prime minister 1993.01.01-1994.03.16 and 1994.12.13-1998.10.29.

In 1999, 13 settlements on the Slovak side which had been involved in these cultural days formed an association (a voluntary micro-region), which they gave the same name as the name of the cultural festival, the Hídverő Társulás (in Slovak, *Zdruzenie most priatel´stva*). According to its by-laws, Hídverő is an organization set up to protect the interest of its members and solve common problems (Statutes, Article II). However, a key sentence is included at the end of the second Article: "The Association can work together with towns and settlements of other regions in the country and abroad too.[85]"

In the same period, the Tata Microregional Development Association was formed on the Hungarian side In 2003, the Tata Microregion and Hídverő Association set up an agreement to form a Euroregion called Duna Eurégio (Danube Euroregion) and registered in Hungary, with Neszmély as a leading partner[86]. Even though all local governments of the Tata micro-region in Hungary were formally members, those that had already been honorary members in Hídverő were significantly more active in the set-up and running of the co-operation than others. The Euroregion was subsequently tainted by allegations of corruption towards the mayor of Neszmély, who in the end resigned in April 2008 (Neszmély, General Assembly Protocol 2008; Népszava, 2008). The Danube Euroregion organization was drawn into a criminal investigation after the resignation, and is by any practical definition defunct.

However, the bonds joining the active members were not dissolved and the immediate solution was to 'retreat' to the original organization of 13 Slovak members and five honorary Hungarian members. Of the Hungarian settlements, these were the ones most eager to continue

---

[85]   My translation from the official Hungarian translation of the original Slovak, done by the "Interpreter and Translator Association as of 2006.03.02).

[86] The words 'leading partner' here should not be confused with the technical term 'lead partner' used by some EU structural funds projects.

the cooperation, but also those who had partnership towns among the 13 members of the Slovak association.

<center>*</center>

This section has given an overview of the main characteristics of the Hungarian-Slovak borderland as well as a factual background to the two case study organizations. Before I move on to analysis and research findings, table 5 provides a summary of key characteristics.

Table 5. *Key characteristics of Hídverő, Ister-Granum and the Hungarian-Slovak borderlands*

Euroregion+ *Characteristics*	**Ister-Granum (HUSK*)**	**Hídverő (HUSK)**
Founded	*2003 Euroregion 2008 EGTC*	*1999 Association* *2003 Euroregion*
Local governments in 2011	*89*	*18*
Approximate population 2010	*200,000*	*30,000*
Working language	*Hungarian (dominant), Slovak (rarely)*	*Hungarian (dominant), Slovak (frequently)*
Border existing since	*1919 (except 1938-1944)*	*1919 (except 1938-1944)*
State form	*unitary*	*unitary*
National GDP(IMF 2010, in USD)	*HU: 14,808, SK: 17,889*	*HU: 14,808, SK: 17,889*
Regional GDP (Eurostat, NUTSII 2008)	*Kozepdunantol: 9,500 SK02:Západné Slovensko 11,400*	*Kozepdunantol: 9,500 SK02:Západné Slovensko 11,400*

Source author:

4.3. Motivation, participation and interaction of local governments in Ister-Granum and Hídverő

Patterns of motivation, participation and interaction among members of the two Hungarian-Slovak Euroregions in the study, Ister-Granum EGTC and Hídverő Association, constitute the focus of this section. It seeks to answer the questions 'why are the local governments members of the organization?', 'how do they participate in the organizations?' and 'how do they interact with

each other?' This means that members of Euroregions are the primary units of analysis in this section, while section 3 will address the organizations themselves as the primary unit of analysis.[87] The analytical framework driving the analysis of motivation and participation follows what was introduced in chapter 2, and will be briefly recapitulated in 4.3.1 below.

4.3.1. Motivation

As detailed in Chapter 2, the motivation to join and stay in a Euroregion can broadly be divided into two groups, one based on identity/polity and one based on instrumentality. This division follows March and Olsen's well-known distinction between the logic of appropriateness versus logic of consequences for individual and institutional behavior in general (March and Olsen 1989) and additionally draws on several works on cross-border cooperation (Blatter 2000, Perkmann 2003, Medve-Balint 2008 and 2013, Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012a and 2013). In the analysis, the instrumentality group has been sub-divided into two further groups, the first is materialistic gains through grant-seeking, and the second specific policy problems that are thought to be better solved jointly. In this section I analyze the stated motivations for membership by the organization based on these categories. It should be noted that a local government can base its membership on more than one motivation, in which case answers were sectionalized and coded into multiple categories

---

[87] The analysis relies on primary data collection: 78 interviews were conducted with members of the two Euroregions as represented by their highest political representatives. Six of those have double membership, and have been interviewed as to their attitude towards both organizations. In total, 67 out of 82 members of Ister-Granum (81%) and 17 out of the 18 members in Hídverő Association (94%) were interviewed. See chapter 3 for more details on method and data collection.

The first category is *identity/polity*, and forty respondents were coded in this category.[88] The overwhelming part of these emphasized that the Slovak villages and towns in the cooperation was a part of Hungary before the peace treaty signed after World War I.

> "Here of course the Trianon[89] story is a Hungarian specialty, and a little bit you can take care of this through the creation of the Euroregion." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A138)

> "[We want to] bring the population together, in the interests of the old Esztergom 'castle region' and the two sides of the current border." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A53)

> "The goal is the Hungarian-Hungarian connection […] the regional cohesion of the Hungarians." (Mayor, Slovakia-Ister-Granum: A108)

> "For Hídverő the main aim was the Hungarian-Hungarian connection." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő and Ister-Granum: A 58)

> "On the other side there are settlements that are Hungarian. They were Hungarian historically and they are so today." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: A47)

> "We always thought that what once was broken has to grow together. We wanted to become closer." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: A70)

> "We want to build a spiritual bridge between Slovakia and Hungary, the two riverbanks that belong together should be bound together." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: A69)

> "First I should say that those who live in the 'upper province'[90] are Hungarians. It is true that it is on the other side of the border in a legal understanding, from the point of international law, yes. But from a cultural point of view over there is no different from here. But I don't want to put politics into this, we are in a good relationship with everyone there, the Slovaks just as much as the Hungarians." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: A135).

Several respondents (e.g. #A59, #A66, #A68) mentioned that this cooperation was only possible due to the political changes in Eastern Europe after 1989.

---

[88] These were: #A4, #A5, #A6, #A8, #A9, 3A15, #A16, #A19 #A21, #A45, #A46, #A47, #A48, #A49, #A53, #A57, #A58, #A59, #A60, #A61, #A66, #A68, #A69, #A70, #A71, #A72, #A90, #A93, #A108, #A109, #A113, #A114, #A121, #A125, #A127, #A129, #A132, #A135, #A137, #A138.

[89] The peace treaty between Hungary and the winning ally after WW1, signed in 1920.

[90] The 'upper province' is the Hungarian name for the part of southern Slovakia that belonged to Hungary before WWI.

"The cooperation started after the change of regime, in order for us to keep the Hungarian-ness, keep the traditions, the culture and the mother tongue." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő and Ister-Granum: #A68)

"We formed this [cooperation]" so that we can nurture the relations with the mother country […] In 1989, we did not have any connections. Perhaps we were allowed to cross to go over [to other side of the border] twice a year. The young mayors don't even know how it was." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: #A66)

"The political situation was such that there was almost enemy status between the two countries. We decided that we wanted to improve the situation." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: #A59)

Identity ran as a common theme through interviews with respondents from both organizations, but there was a marked difference in how often it was mentioned. Among Hídverő respondents, 13 out of 17 referred to this, whereas in Ister-Granum 35 out of 72 did the same, i.e. this sentiment was stronger in Hídverő. This was in spite of Ister-Granum having a special territorial historical tie; it covers an area broadly converging with an historical administrative region, the Esztergom county (In Hungarian: 'Esztergom castle county'). These historical circumstances were mentioned by several respondents, but more so on the Hungarian side than on the Slovak.

"We did not set up any specific goals for the participation [in the Euroregion], we just wanted to belong to the community. The Euroregion was set up for the cohesion of the old 'castle region', and we thought that its goals were acceptable." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A45)

"It was a natural thing to do because we are part of the Esztergom micro-region, and Esztergom had an important role in bringing this together. We feel ourselves very much at home in this organization." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A16)

"Once we belonged to the Esztergom county [on both sides of the Danube], it was a historical thing, we found it natural." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: A109)

The small Slovak minority living in Hungary seldom featured as a reason for cooperation, neither did the possibility for inter-ethnic cooperation, i.e. that Hungarian local governments

would seek to include Slovak-speaking Slovak villages in the Euroregion. Thus, the quote below by a Hungarian mayor is an exception[91]

> "We wanted to get connections to the other side, because we are a Slovak village, and that is why it was interesting." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A129)

Aside from ethnic belonging, identity/polity motivation can also be based on the belief that cooperation has an intrinsic value, i.e. that *cooperation per se* is valuable and that inter-municipal cooperation is an important element of current and future local government practices. This did occur among interviewees, but less frequently.

> "We are open, if somebody knocks on our door [and invite us to a cooperation], we don't say 'no'." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: A8)

> "We thought we'd better not be left out of something. We were the mass, so to speak, we were not the ones initiating this and we are not very active." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: A49)

> "I thought it would be a good idea to get together." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: A61)

Instrumentality, the second motivation category, was very common in the Ister-Granum group, whereas it was almost entirely absent in Hídverő.[92] How the mayors referred to this did not differ much; the formulations in interview situations were very similar:

> "We would like to be access sources of funding." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: A9)

> "We joined because of the application possibilities; a European integrating association always brings greater advantage than if you apply as a small local government. (Mayor, Hungary, A131

---

[91] Another exception is #A87, which besides its Euroregional engagement is a part of a partnership arrangement of four villages a Slovak Hungarian village, a Slovak Slovak-speaking village, a Hungarian village with a Slovak minority and a Hungarian village without minorities.

[92] #A8, #A50, #A9, #A131, #A123, #A132, #A19, #A138, #A128, #A12, #A17, #A87, #A67, #A92, #A72, #A66, #A88, #A71, #A91, #A57, #A65, #A64, #A108, #A124, #A110, #A126, #A112, #A127, #A111, #A115, #A116, #A114, #A86.

"We thought of opportunities to apply for money." (Mayor, Hungary, Istergranum: #A19)

"What is important is that we can apply for funds jointly. " (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A138)

"The opportunities to apply, because EU supports cross-border cooperation." (Mayor, Hungary, #A17)

"The main reason was to get money, from Europe, and regional money too. The idea was that we should get more for development." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A110)

"Us small municipalities have difficulties to get our economy in order. We thought that with a joint organization we can get to information more easily, and can work together with Europe." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A111)

Whereas expectations as expressed in the citations above mainly were directed towards EU, some also pointed out the role of the local government Esztergom in supporting the Euroregion directly.

"I got money from Ister-Granum, it was not EU money though. It was for a cultural house in 2009. We got the most from Ister-Granum because the smallest and poorest had the highest chance to get something." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum, #A92)

"[The membership] brought a lot, both moral support but also money. It was the local government of Esztergom that gave money to distribute to villages." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A64)

All these answers, which are just some examples from the interviews, express how the Euroregion by Ister-Granum members were seen as a direct means to access grants, even if identity also played an important role. Sometimes, this double motivation was expressed clearly:

"The first is to have connection to our sister settlements on the other sides, the villages and the towns, the other is that we should be able to apply for European money." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A132)

The statutes also emphasize this focus on economic (and social) development. Article one lays down that the emphasis is on "the full range of regional development activities […] for promoting and strengthening economic and social cohesion". The text leaves no doubt regarding from where resources for this development should come. The statutes specifies that "the specific objective of the Grouping" is "that by the co-financing of the European Union" achieve this economic and social cohesion.[93]

However, neither the statutes nor the interview material gives any support for the idea that common policy problems constitute an important reason for cross-border inter-municipal cooperation. Only a few respondents pointed to a specific policy problem.

> "They emphasized that there would be an infrastructure corridor [North-South corridor] which would imply a reviving economical role." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A52)

> "There were issues to be solved, such as the hospital. Infrastructure was another." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A15).

To sum up, identity/polity constitutes the motivational base-line for cooperation in both analyzed Euroregions, but in Ister-Granum materialistic expectations, primarily in the form of access to grants featured prominently as well.

4.3.2. Participation

Local government motivation for membership in Euroregions constituted a first important piece of the picture of Euroregional function and performance, which both this chapter and the dissertation seek to paint. How local governments engage with Euroregional organizations in

---

[93] Curiously, the wording implies that the rationale for the organization would not exist if the European Union did not provide funding for cross-border cooperation.

which they are members is a second piece of the picture, and this is the focus of analysis in this section.

A couple of years prior to the recording of the interview material (the bulk of which was collected in 2010 and 2011) both Euroregions went through a significant shift in their constitution. In 2008, Ister-Granum adopted the legal form of European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) (see Chapter 2 and section 4.3.2.) Ister-Granum was the second Euroregion in all of Europe to do so, and it therefore received considerable international attention, including invitations to its management and political leadership to speak at practitioner conferences and seminars. The introduction of the EGTC tool was supposed to give a more secure legal position, but it was also expected by its members to further facilitate access to European funds. However, another consequence of the reorganization was that out of the 103 local governments that had formed the Ister-Granum Euroregion, only 89 chose to remain in the EGTC (seven more left 2008-2011). Within the framework of this study I did not systematically approach governments that exited, but interviews and conversations with representatives of three of them and interpretations by other actors (other mayors, managers) gives reason to assume that members took the moment of transformation as an opportunity to reflect on cost and benefits of the membership. As expectations of direct returns to individual local governments in the form of external funds had been an important instrumental motivation for the Ister-Granum, those who left found that if such expectations had not been fulfilled, it was not worth continuing contributing even by the modest membership fee and time investment required.

Meanwhile, Hídverő had gone through a turbulent time as well. In 2003, all local governments of the Tata micro-region in Hungary had joined up with Hídverő to continue the cross-border cooperation efforts under the name *Danube Euroregion*. The work was led by the mayor of Neszmély. However, the Euroregion was drawn into an investigation of corruption

directed towards mayor of Neszmély, and after his resignation in April 2008 (Neszmély General Assembly Protocol 2008; Népszava 2008), the initiative died out. All local governments of the Tata micro-region left the cooperation, except those five Hungarian settlements that had been previously active in Hídverő, which now returned to calling itself by this name alone.

At the time when the interviews were conducted these events were already seen as something in the past, and members expected the new and renewed organizational forms (Ister-Granum and Hídverő respectively) to function. Membership in the organization was not a salient political issue in the settlements; generally it was considered a low-cost investment as none of the Euroregions require much from the members in terms of resources, either for membership fees (less than 10 Eurocents per inhabitant per year in both organizations) or in terms of time commitment to meetings. Even if preparation, travel time and attendance to meetings are included, the time investment is limited.

Before going into how members take part in the organizations, it should be noted that the frequency and style of meetings in which members could take part differed starkly. Ister-Granum generally has 1-2 meetings open to all members per year, in addition to separate activities, which were few in the years 2009 and 2010, i.e. shortly before the interviews were conducted. The assembly meetings usually take place in Esztergom, although they are occasionally located in Sturovo (Parkany). Due to the high number of members they have to take place in rooms seating many persons, settings not always conducive for debates. Formal agenda items (elections of Chairs, Senate, Manager etc) constitute a big part of the meetings, but also information given by the Manager on ongoing and planned projects. An assembly meeting typically lasts 2-3 hours with food afterwards. In Hídverő, meetings rotate among the Slovak members, and they usually last from morning refreshments until lunch. The schedule is relaxed to allow for plenty of informal socializing between the mayors. Most agenda items concern Slovak issues, as Hidverö

functions as both a cross-border forum and a micro-regional platform for cooperation within Slovakia. Especially changes and implication in social legislation constitute common themes. However, discussions related to ongoing or planned projects between members in the association are also standard items (e.g. projects on clean Danube beaches river banks, or preservation of ruins from Roman times).

In the analysis of interview data, the local governments were divided into three groups regarding how they engaged with the organization:

- Detached: rarely participating in meetings or events, receiving information rather in writing from the organization;

- Listeners: regularly attending meetings and events, but doing it mainly to seek information, deputies or lower-ranked administrators might be sent to meetings to get this information rather than the highest political representative (mayors);

- Active: regularly attending meetings and events with a strategic approach and contributing to the agenda.

The results of the analysis demonstrated a distinctively different pattern between the two organizations, as outlined below.

Detached members. Hídverő did not have any members coded into this group, as its monthly meetings have very high attendance rates, with no settlement consistently opting out. All mayors would attend in person, except one mayor on the Slovak side that generally delegated attendance to his more experienced deputy mayor. In Ister-Granum, on the other hand, there was a large group, roughly a third of the members (especially Hungarian members), in which the mayor stated that he/she had not attended any meetings over the last year. The reason given for this was mostly that the members conditioned engagement with visible output (activity of the Euroregion) and perceived the organization to have an ineffective management.

119

"There are too many layers in the cooperation. I cannot see through how it works." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A50)

"Not much has happened in the last years. There were just some reports, and then there are the Ipoly bridges." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A60"

"The colleagues around here don't go much either." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A47)

The implicit expectation was that the responsibility for moving things forward clearly lay with the managing team and the political leaders of Esztergom and Sturovo (Párkány). Mayors would frequently refer to a 'golden time' of enthusiasm around the creation of the EGTC. This 'golden time' ended when the manager who had been the driver of the legal reconstruction was dismissed under circumstances that were unclear to members and perceived as being due to personal difficulties with the mayor of Esztergom. The subsequent manager did not make visible efforts to connect to representatives of the many small settlement members, which the previous one had, and, and interviewees seldom indicated trust in his commitment.

"The problem with them is that they change manager all the time, this is like the third one in a year, and the things get stuck." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A123).

"I don't participate very often, because of this. Although I did attend the last one, and it looks as if the situation might consolidate. We also could be pleased to see that at least more than half of the members attended the meeting." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A115)

All in all, the interview material indicated significant amounts of indifference, expressed as non-emotional disapproval, and explained by respondents as a sound reaction to 'nothing happening' at the level of the Euroregion

Listeners. However, even in Ister-Granum, the largest group of members was not the detached ones, but the group consisting of members attending meetings regularly but without a

strategic goal or set of priorities for their relation with the organization. Roughly half the members could be categorized into this group, with an overrepresentation of Slovak settlements.

> "I usually go to the assemblies, mainly to get information." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A128)

> "I always go to the meetings. If, for some reason, I cannot go I send someone." (Mayor, Slovakia: Ister-Granum: #A63)

Also in Hídverő, this group was relatively large, constituting more than a third of participants.

> "These are pleasant, friendly meetings. You can get connections and get interesting information." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: A66)

> "If I don't go to the meetings, that's a rare exception, because I like to listen to the colleagues, and you can discuss freely there and get information, which is important for me." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: #A73)

> "The main activity at the meetings is to exchange experience and information, for instance we hear about the Hungarian side." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: #A57)

Active members – Most of the Hídverő members can be classified as active. Since meetings rotate between the Slovak members, every (Slovak) member has the chance to set the main part of the agenda at least once a year. Probably partially due to the participating local governments being relatively equal in size and all being located close to the border, none of the members were perceived as more higher-ranked than the other. The situation in Ister-Granum differed significantly in this respect, as the towns Esztergom in Hungary and Sturovo (Párkány) in Slovakia are perceived as leaders in the cooperation.

> "We are almost 100 settlements, but Esztergom and Sturovo (Párkány) are still the leaders. Esztergom was so strong that we trusted in them and let them have everything because they were strong. We could not believe that such a big town would get into such serious troubles." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: A91)

> "Esztergom ruled everything, they even paid for small projects in the villages […] it would have been good if that could have continued. It is really the case that

bigger settlements with perhaps 3,000 inhabitants have other ways of thinking than us who have around 200. You cannot dream about miracles here." (Mayor, Slovakia: Ister-Granum: A125)

When the local elections in 2010 resulted in a political stalemate in Esztergom, this was therefore seen as a major drawback also for the Euroregion. Esztergom elected an independent mayor, who could not cooperate with the majority party in the local council (and national government), Fidesz. This political strife[94] had consequences for Ister-Granum, as support both in terms of finances and time diminished.

"Now when Esztergom is in such a bad situation nothing works. […] Now we have to pay, we will ask members to pay one or two membership fees in advance, so that we can pay the pre-financing [of a failed EU-funded tourism-project]." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A87)

This quote, by a senior mayor, demonstrates that turning events around was perceived as an uphill battle if Esztergom and Sturovo (Parkany) were not on board, even if there were a few other actors trying to steer the Euroregional cooperation in a strategic manner, mainly town representatives (e.g. Labatlan and Szob in Hungary, Muzla/Muzsla and Želiezovce/Zseliz in Slovakia).

This section has so far outlined the degree of engagement of members in the two Euroregions. In terms of the political character of participation, both organizations are political in the sense that they are composed by elected officials, with only the Ister-Granum secretariat employees serving as regular civil servant participants (as mentioned in section 4.2., Hídverő does not have an independent secretariat but relies on the administrative capacities of the local government of the serving Chair). However, party politics was described as irrelevant for internal

---

[94] Interested readers may consult websites such as *Local and Regional Monitoring Institute* or *Politics.hu*. See for instance articles in English at [http://www.politics.hu/20120117/multi-issue-referendum-to-be-held-in-esztergom-amid-ongoing-political-battles/ or http://www.localmonitoring.eu/en/article/1638 [Accessed August 22, 2012].

debates and decisions in the organization[95], and in the analysis I was also not able to establish any dividing lines in opinion according to party lines. This is partly due to mayors in smaller Hungarian settlements usually being independent, whereas Slovak mayors in the studied area generally belong to one of the Slovakia's two ethnic Hungarian parties.[96] On the other hand party politics was perceived as important for Ister-Granum, but not for Hídverő, when it came to relations to the national level, especially Hungary. Many mayors stated openly their expectations that a government considered 'friendly' on the Hungarian side would result in more direct support for the Euroregion.

In summary, the participation seems to differ considerably between the two organizations. Whereas the Euroregion Hídverő had members that regularly attended meetings, either as passive information-seekers or active members, Ister-Granum had a layered membership, with a significant part indifferent, the majority passive and only a minority being active in driving the organization forward.

4.3.3. Interaction

This section uncovers to what extent, and how, members interact with each other, as manifested in personal communication (via face-to-face meetings, telephone or email). The findings are largely based on network analysis of communication data as provided by the respondents, and on

---

[95] In both organizations, party politics and national differences (Hungarian-Slovak) was ranked lowest when asked about what lines of differences could cause conflicting opinions within the Euroregion politics. The other alternatives (small vs. big towns, close vs far from the border, administrative vs political status, scored higher but were still not considered important, which imply that the character of the Euroregion is perceived as depoliticized.

[96] Before the conduction of interviews, in 2009, a second Slovak-Hungarian was formed (the 'Bridge' Party) which was communicated as a less ethnically radical party than the Hungarian Coalition Party. While this split undoubtedly was a big political issue for all active politicians of Hungarian ethnicity in Slovakia at the time, I could not establish any direct effects on the working or inner relations of either of the two Euroregions.

qualitative analysis of statements relating to communication. The social network analysis will be elaborated on in Chapter 7, and only the core findings are included here.

Intermunicipal cooperation became increasingly common in the investigated period on both sides of the border as local governments joined up for cooperation and service delivery. Both involved states adopted policies supporting inter-municipal cooperation in order to counteract perceived inefficiencies due to local government fragmentation (large numbers of small settlements). This process predated *and* developed concurrently with the formation of cross-border cooperation. The social network analysis showed that most local governments would state that they have weekly or monthly contact with local governments in the same micro-region, whereas domestic contacts outside the region was much rarer. Mayors indicated an increase in contact frequency over time. This implies a presence of domestic local institutional social capital (within-group social capital) built up within these institutions that could potentially be utilized by the emerging cross-border institutions as transnational local social capital (between-group social capital).

This gives support for the claim that domestic local social capital leads to the generation of between-group social capital as cross-border communication is also claimed to have as increasing over time, albeit not to the same extent as domestic communication.[97] Nonetheless, the study also demonstrates the large extent to which communication takes place within the nation-state context. The communicational pattern clearly falls into one Hungarian and one Slovak pattern cluster. The pattern differs between the two analyzed organizations. Especially in Ister-Granum there are few

---

[97] Respondents were asked to indicate how the frequency of communication had developed over the last 5 years (i.e. more than one electoral cycle).

cross-border links on a weekly or monthly basis, whereas Hídverő has somewhat more. Overall, the Hídverő network is denser, as revealed by the social network analysis.[98]

The next question is why, and about what, the mayors communicate with each other. This is important, as research on inter-organizational relationships has shown that information transmission is one of most significant relationships for efficient network output (Laumann and Knoke 1987).[99] Much of the cross-border communication takes place only at events and meetings arranged by the Euroregions, and tend then to focus on the political realities of the local governments and information exchange on how things are done 'on the other side'. When it comes to communication outside the framework of the Euroregion, this focuses less on political development or public service delivery and more on various events. Especially in smaller local governments, it is perceived as something positive, or 'good manners', to invite representatives from nearby settlements on the other side of the border to cultural events arranged in or by the municipality. For instance, most villages have annual cultural days ('the village day'). When the mayors meet at those events, conversation tends to revolve around general problems, such as unemployment, rather than around concrete ideas for cooperation or solutions.

> "We meet mainly with those here around the Ipoly river, [the settlements of] Letkes, Vamosmikula, etc. We use to talk to each other and come to each others' cultural events, our musical and dance groups perform there, and the other way around. The same goes for sport competitions." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A128l)"

> "We are in contact with the other mayors and their representatives in this area. We talk about our problems, that no one has money for anything, that is the biggest problem." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: A127)."

---

[98] For numbers and graphic visuals see Chapter 7.

[99] "The greater the variety of information and the more diverse the sources that a consequential actor can tap, the better situated the actor is to anticipate and to respond to policy events that can affect its interests." (Knoke and Laumann 1987:13)

Examples on communication focusing on concrete policy issues could mainly be found between Esztergom and Sturovo (Párkány), for instance about access to the hospital located in Esztergom, issues related to the current bridge and a planned bridge, and competition and cooperation around tourists. It could also be found around the Ipoly river, where bridges and roads leading to bridges constituted a common concern for settlements and local governments such as Szob, Salka (Ipolyszalka), Ipolydamasd, Letkes, Tesa, etc.

All in all, the research shows that the reserves of transnational (between-group) social capital are relatively weak, especially in Ister-Granum. Table 6 summarizes the assessments in the different categories (see Chapter 3 on methodology).

Table 6. *Between-group social capital of Hídverő and Ister-Granum*

	Euroregion	**Ister-Granum (HUSK)**	**Hídverő (HUSK)**
BETEWEEN -GROUP SOCIAL CAPITAL	*Strength of cross-border communications*	low	high
	Perceived trend of contacts	increasing	somewhat increasing
	Level of trust to other side	medium	high
	Presence of conflict (politicization of issues)	low	low

Source: author

*

This section on motivation, participation and interaction has treated Euroregions as the primary unit of analysis, seeking to answer questions as to why and how they participate in the two investigated Hungarian-Slovak Euroregions, but also how they interact with each other. Motivation, participation and interaction patterns constitute independent variables that were expected to show some variation. This turned out correct, as Ister-Granum had a stronger instrumental grant-seeking element, combined with the identity/polity component that was virtually the sole base of the Hídverő cooperation. Participation patterns differed in that Hídverő

had more active members, taking turns to drive the cooperation, whereas the majority of Ister-Granum members were either indifferent or passive information-seekers. This finding was reinforced by the analysis of interactions, which showed Hídverő to have more bonding between-group social capital than Ister-Granum due to its more frequent communication. I will now move on to how the organizations function and perform as Euroregions, before discussing how the function and performance is related to the factors discussed in this section.

4.4. Function and performance

This section deals with organizations as primary units of analysis, and elaborates on the dependent variable of the project: what do they do and how well do they do this? In other words, what are the functions and performance of Euroregions? I first introduce the policy areas they concentrate on via typical projects and which policy areas they prefer. I then look at how the performance of the two case study organizations can be assessed in terms of intensity of cross-border cooperation, judged by categories used in the literature (primarily Perkmann 2003, 2007), and to assess the appropriation of policy space, I determine to which extent the two cases at the Hungarian-Slovak border function as seismographs, loudspeakers and display windows (see chapter 2).

4.4.1. Policy areas and typical activities

Table 7 summarizes the policy areas that are considered most important by the members of the organizations (interviewees were asked to grade a number of policy fields) and two activities

carried out by the Euroregions that were frequently referred to. The purpose of the table is to give

a quick overview of policy and project activity.

Table 7. *Typical cooperation areas and activities of Hídverő and Ister-Granum*

Ister-Granum (HUSK)
Most important to members: **culture, economic development, creating a common regional identity**   Typical activities: **Ipoly fish ladders**. Interreg III/A supported project to help enhance the free movement of water species in the river Ipoly, especially in the area close to the local governments Tesa (Hungary) and Ipeľský Sokolec Ipolyszakallas (Slovakia). The Euroregion was officially one of the project owners, together with the municipality of the town Esztergom, the district Banska Bystrica in Slovakia, Union Ipoly and the Middle-Danube-valley Environmental and Water Directorate.   **Ipoly bridges**: Before WWII there were 47 bridges crossing the river Ipoly, most of which were destroyed during the war and not rebuilt. Only four worked until the change of regime in 1990, one of which was in the Euroregion area (Letkes-Ipolyszalka.)[100] The Euroregion has constituted an arena for discussing where bridges would be needed, and has also given support for much of the paper work to apply for money and receive state support for rebuilding bridges. At the time of writing interstate agreements to build (sharing costs) had been signed for two bridges: between Ipolydamasd (Hungary) and Chlaba/Helemba (Slovakia), and between Vamosmikula (Hungary) and Pastovce/Ipolypaszto (Slovakia).[101]
Hídverő (HUSK)
Most important to members: **culture, regional identity-building, creating a common European identity**   Typical activities: **Bridge-building Days**. This is an annual cultural event, the organization of which rotates between the members of the Euroregion. The event focuses especially on activities that connect with the common cultural heritage in the area (folk dance, musical performance, food).   **Historical site preservation**: "In the footsteps of the Romans at the Roma river". The Hídverő members Iza/Izsa (Slovakia) and Almasfuzito (Hungary) received funding from the Hungary-Slovakia Cross-border Cooperation Program 2007-2013 program in order to restore and erect a museum to educate and remember settlements at these sites during Roman times. The project runs 2010-2012 and has a total budget of 10.3 million EUR.

Source: author

The difference in priorities between the two Euroregions was established in section 4.3.1 on

motivation, in which it was demonstrated that Hídverő membership was motivated primarily by

identity/polity in the form of ethnic kinship, whereas the motivational base for Ister-Granum was

---

[100]   Source: http://www.kormany.hu/hu/nemzeti-fejlesztesi-miniszterium/hirek/keretegyezmeny-egyszerusiti-es-gyorsitja-a-kozos-magyar-szlovak-kozutfejleszteseket

[101]   The state agreements can be found at: http://www.rokovanie.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-141832?prefixFile=m   (accessed August 16, 2012) and http://www.rokovanie.sk/File.aspx/ViewDocumentHtml/Mater-Dokum-141836?prefixFile=m   (accessed August 16, 2012)

both ethnic kinship and instrumental expectations (grant-seeking). This table reinforces this by showing how Ister-Granum members ranked economic development as the second most important policy area among 12, whereas Hídverő ranked those highest related to identity-building. In Hídverő the typical activities are in line with this priority, as both the cultural days and the joint Roman heritage project are culture-related. For Ister-Granum the picture is different. When asked what they know about what the Euroregion actually does, the members typically mentioned the fish ladder and the bridge projects at the Ipoly river. While these projects were undoubtedly received positively in the few settlements where these are located, mayors in most other member municipalities did not see any immediate benefit for themselves, nor how it would contribute to the overall development in the region.

4.4.2. Cross-border cooperation intensity

I will now turn to the cross-border coooperation intensity, and assess how they perform in categories derived from the literature (see Chapter 3). Table 8 summarizes the assessments, which I will then elaborate upon.

Table 8. *Cross-border cooperation intensity of Hídverő and Ister-Granum*

	Euroregion+ *Indicators*	**Ister-Granum (HUSK)***	**Hídverő (HUSK)**
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	*Strength of legal arrangement*	high	low
	Robustness of its administrative arrangement	high	low
	Meeting activity	low	high
	Adherence to development strategy/mission statement	medium	low
	Budget	medium	low
	Project intensity	medium	low

Source: author

The *legal arrangement* of Ister-Granum is strong, as the organization has adopted the legal form European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, which has been developed by the European Union (in cooperation with the Committee of the Regions and the Association of European Border Regions), to specifically serve cross-border regions. Hídverő, on the other hand, has a weak organizational form, as the five Hungarian settlements are only honorary members in the association, which is registered in Slovakia.

Likewise, the Ister-Granum has a robust *administrative arrangement*, since it has three full-time employees, whereas Hídverő has to rely on the local government where the Chair is located for administrative support. This has consequences for the amount of activities that can be carried out. On the other hand, none of them have been able to set up working groups, or similar, that would draw in a larger number of members.

> "I used to be Chair of the working committee on environment, six, seven or eight years ago. We did a study on waste collection in the member municipalities, how it works. That was so that others could see good practices and examples; we disseminated this among the members. We used to meet perhaps four times a year, I don't remember, so much has happened since then. Then we just started to meet less and less, there were things we had to do, the financial crisis came, and somehow it just stopped. In the EGTC there are no working committees, I don't know why." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A113)

The reasons cited by interviews with the political and administrative leadership for why working groups were not set up is that they took too much time for the management, and that it was difficult to get participants to be committed beyond the initial meeting. An additional reason might have been that the working groups that were set up before the EGTC were set up by political participants and not administrative staff, making them partially overlapping with the assembly forum and leaving them with few links into executive-administrative branches of local governments.

Meeting activity is low in Ister-Granum, with some years only one assembly, in others two taking place. Hídverő, on the other hand, has regular monthly meetings with high attendance. Activity was higher at the time of the transformation to EGTC and when there were financial troubles, but the agendas have not been exciting enough to draw many members to meetings.

Ister-Granum has a medium sized *budget* in a European perspective. It has received national funding to secure its operational costs, but it has had difficulties to get more than a few projects funded by the European Union. Although a Euroregion does not need to run projects in its own name, the expectation (as expressed for instance in the statutes) has been that it would be a project-owner, especially with European Union support. This expectation has only partially been fulfilled. Hídverő, on the other hand, has a miniscule budget, consisting only of membership fees, since it does not have any external support. All its projects are officially run by a selection of its members. It has, however, been successful in receiving sponsors for events such as the annual Cultural Days.

The limited budget is reflected in *project intensity;* Ister-Granum has annually had between 1-4, whereas Hídverő has generally focused on one project at the time.

4.4.3. Appropriation of policy space

The ability to appropriate the policy space in borderlands (see Chapter 2) depends on how well the Euroregion can perform the three functions of seismograph, loudspeaker and display window. As elaborated on in detail in Chapter 2, as a *seismograph* it measures the intensity of attitudes and preferences with cross-border relevance. As a *loudspeaker it* performs advocacy work for resources or policy interventions, and as a *display window* it strengthens the image, both towards external and internal communities, of the Euroregion as a single area. For this section I

rely mainly on the interviews with managers and Chairs of the organizations, but also on documents and member interviews.

4.4.3.1. Seismograph function

The municipalities taking part in the Hídverő Euroregion are all small, which facilitates contact between the representatives in the Euroregion (the mayor) and ordinary citizens. However, structured and strategic dialogue with civil society organizations is non-existent. Civil society organizations do not constitute important partners according to the Chair, and their involvement is limited to the engagement of church, cultural and sport associations in different events. No inventory of civil society organizations operating in the area has been made.

In Ister-Granum the picture is different. Throughout its existence, the Euroregion's representatives have adhered to the European Union-promoted idea of civil society organizations as major channels through which the ones affected by the policies are expected to take part in the policy-making process (Smismans 2006, Kohler-Koch 2009). Several efforts have been made to institutionalize civil society involvement. In 2002 the Euroregion initiated a *Civil Parliament*, in which 50 organizations from both sides of the border took part. The parliament was supposed to serve as a generator of ideas for the Euroregion, i.e. to have a seismographic function. However, the civil society organizations' interest did not persist and only a few meetings were held. A few years later the Euroregion commissioned a study of civil society organizations in the region, their attitudes towards cooperation with local governments and their knowledge and practice of cross-border exchange. The study counted 432 civil society organizations operating within the Hungarian area of Ister-Granum and 85 on the Slovak side (Bartal and Molnar 2006: 20, 45). On both sides cultural activities dominated as the purpose of civil society organizations. A clear majority of the civil society organizations stated that they had good relations with local

governments, but only a third of the civil society organizations knew the Ister-Granum Euroregion. The knowledge of the Euroregion was highest in the center, primarily among associations located in Esztergom, but it diminished the further away the associations were located from this center (Bartal and Molnar 2006: 72, 76). As for contacts with civil society organizations on the other side, 20% of the Hungarian civil society organizations stated that they had regular contacts, while 14% of the responding Slovak organizations said the same (Bartal and Molnar 2006: 45, 69).

Following the study, a new civil society parliament effort was done in 2007, 700,000 HUF (approximately 2,500 EUR) was allocated for this purpose, and the re-inaugerated parliament was supposed to appoint six members to a Regional Development Council that would serve as an Advisory Board to the newly founded EGTC (this Regional Development Council should not be confused with the Hungarian RDCs on NUTS II level). However, this initiative did not take off either, and in the following difficult years the relation with civil society was given less attention. At the time of writing, a new way of involving non-state actors was envisioned, the carrying out of an "Ister-Granum salon', a one-time event, that if successful would be repeated, where business representatives and CSOs would have a chance to meet policymakers.

A natural alternative to civil society organizations in channeling needs and opinions of the whole cross-border territory into the work of the Euroregion is through the member representatives. For Hídverő this was relatively easy, as most local governments are small and their representatives attended meetings regularly. In the case of Ister-Granum this was not functioning fully, as many members were passive (as seen in section 4.3.2.). The sheer number of participants inhibited the capacity of the leadership and the management to have personal knowledge and contact with all of them. A common complaint among small-size members was that the leadership and management (especially during the manager serving 2009-2010) did not

care about the small local governments. One of the managers succeeding him claimed to want to change this:

> "It is alpha and omega that the director knows the needs of the members, because it is also about good relations within the EGTC, and between the executive and the members. Maybe [the lack of good relations] before was the reason for the general assembly [sometimes] not having a quorum, (Manager, Hungary, Istergranum: #A118)

4.4.3.2. Loudspeaker function

There are multiple ways in which Euroregions can approach decision-makers within the policy network to advance their interests. As indicated in Chapter 2, channels for exerting influence include: (a) multiple positions of member representatives; (b), within-party contacts to people in power; (c) indirect representation via other organizations; and (d) partnerships with non-state actors. Further, there are four main modes of persuasion: (1) commissioning reports on the issue to be raised; (2) arranging seminars or conferences, (3) sending delegations to decision-makers; (4) writing statements/resolutions in the name of the Euroregion.

Table 9. *How a Euroregion can access and influence other policy actors*

Channels for exerting influence	A. Multiple positions of member representatives; B. Within-party contacts to people in power; C. Indirect representation via other organizations; D. Partnerships with non-state actors;
Modes of persuasion	1) Commissioning reports on the issue to be raised; 2) Arranging seminars or conferences dedicated to the issue to be raised; 3) Sending delegations to decision-makers; 4) Writing statements/resolutions in the name of the EGTC

Source: author

Hídverő has on purpose largely avoided taking on the function of loudspeaker. National rules and regulations are taken as set, and issues that would require the involvement of other levels are avoided. This does not mean that the organization does not have access to any channels for exerting influence. Persons within the organization have held multiple positions, for instance in organizations promoting Hungarian interests, and there are contacts to people in power, especially national-level politicians or bureaucrats of Hungarian origin. It does not have any indirect representation via other organizations though, and does not have any formal partnerships with non-state actors. The four modes of persuasion have been largely unused, with the exception of occasional seminars and conferences.

The situation in Ister-Granum is more differentiated. The Chair and the Deputy Chair (these positions rotate between the mayors of Esztergom and Sturovo/Parkany) have multiple positions. The mayor of Sturovo (Parkany), who had the time of fieldwork served as Chair, is for instance also a member of the European Committee of the Region, an advisory body consisting of 344 members representing local and regional governments from the 27 member countries[102] Both he and the Deputy Chair are both frequently invited to national conferences. However, their role as representative of the Euroregion often takes the backseat in these situations.

> "I usually speak as the mayor of Sturovo (Parkany), because in that capacity I'm more known then as the Chair of Ister-Granum, that always need some extra explanation, especially since rotate between being Chair and Deputy chair. So I rather do it as the Mayor of Sturovo, but of course I speak in the name of the region." (Chair, Ister-Granum, Slovakia: #A122)

> "I can be the Chair of Ister-Granum, but also the Chair of the Esztergranum-Nyergesujfalu micro-region. As Esztergom is in a difficult political situation, when I see that the town cannot do something, I try to mobilize the micro-region or Ister-Granum, because there are good relations in there, and big support for this.

---

[102] For more information, see the website of the Committee of the Regions: [http://cor.europa.eu] (Accessed October 21, 2012)

This is an advantage for me, and I use it." (Deputy Chair, Ister-Granum, Hungary: A119)

Within-party contacts to people in power (e.g. Ministers), is considered an important channel for exerting influence in both organizations, and is something that is done on a one-to-one basis. However, whereas Hídverő's cultural focus is less dependent on actors at other levels, the Ister-Granum's focus on socio-economic development makes it more vulnerable. During the history of the Euroregion it has mattered in terms of support whether the political Party Fidesz has been in power (1998-2002, 2010--) or a Socialist/Liberal coalition (2002-2010). On the Slovak side contacts have been with the Hungarian ethnic parties, as the party politics in this part of Slovakia is not divided along right-wing ideological lines.

"I believe party links is important it terms of financial support. Now the Euroregion gets support from the Ministry for its maintenance costs. This we can thank the previous manager for, who was in quite a good relationship with the current government." "(Deputy Chair, Ister-Granum, Hungary: #A119)

"I trust that we can get special support for Ister-Granum. If the Fidesz stays strong, we can survive this. Our own connections are working, they worked before too. I am often asked by the local council representatives what is happening with this. I always try not to go into a debate. I tell them, children, be calm, have patience, this will be fine, it will work." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A87)

Indirect representation of the interests of the Euroregion via other organizations is done to a very limited extent. Ister-Granum is a member of the European Association of Border Regions, and via its early adoption of the EGTC has had the possibility to provide feedback on the process of making this legal restructuring. As related in the section above, the ambition has been to cultivate non-state relations, but as this has been fraught with difficulties it was never possible to enlist civil society organizations as help in lobbying efforts.

Ister-Granum has both arranged seminars and commissioned several reports on issues interesting for it, such as bridges, civil society development, strategic plans and others. The

efficiency of these are difficult to prove, however, and they have been questioned by impatient members.

> "We decided to rather support projects that are concrete, like a bridge or fish ladders, So not really such things as conferences or studies or I don't know what, that we rather like to see concrete things." (Deputy Chair, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A119)

The Euroregion has been unwilling to approach decision-makers formally via delegations or written statements. Instead persuasion is more *ad hoc*.

> "The one who sees a chance to bring up the topic does so [in person], we don't do this in writing (Chair, Ister-Granum, Slovakia: #A122)

According to the Deputy Chair, it is not even the task of the political leadership of the Euroregion to do this, but it should be left to the management.

> "That is important for the management, because even if we as mayors represent the EGTC, the concrete work is done by the management, the manager and two other employees. That would be their task to monitor applications, to negotiate, to decide about things and to conduct lobbying towards the national level and to represent the interests of the EGTC. It depends on their skills ad contacts how this will succeed. At the last assembly we decided to have a so called Ister-Granum saloon, where economical actors can meet political actors, to tie better contacts, but this is still in children shoes, nothing concrete yet." (Deputy Chair, Ister-Granum, Hungary: #A119)

However, Ister-Granum can still point to some successes, for instance regarding the bridges over the Ipoly river, which was pointed out by members as a typical project (table 6), and which needed involvement up to the state level. The bridges also illustrate how single local governments are sometimes able to act more strategically than the overall Euroregion.

> "We have a plan for an Ipoly river valley biking road, but we cannot apply for funds. The critical part is between Damasd and Letkes, the regulation of Ipoly and the surrounding area has not been regulated properly, we cannot apply because we would need the Slovak government too. The ownership (of the land] is not sure, and it is not irrelevant which party is in the government, the previous one left long shadows, and it is hard to deal with this now. We are too small to solve this. You

would need the state. [*Did you do lobbying for this?*] Honestly, we gave priority with Helemba, Paszto and Vamosmikula to have the bridges built, to have a crossing, and you know it is the case that you have to make priorities, that was more important than a bike road, this is a small part, you would need to change the state agreements. (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A133)

4.4.3.3. Display window function

Hídverő has done little to market the participating local governments as one coherent region, mainly because the cross-border dimension was based on bilateral partnership agreements between specific municipalities, and the Hungarian participants therefore are not located next to each other.

Ister-Granum has tried to work with this function through several identity-creating projects. A map created at the time when the EGTC was founded was in frequent use (website, promotional materials, power point presentations at international meetings, etc), although it soon became obsolete as some members left the cooperation and the map also included the territory of several local governments that had never been a member. Another example is how the indoor and outdoor water park owned by Esztergom offered reduced fees for inhabitants within the Ister-Granum region.

> "There are such activities, small ones, like a map of the Euroregion or a calendar of the Euroregion, small projects like these, but when we won the big regional tourism strategy project we unfortunately had to decline it." (Chair, Ister-Granum, Slovakia: #A122)

Although no opinion poll has been conducted investigating the extent to which the Euroregion is known among the population, the impression among the leaders is that Ister-Granum is a fairly known name.

> "Ister-Granum is a brand, which is used for any activity in the region, one example could be how Ister-Granum takes part in the wine association and at cultural

138

events, then Ister-Granum is present there with its brand, that means that you could be, or the mayors could be, proud of our Ister-Granum region." (Manager, Ister-Granum, Slovakia: #A118)

However, this popular familiarity with the Euroregion is not translated into a general feeling of regional cohesion among its members. Frequently in interviews with Ister-Granum members it was stated that everyone only looks at concrete interests for their own local government.

> "We would need such an identity development, at least in Hungary the regional identity is zero, you really would need to develop that. Especially since everybody here deals with how we can expand, that there is little money for the local governments, and they ask 'we paid this membership fee, but tell us what we get for it", that's why we need some concrete things that they get or can get, but also to explain that everything that is could for the regional territory is also good for them, that's why I suggested we would do micro regional plans .." (Deputy Chair, Ister-Granum, Hungary: A119)

Finally, the Ister-Granum has managed to function as a display window also towards actors at other levels, especially towards European policymakers.

> "So Ister-Granum was established as the second EGTC in the EU, it has until this day a really good name in Brussels structures you know. It is always mentioned as a good example, as a positive example of territorial cooperation. This example, this good example, is also used in Hungary." (Manager, Ister-Granum, Slovakia: #A118)

4.4.3.4. The governance space

The cross-border area constitutes a governance space with multiple actors, where the Euroregions need other decisionmakers to implement their agendas. Figure 3 represents the main partners of the Euroregions within a multi-level governance framework. The vertical dimension indicates that the different levels (indicated by the word 'multi-level') and the horizontal dimension indicates the sectoral diversity (the governance part). The figure clearly displays how the cross-border dimension is not placed easily within a two-dimensional representation. I have indicated

the actors exclusively dealing with cross-border governance (included the investigated Euroregions) by inserting a baseline as a separate cross-border cooperation vertical and horizontal space. As Hídverő declines active lobby work, the figure only displays the Ister-Granum governance space.

Figure 3. *Involved actors in cross-border policy issues. Euroregion Ister-Granum and Euroregion Hídverő.*

GOVERNANCE DIMENSION			
		State	Non-state
	Supranational	Committee of the Regions (partially, via the Chair)	Association of European Border Studies, Mission Operationnelle Transfrontaliere, Central European Service for Cross-Border initiatives (Budapest-based), Hét Határ Önkormányzati Szövetség
MULTI-LEVEL DIMENSION	**National**	Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Development (Hungary), Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Agriculture (Slovakia)	
	Regional	Nitra district (Slovakia)	Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Eurohid Foundation (defunct), Jovo Foundation, Regional Development Agency in Sturovo (Parkany)
	Local	Local governments that are members, especially Esztergom, Sturovo (Parkany)	Several efforts to draw in associations in the work, but mainly successful with Esztergom associations, Slovak local associations Local/regional businesses
Cross-border baseline Interreg (VATI) (weak connections for both			

Source: Multi-level governance framework (Marks 1993, Hooghe and Marks 2003, Skelcher 2005, Bache 2012.

Overall, the figure demonstrates that the network of actors within which the Ister-Granum navigates is rather thin. The regional state level is all but empty, as is the national non-state level. Interestingly enough, Ister-Granum has had better contacts on the supranational than the national level. A special weakness has been the lack of dialogue with the authority managing the cross-border cooperation funds, Interreg funds, which is managed by an Hungarian authority, named VATI. Although Ister-Granum received EGTC status, this did not facilitate access to funds, and the perception is that the Euroregion is not treated preferentially in its project applications compared to other applicants.

> "We cannot really influence them [the Interreg]. We just are put in front of ready facts. These are the programs, whether you like them or not. [...] It is very often not what the small villages need, but that for which there is money, for that you have to apply, that's how it is, even if it might be that a settlement needs something else, but for which you cannot apply." (Chair, Ister-Granum, Slovakia: #A122)

The results for appropriation of cross-border cooperation activities are summarized in Table 10, which also includes an assessment of member satisfaction. Hídverő members were in general very positive towards their Euroregion, whereas the picture was much more mixed in Ister-Granum. The low satisfaction follows the motivation when one of the bases for having membership, instrumental expectations, are not fulfilled. It should be added that this captures one point in time, though, as the majority of interviews were conducted in 2010 and 2011. Respondents in some supplementary interviews carried out in 2012 tended to point out that recent developments were hopeful.

> "I just feel that the Ister-Granum is more directed towards the Hungarian side. I would not say that there is nothing for the Slovaks, there are for instance the [Ipoly] bridges, but because there are more Hungarian villages in Ister-Granum it is more tilted towards them." (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő and Ister-Granum: A67)

"I would say that the colleagues from the 'upper province'[103] were more active, for instance getting the fish stairs." (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #A49)

"On the other side they got much bike roads and much money, the majority went there, more I do not know." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A110)

"Thus, it was a political thing, nothing is working, the picture is not working. Ister-Granum did not succeed to bring anything to the Slovak part. Well, there are some brochures, some parrot talking about tourism, wine area, a couple of cultural actions, but there was no big investment projects." (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A127)

As can be seen in the quotes, there were also perceptions, even if not widespread, in both Hungary and Slovakia among Ister-Granum members, that 'the other side' got out more of the cooperation. Overall, this justified the assessment of member satisfaction as low in Ister-Granum, whereas it was high for Hídverő. Both organizations are assessed as medium in appropriation of cross-border cooperation activities, Ister-Granum because it has made efforts to carry out the functions of seismograph, loudspeaker and display windows, but it has had problems with all of them. Hídverő has only properly carried out the seismograph function, but on the other hand it has appropriated the cross-border space to some extent, as it has no other active cross-border forums in the area that could compete with this.

Table 10. *Member satisfaction and appropriation of cross-border governance space of Hídverő and Ister-Granum.*

Euroregion	**Ister-Granum**	**Hídverő**
Member satisfaction	low	high
Appropriation of cross-border governance space	medium	medium

Source: author

*

---

103 The Hungarian expression for the Hungarian-speaking part of south Slovakia.

As seen in this section, Hídverő and Ister-Granum are two Euroregions that function and perform very differently in terms of activities, organizational capacity and the way they situated themselves in the cross-border governance space. The concluding section will link these results to the motivation, participation and interaction patterns discussed in section 4.3.

4.5. Conclusion

The scenes in the beginning of this chapter depicted one Euroregion in crisis, and another one that seemingly florished. Why had the former (Ister-Granum EGTC) had arrived at the verge of disintegration whereas the latter (Hídverő Association) showed no such tendencies? Further research and analysis demonstrated the inherent difficulties in defining 'success' or 'performance' when it comes to organizations in general, and Euroregions in particular, as discussed in Chapter 3. Ister-Granum scored higher than Hídverő in five out of six categories in cross-border cooperation intensity. It also had made considerable efforts to fulfill all three functions of siemograph, loudspeaker and display window. Nonetheless, Hídverő was assessed favorably in the two performance categories, due to its satisfied members and unthreatened position as a mediator for cross-border contacts in the area. While earlier efforts to make something grander out of Hídverő with the Danube Euroregion had come to nothing, the core organization had survived. In spite of these assessment difficulties, the investigation allows for making some statements in relation to the two main research questions.

The first question asked why and how local governments in the central Hungarian-Slovak borderland participate in Euroregions and how they interact. This was analyzed from the perspectives of motivation, participation and interaction of local governments. The analysis demonstrated how identity/polity constituted a basis motivation for membership in both

Euroregions, but in Ister-Granum this was complemented by an instrumental motivation that was mainly grant-driven, i.e. members expected to see concrete inflow of resources as a direct result of their membership. The results were in line with the findings of both Blatter (2000) and Perkmann (2003). The investigation established how Ister-Granum had a large share members that were either indifferent or passive information-seekers, and only a small clique driving the cooperation, whereas the members of Hídverő tended to be more active and equally ranked within the organization. Finally, Hídverő had denser communicatonal networks, both domestically and across the border. Nevertheless, overall cross-border communication is relatively sparse for both organizations, with weekly and monthly contacts being the exception rather than the norm.

The second question asked if motivation and interaction patters can form <u>social capital</u> that influences <u>how the Euroregions function and perform</u>. The analysis demonstrated the importance of congruence between motivation and actual activities. The case of Ister-Granum showed how a Euroregional organization, in which many of the members base their membership on visible grants, will suffer from an output legitimacy problem (see Scharpf 1997:19)[104]. Such an incongruence makes it more difficult to create actively participating members, who are in close contact with each other also outside the framework of Euroregion meetings, i.e. the kind of membership that signifies the presence of strong between-group (transnational) social capital.

Conclusions can also be drawn as to the distribution of social capital between three sub-sets: bonding, bridging and linking social capital. The analysis showed that the interaction between local governments indicated the existence of strong bonding social capital on

---

[104] Scharpf argues that democracy would be an 'empty ritual' if the democratic procedure was not able to produce effective outcomes, that is: 'achieving the goals that citizens collectively care about' (1997: 19).

institutional level for Hídverő, whereas Ister-Granum had little of this resource. Hídverő had access bridging social capital (a network including other sectors) locally), whereas Ister-Granum has struggled to do the same on a regional scale. Ister-Granum had, however, only been moderately successful, and that as well concentrated to the heart of the cooperation, Esztergom. Both organizations have linking social capital, but concentrated to some personal party-based affiliations of some actors, limited in scope.

To sum up, Hídverő possesses bonding social capital, and also partially bridging social capital, which enables it to perform the seismograph function well, but does not utilize these resources to attempt to perform the other two functions (loudspeaker and display window). Ister-Granum is lacking in terms of bonding social capital, is working to create bridging social capital, but uses the linking in a non-strategic manner.

To what extent such between-group social capital is also a consequence of within-group (domestic) social capital will be analyzed and discussed in detail in Chapter 7. However, before that, Chapter 5 and 6 give the results of research at two other border areas.

CHAPTER 5: A CASE STUDY OF TWO EUROREGIONS AT THE SWEDISH-NORWEGIAN BORDER[105]

The international European road that is numbered *E18* leads from Craigavon in the United Kingdom to Saint Petersburg in Russia, with much of its 1,900 km located in Norway and Sweden. It is the main route for motor traffic between the capital cities Oslo and Stockholm, and on that way it passes through forested rural areas in the area surrounding the border. At the end of the 1980s there was widespread discontent among decision-makers and citizens in the local governments close to the border about the road being unsafe and slow, and in need of urgent funding for improvements. Local decision-makers on both sides realized that that the problem was not bounded within the nation-states of either Norway or Sweden, due to significant flows of people and goods crossing the border, and decided to take joint action. In 1990, the municipalities located closest to the border set up a forum with the task to coordinate actions towards the central decision-makers and authorities of each state. In the mid-90s this developed into a regular committee, consisting of the leading politicians from all member municipalities, registered in Norway. The Euroregion Varmland-Ostfold had thus been formed, henceforth referred to as 'VarmOst'.

This chapter uses this organization and its neighbor to the south, Granskommitteen Bohuslan-Ostfold-Dalsland (henceforth 'OstBoh'), as cases to explore the same research questions as the overall study: (1) Why and how do local governments in the south Swedish-Norwegian borderland participate in Euroregions and how do they interact? (2) Can their motivation and interaction patterns form social capital that influences how the Euroregions

---

[105]Part of the analysis of qualitative and relational data in this chapter and in Chapter 7 has been published in Swedish in Svensson and Ojehag 2012. Andreas Ojehag, PhD candidate at Karlstad University and one of the lead researchers in an inter-disciplinary project on the Swedish-Norwegian borderlands, also provided valuable intellectual input on the links between globalization and local processes.

function and perform? In addition, the chapter follows one additional line of inquiry, to see whether there is such a thing as 'Scandinavian exceptionalism' when it comes to cross-border cooperation.

In terms of methodology, the same methods are used here as in the other case studies in the dissertation (see chapter 3). Suffice to say, the data underlying the analysis consists of organizational material (statutes, minutes, promotional material) and 39 interviews with representatives of the OstBoh and VarmOst Euroregions. The analysis was facilitated by the use of the softwares AtlasTi, UciNet and CEUNet.

The chapter is structured in a similar way to the other case studies. The Swedish-Norwegian borderland cooperation is introduced in section 5.1 against the backdrop of Nordic integration and its emphasis on border issues. An overview of the region at the southern part of the region is given in terms of geographical, economic, historical and politico-administrative characteristics, partly relying on data gathered by interviews and partly on secondary literature and policy documents. This also serves to contextualize and qualify the criteria that were used for the decision to select the Swedish-Norwegian border area as one of those to be studied in this dissertation. The section finishes with a brief description of the two organizations. The analysis starts in section 5.2 using the local governments as units of analysis. It examines why they engage in Euroregional cooperation and how they do so (mode and intensity of engagement with the organization), and also how they interact with each other, both within and outside the framework of the Euroregion. Section 5.3 focuses on the organizations as units of analysis: I first determine the functions that the organizations fulfill and the type of projects and policy areas that are prioritized. I then discuss the type and level of institutional social capital endowments available to the organizations. Conclusions are drawn and the ground set for the final case study in section 5.4.

5.1. Cross-border cooperation in the Nordic Countries

One of the few efforts to systematically categorize and compare organizational cross-border regions of Europe was made in a much cited article from 2003. In this, Markus Perkmann constructed a typology in which Scandinavian institutions constituted a separate type, indicated as all having high cooperation intensity and large geographical scope (Perkmann 2003). Likewise, Medeiros in a 2011 article refers to the "so called Scandinavian-type Euroregions" (Medeiros 2011, 152), described as "older and, as a consequence, should have a higher degree of maturity and better outputs in generating positive and effective territorial impacts" (Medeiros 2011, 142). However, the previous chapter on two Hungarian-Slovakian Euroregions demonstrated the pitfalls of comparative assessment in general, and the assumption of similarity within one geographical context in particular. Instead, I argue that the main line of Scandinavian 'exceptionalism' refers to the relative unimportant role played by European-level actors (Council of Europe, European Union, Association of European Border Regions) compared to Nordic Cooperation actors (Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers). I further argue that, on the other hand, such exceptionalism is not applicable to the function and performance, where there is significant variation.

Several Euroregions in the Nordic countries were established as early as the 1960s and 1970s, and the idea that local cross-border cooperation is beneficial stems from the post-WWII years. Local cross-border cooperation was one of the issues that had been taken up by the Nordic Council, founded in 1952, and included in the Treaty of Cooperation between the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden signed on March 23, 1962. Article 25 stated that when "the need and the necessary conditions exist for joint economic development

of adjoining parts of the territories of two or more contracting parties, these parties shall jointly endeavor to promote such development." (see Anderson 1967, 174).

Analogous to the European integration process, intense work was done in the 1950s in order to foster Nordic unity. Although having much in common, these countries also share a history of wars and tensions. World War II added additional strain with two countries occupied by Germany (Denmark, Norway), one country in liason with Germany during part of the war (Finland), one occupied by the Allies (Faroe islands) and two declared neutral (Iceland, Sweden). Even though Sweden accepted many refugees from the occupied countries, and the vast forested Swedish-Norwegian borderland served as a supply center for the resistance, the fact remained that the allegedly 'neutral' country of Sweden let German troops pass on its soil on their way to Norway, which meant an extra strain casting shadows on the relations long after the war had ended (see Ekman 2005 on Norwegian-Swedish relations after the war).

It was in this context of intertwined unity and disaccord that the Nordic Council was founded, consisting of members of parliament from the participating countries. Together they developed and negotiated the Treaty of Cooperation that set forth the common goal to "maintain and develop further co-operation between the Nordic countries in the legal, cultural, social and economic fields" (Treaty of Cooperation, 1962, Article 1). The *Nordic Council of Ministers*, a similar cooperation on government level, was formalized in 1971 (Nordic Council of Ministers 2012), a time when none of the countries had joined the European Union. The Nordic Council of Ministers took on an active role in promoting the cooperation between local and regional authorities located close to borders, and started to give financial and technical support to border regions.[106]

---

[106] The annual budget of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2012 was 932 million DKK, approximately 125 million EUR. Out of that 10.5 MDKK, approximately 1.4 million EUR, was given in direct support to the operation of Euroregions. In addition, other

If the Nordic cooperation (manifested by the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers) is more important for the border regions in Scandinavia than the European cooperation (manifested by the Council of Europe, the European Union, and the European Association of Border Regions), we can expect to see greater operational importance of this support in organizational documents and more reference to the Nordic Council and other Nordic organizations in the interviews with organizational representatives and members. Evidence in support of the latter will be presented later in this chapter, and I will therefore argue that there is a case for talking about 'Nordoregions' rather than 'Euroregions'.

5.1.1. The Norwegian-Swedish border: the socio-economic characteristics and main actors at the southern part

The border between Sweden and Norway stretches over 1,600 kilometers, making it one of the longest borders in Europe.[107] The borderlands are mainly constituted by mountains, pine forests and plenty of lakes, and although the southern part of the border is more populated than the rest, it is still a mainly rural area characterized by longer distances between settlements than in other parts of Europe. It takes one and a half hour by car for the chair of VarmOst, one of the studied organizations, to visit his deputy, located one hundred and one kilometer away. The distance between the secretariat of OstBoh, the other studied organization, and the Norwegian Chair is even greater, one hundred and nineteen kilometers. In that sense, Perkmann is right in that the geographical scope of these Euroregions is large compared to many European Euroregions

---

budget lines can be utilized for project . applications depending on their activities. (Planer och budget 2012, [*Plans and budget 2012*], p 5 and 116, available at http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publikationer/2011-740). According to the 2009-2012 strategy plan of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Business, Energy & Regional Policy, the current aim is to make "functional regions located on two or more sides of national borders sustainable and developing and thereby benefiting the people in the Nordic border areas" (Nordic Council of Ministers 2012, my translation).

[107] In fact, the length more or less equals the distance between the centers of two of the case studies in this study, as the driving distance between the towns Halden in Norway and Esztergom in Hungary is 1,588 kilometers.

(Perkmann 2003). However, as I have argued elsewhere, what matters is cognitive distance, which is relative rather than absolute (see Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012 and Medve-Balint and Svensson, forthcoming). This was evident from my interviews, in which interviewees from these organizations rarely referred to geographical distance, unless their local governments were located at the outskirts of the territory covered by the Euroregions. Hence, what mattered was the relative perception of being furthest away, not the absolute distance. Neither size (geographical scope) nor absolute distance are therefore factors that will feature in my analysis in this chapter.

The border between Norway and Sweden marks a linguistic and cultural difference, although the languages are so close that the nationals of one country have no problem understanding the nationals of the other. This is especially true of the borderland areas, where the local Swedish dialect has many similarities to the Norwegian language spoken in that area[108]

Although Scandinavia to the outside world has a reputation as a rather homogenous area characterized by high welfare, high taxes and high incomes, there are differences between the areas on each side of the border, although these also tend to vary over time. While the Swedish side for the past decades has been characterized by overall out-migration and population loss, the Norwegian side has benefited from Oslo serving as a motor for the economy. Statistics compiled by the European Territorial Interreg program for the 2007-2013 budget period clearly shows this pattern. The sub-program areas *Gränslöst Samarbete* and *Inre Skandinavien* are located at the southern half of the border, thereby roughly covering the area of interest in this study. Here the

---

[108] Norway officially recognizes two versions of the Norwegian languages (bokmal and nynorsk) along with Sami and Romani languages (See the Nordic Council website for more information on Nordic languages: http://www.norden.org/en/the-nordic-region/language/ , accessed July 20, 2012)

population on the Norwegian side has grown, whereas the Swedish side has declined, as seen in Figure 4. These trends have largely continued during the programming period.[109]

Figure 4. *Population development at the Swedish-Norwegian border*
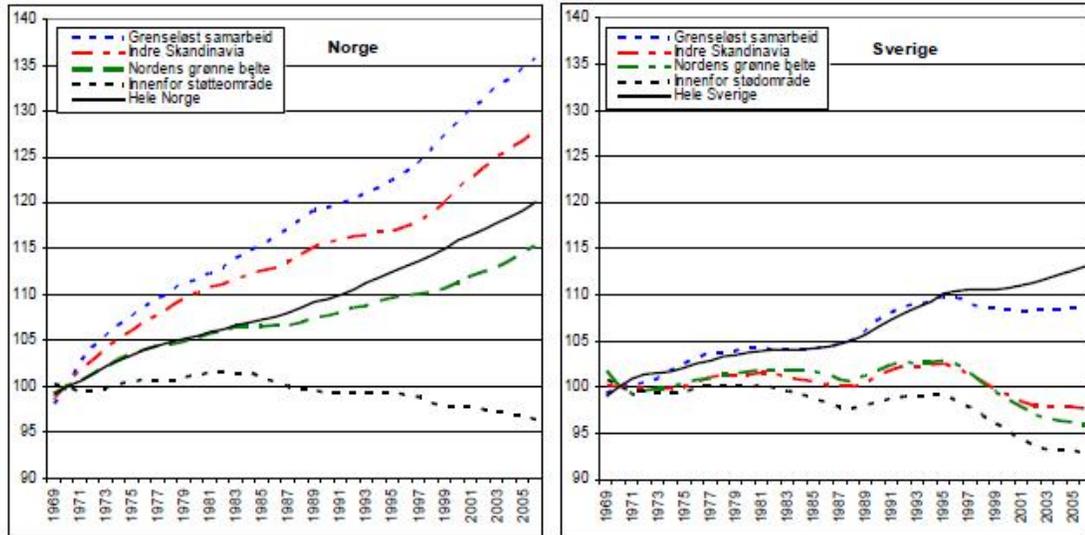
Source: Interreg program and Center for Regional Development Research, Karlstad University. Interreg program report, page 29.

There is also a marked difference in equivalised disposable income; the average one-person household (under 64 years of age) had 27% higher disposable income in Norway than in Sweden in 2009 (Haagensen 2012, 66). This difference can be assumed to be higher in the border area, since the Norwegian side is located close to Oslo. However, official statistics do not take into account income generated in the other country. That affects, for instance, the municipality of Årjang (member of VarmOst), which ranks low in Sweden income lists, but in fact has an

---

[109] Since 2007 most Swedish local governments that are members of OstBoh or VarmOst have stagnated or lost population, whereas all municipalities grew on the Norwegian side. See reports on <www.regionfakta.com, www.fyrbodal.se, www.ostfoldanalyse.no (accessed July 20, 2012).

average-affluent population due to the high proportion of the workforce employed in Norway (Mayor, Sweden, VarmOst: #A98).[110]

In total, the volume of commuting taking place across the Norwegian-Swedish border is bigger than in the Swedish-Danish Oresund border area (Interreg Sverige-Norge 2007, 32), despite the latter receiving more attention in media and from researchers. In 2008, 26,000 persons commuted daily or weekly from Sweden to Norway, compared to 21,000 from Sweden to Denmark (Haagensen 2012, 90). While labor mobility is gravitating towards Norway, the flow is reversed when it comes to shopping and real estate purchase. A number of shopping centers specifically catering to Norwegian customers have sprung up on the Swedish side in the 1990s and 2000s (for more on this see, for instance, Lofgren 2008, Olsson, Berger, and Gottfridsson 2011). This has been called an "unplanned integration, often seen as a problem by the Norwegian state, but a blessing for the wak economy on the Swedish side." (Lofgren 2008: 207)"

The Swedish entry into the European Union in 1995 had some effects on the frequency of controls at the Swedish-Norwegian border[111] as well as on customs regulations. However, it did not have any significant consequences for everyday life among nearby municipalities and populations. What did change for cross-border cooperation was that the border areas became eligible for European Union funds for cross-border cooperation (Norway joined the EUs Interreg for cross-border program program as well on a voluntary basis, but funds are located separately). Norwegian project owners receive their financial assistance directly from Norwegian sources

---

[110] This means that although I categorized Sweden/Norway as an economically homogenous border area in the case-selection phase of this project, homogeneity is indeed a relative phenomenon and the cut-off point that was used (50% national GDP-difference) is crude and perhaps too high. While the differences along the Norwegian-Swedish border are not as big as for example differences at the Polish-German or Finnish-Russian border, there are still differences big enough to have effects on mobility patterns.

[111] Nordic citizens have been allowed to freely pass the border without passports since the 1950s, according to the 1957 Agreement on Suspension of Inter-Nordic Passport Controls, available at: http://www.norden.org/sv/om-samarbetet/avtal/nordiska-avtal/passfraagor-medborgarskap-och-folkbokfoering/den-nordiska-passkontrolloeverenskommelsen/ (accessed July 20, 2012).

instead of via the European Regional Fund (Interreg Sverige-Norge 2012). The relation between the Euroregions and funding agencies will be discussed in section 5.3.

The politico-administrative settings are similar in the two countries in that they are both characterized by having strong states and local governments, whereas the regional level traditionally has been weaker. However, in recent decades there has been a trend towards regionalization through increased cooperation between local governments.

In Norway inter-municipal cooperation has emerged as an answer to a perceived problem having too many small municipalities. In spite of much debate, municipal consolidation has not taken place[112] and as a result more than half a dozen of the investigated municipalities have less than 2,000 inhabitants. Municipalities in Norway are now regularly part of tens of specific-purpose organizations, for example on health provision for elderly, garbage collection or education.[113] In the Ostfold county, three inter-municipal organizations operate. The members of OstBoh are primarily members of the inter-municipal organizations (regionrad) Nedre Glomma and Mossregionen, whereas all members of VarmOst are also members of the IndreOstfold inter-municipal organization except Aremark and Moss. The border town of Halden does not partake in any such organization. In the Norwegian part of VarmOst, IndreOstfold is the highest organ for inter-municipal regional cooperation. It is an organization consisting of ten municipalities in the region Østfold. In addition there are number of organizations created for specific tasks, such

---

[112]ECON-rapport nr. 2006-057, " Det ser ikke ut til at Regjeringen og Stortinget ser for seg større endringer I Kommunestrukturen" (sid 1).

[113]A survey from 2006 showed that many of them have bad oversight and knowledge of these organizations. Hence, while the increased nesting of municipalities into intermunipal organizations in this study is used as an indicator of strengthened networks and trust relations (i.e. social capital), it shall not be hidden that these organizations can also weaken general societal transparency and political legitimacy (ECON-rapport nr. 2006-057).

as the protection of vulnerable children, fire protection, etc. These can be run either as jointly owned companies, via municipal agreements or a task-specific non-profit.[114]

The number of specific task organizations is lower in Sweden, but there are several regional initiatives. Examples include Region Varmland, Region Vastra Gotaland, Fyrbodals Kommunalforbund, West Sweden, Finsam Varmland (labor market and social insurance management) and Vastra Varmlandssamarbetet (business development policy). Kommunalforbundet Fyrbodal incorporated in 2001 actors from previous organizations such as BOSAM, Fyrstadskansliet and KommunalforbundetDalsland. Cooperation generally dates back to the 1970s with formalization in the 1980s and 1990s. The discourse of mutual independence is emphasized as the overall justification for its existence: "Since long the municipalities have seen the advantages of cooperation. This has implicated the creation of several institutions for cooperation within this geographical area. What is new is the change of county design [the creation of VastraGotalands region] has increased the opportunities for coordination in Fyrbodal. More and more it has become clear that the municipalities within the area need each other in order to jointly develop a strong region."[115]

5.1.2. The case study organizations

The focus in this chapter is on the most southern part of this long border, from the joint archipelago of Stromstad and Hvaler to roughly the beginning of the mountainous areas. The two Euroregions operating in the area (OstBoh and VarmOst) cover a territory much of which is

[114]See for instance information at [http://www.smaalensveven.no/Modules/regionalt.aspx?ObjectType=Article&ElementID=4910&Category.ID=26365]

[115] Evaluation and program declaration of Fyrbodalskommunforbund, see http://www.fyrbodal.se/download/4112/bakgrundoforslagkommunalforbundet.pdf (p 8, my translation).

sparsely populated, but which still constitutes a nexus between the three major cities of Oslo, Gothenburg and Stockholm. The international European roads E6 (Oslo-Gothenburg) and E18 (Oslo-Stockholm) constitute vital infrastructural elements around which the two Euroregions gather. The former has a higher traffic load (approximately four times the annual amount, Interreg Sverige-Norge 2007, 33), but each road constitutes the most important public road in their territories. Administratively, both Norway and Sweden are unitary states with historically strong states combined with strong municipalities (in terms of financial independence and scope of activities). The regional tier has been largely an arena of state administration (in Norway via *fylken*, in Sweden via *lansstyrelserna*), even though both countries, especially Sweden, has gone through a process of political regionalization, i.e. increased power to elected regional decision-making bodies or regional associations of municipalities. Table 11 provides a summary of the case selection criteria (outlined above) and the main characteristics of the two Euroregions.

Table 11. *Key characteristics of OstBoh, VarmOst and the Swedish-Norwegian borderland*

Euroregion+ *Characteristics*	OstBoh (SENO)	VarmOst (SENO)
Founded	*1980*	*1990*
Local governments in 2011	*22*	*15*
Approximate population 2010	*470,000*	*210,000*
Working language	*Swedish (dominant), Norwegian*	*Norwegian (dominant), Swedish*
Border existing since	*1751, 1905 (dissolved union)*	*1751, 1905 (dissolved union)*
State form	*unitary*	*unitary*
National GDP(IMF 2010, in USD)	*SE: 61,098, NO: 96,591*	*SE: 61,098, NO: 96,591*
Regional GDP (Eurostat, NUTSII 2008)	*SE31/Norra Mellansverige: 31,100, Ostfold 32,755*	*SE31/Norra Mellansverige: 31,100, Ostfold 32,755*

Source: author

In section 5.2 and 5.3 the relevant aspects of the two organizations and their members will be analyzed together, but they are here introduced separately in order to provide a brief factual background.

Granskommitten Varmland-Ostfold (VarmOst) is an association registered in Norway, consisting of fifteen municipalities, ten on the Norwegian side (Aremark, Askim, Eidsberg, Römskog, Marker, Trögstad, Skiptvet, Spydeberg, Hoböl and Moss) and five on the Swedish side (Säffle, Årjäng, Grums, Bengtsfors and Karlstad. Nine of them are located within 50 km distance of the border (seven on the Norwegian side and two on the Swedish side). The biggest towns are Moss and Karlstad[116], located at each end of the covered territory, thereby creating a rectangular region characterized by two poles at each side with small or midsize municipalities in between. However, Moss and Karlstad have not acted as locomotives for the cooperation, but have been less active than the smaller municipalities located between them, nearer the border.[117] 55% of the municipalities in Region Østfold are members of VarmOst and 31% of the local governments in Region Värmland. Both Region Østfold and Region Värmland are also members, although the organization has a clear local (inter-municipal), rather than regional, character. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, VarmOst was founded in 1990 as a single-issue committee and gradually took on more tasks until it became a multi-purpose cross-border regional body in the mid-90s. Revised by-laws of VarmOst, valid through 2011, were adopted in 2001 and confirm the primacy of municipalities through the first article, which states that the organization "[…] is an organ for continuous contact and cooperation between those municipalities that are a part of it" (Granskommitten Varmland-Ostfold 2011, my translation)..

It further states the goals of the organization:

> "to promote and actively participate in cooperation across the border with special emphasis on infrastructure, information and removal of border obstacles, in

---

[116] In 2010 Moss had 30,030 inhabitants, Karlstad 86,348, whereas the remaining ranged from 688 (Romskog) to 15,466 (Saffle). Statistical Offices, Norway and Sweden, Official Websites.

[117] In the academic literature, borderlands have often been characterized as *peripheral* (Houtum 2000:60). VarmOst mirrors such a structure on the scale of the Euroregion, as those municipalities directly at the border are the smallest ones and hence also most peripheral.

addition to cooperation within health, business development and competence development. [The Euroregion] shall initiate, analyze and coordinate projects that are of interest to the municipalities at the border. [It] can also take tasks which it considers favorable for cooperation in the region." (Granskommitten Varmland-Ostfold 2011, my translation).

The management is carried out by one part-time employee, and the financing of the basic operation of the organization is split into four parts. The regions of Østfold and Varmland, the Swedish municipalities and Norwegian municipalities, each finance 25%. For the first 20 years of its existence the organization had a limited annual budget, since it did not receive any direct external funding for operational costs. Expenses in 2010 were 304,095 NOK (approximately 40,000 EUR). However, this did not include the funds for any of the projects initiated by VarmOst as the organization let municipalities stand as official project owners. For instance the three-year-long project "The children's border region", which aimed at stimulating tourism in the area, had a total budget of approximately 1.5 million EUR (6.4 million SEK and 6.5 million NOK). In 2011, the organization was recognized by the Nordic Council as a border region, and it received an annual assistance of 400,000 NOK (see further on this in section 5.3).

Granskommitten Ostfold-Bohuslan-Dalsland, OstBoh, consists of 22 municipalities and two regions in southeast Norway and southwest Sweden. Fourteen municipalities are situated on the Swedish side of the border and eight on the Norwegian side. Some members on the Swedish side are indirect members via the inter-municipal association Fyrbodal, whereas others have individual membership allowing them to cast individual votes. The Swedish municipalities are all small to mid-size in terms of number of inhabitants, ranging from Färgelanda with 6,691 inhabitants in 2009 to Trollhättan with 54,873. The Norwegian local governments have a somewhat wider span, with the smallest municipality Aremark having only 1,420 inhabitants, while 72,760 were registered in Fredrikstad in 2009. Four of the Swedish municipalities and seven of the Norwegian ones are located very close to the border (within 50 km to the nearest

158

main border crossing point). The two regional members are Østfold fylkeskommune and Västra Götaland county[118], although as in the case of VarmOst, this organization also has a local government rather than a regional character.

OstBoh was funded in 1980 and operates under the Fyrbodal inter-municipal association, i.e. it does not have its own legal personality.[119] In 2010, it spent 3,900,000 SEK (approx 390,000 EUR) on overhead costs and various projects; the largest income was project money (approximately 2 million SEK), Nordic Council financial support (1.3 million SEK) and member fees (0.5 million SEK). It is steered by a Board comprising the highest political leaders of most of the member municipalities, and an Executive Committee consisting of the highest political leaders of five municipalities close to the border. Its secretariat employed three people in 2011 (Gränskommitten Östfold-Bohuslän-Dalsland 2012). The by-laws state that the organization is:

> […] a forum for continuous contact between the municipalities in the border region and the regions, aiming to promote such contact. It task is to work for a sustainable development and belief in the future among the inhabitants of the region, to work for the region's resources to be seen as common, and to further contribute to the historical, cultural and linguistic cohesion, to help, facilitate and encourage inhabitants to disregard the mental, practical and formal border that divides the two countries of the region."[120]

In the 2000s OstBoh has devoted much of its work towards reducing 'border obstacles', defined by the Nordic Council as "official decisions, laws and regulations that make it problematic to move, study, commute or conduct business activities across the borders within the

---

[118] Vastra Gotaland is relatively new region, created in 1998 by merging the counties of Alvsborg, Goteborg and Bohus and Skaraborg. Most of the municipalities in this very large region are not members of OstBoh (14 out of 49 are members on the Swedish side, whereas 8 out of 18 municipalities in Ostfold region on the Norwegian side are members).

[119] The legal set-up of Euroregions in Scandinavia varies greatly (EGTS report), and it is hence not a coincidence that VarmOst and OstBoh have different legal arrangements

[120] By-laws 1999, revised 2006 (my translation). Available at http://www.granskommitten.com/media/103197/stadgar_gk_revidering_2010.pdf

Nordic countries" (Nordic Council 2010: 3, my translation, p. 3). The strategy to prioritize this work thus follows the strategy of the Nordic Council.

<div align="center">*</div>

This section has set the ground for the analysis by elaborating on the local context of the macro-criteria used to select the Norwegian-Swedish border as one of the case study areas, and by introducing the two organizations to be studied at this border. The analysis of the data in relation to the research questions starts in the next section.

5.2. Motivation, participation and interaction of local governments in OstBoh and VarmOst

This section seeks to understand patterns of motivation, participation and interaction among local governments that are members in the Euroregions OstBoh and VarmOst. It aims at answering the questions 'why are they members of the organization?', 'how do they participate in the organizations?' and 'how do they interact with each other?' This means that the section deals with the members of Euroregions as the primary unit of analysis, while section 3 will have the organizations themselves as the primary unit of analysis.

5.2.1. Motivation

The aim of this section is to establish whether the motivation for membership in a Euroregion for the investigated local governments was primarily normative or instrumental by nature. As discussed in Chapter 2, the first type of explanation draws on identity and polity as leading ideas, whereas the other relies on rational/instrumental motivation, which can be either

directly material (for instance return in the form funding opportunities) or policy-need driven (expected gains from cooperation around policy needs).

The analysis found that in both organizations *identity/polity* was the dominating motivation. Identity/polity should here be understood as normative factors (Medve-Balint 2013, Medve-Balint and Svenson 2012 and 2013). This can refer to a sense of ethnic-linguistic belonging, but may also be a belief in the inherent value of cooperation.

Half of the VarmOst, eight out of fifteen interviewed mayors (#A30, #A106, #A97, #A98, #A104, #A99, #A105, #A107) were coded as having elements of this side in their answers, and 13 out of 22 of the OstBoh members (#A42, #A35, #A39, #A55, #A42, #A22, #A40, #A30, #A37, #A36, #A41, #A33, #A32, #A27). One type of answers indicates how membership is considered unproblematic and expected:

> "It seems reasonable that we are in. Seems cheap otherwise." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: #A35)
>
> "There has been a wish to be a part of this, because one thinks one is a part of the larger region, it is natural for Trogstad to be in that and to support it. The organization is in our neighboring area." (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #A107)
>
> "For us it is a bit far off […] we are in the periphery. At the same time it seems strange if we are not in it, much [work in the organization] is about border-related problems, and we have many Norwegians here, for instance tourists, and in that way it is natural." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: #A33)
>
> "As of 2010 we are direct institutional members [*and not members via the inter-municipal organization Fyrbodal*]. The municipality of Bengtsfors made the same decision, and we thought it would look strange if that municipality is a direct institutional member, and not us. There was no discussion around it, everyone agrees." (mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: #A35)
>
> "Often it is some type of action, and then you join if you want to or not. [This is] the herd animal mentality." (Mayor, Sweden, VarmOst: #A99)

These answers all bring forward notions of reasonableness, expectations, and something that you do because others do it. The answers also indicate that the membership is rarely

reflected on. In fact, throughout the history of the organizations, there have been few cases of exit. One Norwegian municipality has exited from VarmOst, and one Norwegian municipality left OstBoh briefly in the 1990s only to rejoin after a change in the political majority. Another Norwegian local government and two Swedish had discussed the value of the membership in their local councils, but in most cases the membership had not been challenged. Answers also frequently indicate that cooperation *per se* is valuable, that inter-municipal cooperation is an important element of current and future local government practices.

> "I hope the work will continue at least at the same level as today, cooperation is the future " (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: #A39)

> "There is an increase in associations generally." (Mayor, Norway, OstBoh: #A42)

> "We joined both around 1993. Before that, Moss was a bit on its own. I decided that we should get more involved with Ostfold, but also with the Swedes." (Mayor, Norway, OstBoh and VarmOst, #A30)

This belief in cooperation as having an intrinsic value has been confirmed also in other studies in the same or close-by areas (Sundin and Hagen, 2006:101, Olsson and Miles 2012: 107). Sundin and Hagen describe cooperation as a "political watchword" frequently evoked by respondents from the public sphere both in relation to cross-border cooperation and domestic actors from different sectors (Sundin and Hagen, 2006:101).

Embeddedness in inter-municipal cooperation arrangements domestically frequently featured as a motivation as well. In the case of OstBoh this is part of the structure on the Swedish side, as some local governments are direct members (individual membership) whereas others have institutional membership via the inter-municipal organization Fyrbodal. This arrangement is unique, but on the Norwegian side membership in the inter-municipal organization *Yttre Ostfold* and *Indre Ostfold* still played an important role for membership in the Euroregions (the members

162

of Yttre Ostfold were generally members of OstBoh, and those of Indre Ostfold members of VarmOst).

> "It is a part of the regional solution, what we do on this side as well. It is the same municipalities that are in. " (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #A99)

> "We joined 1981, via the predecessor of what is now called Fyrbodal. We have thought about becoming direct members. It does not make any practical difference, but would have a symbolic meaning." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: #A26)

References to common heritage, history or culture were rarely made, which makes the following quote unique in this context.

> "Basically, Varmland (the county) stands with one leg in Sweden and the other in Norway, but we have lifted one leg too high from the ground. I guess it was good that the Union [between Sweden and Norway) was dissolved in 1905, but we should do more." (Mayor, Sweden, VarmOst: #A105)

Thus, the stated motivations for being a member of a Euroregion mainly belong to the identity/polity category. I now turn to whether there are rational/instrumental reasons as well. Such answers do feature (Mayors #A28, #A31, #A105, #A100, #A29, #A98, #A104, #A105, #A102, #A103), dominated by Swedish member municipalities hoping to capitalize on the growth on the Norwegian side due to the expanding Oslo region.

> "It is a part of our stated political objectives and aims to work with contacts in Norway. It is because of the labor market. We have lost 1,700 jobs here, and we want to make the region 'rounder' so to speak. One should be able to live in one place and work in other." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh and VarmOst: #A28),

> "Norway is important. I think we do too little, and that we should connect better to Oslo, Ostfold and the Ostfold region. I think Karlstad could play a much clearer role to connect Stockholm and Oslo and make them closer. I think they need each other. Both stand next to each other and look south towards Brussels but I think they should turn to each other. Oslo is a hot area, much growth there, and Stockholm is as well." (Mayor, Sweden, VarmOst: #A 105)

"I think the Norwegian issues are very important, not only for Saffle, but for all of Varmland, depending on what happens around Oslo." (Mayor, Sweden, VarmOst: A100)

These quotes clearly illustrate how cooperation with Norway is perceived as having strategic importance. Throughout the interviews (often before or after the recorded setting), respondents on the Swedish side would also share fact snippets they had picked up elsewhere and clearly found relevant, such as asking me if I knew that "Ostfold is the fastest-growing region in Norway', 'that Oslo is the economically hottest area in Scandinavia', 'if I knew that border municipality X depended on Norway for X number of' jobs', etc. On the Norwegian side references to material returns were few and far in between, although one respondent mentioned that the Euroregion might help reversing the one-sided shopping stream from Norway to Sweden (Mayor, OstBoh: #A31) and two mentioned the need to get more Swedish tourists to Norway (Mayor, OstBoh: #A22, mayor, VarmOst: A104). What do not feature at all are answers referring to funding and grant opportunities. Accessing EU or other funds is *not* an important motivation for being a member in a Euroregion.

The major difference between the two Euroregions manifested in the area of instrumental expectations regarding common policy needs. The introduction to this chapter detailed how growing concerns about the deteriorating quality of the international European road E18 led to the creation of a single-issue committee that became the Euroregion VarmOst. The importance of the road as a rallying factor, or joint policy problem, was clearly visible in interviews.

"The goal was to get [the road] E18 improved and extended. On the Norwegian side this has come really far, there it is a success and the Border Committee was very active in that." (Mayor, Sweden, VarmOst: #A98)

"The E18 extension, there has been a good cooperation around that, we pushed on both the Swedish and Norwegian side." (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #104)

"It started as a cooperation forum for the challenge of the roads which were bad and narrow, and so it continued. (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #A103)

"Even before I became mayor [in 1995] they had started to work on a good road connection" (Aremark A29),

OstBoh in fact emerged during a period of less salient policy problems. This does not mean that there had not been potential policy problems that could have served as catalysts for cross-border cooperation already in the 1970s. *Idde fjord*, the inlet from the Nordic Sea that is also a state border between Sweden and Norway, was heavy polluted and over-used for maritime traffic. However, rather than spurring cooperation, the irritation on both sides was so high and state agencies were so much involved that cooperation efforts broke down totally (Granskommitten Ostfold-Bohuslan-Dalsland 2005, 3). Instead, it was a political initiative with a lower profile that would eventually lead to the creation of the OstBohEuroregion. A long-time vice president of OstBoh remembered on the occasion of the organization's 25-year-anniversary:

"We had a meeting at the TanumsGastgifveri restaurant and Kjell A. Mattson [politician in Stromstad] asked if we should not start doing something with the Norwegians." (Gränskommitten Östfold-Bohuslän-Dalsland 2005, 3).

The quote again indicates how 'doing something' in a general sense was more important than 'doing something about something specific'.

To sum up, the local governments in the two Swedish-Norwegian case studies join and maintain membership in the Euroregions primarily due to reasons of identity/polity reasons, whereas instrumental reasons (related to material or policy needs) takes the backseat. However, VarmOst also has a strong policy-need dimension, as the cooperation grew out of concern about the quality of road number E18.

5.2.2. Participation

Being a member of the two Euroregions is a low-cost investment. The membership fees are miniscule in relation to overall municipal expenses (fees in 2010 ranged between 2,000 NOK and 36,000 SEK, approximately 200 EUR and 3,600 EUR per local government, see Grensekomitteen Varmland-Ostfold 2010, 9, and Granskommiten Bohuslan-Ostfold-Dalsland 2010, 25). While extra costs are still incurred by travel to meetings, working time invested in preparation and attendance, it is still not very resource-intensive compared to other type of activities.[121]

As in the previous chapter, the local governments were divided into three groups based on their engagement with the organization as inferred from interview data: detached, listerners and active.

The number of **detached members** was low, mainly consisting of a few local governments of OstBoh who are indirect members via the inter-municipal organization Fyrbodal on the Swedish side.

> "We don't have any representation, it has not been interesting to us. We don't participate in meetings, but get information through the inter-municipal organization [Fyrbodal]. Sometimes I look at the agenda. (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: A36)"

> "Once we hosted a meeting. Then I was there. Otherwise I don't really know what's happening at meetings. (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: A34)."

---

[121] Due to this low intensity in terms of resources, participation and interaction cannot be explained very well by resource dependency theory (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978, Scharpf 1978). The resources that the different municipalities bring in are also relatively similar as they are only one type of actor. Note that this assessment partially differs from Sundin and Hagen 2006, who find resource dependence theory applicable when it comes to cooperation between twin towns located directly at the border. Out of the four pairs they investigated, one is located within the area of this study (Arjang-Marker).

The group of **listeners** was larger, constituting roughly one third to half of the members (this also varies over time as political majorities and personalities of leaders change). The type of information Euroregions can provide to these listeners mainly consist of three components:

- what happens in other municipalities, especially on the other side of the border;

- larger trends in the borderland area (commuting, employment, migration, etc);

- project and funding opportunities.

Both Euroregions in the study emphasize the importance of getting to know more about political, social and cultural developments on 'the other side', for example the OstBoh standing item of 'going around the table' was mentioned by several as useful (e.g. #A43, #A55, #A41, #A31, #A38).

> "We have started to always take a round around the table to hear what has happened in each municipality – you can think about whether this is something we should think about – this information we did not have before." (Mayor, Norway, OstBoh: #A41)

This is perceived as especially important, since local newspapers devote very limited space to what happens in the other country. OstBoh has been a constant supplier of statistics and reports relevant to the borderland, whereas VarmOst has done so on an irregular basis. In line with the finding above that funding or grants do not feature as important statements for being a member of a Euroregion, it is not surprising that the members also do not mention that project or funding opportunities make up an important part of the agendas.

Engagement can also be passive if the highest leadership (Mayor) does not attend or follow-up on meetings. This was stated in only one case.

"I have chosen not to attend. You get so many invitations as a mayor and even if the meetings are not long, they involve long travels, I have chosen to delegate this to others. (Mayor, Norway, OstBoh and VarmOst: A30)"

While delegation does not mean have to mean anything less in terms of outcomes, the high ratio of mayors that attend meetings themselves points to the political meaning attached to the cross-border cooperation institution.

Active participants, who utilize meetings to advance issues of cross-border relevance or generate ideas for joint projects, constitute roughly half of the members. They perceive of meetings as more than information points.

"We think that our activity in OstBoh will increase significantly. There is political consensus in the municipality that this is important." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh and VarmOst: #A28)

"There is an internal strategic debate now: what do we want the role of the organization to be? [..] In addition to the school issue [settling of fees across the border for commuting children] we want to raise the issue of housing registration [of Norwegians owning houses in the municipality. [The Euroregions] have not dealt this very much because before every municipality should do everything themselves, but now there is more of cooperation." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh and VarmOst: #A35)

"There can be a living discussion, even if it is not a hot debate. The questions have been established before." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: A40)

The work and atmosphere of both Euroregions are described as *political but not partisan.* By 'political' I mean that the organizations consist of elected officials, with only the secretariat employees as regular civil servant participants. None of them have standing working groups that would include administrative staff, although especially OstBoh usually has several project groups with civil servant participation. However, the groups are not partisan, in that differences in political party origin rarely makes a difference at meetings, and all respondents rate the importance of political parties as very low for how issues are dealt with. Similar to other regional forums in Scandinavia, there is a process of depolitisization, in which consensus (Hudson 2005,

Johansson and Rydstedt 2011, Sall 2011) is valued as something good, rather than something that

hides structures of power that after all still exist.

> "At meetings you don't always know which party someone represents." (Mayor, Norway, OstBoh and VarmOst: #A29)

> "In Dalsland many municipalities have been ruled by the Center Party, but you cannot feel that in the border committee [OstBoh]." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh and VarmOst: #A28)\

> "Political parties are totally uninteresting, I never ask [the Swedes] which party they represent." (Mayor, Norway, OstBoh: #A22)

> "I usually find out the party, sometimes they have a pin on their jacket so you can see which party they represent, but the issues we take up are often general, for instance geographical things, railway for instance, and not political." (Mayor, Norway, OstBoh: #A31)

> "You look for the least common denominator. I don't know what party [all Norwegians] belong to, I don't ask." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: #A26)

> "Generally it is much consensus, but in some areas we are more interested, like tax rules, than Eidsberg and Askim are." (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #A103)

Policy areas that could induce conflicts are either not entered into at all, or cooperation is

more at the exploratory stage where potential conflicts do not matter.

> "[When we meet government representatives on the issue of unfair competition from the Swedish border towns] we do not represent the border committee [VarmOst]. But we are always open, as late as yesterday I talked to Arjang and Saffle about this. I have been open about what we are doing, not because they should not have what they get, but because we need more. That is not a conflict. Competition is not bad as long as it is open competition on the same conditions. If we look at it more broadly, we can see that when it comes to establishment of companies, everything within 50 km from Orje [central location of Marker) is good. Every person moving to that kind of distance is good, if it is on Norwegian or Swedish side does not matter, because then something happens in our region, things do not stand still." (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #103)

In short, the analysis of participation showed the patterns of the two organizations to be

relatively similar, with the exception that OstBoh had some members that were inactive, mainly

due to its membership strategy of allowing indirect membership on the Swedish side via an inter-municipal organization. Both organizations were characterized by their members as being political but not partisan, i.e. the organizational culture is one of depolitisized consensus-seeking culture in which difficult topics are avoided. This does not mean that party contacts are not utilized in other connections, which will be clarified in section 5.3 on function and performance of the Euroregions. Before that, the next section investigates the patterns of interaction that local governments within the Euroregions show.

5.2.3. Interaction

In a booklet produced in connection with the 25th anniversary of OstBoh, it was stated that the organization "has the densest and most frequent contact pattern along the whole Swedish-Norwegian border" (Granskommitten, p 3). How this statement was arrived at it is not elaborated on, but the data collected within the framework of the dissertation allows for testing whether OstBoh or VarmOst has the most intensive contact pattern in terms of institutional political communication between its members. This can be done with the help of tools from *social network analysis* of self-declared values of frequency of communication with each and every member of the Euroregion. A detailed account of the method and the results is given in Chapter 7.

In brief, my findings demonstrate that VarmOst, not OstBoh, has the denser network between the two, and that it is premature to refer to the Euroregions as cohesive and integrated cross-border political networks. The networks clearly display two sub-groups based on national location, connected by a small number of transnational links. Not surprisingly, the cross-border communication network is best developed between the local governments located directly at the

border, and they are the ones most likely to interact outside the framework of meetings and events arranged by the Euroregion itself. The majority meets members from the other country only at those occasions (3-4 times a year), and also has difficulties to recall the names of their partners on the other side. A survey of name recognition of the OstBoh members showed that they were on average able to give the names of 10.6 out of 21 other mayors in the Euroregion, but out of these an average of 9.2 were from the same country, i.e. the average mayor knows only one (and a half) mayor by name on the other side of the border. However, the variance is big, as some mayors know 3-4 by name on the other side, whereas many do not know any. Again, not surprisingly, the mayors located directly at the border knew more than their peers living further into the country.[122]

The assessment of contacts as sparse is not shared by members themselves, who often referred to contacts as close:

> "I know everybody who is in the executive committee. Those who are further in [geographically] I don't know. Right now I don't know so many due to the Norwegian elections. Most cooperation is with Römskog, Aremark, and Eidsberg." (Mayor, Sweden, VarmOst: #A98)

> "I think we know each other quite well and that is good. But every four years there are changes with the elections. But the administration remains, so it is important. Therefore we will have a joint day in Karlstad in December. We do that because it is useful, but also because it is an arena for the new [elected politicians] to meet each other. Knowledge of each other leads also to friendship, which makes the cooperation work better. If you have met, know where they stand, than it is easier to go to the phone afterwards and say 'thanks for last time, there is an issue I need to discuss'." (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #103)

> "I have come to know Arjang very well, and with her [the Mayor] I was in Saffle yesterday to take a coffee and talk about border challenges […] we know each other. I call X when I take the boat on the channel and then we have a joint coffee." (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #103)

---

[122]The data for VarmOst for this question is incomplete. Due to elections taking place the month prior to the fieldwork, in some cases mayors that had just stepped down were interviewed via phone and the phone setting was not conducive for this type of question.

"We have learned about how they think on the other side, it has been very informative on what there is on the other side, we learned things, met Mayors…" (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #104)

However, asked specifically how the contacts across the border have developed over a shorter time-span, the last five years, there are varied answers. About half the respondents (in both Euroregions) see no change at all or a decrease in contacts, whereas the other half stated that contacts are much denser, expressed in terms as in the two quotes below:

"In the beginning there was not so much contact, very sporadic. The last 15 years it has increased." (Mayor, Norway, VarmOst: #106)

"The cooperation across the border has increased continuously. Halden and Stromstad had not talked with each other on a political level before the Euroregion started." (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: #A32)

The social network analysis, which will be detailed in Chapter 7, also revealed a relation between the domestic levels of institutional social capital and the levels in the cross-border area. This indicated that strengthening of institutional between-group social capital follows a path of strengthening social capital on the domestic level (within-group). The argument to be advanced is that social capital can then serve as one of several factors influencing how the organizations function and perform.

An alternative way to demonstrate ties between local governments in an advanced joint cross-border policy space would be to use the existence of formal legal arrangements between local governments as the indication of a tie. However, there are only a few such legal arrangements along the whole Swedish-Norwegian border, although there are legal provisions for how this can be done (inter-municipal agreements, inter-municipal companies, inter-municipal organizations or joint municipal committees, the scope of cross-border production of services is so far very limited)(Sundin and Skomsoy 2005). Examples of the formal arrangements that do exist include an agreement on shared water/sewage for a small location at the border arranged by

172

the municipalities of Dals-Ed and Aremark (interviews July 2010), while Marker and Arjang jointly operate a ski slope.[123]

Even though the cross-border regions investigated in this chapter belong to generally well-off Scandinavian countries, the local conditions at the border in these cases are different in terms of the availability of employment, price level (housing and retail goods) and also, to a lesser extent, income levels. Such local economic heterogeneity fosters mobility across the border, but is generally not conducive for the kind of mutual trust and, to a certain effect, liking, that it takes to sustain and nurture population-level social capital. Mayors in local governments where Norwegians bought houses at cheap prices indicated that common human sentiments such as resentment and jealousy could be found, even if they are not frequent. It is not unreasonable to assume that similar opinions to some extent could be present among the mayors as well, affecting the level of institutional social capital. However, apart from raising awareness that these issues exist, no evidence of mistrust could found among the interviewees.

Norwegian respondents, on their side, in interviews frequently turned to the subject of the precarious economic situation of their local governments as if to emphasize that just because Norway as such is going well, it does not mean that local governments are sitting on any oil funds or riches. In addition, the caravan of shoppers going across the borders – from the policymaker's perspective – constituted somewhat of an annoyance when local shops could no longer compete. The ambivalence towards the symbolical and practical position of the border also may inhibit progress on creating functioning cross-border regions, as the border especially

---

[123]Policy cooperation is also said to take place without legal arrangements, even though less formalized cooperation can also be assumed to be less substantial. Halden and Stromstad cooperate on business, environment, culture, education and care. Dals-Ed exchanges urban planning plans with its Norwegian neighbors. An example concerns the award of a license for opening a shopping center in Dals-Ed, when the opinion of neighboring Halden was asked for. In addition Halden was involved in consultations regarding the establishment of a call center company in Dals-Ed, as it saw the advantages of a joint labor market (Lorentzon 2006).

for those situated closest to it – is viewed as both a source of (unequally distributed) income and as an obstacle. It follows that development that has taken place has done so not because of mobility but in spite of it.[124] While much institutional social capital can be amassed just by repeated face-to-face meetings, reinforcing the common culture, and similarities, this resource would yield more profitable 'interest rates' if the economic heterogeneity did not exist.

The results demonstrate that there exists a bonding institutional social capital (due to positive attitudes to each other and to cooperation), but that it could be increased significantly if interaction was more intense. The results also demonstrate some variation, albeit small, between the two investigated Euroregions. Table 12 summarizes the assessments in the different categories (discussed in Chapter 3 on methodology).

Table 12. *Between-group social capital of OstBoh and VarmOst*

	Euroregion	**OstBoh (SENO)**	**VarmOst (SENO)**
BETEWEEN -GROUP SOCIAL CAPITAL	*Strength of cross-border communications*	low	medium
	Perceived trend of contacts	increasing	increasing
	Level of trust to other side	medium (5.90)	high (6.46)
	Presence of conflict (politicization of issues)	low	low

Source: author

*

This section on motivation, participation and interaction has treated Euroregions as the primary unit of analysis, seeking to answer questions on why and how they participate in the two investigated Swedish-Norwegian Euroregions, but also how they interact with each other. Motivation, participation and interaction patterns constitute independent variables that were

---

[124]Notably, this is partially against the argument of some economists, that for instance increased shopping along the Norwegian-Swedish border is an 'engine for regional development' (Lorentzon 2011).

174

expected to show some variation. This turned out correct as VarmOst had a stronger policy-need element, although both were primarily identity/polity-based in motivation. Bonding between-group social capital existed in both institutions, but somewhat stronger in VarmOst. Participation patterns were relatively similar, with the exception that OstBoh had some members that were inactive, mainly due to its membership strategy of allowing indirect membership on the Swedish side via an inter-municipal organization.

5.3. Function and performance of OstBoh and VarmOst

This section deals with organizations as primary units of analysis, and elaborates on the dependent variable of the project: what do they do and how well do they do this? In other words, what are the functions and performance of Euroregions? First the policy areas they concentrate on will be introduced via typical projects and preferred policy areas. The two cases are then assessed in terms of cross-border cooperation intensity and appropriation of cross-border space, judged by the extent to which they function as seismographs, loudspeakers and display windows.

The policy areas that are considered most important by the members of the organizations (interviewees were asked to grade a number of policy fields) and two activities carried out by the Euroregions that were frequently referred two are summarized in Table 13. The purpose of the table is primarily to give a quick overview of policy and project activity.

Table 13. *Typical cooperation areas and activities of OstBoh and VarmOst*

OstBoh (SENO)
Most important to members: **infrastructure, economic development, facilitate cross-border mobility**
Typical activities:
1. **The Contact Fair.** Annual business fair that has been arranged since 1999 and which aims at mutual benefit for Swedish and Norwegian companies in the border area. Typically 100-150 companies and organizations take part. Participating businesses use online catalogues to request short (25-minute meetings) with each other during the fair. The model was developed under the name Europartenariat by DG XVI (Regional policy) and DGXXIII (Enterprise Policy).[125]
2. Collect, evaluate and assess **border obstacles**, i.e. differences in legal frameworks between the countries that hinder mobility and business, and lay forward these issues either directly to agencies/ministries or to other fora that can take them further (i.e. Grenseradet).
VarmOst (SENO)
Most important to members: **infrastructure, facilitate cross-border mobility, economic development**
Typical activities:
1. Supporting **high-speed train connection** Oslo-Stockholm. Focus of several meetings, seminars, delegations to the capitals and resolutions in the 2000s has been to convince decision-makers that (a) there is a need for a high-speed train between its capitals, and (b) that this should go along the same route as the *European route E18*, the original joining issue of the Euroregion.
2. Children's borderland. The project was developed by three of the five Swedish members (Arjang, Bengtsfors, Saffle) and all Norwegian members via the inter-municipal organization Indre Ostfold. It serves to coordinate tourism promotion by displaying a joint image to the outside world especially targeting families. The project has a joint website (http://www.barnensgransland.se/).

Source: author

As seen in Table 13, the ranked preference of policy areas is almost identical, but the absolute values that were attached to each policy activity and what they actually do show that infrastructure is still of the greatest importance for VarmOst, whereas OstBoh focuses more on working directly with business to promote increases in cross-border business links and thereby economic development. OstBoh also worked more strategically than VarmOst, both towards policy issues by using the Nordic Council-developed concept of 'border obstacles'[126] and by annual follow-up and evaluation of its work to see that it follows its set priorities.

---

[125] See http://cordis.europa.eu/search/index.cfm?fuseaction=prog.document&PG_RCN=1362322

[126] As pointed out earlier in the chapter, the Nordic Council defines border obstacles as "official decisions, laws and regulations that make it problematic to move, study, commute or conduct business activities across the borders within the Nordic countries" (Nordic Council 2010: 3, my translation, p. 3).

In Chapter 3 indicators of cross-border cooperation intensity were selected from those that have been used in the literature on cross-border cooperation. Using a tripartite scale, six dimensions were assessed: strength of legal arrangement, robustness of its administrative arrangement, meeting activity, adherence to development strategy/mission statement, budget size and project intensity. The assessment scoring is summarized in Table 14 and is elaborated on below.

Table 14. *Cross-border cooperation intensity of OstBoh and VarmOst*

Euroregion Indicators	OstBoh	VarmOst
Strength of legal arrangement	low	low
Robustness of its administrative arrangement	medium	medium
Meeting activity	medium	medium
Adherence to development strategy/mission statement	high	medium
Budget	medium	low
Project intensity	high	medium

Source: author

Strength of *legal arrangement* is rated highest if the organization uses the instrument European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). Both Euroregions scores low in this catetory. OstBoh is not legally an independent organization, but operates under the auspices of an inter-municipal organization on one side of the border (Sweden). Although the stakeholders themselves find the arrangement satisfactory, it does not ensure legal independence. Likewise, VarmOst operates through Norwegian Ostfold Bedriftscenter.

The *administrative arrangement* is robust in both cases insofar that both have permanent staff. OstBoh has one permanent full-time employee located in Sweden, and usually one or several part-timers working for specific projects. The VarmOst has one half-time employee

177

located in Norway, but has been skilled in using the resources of its members to keep operational costs down.

Both organizations have regular meetings, and most members participate at least yearly; the majority of mayors take part in two to four meetings a year. *Meeting activity* was therefore assessed as medium for both organizations. Both organizations have strategic plans and mission statements, but OstBoh has been more active in following up activities and classify them in accordance with strategic goals.

In a European perspective, the *budget* of OstBoh is of medium size (approx 300,000 EUR in 2011), whereas the VarmOst has a small budget (approximately 94,000 EUR in 2011, but only 40,000 EUR in 2010.). Comparing and assessing project intensity can be deceiving, as Euroregions usually work both as project owners and as project developers. As for owning projects, OstBoh has had an increasing number of projects over the past two decades (6 running in 1994, 4 in 2000, 13 in 2006 and 17 in 2011). As a comparison, VarmOst has not had more than a few (2-3) running in a given year. The remaining project-related activity can be referred to as 'project development', in which the Euroregion sometimes takes a very active part, but where it is not the project owner and the resources of that project therefore are not part of its accounting (e.g. the VarmOst project "Barnens Grenseland")

The ability to appropriate the policy space in borderlands (see Chapter 2) depends on how well the Euroregion can perform the three functions of seismograph, loudspeaker and display window. As elaborated on in detail in Chapter 2, as a *seismograph* it measures the intensity of attitudes and preferences with cross-border relevance, and can thereby convince its members of their existence. As a *loudspeaker it* performs advocacy work for resources or policy interventions, and as a *display window* it strengthens the image, both towards external and internal communities, of the Euroregion as a single area. For this section I rely mainly on the

interviews with managers and Chairs of the organizations, but also on documents and member interviews

The main channel for knowing what is going on and what people care about, i.e. measuring issues of importance as a *seismograph*, is the multiple positions that especially the Chairs have, as they also function as Mayors of a town, but also as participants in other political forums. In that way they bring in issues of political salience, although the organizations do not seem to be well-known about the general public. In none of the cases does the Euroregion leadership (Chair and manager) get contacted frequently directly by citizens about issues related to the cross-border governance area. Instead, in their capacity as Chairs or Managers the most frequent actor type they get contacted by is politicians or administrators.

> "Generally it was people who knew Granskommitten from earlier positions as politicians, or they represented some organization which had applied for funds via Granskommitten." (Chair, OstBoh: #A42)

However, citizens' opinions are to some extent channeled to the Euroregions via civil society, such as sport groups or churches (#A95, #A100). One mode to get a feeling for what issues are burning is to run permanent working groups in different policy areas consisting of both politicians and administrators. Such permanent working groups had been tried out by OstBoh, but it did not work satisfactorily.

> "We had it several years, but then, you have to make people attend meetings, and all the time there are lots of projects, and the same people would be in the groups, and they sort of don't have the energy to keep on in that way. We have therefore chosen to take it thematic depending on what we have in pipeline." For instance environment or infrastructure." (Chair, OstBoh: #A42)

The by-laws of VarmOst allow for having standing working groups, but it has never been tried out. Instead OstBoh has worked more with ad-hoc project groups consisting of politicians

and administrators, whereas VarmOst has sought to include the highest administrative officials at its meetings.

OstBoh has worked much with single companies in order to find out what their issues are.

"Right now we have lots of contacts trying to identify border obstacles. We work very hard with business organizations, to get their help to see what border obstacles they meet. Recently we reached out to both single companies and business organizations." (Manager, Ostboh: #A5)

VarmOst has been much less direct in its contacts with the business sector.

"We don't work so much directly with business, but we work with issues of importance to business. But maybe you can say that we haven't mobilized the business sector. " (Manager, VarmOst: #95)

The *loudspeaker function*, i.e. to bring issues to the agendas of those that have decision-making power, is considered very important by both organizations. Political issues for which the Euroregions needs decision-makers on regional and national (possibly also European) level can be dealt with via multiple positions of persons in the top leadership, within-party contacts to people in power, the arrangement of events, commissioned reports, delegations to the decision-makers in the capital or at regional level, or written statements. OstBoh has used all of these at times:

"It depends on the issues. It is very different what you can do and how. But if we take the double railway line as an example, we work closely with the Gothenburg Oslo group. We have had seminars, where we collected representatives to discuss how you can do. We have had contacts with the infrastructure minister, […] you work towards the ministry, we have resolutions, also do our own studies to show the need, so that we not only say that we must have this." (Manager, Ostboh: #A5)

VarmOst, on the other hand, has focused on the less resource-intensive modes of network contacts (either through multiple positions of high leadership or through party contacts) or sending delegations to Oslo or Stockholm on a specific issue.

"I talk with MPs quite often and we tell them 'don't forget the Sweden-Norway-perspective' and we will help them." (Chair, Sweden, VarmOst: #A100)

The Chair of VarmOst frequently introduces himself as Chair of VarmOst, and not as Mayor of Saffle. Being a Chair of a cross-border organization is perceived as giving extra weight to arguments, but it is also required by the organization in order to make it less anonymous among the public and relevant policy actors.

"They [the members] said that I should do this, and that is fun, it shows the existence of contact network, they [national politicians] immediately notice this, for instance Lena Ek, the environment minister. Take the example of the wolf policy problem, I then say that this is not just an issue for Varmland, not only Varmland that is engaged, but that it is also the Norwegian side. This means I am spokesperson for both sides in a concrete issue. It can also be the agricultural minister, or the minister for infrastructure, it is fun. You can do quite a lot while the level of work is still reasonable." (Chair, Sweden, VarmOst: #A100)

"We have done it [writing declarations] for national transport, but it is also a question of capacity. It takes time to write. We have, what should one say, worked very effectively with low costs on administration. If you had more time you could engage more, take more general issues of principal character related to Norway and Sweden, but it takes resources. It is more that politicians have talked to someone they know, and then we have raised with the regions of Ostfold and Varmland " (Manager, Norway, VarmOst: #A95)

Interacting directly with agencies and actors in Brussels has not been given priority or resources by any of the two Euroregions. What matters is to have relations to the authorities distributing and allocating Interreg funding. Whereas the manager of OstBoh (located in Sweden) has very close contacts (at least weakly) with the Interreg office, and the Euroregion is consulted when the multi-year priorities are developed, VarmOst has been treated more as an applicant among others.

"We have discussed Interreg at our Board meeting, but as a Euroregion we have not been consulted directly" (Manager, Norway, VarmOst: #A95)

"We give priority to the local and regional level, and the Nordic, but not the European Union, except locally with the Interreg office." (Manager, OstBoh: #5)

Finally, multiple positions of leading persons within the organizations are considered very

useful:

> "When it comes to infrastructure, I am also a member of the Board of Region Varmland, something that gives me connections. That is why XY [responsible for infrastructure for Region Varmland] is more and more with us, you must involve them. You are a representative and try to monitor and tell what should be done. I believe that that gives effect, more know that we exist now, both politicians and civil servants, they refer to VarmOst." (Chair, Sweden, VarmOst: #A100)

> "And then there was also so that Oslo, they have this Oslo Gothenburg cooperation, and we felt that there were decisions taken over our head of us in Ostfold Bohuslan, so we wrote an application for membership in this organization too, because we thought that the whole area from Oslo to Gothenburg must be seen as one area, a commuting area, and there was consensus among them, we got in two representatives.." (Chair, OstBoh: #A42)

Despite polity factors playing a major role in why local governments join Euroregions,

region-building in terms of identity is not a prioritisized issue. The function as *display window* of

the region both externally and internally is therefore downplayed.

> "We are an organization for the members. If you look at it, it is the members that should get to know each other, we work for the municipalities, so we don't really work externally, we are not an information service for the public, and then of course, then you don't get that much name recognition among the public." (Manager, OstBoh: #A5)

This may be due to the little emphasis on history, and rather on the value of cooperation,

which might have long-term consequences for identity but is not prioritized.

> "Since Varmland will not merge with Vastra Gotaland[127], we in Sweden talk more and more about Norway. We cannot stand alone, then we have to take the actual step westwards, to integrate. That is the alternative, not only towards Ostfold, can also be Hedmark [further North in Norway] "(Chair, Sweden, VarmOst: #A100)

---

[127] The tendency in Sweden has been towards merging regions to create 'super-regions', but Varmland had as of writing not joined any of the 'supra-regions', such as Vastra Gotaland.

It should be noted that this downplaying of regional identity issues and history is not a Scandinavian phenomenon in itself. For instance, the Danish-Sweden cross-border region Oresund does heavily promote the concept of the 'Oresund region' and its historical links.

Figure 5. *Involved actors in cross-border policy issues. Euroregion OstBoh and Euroregion VarmOst*

	GOVERNANCE DIMENSION		
		State	**Non-state**
MULTI-LEVEL DIMENSION	**Supranational**	Interreg representatives, Nordic Council of Ministers	
	National	Ministries, especially Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment; Agencies: especially Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, Swedish Social Insurance Agency, Swedish and Norwegian Tax Agency, Swedish and Norwegian Customs Agencies	Hunting Association (Sweden and Norway), National parties
	Regional	County Administrative Boards (both countries), Political Regions (Sweden), Inter-municipal associations, Regional Public Employment Service Units, Regional Tax Agencies, Regional Customers Service Units	Regional business chambers, Regional parties
	Local	Local Government Boards and Councils, Civil Servants working for Local Governments,	Individual business companies (especially OstBoh), associations for sports and culture, local parties
Cross-border baseline VarmOst, OstBoh, Grensetjensten, Goteborg-Oslo Cooperation, Interreg Sweden, Nordic Council Working Group on Cross-border Cooperation			

Source: Multi-level governance framework (Marks 1993, Hooghe and Marks 2003, Skelcher 2005, Bache 2012.

183

In terms of policy emphasis, Figure 5 demonstrates that the focus is on certain questions such as customs, labor mobility, tax issues, but also one issue with high salience locally, namely the presence of wolves in the area. For instance, in 2003 Granskommitten agreed on a resolution and a letter to the state's regional representatives in Varmland, Akershus and Ostfold, demanding that hunting for wolves should be allowed to decrease the number of wolves in the area should.[128] The Chair of VarmOst has also raised this issue several times during his period, which started in 2010 (Chair, Sweden, VarmOst: #100)

The results for *appropriation of cross-border cooperation activities* are summarized in Table 15, which also includes an assessment of *member satisfaction*. Members of the VarmOst Euroregion are generally very positive about the organization. The same can be said for OstBoh, with the reservation that the organization in some members' opinion has grown 'too big', and some are passive members. This warrants the assessment medium for OstBoh and high for VarmOst. As for appropriation of policy space, this is assessed high for OstBoh, which is the dominant policy partner when it comes to cross-border activities. As VarmOst is more of a project applicant among others, the assessment here is medium.

Table 15. *Member satisfaction and appropriation of cross-border governance space of OstBoh and VarmOst.*

Euroregion	OstBoh	VarmOst
Appropriation of cross-border governance space	high	medium
Member satisfaction	medium	high

Source: author

---

[128] See article on March 7, 2003. http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=93&artikel=195242

*

This section has showed that there is variation in both performance and function of the organizations. OstBoh scored higher than VarmOst on three out of the six indicators used to assess organizational capacity. Nonetheless, VarmOst could draw on a tighter inter-municipal network to convince members that the organization could do much in terms of lobbying (loudspeaker function) for its issues with relatively few resources. Both Euroregions do fulfill the three roles of seismographs, loudspeakers and display windows functions, but they do so less as seismographs and display windows than as loudspeakers.

5.4. Concluding remarks: 'Nordoregions' but behaving as Euroregions

The line of inquiry in this chapter has been guided by the two research questions: "Why and how do local governments in the south Swedish-Norwegian borderland participate in Euroregions and how do they interact?" and "Can their motivation and interaction patterns form specific configurations of social capital that influence how the Euroregions function and perform?" In addition, I sought to establish whether there is such a thing as 'Scandinavian exceptionalism' when it comes to cross-border cooperation.

The first question was analyzed from the perspectives of <u>motivation, participation and interaction of local governments</u>, and I will here summarize the results of these. *First*, the analysis has showed that local governments in both Euroregions become and stay members of Euroregions primarily due to reasons of identity/polity, whereas instrumental reasons (material or policy needs related) take the backseat. However, VarmOst also has a strong policy-need dimension, as the cooperation grew out of concern about the quality of road number E18. This

indicates support for Blatter (2000) rather than Perkmann (2003). *Second*, both organizations are characterized as being political but not partisan, i.e. the organizational culture is one of depolitisized consensus-seeking culture in which difficult topics are avoided. Active members constitute the relative majority of members, but passive information-seekers also constitute a significant group, whereas few members are inactive. A difference between the organizations is that OstBoh has a relative larger portion of inactive members, mainly those who are indirect members via Fyrbodal. *Third*, the interaction patterns between members, based on frequency of communication between the political leadership, are mainly bound within the national states. This means that the political networks are not integrated within one cross-border regional space, but consist of Swedish and Norwegian separate networks with relatively fewer links in between. As communication was mainly described as positive, the frequency of communication is an indicator of endowments of bonding social capital on an institutional political level. The results indicate that there is such bonding social capital, but that the domestic levels are higher than the local transnational (i.e. within-group social capital compared with between-group social capital).

In order to answer the second question I first needed to assess the two Euroregions along the performance and function index developed in Chapter 3, with special focus on their capacity to become the leading actor within the cross-border governance space (appropriation of cross-border space) and how that could be interpreted in relation to how they fulfill functions as seismographs, loudspeakers and display windows. The analysis showed that there is variation in both performance and function of the organizations.

One of the organizations (OstBoh) has had an annual turnover ten times that of the other, and has been closely involved with cross-border related policy work both in the Nordic Council and with the disbursement bodies for European funds (Interreg). The other one (VarmOst) was less embedded, not receiving such external funds until after nearly 20 years of operation. On the

186

other hand, it has utilized party contacts and direct lobbying to make progress in the primary goals related to infrastructure investments. Nonetheless, OstBoh scored higher on three out of the six indicators used to assess organizational capacity. The only one where VarmOst scored higher was in the category of strength of legal arrangements, due to its independent status, but spokespersons of both organization contested that legal status has any practical meaning in the Scandinavian context.[129] In terms of policy orientation, infrastructure, cross-border labor mobility and economic development/business promotion are the most important issues, even though the priority between them differ somewhat. OstBoh has in practice worked much more directly with organizational and individual business representatives, whereas VarmOst has worked more exclusively with governmental institutions. However, none of them are well-known by the general public, and the *seismograph function* could therefore be improved. While the *loudspeaker function* is important for both, VarmOst does this mainly via direct communication to actors at the national level, whereas OstBoh also works with reports, conferences and seminars. The *display window function* is generally downplayed – while both organizations emphasize similarities, the regions are not portrayed as areas that 'naturally' belong together or which should be promoted as one region.[130]

The argument in relation to the second question is that these functions can be linked to three different types of social capital. As mentioned above, the analysis showed that the interaction between local governments indicated the existence of bonding social capital on institutional level, but that the level was not very high in the cross-border space, albeit somewhat

---

[129] What can be noted is that for both organizations actors on that side of the border appear to be stronger in influencing strategy and project implementation where it is administratively embedded. The secretariat of OstBoh is in Sweden, and it is organizationally affiliated with a Swedish inter-municipal organization. The management of VarmOst has been vested with Norwegian members, as part-time positions of local development units.

[130] Note that this downplaying of regional identity issues is not a Scandinavian phenomenon, the Danish-Sweden crossborder region Oresund very much promotes the concept of the 'Oresund region')

higher for Varmost. In terms of linking social capital, this is well developed of both, in terms of administrative and party links to actors at the regional and national level. However, OstBoh has been better at creating bridging social capital to other sectors.

Finally, the chapter put the question whether the label 'Nordoregions' would be more appropriate for these cross-border cooperation initiatives than 'Euroregions', indicating a fundamental difference between Scandinavian and continental cross-border cooperation types. The chapter did establish that the ideational influence of Europe has been limited. Relating to Europe (creating a sense of 'Europeanness) came far down the list of policy priorities in the survey. In fact, Norwegian respondents often met the question on Europeanness with a laugh or ironic comment. Politicians of parties that officially support Norwegian membership in the union recognized the hopelessness of their cause as opinion polls are firmly against memberships. None of the organizations were funded as a result of normative or instrumental incentives (rhetoric or funding) from the European Union. In terms of origin and emergence, these organizations are indeed rather Nordoregions than Euroregions. However, this exceptionalism refers only to origins and not to exceptionalism in terms of organizational activity and performance. In that respect, they are easily assessed along similar dimensions as other European cross-border cooperation initiatives, and also show variation between them. I therefore argue that 'Euroregion' is a justified and appropriate term to use in international contexts, and that Scandinavian cross-border cooperation should not be seen as a species of its own.

CHAPTER 6 – A CASE STUDY OF TWO EUROREGIONS AT THE AUSTRIAN-GERMAN BORDER[131]

The fortress of Kufstein and the Salzburg Castle are historical landmarks signifying the salience of defense policy in medieval times. But at whom, and towards what direction, would the cannons of Kufstein be directed? And which enemy or enemies were the walls of Salzburg supposed to keep out? Throughout centuries, these fortified cliff rocks were subjects of changing territorial allegiance. While boundaries, allegiances and the shape of the 'enemy' changed repeatedly, as Bavaria, the Habsburgs, Tyrol, Austria and the Archbishopric of Salzburg ruled the area, the *raison d'etre* of these impressive structures, i.e. defense, required continuous regional efforts to be sustained. Since 1995 both are located in the European Union, and their role in regional policy is related to tourism instead of defense. Kufstein has become the administrative center of Euregio Inntal - *Chiemsee - Kaisergebirge – Mangfalltal,* and Salzburg is the dominating partner in *Euregio Salzburg – Berchtesgadener Land – Traunstein.[132]* These Euroregions are two out of seven that were set up in the immediate years following accession, and they will be examined in this chapter, which presents the last of the empirical case studies.

Here, as in previous chapters, the central research question is: "How does cooperation work?", while two sub-sets of questions serve to structure the outline of the chapter: (1) Why and how do local governments in the Austrian-German borderland participate in Euroregions and

---

[131] All data in this chapter is unpublished, but interview data from the two cases will feature in Svensson 2013, a contribution to a book on the legal form European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation, edited by a team at the European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano. The analysis also benefited significantly from discussions following a lecture that I gave at University of Salzburg on November 6, 2012.

[132] In daily speech these are referred to as Euregio Inntal and Euregio Salzburg. This chapter will also use these shorter names, but for the sake of consistency with the rest of the dissertation, will use the term 'Euroregion' instead of 'Euregio'.

how do they interact? (2) Can their motivation and their interaction patterns form social capital that influences how the Euroregions function and perform?

In addition to seeking to answer these dissertation research questions, I will in the chapter seek to demonstrate how Euroregions in the Austrian-German borderlands act as new organizations, which need to compete for the attention and time of its presumptive members, the local governments. The way to compete is to find, justify and establish the existence of policy problems, and policy opportunities, with a cross-border dimension.

The research relies on a smaller number of interviews (n=20), than the previous chapters, but this was compensated or supplemented by the existence of more primary documents (such as internal evaluations) and secondary literature on cross-border cooperation in the borderland area.

The chapter starts with a descriptive section. The first part (6.1.1.) focuses on the factors that determined the selection of borders for this dissertation (cultural-linguistic proximity, politico-administrative similarity and economic homogeneity) and elaborates on these on a micro-level as well as on the region's geography and history. The second part (6.1.2.) gives a brief introduction to the two case study organizations.

Further on, the first research question is dealt with in section 6.2, which states findings related to the motivation, participation and interaction of local governments. Section 6.3 is devoted to the second research question, hence answering the question on how the organizations function and perform as well as how that is related to its motivation and interaction patterns. Conclusions are drawn in the final section (6.4).

6.1. The Austrian-German border area and the investigated Euroregions

In this chapter an 822 kilometer long line on the map, and a 522 km² large area, is referred to as the border between, and the border area[133] of, Austria and Germany. However, before going into the particulars, it is worth mentioning that in daily speech and in official documentation such as that of the European Territorial Cooperation program Interreg the border runs between Austria and the German federal state of Bavaria, i.e. the border is referred to as the *Bavarian*-Austrian border, not the German-Austrian border. This is of minor importance for the analysis, although it will feature in the context of analysis of politico-administrative symmetry, but highlights the potentials of moving the field of border studies beyond that of national state borders (see e.g. Scott 2012 or Maganda 2007 for discussions on the meaning of borders between sub-national units).

6.1.1. Cultural-linguistic, economic and politico-administrative characteristics of the border area

The middle part of the Austrian-German border area, where the two Euroregions are located, has been inhabited since the Stone Age, and contained important urban border centers already during Roman Times. For instance, Salzburg was founded in 15 BC as the Roman city of Iuvavum, which would serve as a resting place at the crossing of two important traffic routes and offered convenient proximity to the precious salt mines (Moosleitner 2004a: 6, Moosleitner 2004b: 12). Pons Aeni, close to the location of today's Rosenheim, was located at the border between the provinces of Noricum and Ratien (Rosenheim city archive, 2012). In the 5th century, as the

---

[133] Border area as defined by the European Territorial Program (Interreg Bayern-Osterreich 2007-2013, 2007), incorporating NUTS III levels closest to the borders. Note that such as border area definition does not necessarily coincide with citizens' perception of whether they live in a 'border area' or not.

Roman empire imploded, the Bawarii people (later Bavaria) entered the struggle for power in the area, and grave findings from the centuries up to the first millennium show how the frontier between Bawarii-inhabited and Roman-inhabited areas was in the Salzburg area (Moosleitner 2004c:18). However, the frontier was gradually pushed southwards, which had as a consequence that various dialects of the Germanic language group became the dominant tongue in the area, regardless of whether its speakers in the next 1,000 years were ruled by the Salzburg archbishops, Bavarian kings, Tyrol counts or Habsburg emperors (Dopsch 2004).

This *language homogeneity* was not affected by the major border revisions that took place in connection with the Napoleonic wars in the early 19th century, ending with a series of treaties, which set the borders that are still valid today[134]. However, economic policy during the industrialization period meant that the new borders limited and changed economic interactions. For instance, the areas on the Western side of the river Salzach, which became the new border demarcation, came under Bavarian rule and thereby were incorporated into the German Customs Union, whereas Salzburg and other towns east of Salzburg were incorporated into the Habsburg economic space, just as was Kufstein (the central Austrian town of today's Euregio Inntal) (Dirninger 2004:98). Both sides of the border developed favorably in economic terms in the last decades of the 20th century, but political leaders and those who voted 'yes' in the accession referendum hoped that the EU accession of Austria in 1995 would mean a further boost for the economy (Muller 2009, 25). After accession – whether this was the cause or not - both sides of the border have grown, although Bavaria has been able to show more impressive growth figures

---

[134] Treaty of Ried 1813, Treaty of Munich 1816, and minor border corrections made in additional treaties 1818 and 1851 (Roth 2004: 64). In the 20th century the border was de facto removed as a state border during 1938-1945, when Austria was a part of Nazi Germany. For understandable reasons, this period does not receive much space in official documentation surrounding the Euroregions. Economic historian Christian Dirninger writes: "The forced integration [following after the Austrian Anschluss] of the two parts in the Nazi time could presumably in no aspect be seen as a favorable constellation. (Dirninger 2004: 99, my translation)

in the 2000s. In 2011, employment rates were 79.5% in Upper Bavaria, 77.8% in Salzburg and 76.9% in Tyrol. The unemployment rates for the central parts were 4.5% in Salzburg, 5.9% in Tyrol, and below 4% in the Bavarian districts in the studied border area. While there can still be said to be overall *economic homogeneity* (see Moller 2009: 48 for the case of Euroregion Salzburg), especially close to the border, the overall Bavarian might turn the area more heterogenic long-term. The latest Eurobarometer income statistics in 2011, showed that the income compared to average EU27 was 161% in Upper Bavaria, 141% in Salzburg and 128% in Tyrol.[135] The economic structure of the border area is diverse, although services (especially tourism) play a major role.

An advantage for cooperation in *politico-administrative* terms is that both sides of the border are incorporated in a federal state, but nonetheless the actors in the border area that the Austrian and German stakeholders have different possibilities and capacities to act. A study of Euroregion Salzburg stated that "on the Salzburg side the administrative and political distance between the federal state and local governments is shorter than in Bavaria. Also size is different. While the city of Salzburg is also the capital of the federal state Salzburg, Munich is at a greater distance from the districts of Traunstein and Berchtesgaden" (Moller 2009: 38, my translation). Bavaria is a much bigger federal state (12 million inhabitants) than either Salzburg or Tyrol in Austria (530,000 and 714,000 inhabitants, respectively). This means that Bavaria takes on a quasi-national role (instead of Berlin), which is expressed in the name of the European Funding program mentioned earlier (Interreg Bavaria-Austria 2007-2013).

A further political-administrative difference is that regional districts in Austria do not have political representation, but are merely administrative, whereas the German districts do have

---

[135] Statistics from Eurobarometer, Wirtschaftskammer Osterreich and http://www.arbeitsagentur.de. [accessed September 25, 2012)

political councils. This means that the Euroregion may behave differently towards districts in the two countries (in general, the manager tend to approach non-elected officials, and the Chair elected officials, although that is not always the case, Manager, Euroregion Salzburg, #A79). Nevertheless, the politico-administrative setting of the border is less heterogenic than in many other European border spaces (Moller 2009). On both sides of the border there is a multitude of relatively small local governments (*Gemeinde*) along with a smaller number of midsized towns and one bigger city (Salzburg).[136]

Inter-muncipal cooperation is prevalent in both countries. In Germany, the Basic Law gives the right to municipalities to cooperate (art 28 II), and cooperation has been actively promoted since the 1960s and 1970s when reforms were also taking place (Bolgerhini 2011). Inter-municipal cooperation can take several forms, as the law on inter-municipal cooperation lists four possibilities: working communities, purpose agreements, purpose associations and jointly owned municipal companies (Bavarian Ministry of Interior, 2012[137]). Also Austria encourages cooperation[138] via official policies (funding, etc.), and in the case of Euroregion Salzburg the Austrian regional associations Regionalverband Salzburg, Regionalverband Salzburger Seenland, and Regionalverband Pinzgau, are important partners.

Cross-border cooperation along the entire German-Austrian border developed from the 1970s onwards. The working committee ARGE ALP and the International Bodensee lake conference were founded in 1972, and the spatial planning conference ODROK in 1973. The

---

[136] In Austria all local governments have the same fundamental rights and duties, regardless of whether they have town status or not (there is also a third status called 'market town'). In Germany there are two layers with different functions. Districts and 'Towns not belongng to districts' in the first layer, and the level of towns and municipalities the second.

[137] http://www.stmi.bayern.de/buerger/kommunen/zusammenarbeit/detail/17007/

[138] See for instance website of the Austrian Association of Towns, which portrays inter-municipal cooperation as receiving more attention in the light of overall budget austerity. http://www.staedtebund.gv.at/oegz/oegz-beitraege/jahresarchiv/details/artikel/interkommunale-zusammenarbeit-in-oesterreich-aktuelle-trends-und-thesen-zur-weiteren-fachdiskus.html

Euroregions along the border were all founded after EU Accession: Bayrischer Wald-Bohmerwald 1993/94, Inn-Salzach 1994, Salzburg 1995, Via Salina 1997, Zugspitze-Wetterstein-Karwendel 1998, Inntal 1998 and Cooperation Bad Tölz-Wolfratshausen-Miesbach-Schwaz 1998. (Interreg Bayern-Osterreich 2007-2013, 2007: 53)

6.1.2. The case study organizations

This section provides brief factual backgrounds for the two Euroregions investigated in this chapter. This is done to prepare the ground for sections 6.2 and 6.3 where the relevant aspects of the two organizations and their members will be analyzed together.

<div align="center">*</div>

The Euroregion Salzburg[139] was founded in 1995 and is located in the heartland of the historical region Salzburg, and currently incorporates nearly 100 local governments. In addition, the membership consists of two German regional districts (*Landkreise*, NUTS III, an intermediate level between the federal states and local governments) as well the Salzburg Chamber of Commerce and the Salzburg Chamber of Labor.[140] Legally, the Euroregion consists of two separate organizations, set up specifically for the purpose of creating a Euroregion, joined by a binding agreement. It was agreed that German law on private associations would be used (Moller 2009:12) for joint activities, but the organizations were established on each side of the border to ensure legal presence in both countries. In German they are called 'carrying organizations'

---

[139] Where not otherwise indicated this section builds on material provided on the websites of Euroregion Salzburg (www.euregiosalzurg.eu) and Euroregion Inntal (www.euregion-inntal.com), or provided in interviews with the Managers of the organization.

[140] *Wirtschaftskammer Salzburg* (Chamber of Commerce) and *Arbeiterkammer Salzburg* (Chamber of Labour) are economic associations typical of Austrian neo-corporatism (Schmitter 1979) whereby membership in the former is compulsory for all employers in Austria and membership in the latter compulsory for all employees. Due to this policy of compulsory inclusion of members, in combination with extensive participation of these organizations in policy-making and policy implementation, they in practice become semi-public bodies. Inclusion of, or interaction with, these organizations is therefore seen as necessary to efficiently deal with economic issues. A social partnership body founded 1957 (Parity Commission for Salary and Price Issues) has played a key role in negotiations and policy-setting (Moller 2009: 51)

(*Trägervereine*), and they can be seen as separate pillars that legally support the Euroregion. Each of the two 'carrying organizations' officially has a Chair, and these two take turn to be the (externally visible) Chair and Deputy Chair of the Euroregion. To the external world, the Euroregion is presented as one organization, but "it is not a legal person, can not make binding decisions and does not have competences that limits the decision competences of the local governments. The activity field of the Euroregion is therefore strictly dependent on the willingness of the carrying organizations, and in this primarily on the local governments, to give resources of different kinds and support and implement the activities of the Euroregion." (Rittner 2010:11, my translation).

The preamble of the treaty between the two organizations emphasizes that the organization is linked to the founding ideas of the European Union, containing phrases such as "the objective [is] to realize the aims of the treaties that form the European Union", while the Euroregion is "dedicated to the spirit of these treaties" and will "contribute to a closer connection between the European Peoples". (Preamble to the Treaty of the Euregio Salzburg - Berchtesgadener Land - Traunstein, 1995, my translation). The treaty lists the tasks of the Euroregion as "to support, assist and coordinate the regional cross-border cooperation between its members, which includes project planning, conceptualization and realization of activities within the framework of the European Union Initiative Interreg" (Treaty of the Euregio Salzburg - Berchtesgadener Land - Traunstein , 1995, my translation, Article 3).

The highest decision-making body is the assembly, which meets twice a year. The assembly elects a Board of eight members, and an Administrative Council to assist with the tasks that are assigned (University of Salzburg 2008, 9). The Board appoints the Managing Director, a position that in 2012 was held by the same individual as when the organization was founded. The secretariat of the organization employs three additional employees and is located in Freilassing, a

small town on the German side of the border, which functions as a suburb to Salzburg in terms of housing and work flows. In 2011 the Euroregion had 15 working groups, most of which had been working continuously for ten years or more. The working groups consisted of civil servants in specific policy areas appointed by the Board on unlimited terms, thereby ensuring continuity in policy work. The working groups both implement ideas conceived by the Assembly and Board and generate ideas, brought to the Board and Assembly via the Secretariat.

The cost of membership is 30 cent per inhabitant and year in Germany and 12 cent per inhabitant and year in Austria (the districts and the City of Salzburg contribute on top of this). In 2011, the Euroregion 2011 spent 374,244 EUR, the two major items being staff costs (220,898) and project support (107,587 EUR). Members, including districts and Salzburg, contributed 146.892,54 EUR, and 236.553,59 EUR came out of the European Territorial Cooperation Interreg support.

The Euroregio Inntal was founded four years after Euroregion Salzburg, which in several respects was used as a model organization. For instance, it utilizes the same preamble for its by-laws. Hence, again the 'embodiment of the spirit' of the European Union features as the motivation for founding the Euroregion (Euregio Inntal 1998). The organization consists of 66 local governments and four regional districts (the *Landkreise* Rosenheim and Traunstein in Germany, and the *Bezirke* Kufstein and Kitzbühel in Austria). The territorial core of the Euroregion is the valley around the river Inn, but it stretches beyond that, as indicated in the somewhat long official name, Euroregion Inntal-Chiemsee-Kaisergeberge-Mangfalltal.

The organizational structure of Euroregion Inntal is more straightforward than that of Euroregion Salzburg, although it follows a similar logic. Euroregion Inntal is formed as a German-Austrian municipal private law association, registered in Austria. It has a secretariat based at the Kufstein College, consisting of a half-time Managing Director, who has access to

administrative support within the structure of the college, and is regularly helped out by interns. The president of the Euroregion is elected by the general assembly changes every three years, and should alternate between Austria and Germany. The original statutes envisioned the set-up of working group, but such groups have never been functioning. A revision of the statutes in 2011 allowed for an inclusion of non-voting representatives of different administrative sectors into the Board, in order to create better links between political and administrative officials.

On the German side, the Rosenheim regional district has undertaken to pay the membership fees also for the local governments, whereas the local governments in the Traunstein district and on the Austrian side pay their own dues, which for a small local government does not exceed 200 Euro a year.

*

This section has set the ground for the analysis by elaborating on the local context of the macro-criteria used to select the border as one of the case study areas, and by introducing the two organizations to be studied at this border. Key facts from the section are summarized in Table 16. The analysis of the data in relation to the research questions starts in the next section.

Table 16. *Key characteristics of Inntal, Salzburg and the Austrian-German borderlands*

Euroregion+ / Characteristics	Inntal	Salzburg
Founded	1999	1995
Local governments in 2011	66	97
Approximate population 2010	630,000	800,000
Working language	German	German
Border existing since	1813 (Treaty of Ried), non-state border 1938-1945	1816 (Treaty of Munich), non-state border 1938-1945
State form	Federal	federal
Self-determination on local level	Medium	medium
National GDP (IMF 2010, in USD)	AU: 50,504, GE: 44,558	AU: 50,504, GE: 44,558
Regional GDP (Eurostat, NUTSII 2008)	Niederbayern: 29,900 , Tyrol: 35,200	Niederbayern: 29,900 , Tyrol: 35,200

6.2. Motivation, participation and interaction of local governments in Euroregion Salzburg und Euroregion Inntal

As in the chapters on Euroregions at the Hungarian-Slovak and Swedish-Norwegian border, this section revolves around patterns of motivation, participation and interaction among Euroregional members. Here, the members of Euroregion Inntal and Euroregion Salzburg constitute the primary units of analysis. The section seeks to establish the basis for membership ('why are they members of the organization?'), their modes of participation ('how do they participate in the organizations?') and the intensity and content of their communication ('how do they interact with each other?').

The analysis relies both on primary data collection and on secondary sources. Seventeen interviews were conducted with fourteen member representatives or managers (three were interviewed twice); in addition, three interviews were conducted with other cross-border cooperation actors. (See chapter 3 for more details on method and data collection.). The analysis could take advantage of 2012 survey data collected in 2012 by the Euroregion Inntal, which contained responses from fifteen members who were or had been on the Euroregional board, as well as a 2009 study (Moller 2009), which contained interviews with five representatives of local governments (mayors) from Euroregion Salzburg. Secondary sources include German-language academic writings. The analytical framework driving the analysis of motivation and participation follows what was introduced in chapter 2, and will be briefly recapitulated in 6.2.1 below.

6.2.1. Motivation

As detailed in Chapter 2, the motivation to be a member of a Euroregion can broadly be divided into two groups, one based on identity/polity and one based on instrumentality. The former follows a logic of appropriateness, whereas the latter is consequence-based (see March and Olsen 1989), a distinction that has been applied several times to a cross-border context (Blatter 2000, Perkmann 2003, Medve-Balint 2008 and 2013, Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012) In the analysis, the instrumentality group has been divided into two sub-groups, the first contains those seeking direct materialistic gains through external funding, while the second contains those seeking benefits through solving specific policy problems. In this section I analyze the stated motivations for membership by the organization based on these (not mutually exclusive) categories.

The first category is *identity/polity,* in which ten answers were coded. The dominating theme was the idea of a united Europe as the motivation for why cross-border cooperation should be supported by membership. In this context, it is worth mentioning that Euroregion Salzburg was founded in 1995, the year of the Austrian entry into the European Union, and clearly was a child of that momentum, as was Euroregion Inntal, when it was founded a few years later. As stated above, the preambles to their by-laws state that the members are "united in their desire" to achieve the objectives of the European Union and that they seek to "promote a closer union of European peoples'. It calls for action to completely remove what is already referred to as "former borders". Thus, the founders of Euroregion Salzburg and Euroregion Inntal deliberately placed them within a narrative of Euregions as small 'mini-EU:s', or laboratories of European

integration[141]. The fact that the European Union was not directly involved in financing or promoting these organizations until 1990 is neglected, and so is the long-term support of Euroregions by the Council of Europe.

This belief in Europe (equal to the European Union) as a *leitmotif* could be found in half of the interviews, and the close connection with EU is also present in the logo of Euroregion Inntal, which features yellow stars much like those on the EU flag. However, the picture was made more complicated by the fact that the inhabitants of member municipalities were perceived to be less enthusiastic than their political leaders (the mayors representing the municipalities in the Euroregion assemblies).

> "In the meetings you always have the mayor and they have a joint aim […which is…] the joint Europe. I believe that Europe's peace project was the most important decision in the last 70 years." (Mayor, Austria, Euroregion Salzburg: #85)

> "The European Union is unfortunately always viewed negatively, it is always associated with when something doesn't work. " (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Salzburg: #84)

> "The citizen [in this town] feels primarily as a Neumarkt citizen, then as a Salzburger, then perhaps Austrian, and on fourth or fifth place as European. When you then add the Euroregion, and many persons have projects or contacts with us, and see that it makes sense to have cooperation across the border, then in their thoughts [cross-border cooperation] surely comes before EU. He/she is still Neumarkt citizen first, then Salzburg, the perhaps inhabitant of the Euroregion, then maybe Austria and than the EU. But since it [the Euroregion] always has this EU connotation it is a difficult idea to sell." (Mayor and Deputy Chair, Austria, Euroregion Salzburg: #130)

In spite of these perceived negative perceptions among the member municipalities' populations, there have been no discussions to replace the logo of Euroregion Inntal or downplay the European connection. As expressed by the Manager of Euroregion Inntal:

---

[141] The 'laboratory' is an often-used metaphor for a Euroregion, recently repeated by the Committee of the Regions in the Official Journal of the European Union (Committee of the Regions 2011).

"I don't think that Europe is the first thing that should be thrown from the train when the ride is getting rocky." (Manager, Euroregion Inntal: #A80)

In addition to the European identity theme expressed in the quotes above, a few respondents expressed belief in cooperation having an intrinsic value.

"We wanted to facilitate familiarization with other local governments, and to learn from each other, and be able to give each other some things." (Mayor, Austria, Euroregion Salzburg: #A85)

"I am convinced that the key [for doing something] is to know each other." (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Salzburg: #A84)

Such answers indicate that *cooperation per se* is valuable and that inter-municipal cooperation is an important element of current and future local government practices. More rarely were history, culture or ethnicity alluded to, although it did occur in both Euroregions.

"The regional identity should not be dependent on borders. There is an Inntal identity. And the regional identity was always very strong, both in Tyrol and in Bavaria. We understand each other well. We have more in common with them than with a North German, which is something I find positive." (Chamber of commerce member, Euroregion Inntal: #A74)

"We have the same culture, for instance the Holy Rupert is our saint, our joint saint. Also, you now, Mozart was never an Austrian, he was a 'Salzburger'." (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Salzburg: #81)

Instrumentality, the second motivation category, featured less prominently than the identity category. This category includes both grant-seeking motivation for membership, and membership based on the perception that there are policy problems that need to be dealt with jointly.. The two quotes below are the only ones illustrating grant-seeking, and only the second of these refers directly to external funding.

"Well, we thought cross-border cooperation was important and thought there could be certain advantages for the municipality." (Mayor, Austria, Euroregion Inntal: #A76)

> "We always became donors somehow. When you see Salzburg, how they are able to get to the 'cooking pots', that is amazing. I rather would do what I think is important, then I think whether there is funding or not. But the Austrians do what there is funding for." (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Salzburg: #A84)

That grant seeking is rare as motivation among members, was also confirmed by the Chair of Euroregion Inntal, who testified that the leadership of the Euroregion actually often has to persuade local governments apply for existing opportunities for cross-border cooperation funding,. It is also supported by statistics from the Interreg program. According to a comparative study of 14 cross-border programs, the German-Austrian border had the highest proportion of approved projects.[142]

Regarding policy problem solving as an instrumental motivation, although spatial development and infrastructure have been major activity areas for both Euroregions (see section 6.3), no references to policy problems were that specific.

> "I believe that exchange of experiences is important – you do not need to invent the wheel twice." (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Salzburg: #A81)

> "Today you see that mayors from Tyrol and Bavaria actually call each other, and say '*we have that and that problem, how can we solve this jointly?*'". (Deputy Mayor and Chair, Austria, Euroregion Inntal: #A3)

> "Earlier each country was on its own. It is still a bit like that, but indeed it is important cross-border cooperation for economic development". (Representative of Euroregion Inntal member Chamber of Commerce: #A74)

The quotes illustrate that while respondents can mention policy problems in very general terms (such as 'economic development'), there do not appear to exist a multitude of concrete and substantial policy problems, which caused local governments to enter and engage in the Euroregions. The conclusion of this sub-section is therefore that identity-based normative

---

[142] Eighty-five percent of ideas and ninety-five percent of submitted full applications were assessed positively, 98% of these received funding This was the highest out of 14 cross-border programs. (Interact 2010: 41-42)

incentives, namely accession-induced support for European integration as linked to the European Union project, played a key role for membership in both investigated Euroregions. This, in combination with institutional 'stickiness', or intstitutional inertia, (Pierson 2000), manifested as unwillingness to question already existing memberships, mainly explains long-time memberships.

6.2.2. Participation

Members of the Euroregions get a number of invitations each year to participate in events organized by the Euroregion. The invitations usually target the mayor, but they may also be directed to municipal administrative employees regarding specialized topics. The general assemblies are regular events (one per year in Euroregion Inntal and two per year in Euroregion Salzburg), to which both Euroregions attach workshops or lectures on specific themes in order to attract members to attend. Participants not representing member municipalities are therefore welcome to attend as well. The two Euroregions in this chapter are both relatively large organizations in terms of membership; one has 66 local government members (Euroregion Inntal), the other 95 (Euroregion Salzburg). As in previous chapters, the local governments can be divided into three groups depending on how they engage with the organization:

- Detached: rarely participating in meetings or events, receiving information rather in writing from the organization;

- Listeners: regularly attending meetings and events, but doing it mainly to seek information, sometimes letting administrators or deputies represent the local government at meetings instead of the highest representative (the mayor);

- Active: regularly attending meetings and events with a strategic approach and contributing to the agenda.

According to attendance data from general assemblies and an internal survey carried out by Euroregion Inntal[143], most of the members in both organizations can be found among the groups of *detached members or listeners*. Assembly meetings rarely have more than half of the members attending. Since only the presence of a third of the members is required for a quorum, that does not create a formal problem in terms of ability to take decisions, but it means that that the organization needs to be innovative even to get members to be in the second group (listeners). Arranging spectacular events mean less when it comes to attract the members of the second group (listeners) than to make these events efficient in terms of the time and effort it takes for members to attend them. For instance, on July 9, 2010, the General Assembly of Euroregion Inntal was held on the island Herreninsel (famous for the 'fantasy castle' erected by the 'mad king', Ludwig II of Bavaria). After the formal agenda points, a lecture and round-table discussion was led by the Finance Minister of the federal state of Bavaria, the President of the Parliament of Tyrol, the Regional Leader of Rosenheim and the editor of a large Austrian daily newspaper. The total attendance was only 35 persons.

> "It's important where you have the meetings. We had the general assembly in the castle of the island Herreninsel in Chiemsee, that was of course a great experience, but sort of difficult to get there. You know, you have to take the boat, and the mayors have all these appointments, they have to choose, and they often cannot make themselves available for a half-day or a full-day, especially if they have to travel. But we did that for this one occasion, since the Minister of Finance had the idea that he'd like to come and would like to visit the castle, and that's why we did it." (Manager Euroregion Inntal: # A80)

---

[143] In 2012 Euroregion Inntal conducted a survey among current or former members of the Board, the majority of whom are mayors representing local governments. Fourteen reacted to the statement: "Mayor work actively in the Euroregion and attend assemblies regularly." Four agreed with the statement, whereas nine answered 'rather agree' and one did not agree. The hesitance to agree with the statement might be due to the fact that while assembly meetings in Euroregion Inntal generally has around 40 persons showing up, this only represents half of the members.

The information sought by those belonging to the category of listeners does not primarily relate to grant access. As pointed out above, the leadership of Euroregion Inntal has rather experienced that the difficulty is to persuade members to utilize funding opportunities for cross-border cooperation. Information about specific topics (highways, local transportation, hail prevention, hunting, social care, etc.) have been utilized to tempt these members to attend events. .

The group of listeners is the group most likely to experience change in its composition. There have been local governments that have left both organizations, usually in connection with change in political leadership, and others have been added. For instance, Euroregion Salzburg started out with 87 local governments as members, and in 2012 had 95. This is due to reputation (the Euroregion being more known) and deliberate campaigning.

> "Sometimes new local governments are added when they look for us. Others you have to deliberately target, for instance through projects. We had a drive in Pinzgau when we informed all mayors and invited them to become members. Through that we won one more local government." (Manager, Euroregion Salzburg: #A79)

The *active members* mainly consist of those that volunteer to engage in the Board. This still does not mean a large investment in terms of time-commitment, and even duties formally carried out by members (such as treasurer or secretary) are frequently in practice handled by the secretariats.

> "I have been treasurer since three years, and have been even longer in the Board. However, in the reality the accounting is done by the Manager, I'm just formally the treasurer, he [the Manager] can deal with this, we use to change positions every three years." (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Inntal: #A75)

Despite the relative low share of active members, those that are active are able to achieve results partly due to the stability among elected mayors and thereby in the Board. Mayors are

elected for relatively long periods of time (six years in Bavaria and Tyrol, five years in Salzburg) and tend to be reelected. For instance, general elections in Tyrol in 2010 did not lead to any change in the composition of the Euroregion Inntal Board. Stability may also be furthered by a depoliticized climate, in which partisan conflict issues are rarely discussed. For the case of Euroregion Salzburg, this was established in a 2009 study according to which interest conflicts were rare (Moller 2009:59[144]), and was also seen in interviews for this dissertation.

> "We try to find a joint common denominator, where we can see if the problem formulation is the same on both sides. (Mayor, Austria, Euroregion Salzburg: #A85"
>
> "We are all in the same boat, we are all municipal politicians from 64 local governments, which party we belong to is not important […] we are looking for topics that all have an interest in." (Mayor, Austria, Euroregion Inntal: #A75)
>
> "I usually ask about party affiliation. It is not a problem if it is red, yellow or black - we have the same problem - but it still interests me, because you understand why someone says some things" (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Salzburg: #A81)

The non-partisan-ship of political relations at local level was confirmed in a study of cross-border cooperation between two of the Euroregion Salzburg members Hallein and Bechtesgaden (Aufschnaiter et al. 2008): "Looking at 'actor-dependent factors', it is clear, that on both sides issue politics rule, not party politics, when it comes to anchorage in the political-society system. At municipal level personal contacts and informal information is important for politics and the civil society in Hallein and Berchtesgaden."[145] (Aufschnaiter et al 2008: 30, my translation).

<div align="center">*</div>

---

[144] According to the study, interest conflicts, if existing, would be solved by majority voting, but no examples of such majority voting procedures were given in the study (Moller 2009).

[145] The study concluded that the visions of the Euroregion were hard to realize on local levels for other than 'soft politics areas' such as sport and cultural events. 'Hard politics' cooperation between the two towns was prevented by competitive thinking and different legal systems in the two countries (Aufschneiter et al 2008). On the other hand, the cooperation between Laufen and Oberndorf on areas such as schooling and spatial planning, shows that it is possible to beyond hard politics.

All in all, participation patterns of member representatives did not differ significantly between the two organizations. Both have many members, the majority of which who do not participate actively in organizational affairs.

6.2.3. Interaction

Chapter 2 outlined how Euroregions can be seen as an institutionalized policy network, where the policy network is a metaphor for how "regular communication and frequent exchange of information lead to the establishment of stable relationships between actors and to the coordination of their mutual interests" (Adam and Kriesi 2007, 129). In the borderlands an integrated network, or a political community, is created when it is as common for a political (or administrative) representative to recognize, meet, talk or write to a representative of the other side, as to someone on his/her own. To assess to what extent such a political community exist in these Euroregions, one suitable method is social network analysis, which will be applied in Chapter 7 for four of the case study organizations in this dissertation (the case study organizations at the Norwegian-Swedish and Hungarian-Slovak border). For the Austrian-German border, the allocated resources for field research did not allow for a full mapping of the political relations within the two Euroregions.

However, the interviews that were made with members provide some support for three propositions. First, the cross-border linkages are still relatively weak. All the interviewed local government mayors had significantly fewer and weaker communication links with local governments on the other side of the border than with those in their own country.

> "The discussions [at the Euregio assembly] are very interesting, but they are perhaps not very efficient. But it is important for the reason that you meet your

colleagues from the other side. We would not meet otherwise, but the network is rather loose. You recognize them when you meet them, but there is no cooperation outside [the Euroregion]. (Mayor, Austria, Euroregion Inntal: #A76)

"Most know each other, but despite of that, when an assembly meet, Traunstein as at one table and Salzburg at another. It is the same at intermunicipal associations. It must be how people are." (Manager, Euroregion Salzburg: #A79)

Second, contacts are perceived to have increased over time. When asked about the amount of cross-border contacts over the past five years, most respondents in both organizations indicated an increase.[146] Third, parallel with the tendency towards increased cross-border networking, local governments also tend to increase contacts within domestic networks i.e. on one side of the border, via micro-regional associations. This enables a tentative estimation of the indicators used to assess between-group social capital, to be used in the analysis of the second research question, related to the performance and function of Euroregions.

Table 17. *Between-group social capital of Inntal and Salzburg*

Euroregion	Inntal	Salzburg
Strength of cross-border communications	medium	medium
Perceived trend of contacts	somewhat increasing	increasing
Level of trust to other side	high	high
Absence/presence of conflict (politisization of issues)	low	low

Source: author

*

This section on motivation, participation and interaction has treated members of the two Austrian-German investigated Euroregions as the primary unit of analysis, seeking to answer

---

[146] This is sometimes promoted by direct activities by the Euroregions. Especially Euroregion Salzburg has been active in this, for instance through the organization of special "Mayor marches" across the border, having the explicit aim of making mayors know each other.

questions as to why and how they participate, but also how they interact with each other. Unlike the case study organizations in previous chapters, the ones in this chapter showed less variation. The chapter demonstrated the primacy of identity/normative motivation over instrumental motivation, both having large shares of members being detached or listeners rather than actively engaging, and a low but increasing endowment of transnational institutional social capital in the form of networks.

6.3. Function and performance of Euroregion Salzburg und Euroregion Inntal

The previous section dealt with members as units of analysis; in this section, the organizations constitute the units of analysis and the objective is to assess their function and performance in accordance with the analytical framework established in Chapter 2 and carried out in the two preceding case study chapters. I start by outlining the policy areas within which the Euroregions are active, and the typical activities they engage in, and proceed to assess their organizational capacity and the extent to which they are able to appropriate policy space. The analysis of the latter focuses on whether they take on roles as seismographs, loudspeakers and display windows, and how that is related to their capacity to take place within the governance landscape.

6.3.1. Policy areas and typical activities

As described in section 6.1.4 both organizations' statutes list a number of activities within which the Euroregion can engage: spatial development, economic development, traffic, environment, culture and sports, health care, energy, waste treatment, tourism, agriculture, innovation and technology transfer, education, social cooperation, emergency services, communication,

cooperation on public security and cooperation on public concerns (Euroregion Salzburg 1996, Euregio Inntal 1998). However, whereas Euroregion Salzburg has had projects within most of these (on this, see also Gabbe and Malchus, p. 93), the range of activities carried out by Euroregion Inntal has been more limited, mainly focused on spatial development, business promotion, higher education (the University of Kufstein has a large intake of students from the other side of the border) and youth policy. Table 18 lists the areas said by members to be most important, and typical activities (in the sense of being frequently mentioned by members and/or featuring prominently in Euroregional documents).

Table 18. *Typical cooperation areas and activities of Inntal and Euroregion Salzburg*

Inntal
Most important to members: infrastructure, European identity-building, economic development **Typical activities:** 　　1.　Coordinated hailstone prevention. An initiative that the Euroregion took in the first years of its operation was to brokerage an agreement between Bavaria and Tyrol allowing the Bavarian hail prevention team to fly also over Tyrol. 　　2.　Multiple generation house –Flintsbach: The local government of Flintsbach, situated in Germany, right at the Austrian border, seeks to integrate care activities for elderly and young children under one roof. The care center will use volunteers who receive some sort of compensation, and the training will be carried out together with the Austrian Red Cross. A cross-border forum for mayors to be held in the house is scheduled for 2012 or 2013.

Salzburg
Most important cooperation areas: infrastructure, European identity-building, environment **Typical activities:** 　　1.　Spatial Planning Coordination project. The Euroregion provided co-funds and management support as well as served as a focal point for its members for this three-year-project which resulted in a master plan for spatial development in the borderland area. The importance of including local governments (and not only the regional level) was highlighted in all program documentation. 　　2.　Euroregion Summit Meeting (EuRegio Gipfel). Annual meetings/conferences to which leading politicians from regional and national level are invited to learn about topics prioritisized within the Euroregion. For instance, the 2010 meeting took place on May 5, 2010, in Salzburg. The meeting was arranged by the governor (Landeshauptfrau) of Salzburg. In the meeting, there were representatives of the government of Salzburg, political leaders of the Bercthesgadener sp? and Traunstein regions, city of Salzburg, the government of Upper Bavaria, the State Chancellery of Bavaria and the central Salzburg administration. Five topics were dealt with: The intention to continue to cooperate on an annual Professional Information Fair after 2001; location of a new bridge at Oberndorf/Laufen; to develop the idea of the transnational regional City Transportation system; the promotion of hydro power at the lower Salzach, joint efforts to influence the shape of the Interreg policy program after 2013.

Between the two organizations, the priorities resemble each other, the only difference being that Euroregion Salzburg has environment in third place and while Euroregion Inntal has economic development there. Notable is the high score of European identity-building, supporting the argument made in the previous section on this as a motivation for membership.

In addition to these 'typical activities', the European Territorial Cooperation program for cross-border cooperation (Interreg) has allocated implementation tasks for smaller projects directly to the Euroregions located at the border. This means that each Euroregion has a 'small project fund' from which it can award funds for projects up to total project values of up to 25,000 EUR (up to 60% of total project costs can be covered by Interreg). Thereby the Euroregions become interesting for both members and non-members as grant-givers, and make them a natural first point of contact for information about European CBC programs, even those not included in the small project fund. It also implies a natural point of connection and contact between the Euroregions and the Interreg program (see more in section 6.3.3. below). This contact is mostly kept up by the managers of the Euroregion; for the 2007-2013 programming period the Manager of Euroregion Salzburg was included as a voting member of the Monitoring Committee, whereas the Manager of Euroregion Inntal was asked to be an advising member.

6.3.2. Cross-border cooperation intensity

In Chapter 3 indicators of cross-border cooperation intensity were selected from those that have been used in the literature on crossborder cooperation. Using a tri-partite scale, six dimensions were assessed: strength of legal arrangement, robustness of its administrative arrangement,

meeting activity, adherence to development strategy/mission statement, budget size and project intensity. The assessment scoring is summarized in Table 19 and is elaborated on below.

Table 19. *Cross-border cooperation intensity of Inntal and Salzburg*

Euroregion	Inntal	Salzburg
Strength of legal arrangement	medium	medium
Robustness of administrative arrangement	medium	high
Meeting activity	medium	high
Adherence to development strategy/mission statement	medium	high
Budget	low	medium
Project intensity	medium	high

Source: author

Strength of *legal arrangement* is rated highest if the organization uses the instrument European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), and lowest if it is not formally registered. Both Euroregions in this chapter score medium, as they have a functioning structure, which is, however, built on the premise that the Euroregion does not exist as one legal organization but legally consists of two organizations (*Trägervereine*) having a cooperation agreement between them. In several recent and ongoing research projects (see e.g. Evrard and Chilla 2012) the EGTC is promoted as a positive tool for cross-border cooperation. Moller wrote in 2009 "As soon as [this law] is implemented, the national 'carrying associations' of Euroregion Salzburg […] not be needed anymore, since the Euroregion can be a legal person in itself." (Moller 2009:66) However, as of 2012 Euroregion Inntal had not raised a discussion around reconstituting into an EGTC, whereas the discussion that did take place in Euroregion Salzburg led to a decision not to take the idea of reforming into an EGTC forward.

> "As you know we have around 100 members. [If we wanted to regroup into an EGTC] every local government would have to vote again on the membership. As I have said that it [the Euroregion] always is connected with EU, we don't want to

risk that many local governments do not follow." (Deputy Chair Euroregion Salzburg, Austria: #A130)

While the Manager sees several advantages of an EGTC formation (easier structure, own legal entity, ability to carry out own projects instead of relying on the 'carrying organizations', better external representation), he repeats the concerns of the Deputy Chair.

> "It does not have anything to do with the construction of the EGTC. It is rather a bit the question what risk the introduction of an EGTC brings when it comes to the membership of the local governments. In order to create a new legal person, with the same members, then the local councils have to approve that, and that could backfire, so that they say 'we are not interested' and take the reconstruction as an opportunity to exit." (Manager, Euroregion Salzburg: #A79)

Adherence to development strategy/mission statement. Euroregion Salzburg receives the assessment 'high' in this category, as it has activities in all the areas outlined as important in its original mission and in a document elaborating on the mission statement. Early on, it also conducted a 650-page long assessment study on what work would need to be done to enhance integration, and this "Development concept' (Euroregion Salzburg 2000) was used as a guide for project generation in the years to follow. While neither the long mission statement, nor the development concept, includes quantitative indicators that can be used for follow-up work, they still allow members and external parties to make their own judgments. On the other hand, Euroregion Inntal receives the assessment 'low', as its objectives are stated on its website, but are not further developed, and not referred to in other documents or parts of the website. An internal survey showed some dissatisfaction with the set-up of joint long-term aims and objectives. Only four out of 15 thought that the aims for regional development were possible to realize, and that "aims are clearly operationalized and measurable with 'mile stones'. The majority did not agree with the statement that Euroregion Inntal 'takes strategic initiatives and moves development'.

The *administrative arrangements* are robust in both organizations, but differ in scale. Euroregion Salzburg has a four-staff team including a full-time manager, whereas Euroregion Inntal only has a half-time manager (assisted by Kufstein College staff and occasional interns). Euroregion Salzburg is therefore put into the 'high' category, whereas the evaluation is 'medium' for Euroregion Inntal. For the latter, the assessment is affirmed by an internal Board member survey from 2012, in which only one out of 15 respondents gave an unqualified 'yes' to the question if there is enough personnel for project- and network management. While there is no equivalent evaluation of Salzburg, no interviews indicated dissatisfaction with the managerial resources.

Both organizations have regular meetings. However, Euroregion Salzburg also runs 15 working groups with administrators meeting between twice and eight times a year. Therefore, the *meeting activity* is assessed as 'medium' for Inntal and 'high' for Salzburg. However, it should be noted that the annual assembly meetings rarely gather more than half of members in any of them. Since only a third is needed for a quorum, the low numbers are not seen as a problem by the leadership.

> "When you take into account the appointment-related stress the mayors have, it is actually quite good, we always have the capacity to make decisions." (Manager, Euroregion Salzburg: #A79).

Euroregion Inntal does not have working groups. Originally a number of working groups were envisioned (mentioned in the statutes), but they only functioned for a short time in the early 2000s, according to an early Board member, who at the time of the interview was a civil servant with the Rosenheim region

> "In the beginning we made long lists of priorities, and we tried to set up working groups, lots of people were involved, but very soon we felt and saw that some imaginations in the cooperation were an illusion. For instance, in the area of

215

culture, sport and tourism, we had this working group to which for the first meeting 50 people came to try to discuss how we could create a cross-border tourism area. But we soon realized that it is difficult enough to make local governments cooperate on the domestic side. So the ideas we had on cross-border cooperation soon were hit by reality." (Former manager, Euroregion Inntal: #A78)

As of 2012, no new initiatives had taken to reinstate permanent working groups. However, a revision of the statutes in 2011 allowed for an inclusion of non-voting representatives of different administrative sectors into the Board, in order to create better links between political and administrative officials.

The *budget* of Euroregion Salzburg is medium-sized from a European perspective (374,244 EUR in 2011), and has varied between approximately 300,000 EUR and 500,000 EUR over the past ten years. The budget for Euroregion Inntal was lower, xx EUR. As pointed out in previous chapters, comparing and assessing *project intensity* can be deceiving, as Euroregions usually work both as project owners and as project developers. In the case of these two Euroregions, the task to manage the small project funds boosts the Euroregional budgets.

6.3.3. Appropriation of policy space

As in previous chapters, I now move on to how well Euroregions can appropriate policy space in borderlands (see Chapter 2), which depends on how well the Euroregion can perform the three functions of seismograph, loudspeaker and display window.[147] For this section I rely mainly on the interviews with managers and Chairs of the organizations, but also on documents and member interviews.

---

[147] See Chapter 2 and previous case study chapters for elaborations. In short, as a *seismograph* it measures the intensity of attitudes and preferences with cross-border relevance, and can thereby convince its members of their existence. As a *loudspeaker* it performs advocacy work for resources or policy interventions, and as a *display window* it strengthens the image, both towards external and internal communities, of the Euroregion as a single area.

6.3.3.1. Seismograph function

A Euroregion has different ways through which it can receive, register, categorize and measure policy issues of importance to the Euroregion *constituency*, i.e. the inhabitants of the territory of the Euroregion. The most important is undoubtedly through participation and communication of its members. As seen in the previous section, both Euroregions have large memberships, a relative large part of which is passive in their membership. In both Euroregions it is mainly the task of the secretariat and the Chair/Deputy Chair to conduct active outreach to members and encourage them to include the cross-border dimension in municipal strategic thinking, preferably without making it a grant-access exercise only. Another way to serve as a seismograph is through direct contacts with citizens and interest representations (civil society or firms). A precondition for this is that these groups know about the existence of the Euroregion. While no data is available on the extent to which the two Euroregions are known, the perception is that recognition is growing.

> "Those whom we have supported earlier [*with the small project fund*] know us of course, but interestingly there are more and more people approaching us who know us from media, so I would say that we are increasingly known, but it should not be overestimated." (Chair, Euroregion Inntal, Austria: #A3)

A similar effort to estimate how well Euroregions are known was made by Moller 2009. Interviews with five mayors within the Euroregion Salzburg area were carried out within the framework of her research project (as were interviews in two other Euroregions). The conclusion drawn based upon these interviews was that the Euroregion was positively assessed, but little known outside the town of Freilassing, the location of the secretariat. The study highlighted which groups that the Euroregion would be known to.

> "In addition to representatives of the local governments and other local and regional politicians, it is mainly the highly educated and professional middle classes to whom the Euroregion is a concept. In addition, of course politically engaged or interested persons know of the Euroregion. On the other hand, the Euroregion is not so known among elderly and less educated people and professional groups, who don't have contact areas to the Euroregoion in their work. It can be established, that a certain minimum level of interest in local political processes is necessary for knowledge about Euroregions and their tasks. (Moller 2009: 71, my translation).

Euroregion Inntal monitors the flow of incoming spontaneous phone calls or visits, which in the past years have been around 70-80 a year. Most of the inquiries concern possibilities and technicalities related to funding, and are evenly distributed from local governments (members), civil society organizations and firms. For this to happen, it is important that the Chair, who performs other public functions as well[148], most notably as a mayor, is known also as the Chair of the Euroregion.

> "I'm sure that I'm more well-known as a mayor than as chair or deputy chair of the Euroregion. Maybe partly due to me being mayor for longer time, and since there is a monthly newspaper with a page on Euroregional news in it, with picture, etc, I'm getting more well-known". (Deputy Chair and former/rotating Chair, Euroregion Salzburg, Austria: #A30)

The previously mentioned internal survey in Euroregion Inntal showed that half of the respondents did not think that firms take part in Euroregional work, and the answers regarding civil society organizations such as tourist organizations were only slightly better.

While the Euroregions have done much for increasing cooperation, an obstacle is the perceived increased hostility towards the European Union. Euroregions in Austria and Germany are seen as intimately entwined with the European integration project, which is something that may also backfire.

---

[148] Chairs of both organizations estimate the time they dedicate to Euroregional work to be between ten and 25% on an annual basis. The Chair of Inntal estimates it to 10-15%, whereas the Salzburg estimates half a day per week (10%) in years when he is the Deputy Chair, and 20% in the years when he is Chair.

"Unfortunately, EU is not seen very positively, it's not as I thought it would be that people would realize the importance of European history so that they would be enthusiastic for this. So for electoral strategic reasons I have to play it down it bit, I do my [Euroregional] work and I do it enthusiastically, but politically there is simply nothing to harvest from that. (Deputy Chair, Euroregion Salzburg, Austria: #A30)

In Euroregion Salzburg there is a well-functioning system for exchanging information between political and administrative officials, thereby also helping the Euroregion decision-making bodies (politicians) to know about perceived problems and issues within the region. The main vehicle for this is the 15 working groups, which function well due to meticulous work by the secretariat in supporting them by administrating agendas, meeting localities, minute-writing, etc. These networks can then serve as important generators of ideas. As seen before, this has not been the case in Euroregion Inntal, which after a long period without any institutionalized participation of non-elected officials has introduced a system of adjunct Board members. This was explicitly said as an alternative to try to reinstate permanent working groups.

"Yes, that was the idea behind this. It needs resources to advise working groups all the time, to write protocols, to follow-up some projects, and then instead we chose to select certain persons, for certain topics, and integrate them into the Board. Because after all, it is important to know people in the region and create contacts." (Manager, Euroregion Inntal: #A80)

Whereas Euroregion Salzburg has found a system for collecting policy-related information (and implementing policy), Euroregion Inntal has been struggling to set up a structure working for a smaller setting. It remains to be seen whether the system of adjunct people on the board from a few areas can rectify the lack of permanent groups by instilling new ideas and creativity into the system.[149]

---

[149] That membership stretches beyond local governments (including chambers of commerce and chambers of labor) also means extra channels outwards: "At least the networks here have become deeper. In the area of the chamber of commerce the contacts are better and more intensive, especially in new businesses. Through many years' participation in fairs, autumn holidays, good networks could be created, which are good for the companies. For instance, if a company knows the managing director in

6.3.3.2. Loudspeaker function

Both Euroregions have utilized the various channels for exerting influence and modes of persuasion outlined in Chapter 2: multiple positions of member representatives; within-party contacts to people in power; indirect representation via other organizations; partnerships with non-state actors; commissioning reports on the issue to be raised; arranging seminars or conferences; sending delegations to decision-makers; and writing statements/resolutions in the name of the Euroregion.

Successful utilization of any of these is increased by support coming from two sides of a nation-state border, meaning political weight behind any statements.

> "When there is something that cannot be decided in the region we conduct intensive lobbying; that means 100 local governments joining together as one voice." (Manager, Euroregion Salzburg, Germany: #A79)

> "This means that this is not only a political committee, a working group or one local government that is talking, but this is a position which represents all members of the Euroregion, this means all votes thrown into one vessel so to speak." (Manager, Euroregion Salzburg, Germany: #A79)

A difference could be seen in that Euroregion Salzburg has taken greater care to form joint delegations and to always make sure that issues prioritized by the Euroregion is spoken for in the name of the Euroregion.

> "I lobby in the name of the Euroregion [not as mayor or regional representative]. You go alone or two if it is possible, but we always speak for the two sides of the border, not only for our side." (Deputy Chair, Austria, Euroregion Salzburg: #A130)

Rosenheim and other institutions, than it is good for both sides. If you want to settle in Germany and already know who the mayor is, that makes it easier, just to have this personal contact." (Member, Chamber of Commerce, Euroregion Salzburg: #A83)

"As Euroregion, we always try to act together when we approach one side. If there is a written statement, it is always signed by both the Chair and the Deputy Chair [who represents different sides], and when we have a top meeting, both of them must be there." (Manager, Euroregion Salzburg, Germany: A79)

Euroregion Inntal has had rather an *adhoc* approach to this.

"This is rather a task for the Board. That is rather in the background, currently we don't do that, although it could happen. I would say that the board members go to where it is suitable for them, and if it is possible they also bring the Euroregional agenda onboard." (Manger, Euroregion Inntal, Austria: #A80)

Such an adhoc possibility was for instance the entry in 2009 of the German Traffic Minister, who had a background from the region.

"When you have a minister who knows the area, then you can some things into movement." (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Inntal: #A75)

Both Euroregions could bring forward a range of issues, for which they have conducted systematic interest representation. An example from Euroregion Salzburg pertained to the distribution of Interreg funds in the upcoming (2013-2020) funding period. There was reason to believe that a large chunk of the territorial cooperation funds would go to the Eastern borders, and the Euroregion Salzburg decided to persuade decision-makers on the utility of funds at the Austrian-German border. They considered the German government the most crucial to get on board, and therefore approached a German Minister.

"We could get him to come to an event arranged by the Euroregion with high participation of its members, and through him we could say 'dear German Parliament, these programs should continue because they make sense in many respects. We could give these reasons to the Minister in his hands, and get him convinced, so that he will act on behalf of these programs." (Deputy Chair, Austria, Euroregion Salzburg: #A130)

Euroregion Salzburg has also over the year written a number of resolutions, letters discussed in the Assemblies and signed by the representatives of the Euroregions, that have been

forwarded to decision-makers. These have primarily concerned infrastructure, such as the location of large highway projects.

Euroregion Inntal has also been involved in numerous events related to the construction of a tunnel through the Brenner Base Tunnel, which is mainly an Austrian-Italian project, but which has infrastructure ramifications for the Inntal area as well. The perception was that the federal state and state levels on the German side did not prioritize this project, and at several occasions the Euroregion therefore invited ministers and state secretaries from Berlin or Munich to come to events, with the purpose to keep issues on the political agenda (Chair, Euroregion Inntal: #A3).

In the politics surrounding such a large infrastructure project, the Euroregion Inntal is nonetheless a small player. There is, however, one example that demonstrates that the opinion of the Euroregion does carry weight in local conflicts of interest. In 2010 and 2011 one local government (a member of Euroregion Inntal and located directly at the border next to the highway A12) wanted to approve the building of a shopping mall that could potentially attract external visitors passing by on the main north-south highway, but which is seen by surrounding local governments at both sides of the borders as a threat to local small shops. The Euroregion was asked by the authority granting approval to give an opinion, and after much deliberation in the Board and in the assembly, it was decided that the Euroregion would speak against the project. The resolution written on the topic states:

> "In this connection the Board of the Euroregion has the opinion, that the project would not have only positive effects on the liveliness of single shops and town structures on both sides of the border […]To sum up, in parallel with the potential for additional purchase power through visitors driving through the area, from the critical aspects of landscape and regional planning, the project might impact negatively the local governments and towns in the surrounding area of Bavaria and Tyrol. Also, the large shopping area goes against the aims of the spatial and regional planning of Bavaria. From the current perspective, it can unfortunately only be rejected. Kufstein, June 29, 2010 (Resolution, p. 3-4, my translation)

However, it is not only Euroregion Inntal that conducts lobbying. Euroregion Salzburg is known and well regarded enough that its name can be used for goodwill when individual members, especially the business chambers, conduct campaigns for their own issues.

"Lobbying can be made when you plan something for which EU funds are necessary. If you have the blessing of the Euroregion, that already has a value. […] that is why we also want to have the Euroregion with us." (Member representative of Chamber of Commerce, Euroregion Salzburg, Austria: #A83)

6.3.3.3. Display window function

Euroregion Salzburg is the only Euroregion of the two that have the display function explicitly referred to in its objectives. The third objective, developed in a longer explanation to the mission document, states:

"The Euroregion shall make an important contribution to the creation of a joint regional identity among its inhabitants, while taking regional diversity into account. This means continuous information about work and service activities as well as cultural and spare time activities, in the whole area of the region. It is also to inspire participation in those activities. This means that inhabitants can better identify with the Euroregion, but also that existing activities and service offers become better utilized. (Euoregion Salzburg, Mission document, p. 3)

The information about work and service activities thus mentioned in the mission statement has indeed taken place since then, as has extensive media contacts and active project support to joint events. While the Euroregin Inntal does not have the display window function among its objectives, it has also made efforts to promote their *region*[150], as a coherent region.

"I consider it important that the Euroregion becomes more known in the population. Of course the primary target group is the local governments, but the

---

[150] A majority of the respondents to a survey by Euroregion Inntal agreed with the statement '"it is important to be seen in on the regional level in public work", but fewer agreed that the Euroregion and its supported project owners were indeed mentioned by media.

citizens live in those and are a part of their decision-making process. Therefore it is important that the Euroregion is known, and that the mayor forwards the content of discussions. I'm glad to see that some local governments have signs at their entry, which contains also the logo of the Euroregion, because that signifies also the territory of the Euroregion." (Manager, Euroregion Inntal, Austria: #A80)

The road signs at the entry point, like similar signs displaying partnership towns, or distances to different locations, signal identifications that local governments want to display. Another model, frequently applied by cross-border cooperation initiatives around the world (Blatter 2000), is the production of maps of the territory (see Annex B). This work is directed inwards, to give inhabitants a sense of belonging to one region.

Euroregion has worked extensively with maps and other tools in their external marketing of the region, both as a tourist destination and as a location for investment (for instance through production of maps and also of the booklet "Company placement Europe Salzburg") Cooperation around attracting investments has proved more difficult then the tourism promotion.

"Location marketing is not so easy, since each region also looks at its own interests. We do work together, but it is not easy. The other part is much easier, because there tourism organizations or cultural organizations work together and develop this together." (Manager, Euroregion Salzburg, Austria: #A79)

"There is in some branches a thinking of competition, especially in areas where the access to the profession is different (e.g. craftsman). You might have jealousy there, but in general people recognize the advantages [with cross-border cooperation]." (Chamber of Commerce, Euroregion Salzburg: #82)

"You know, sometimes Bavaria and Tyrolians were competitors as well, and in Tyrol they have made investment somewhat easier and faster in Tyrol. In Germany it is rather restrictive, you need a plan, etc." (Mayor, Germany, Euroregion Inntal: #Flintsbach)

The quotes show that when it comes to attracting investment, there is internal competition for resources, and the region's ability to act as one agent is hampered by competing interests. External visibility can facilitate the interest representation discussed in the previous section on the loudspeaker function. Through its membership in Association of European Border Regions,

Euroregion Salzburg is visible on European level, which is less the case of Euroregion Inntal. A consequence of this is the higher attention given to Salzburg in academia.[151]

6.3.3.4. The governance space

At the time of writing (2012), the Euroregions examined in this chapter have existed for 17 and 13 years, respectively. Both have carved out a space for themselves among the actors that are relevant for dealing with policy issues that have a cross-border dimension. For instance, in the previously mentioned survey of Euroregion Inntal local government members, most of the respondents agreed with the statement "the Euroregion has an organized and active network management – within and outside the region." According to the same survey, most respondents found that cooperation with other regional actors worked well or rather well, whereas four thought that it did rather not work or they could not say.

Figure 6 contains the main actors with whom the Euroregions interact within a multi-level governance space.

Figure 6. *Involved actors in crossborder policy issues. Euroregion Salzburg and Euroregion Inntal*

	GOVERNANCE DIMENSION		
		State	Non-state
MULTI-LEVEL DIMENSION	Supranational	Committe of the Regions (Euroregion Salzburg), Brussels Office of Bavarian Local governments, Brussels Salzburg Office	Association of European Border Regions (Euroregion Salzburg),
	National	Infrastructure/traffic ministries *(rare)*	Infrastructure/traffic ministries *(rare)*
	Regional	Regional coordination points, Salzburg, Spatial and	Chambers of Commercs (Euroregional members), Chambers of

---

[151] For instance, a search in Google Scholar results in ten times more hits for Euroregion Salzburg than for Euroregion Inntal, in various combinations (approx. 340 versus 35). The same is true for regular Google (September 2012).

		Economic Ministries of the Federal State of Bavaria, Cultural Ministry of Bavaria, participants in the Interreg Monitoring Committee, Regional government, Regional administration	Labour, Leader groups, Regonale Turismusorganisationen, Regionale Wirtschaftseinrichtugnen
	Local	City of Salzburg, City of Kufstein, City of Rosenheim	Hunting association, fire protection associations, local action groups (within the LEADER program)
Crossborder baseline **Interreg (strong connections with Euregio Salzburg, relatively strong for Euregio Inntal.**			

Source: For references on the multi-level governance framework see Marks 1993, Hooghe and Marks 2003, Skelcher 2005, Bache 2012.

Three points should be made in relation to the figure. First, an important reference for regional action is the Austrian system of regional management coordinators, offering an institutional system through which actors can work jointly for regional integration. Also in the cross-border governance space, they have become focal points. The appreciation of the Euroregions is demonstrated, at least externally, on the website of the regional management coordinators, which state: "Euroregions constitute a special form of regional management. Euroregion is the term for a regional transborder organization aiming to work stronger across national borders. They contribute significantly to European integration." (Regional management website[152])

Secondly, an increasingly important issue for the role of the Euroregions in the policy space is how they position themselves vis-à-vis the administrative bodies managing European funding. Large variation can be seen across national areas; the model found at the Austrian-German border does take the Euroregions into account, whereas others treat them just as project applicants

---

[152] http://www.bka.gv.at/site/3499/default.aspx

among others. The operational program of the funding period 2007-2013 emphasizes the importance of Euroregions (Interreg Bayern-Osterreich 2007-2013 2007) and they have been charged with certain implementing functions within the program (the small projects fund) and receive financial support. Officially, Euroregions are pointed out to prospective project applicants as important cooperation partners: "In the last years Euroregions have taken upon themselves a key function concerning the promotion, implementation and advising of Interreg -projects. Therefore, Euroregions are contact points when you are thinking of a project."[153]

Still, the support for the Euroregions is not unquestioned. Voices have been raised to say that the Euroregions are 'too political' and that it is better to distribute EU funds for cross-border cooperation with purely technical implementing institutions (Manager of Interreg program: #B61)[154]

Third, the system of long-term functioning working groups of the Euroregion Salzburg has enabled the Euroregion to become more firmly embedded as an actor in an emerging governance space. Moreover, Euroregion Salzburg has also cooperated more intensely than Euroregion Inntal with both European funding for cross-border cooperation (ETC Interreg) and with the program LEADER+, the latter through institutionalized regular information meetings between the local **action groups of** LEADER and the Euroregion secretariat. The visibility on European supra-national level should not be over-stated, though. Interviews carried out in 2009 (see Moller 2009) with representatives of two interest representation offices in Brussels (Office Salzburg and Office for Bavarian Local Governments) demonstrated that that the Euroregion is seen as just lobby actors among other. "The Euroregions come to the offices but are not actively contacted.

---

[153] Website of the ETC interreg Program Bavaria-Austria: http://www.interreg-bayaut.net/interreg_iv/links.html, accessed September 2012.

[154] I am aware that this speaks against the previous argument that a Euroregion always brings an added-value by bringing in political weight. The statement demonstrates that the creation of a cross-border political space is sometimes not assessed as important even by people working day-to-day with regional integration issues.

That is primarily due to that the task of the offices is not to represent single districts or towns, but to be their association. That is why all Euroregions are equally treated, even though Euroregion Salzburg through its annual visit in Brussels, has somewhat closer contacts [than others]" (Moller 2009:61, my translation)**.**

Table 20 gives the assessment for appropriation of cross-border space together with the internal evaluation of member satisfaction for both Euroregions.

Table 20. *Member satisfaction and appropriation of cross-border governance space of Inntal and Salzburg*

Euroregion	Inntal	Salzburg
Appropriation of cross-border governance space	medium	high
Member satisfaction	medium	high

Source: author

*

To sum up, section 6.3 has demonstrated variation in how the two Euroregions function and perform. Euroregion Salzburg scored higher than Inntal in five out of six categories of organizational capacity, and has a wider application of the three functions of seismograph, loudspeaker and display window.

6.4. Conclusion

This chapter has investigated two Euroregions that appear similar from a number of aspects; in addition to operating within a similar context that determined the case selection (cultural-linguistically close, political-administratively similar, and homogenous economic development level), they were founded relatively close in time, are of a similar size and operate

with similar structures[155] and have the same overall EU-related rhetoric in their original documents. Nonetheless, the outputs of the organizations are different. Salzburg has become an actor in the cross-border governance space by conducting activities within a large number of policy areas and supporting more projects. As demonstrated in this chapter, a large part of the membership in both organizations is passive and does not see policy problems that the organizations should solve. However, the cost – in terms of financial and human resources - of membership is low, so while the organization offers events, and possibility for information, they stay. In a way, these are Euroregions in searh of challenge, or to be more specific, policy problems or policy opportunities, as members do not enter the cooperation with existing problems or opportunities in mind. In this respect, Euroregion Salzburg has performed better, through early on mapping and studying strategic areas and through allocating resources to a secretariat big enough to support structures such as the working groups.

The study of two organizations at the Austrian-German border was the last out of three empirical chapters investigating how cross-border cooperation institutions in the form of Euroregions cooperate, asking why and how local governments participate in Euroregions, and if their motivation and interaction patterns can influence Euroregional function and performance. The next chapter will ask the same questions, but using a different method to allow for more in-depth reasoning around the importance of member participation and interaction in relation to performance and function.

---

[155] The main difference is that Euroregion Salzburg has a mirror arrangement and Euroregion Inntal is registered only in Austria.

CHAPTER 7: A SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF RELATIONAL DATA

In line with previous chapters, this chapter is concerned with how local government engagement in Euroregions influences how these organizations perform and function. However, this chapter responds to the issue of governance in trans-border regionalization by applying a slightly different approach, and a method different from what has been used hitherto. The approach is network-centered, focusing on communicational patterns among the local governments that constitute the backbone of much institutionalized cross-border cooperation in Europe. The method is application of tools from social network analysis. Two questions are specific for this chapter: First, to what extent do local governments within Euroregions communicate with their counterparts across the border in comparison with how much they communicate with local domestic neighbors? Second, is there a relation between the specific characteristics (the topography) of the communicational networks between the local governments on each side of the border, and the topography of communication networks across the border? In Chapter 8, the results of the latter question will be used to discuss how such a relation impacts on Euroregional function and performance.

The chapter relies on an extensive and unique dataset consisting of data on more than one hundred political representatives (mayors) of Euroregions. I collected this data during the interviews that provided the qualitative material that was analyzed in previous chapters, and it has enough coverage to allow for analysis of the four case study organizations located at the Hungarian-Slovak and Swedish-Norwegian borders.

The chapter starts with a review of how network analysis has been used in cross-border contexts, and how my approach differs from mainstream usage (section 7.1). It proceeds by elaborating on the method in terms of describing how the data was collected and how it was

analyzed (section 7.2). Section 7.3 tackles the first chapter-specific question and appraises the extent to which borders limit communication between political actors, whereas section 7.4 deals with the relation between internal and external networks, i.e. the second chapter-specific question. The conclusion discusses the findings both in relation to the two posed questions and the overall dissertation topic.

7.1. Policy networks in borderlands

As stated in Chapter 2, Euroregions can be seen as networks of actors (local or regional governments), which are policy actors within broader network of actors (other organizational players relevant to policy-decisions taken in the cross-border landscape). This is a view of Euroregions fitting in with the multi-level governance view of Europe, as well as on the emphasis on the role of policy networks in policy-making. Over the past years, relational approaches to policy-making is increasingly being taken by researchers, and this is true for borderlands as well.[156] At least two major European research projects including network-approaches to borderland studies are currently underway, projects that did not exist at the time when this dissertation was planned. The project Metronet studies the effect of policy networks dedicated to transportation and regional marketing in four western cross-border regions (Lille, Basel, Luxemburg and Vienna/Bratislava).[157] The border area as a complex (governance) system is also an important component of the EU Border Regions project, which entails a comparative study of

---

[156] For instance, this chapter benefited much from feedback and discussions among other researchers working on relational data and policy networks, at the conference 'Unpacking cross-border governance', held September 6-7, 2012, in Luxembourg.

[157] The project Cross-border metropolitan governance in Europe runs 2010-2012, and it is led by the Centre for Population, Poverty and Public Policy Studies (CEPS/INSTEAD) and funded by National Research Fund of Luxembourg. See http://metrolux.ceps.lu/metronet.cfm?m2=1 for details.

EU's external borders.[158] Preliminary mapping of cross-border networks has also been carried out at the Ukrainian-Hungarian-Slovak border.[159]

The difference between these research projects and this dissertation is not the questions asked, but the delimitation and definition of the type of networks those questions relate to. For example, one publication resulting from the Metronet project stated the research objective as to find out "the extent to which the existence of national borders […] still limit interactions between the partners" (Walther and Reithel 2012: 3). Another asked "to what extent is the presence of a state border affecting the forms of the networks and the role of actors?" (Dorry and Decoville 2012: 19). Both these are virtually the same as the first research question of this chapter: to what extent do local governments within Euroregions communicate with their counterparts across the border in comparison with how much they communicate with domestic neighbors? However, while their questions pertained to governance networks in two specific policy fields (transportation policy and regional markets), and included actors both with and without formal decision-making power (e.g. private firms), this study looks at actors joining up for multiple-purpose action across policy fields within one organization, and studies their internal relations. I argue that taking a relational approach to the 'network within the network' gives us information, which helps us also to understand the position of the organization/network within the governance landscape.[160] Figure 7 depicts the Euroregion as one actor, which in turn consists of actors, within a multi-level governance space.

---

[158] The project is a four-year project funded by the EU FP7 research program and is led by James Scott of the University of Eastern Finland. See http://www.euborderregions.eu/en for details on the project.

[159] Marton Gero and Istvan Micsinai. Crossborder policy networks. Conference paper presented at the EUBORDERREGIONS conference, Budapest, May 12, 2012. Available at http://www.tarki.hu/en/news/2012/items/20120515_EUBORDERREGIONS_workshop_en.html

[160] A qualitative analysis of each Euroregion's position within the governance space was conducted in chapter 4-6, but a substantial further data collection would be needed for a social network analysis.

Figure 7. *The inter-organizational network in the border MLG landscape*
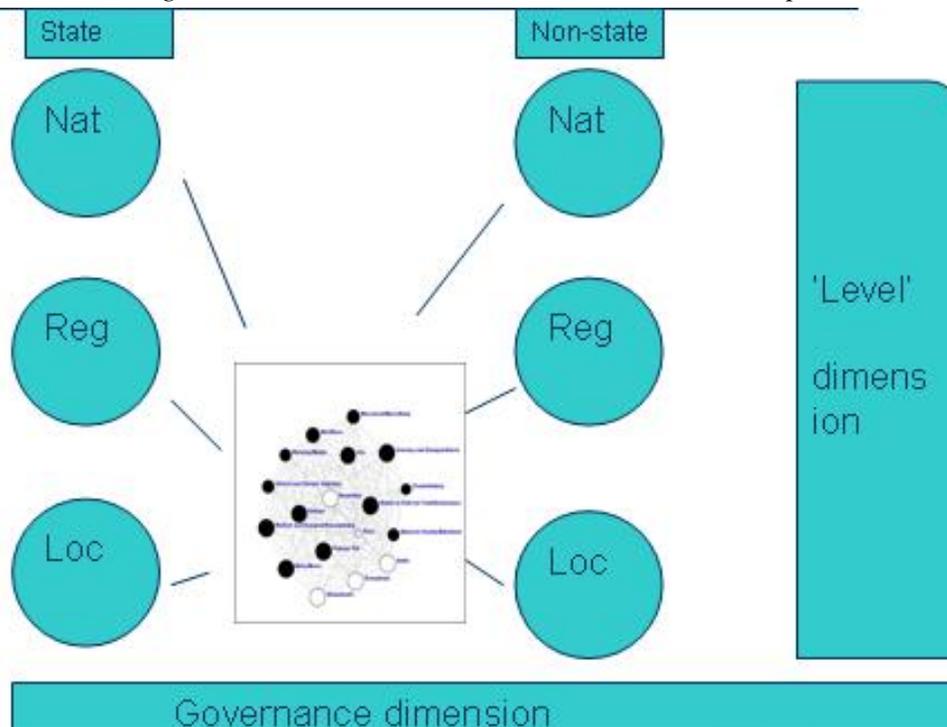
Note: The vertical dimension indicates the hierarchical notion of levels. The horizontal dimension indicates sector diversity (state and non-state in its simplest typology). The Euroregion in the middle is a visualization of the Hídverő Association network.

Source: The author's interpretation of the MLG framework, see Marks 1993:392, Hooghe & Marks 2001: 2-4, Kochler-Koch 1996: 366-375, Bache 2012.

Moreover, the objective is not only to see whether communicational networks are nation-bound (research question 1) but also to see if there is a link between political communicational networks on one side of the border and communicational networks across the border (research question 2). In chapter 2 a model was presented of how the accumulation of social capital embedded in governing institutions on each side of the border was expected to facilitate the creation of local transnational institutional social capital. The terms 'within-group' and 'between-group' social capital was used following Grix and Knowles (2003), who referred to social capital in the form of networks on one side of the border as 'within-group social capital' and local

transnational social capital as 'between-group social capital'. The expectation in this chapter would then be to see a relation of such within-group and between-group social capital.

7.2. Method

That policy actors talk to each other is both a condition for, and a result of, coordination and cooperation on policy in different forms. Speaking is here used as a metaphor for all kinds of personal communication, such as face-to-face contact, telephone or email, regardless of the topic on which the conversation is taking place. But how usual is it that policy actors do just that? For example, one 2006 study of the OstBoh Euroregion described the organization as a forum where cooperation and contacts "daily takes place" between "leading politicians and representatives of the member municipalities" (Lorentzon 2006, 15 my translation). However, the Lorentzon study contained little evidence to back up this statement. I, on the other hand, provide data to test this statement. The data is the communicational patterns between members of the Euroregions, which I investigate by using social network analysis, SNA (see e.g. Wasserman and Faust 1994, Scott 2000, Hannemann 2001, Borgatti and Everett 1997). The underlying assumption is that "relationships among interacting actors are crucial, that actors and their actions are interdependent, and that because of their relational ties they are able to channel flows of (in-)tangible resources" (Dorry and Decoville 2012:15, drawing on Wasserman and Faust, 1994: 4).

The dataset was collected for the purpose of the dissertation and is to the best of my knowledge unique in its scope and coverage. While it is used for a quite specific question in the dissertation, it has potential for addressing other research questions in the field of borderlands studies, especially if combined with network data on infrastructure or geographical distances.

Social network analysis offers a multiplicity of tools for various purposes, here only those directly relevant for the two questions specific to this chapter will be applied (the measures density, the E-I index, and visualizations).

Density "describes the general level of linkage among the points in a graph" (John P Scott 2000, 69), in this case referring to communication links between mayors and their immediate staff of local governments in the investigated Swedish, Norwegian, Slovak and Hungarian areas. Density has been calculated for the entire networks (Euroregions), for partial networks, i.e. domestic networks on one side of the border, and for intra-group vectors, i.e. cross-border linkages. The E-I index is meant to be an easy intuitive measure for the degree to the overall network, sub-groups or individual actors within it tend to be homophilic, i.e. it shows whether links are concentrated within sub-groups. The E-I index was devised by Krackhardt and Stern (1988) and is a simple formula in which the number of internal ties are subtracted from external ties and then divided by the total number of ties. The main reason for including it is to enable comparison with studies from the Metronet 2012 project, although the measure has some deficits that will be pointed out in section 7.3. Finally, the visual display of networks is one of the more alluring aspects of social network analysis, although one should be careful to interpret graphs too literally (for instances, distances between nodes within the visualizations are not 100% representations of underlying data but approximations done by software algorithms). Two programs have been used for calculations and visualizations: Ucinet[161] (the most widely used program for network analysis in the social sciences) and CEUNet (a program currently developed by the Central European University Center for Network Science).[162]

---

[161] Borgatti, S.P., Everett, M.G. and Freeman, L.C. 2002. Ucinet for Windows: Software for Social Network Analysis. Harvard, MA: Analytic Technologies.

[162] Many thanks to Carl Nordlund at the CEU Center for Network Studies for much valuable input into this chapter.

As detailed in the chapter on methodology (Chapter 3), the political representatives of local governments were asked to rate the frequency of contacts, specified as communication in person, via telephone or email, with other local governments (both Euroregional members and non-members) in the investigated areas. Note that 'communication' as the basis for links in the network is close to what Walther and Reitel in their study refer to as 'information exchange', which included all exchanges through personal interaction, phone, email, social media or circulation of documents' (Walter and Reitel 2012: 6, see also Dorry and Decoville 2012 and Durand & Nelles 2012 for publications from the same study). Unlike their work, however, my study also took into account the frequency of communication (or information exchange), as the respondents could choose between "no communication", "at least yearly", "at least bi-annually", "at least monthly" and "at least weekly". These categories were based on a preconception of how communicational networks could look like. However, during the course of the fieldwork it became clear that local governments are relatively preoccupied with their own issues. 'Weekly contact' was therefore rare, and if considered a threshold for a communicational link, it would constitute a very strict requirement. Hence, for the purpose of analysis, the primary decision to be made was to decide whether "at least monthly" or "at least twice a year" should be interpreted as frequent communication. For the first analysis I used "at least monthly" as the cut-off point, and hence dichotomized the data along these lines. For the sake of seeing how patterns change, I have also made limited calculations with different cut-off points, and some outputs of 'at least weekly communication' have been included in tables.

In the studies mentioned above (Dorry and Decoville 2012, Walter and Reitel 2012, Durand and Nelles 2012) respondents were asked to consider a two-year time frame when assessing their exchange of information. The study in this dissertation, on the other hand, asked respondents to assess the situation 'now' (which meant 2010 for the majority of interviews, and

2011 for some). However, the way the mayors reasoned around this question and others, which were carried out face-to-face, indicated that they were in general framing their thinking around election cycles, i.e. they were thinking how they behave in their current election cycle. In practice this means that whereas for instance the interviews in Hungary were made at the end of an election cycle, the interviews in Sweden were made rather towards the beginning. While this to some limited extent might have influenced the outcome, differences of this sort would be impossible to avoid due to the different times at which elections take place in the six countries involved.

The lack of longitudinal data is a curse that plagues most social network analysis studies. As Christopolous writes:

> "it should be reiterated that in an ideal operationalization environment, SNA would be but one of a number of methodological tools that should be utilized in capturing an agent's volition, preferences and action. We also recognize that the effects of action can only be captured through longitudinal analysis which is unfortunately beyond the resources of most research projects" (Christopoulos and Ingold 2011: 40).

An effort to capture the time dimension was made by asking the respondents to assess the overall change in communication compared with five years ago (i.e. in all cases an election cycle earlier), but it is clear that this data is only a proxy.

Missing data is more serious in network analysis than in statistical analysis. Samples can generally not be used (although exceptions can be made for some measures) and the effect of missing data is multiplied throughout the network. Preferably one should work with complete data, but a response rate above 85-90% is usually recommended (Scott 2000). The most common causes for missing data are ill-defined networks, respondent inaccuracy or non-response (Kossinets 2005). In this study, the networks VarmOst, OstBoh and Hídverő were complete, i.e. they had a 100% response rate, whereas the larger Ister-Granum had a response rate of 82%.

237

The direction of ties was not considered in the analysis. The assumption is that there is a communicational link if someone has indicated communication with a local government that did not provide data or forgot to indicate a relation. This was the way to deal with the lower response rate for Ister-Granum. [163] In technical terms this meant that reciprocity was not required in order to establish a link and that the data therefore could be mirrored (symmetrized and maximized).[164] In order to test to which extent this would increase the density of a network, I checked the density of a separate network, municipalities in the Hungarian county of Komarom-Esztergom. By symmetrizing the already dichotomized data, the number of ties grew by 25%, i.e. the number of links was 25% higher if I allowed it to be enough that one mayor said that he/she was in contact with another local government at least weekly or at least monthly.

This indicates two things. First, there is no major distortion in the high-response data, such as we would have if we symmetrized data between 'ordinary people' and 'celebrities' on the question if they are familiar with the 'other'. In fact, the symmetrization can even have made the set more reliable as some mayors found it difficult to choose between the options of 'monthly' and 'bi-annually' (for instance when they communicated every second month, which to them seemed closer to the value of "at least monthly" than "at least yearly"). Second, the symmetrization led to a real gain in data. Nevertheless, this does not eliminate the fact that we still do not know anything about ties between non-reporting actors.

---

[163] In the fast-growing literature on network analytical methods and network science, it is acknowledged that approaches to missing data are still understudied (Huisman 2009; Borgatti, Carley, and Krackhardt 2006; Kossinets 2005). However, this is one of the generally recognized methods (see Stork and Richards 1992).

[164] The same was for instance done in the Dorry and Decoville cross-border study, who wrote: 'We did not consider the direction for the relations between the actors, instead we symmetrised and maximized them. This allows us to overcome the problem of missing out on actors when people forgot to mention established relation to other network actors whereas their counterparts did. However, the reader has to be aware that there might be a slight overestimation of the network's density due to the symmetrisation." (Dorry and Decoville 2012:20)

7.3. The importance of the state borders

This section deals with the question to which extent local governments within Euroregions communicate with their counterparts across the border in comparison with how much they communicate with local domestic neighbors. Formulated differently, the section seeks to establish whether the existence of national borders limit interactions between local governments. Rivaling hypotheses are easy to state:

> H0: The national state still matters, and the existence of a state border therefore makes communication between political actors located close to each other, but in different states, significantly less likely than communication with local governments in the same state.

> H1: The national state is increasingly irrelevant and the existence of a state border therefore does not make affect the likelihood that communication between political actors located on different sides of a border will take place.

Research emphasizing the lingering effect of borders (H0) includes, for instance, the scholarship of van Houtum, who in 2000 wrote that states are "generally unwilling to hand over portions of their sovereignty and political authority to the structured forms of cooperation, sometimes prohibiting and frustrating direct and efficient dialogue between partners in the border regions" (van Houtum, 2000:66). On the other hand, support for H1 can be found in the outcomes from the Metronet project (Walter and Reitel 2012, Durand and Nelles 2012), which found that nationality did not matter for exchange of information within a transport policy governance network.

The two hypotheses are derived from the third theoretical expectation presented in Chapter 2, and were tested on four cases. While the reader should be familiar with them from previous chapters, basic facts are recapitulated here for easy reference.

Table 21. *Overview of case study organizations*

Granskommitten Ostfold-Bohusland-Dalsland (*'OstBoh'*)   Founded in 1980 and located at the most southern part of the Swedish-Norwegian border. It has 22 local government members (14 in Sweden and 8 in Norway). It excels in organizational capacity, especially in relation to adherence to strategic goals. Efforts are geared towards the fulfilling a loudspeaker function, whereas the display window function is downplayed. Assessment: High organizational capacity, medium membership satisfaction, high appropriation of policy space.
Granskommitten Varmland-Ostfold (*'VarmOst'*)   Founded in 1990 as a single issue network dedicated to the improvement of European route 18. Located north of OstBoh, it has 15 member municipalities (5 in Sweden and 10 in Norway). Its organizational capacity is limited, but it has been able to conduct the loudspeaker function efficiently, mainly through the utilization of personal ties to state-level politicians. Assessment: Low organizational capacity, high membership satisfaction, medium appropriation of policy space.
Hídverő Association   The association is registered as a Slovak micro-region consisting of 13 Slovak local governments with 5 Hungarian local governments added as honorary members. The organization was formalized in 1999 but the participating local governments had cooperated on cultural events since the mid-1990s. The association is close-knit and especially characterized by its frequent (monthly) and well-attended meetings. Assessment: Low organizational capacity, high membership satisfaction, low appropriation of policy space.
Ister-Granum EGTC   Founded as an ambitious association of more than 100 local governments in 2003, and converted into a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) in 2008. In 2012 it had 81 members, almost equally distributed between Slovakia and Hungary. The organization has aspired to fulfill all three functions of seismograph, loudspeaker and display window, but has been more efficient as a display window than as seismograph or loudspeaker. Assessment: Medium organizational capacity, low membership satisfaction, medium appropriation of policy space.

Source: author

The application of the question to these four organizations should not be seen as a test of a representative sample, but due to their cultural-linguistic affinity they represent cases that are favorable for communication. If the H1 hypothesis cannot be verified here, it is unlikely to be verified anywhere else. Verification, on the other hand, would indicate that integrated political networks can function, at least under favorable conditions.

Three social network analysis tools were used: visualization, the E-I index and density calculations. First, a visual display of the networks enables a quick assessment of whether the

Euroregions constitute one integrated political communication network. Figure 8 and Figure 9 show the networks in the two Swedish-Norwegian Euroregions, showing communication links that exist on a monthly basis.

Figure 8. *Communciational patterns between municipalities in VarmOst*
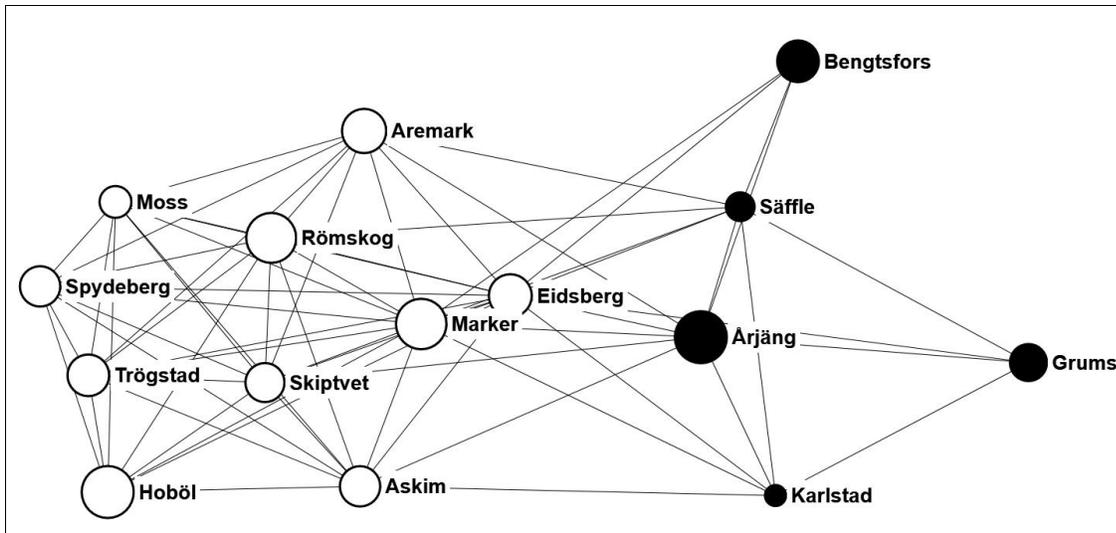
Note: *The figure is based on measurements of communication on monthly basis. White circle = Norwegian municipality. Black circle = Swedish municipality. The size of the cirle expresses the distance to the boarder, where larger circle means less distance. Source: author*

Figure 9. *Communicational patterns between municipalities in OstBoh*
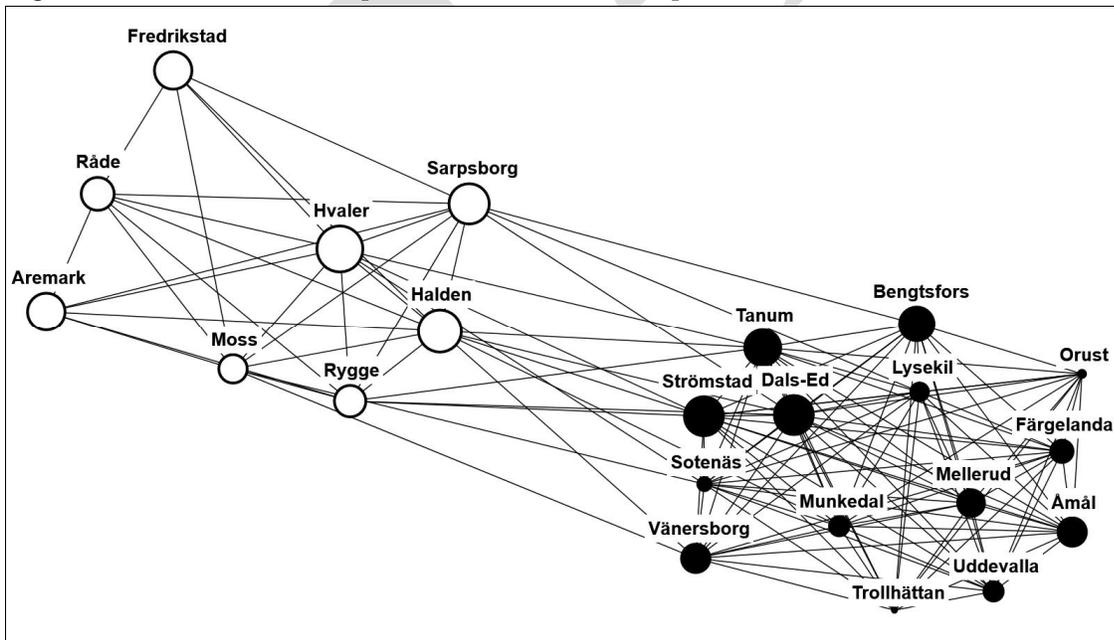
Note: *The figure is based on measurements of communication on monthly basis. White circle = Norwegian municipality. Black circle = Swedish municipality. The size of the circle expresses the distance to the boarder, where larger circle means less distance. Source: author*

The figures show that it is premature to talk about cohesive and integrated cross-border political networks in these cases,[165] since the networks are clearly divided into separate clusters based on state affiliation. The visualizations also indicate that closeness to the border (shown as large circles) is important but not decisive for communication. The results do not differ from those appearing from the Hungarian-Slovak data, displayed below. Again, the primacy of the state is clearly visible, even in the case of Hídverő which seems to be a much more integrated political communication network than any of the other three. A particularity is how the Hungarian side of the Ister-Granum network is further divided into two sub-networks that largely follow geographic and internal administrative divisions. One sub-clique mainly consists of local governments located south-west of the Danube river, whereas the other sub-clique largely consist of local governments located East of Danube and east of the border river to Slovakia, Ipoly/Ipel. The latter area belongs to Pest county, whereas the former is situated in both Pest and Komarom-Esztergom counties. Distance to the border seems to play less of a role in both networks compared to the Swedish-Norwegian ones, although it still seems to matter somewhat in the Ister-Granum Euroregion.

---

[165] As a control question, mayors in OstBoh were also asked to write down the name of the highest political representatives of other local governments. On average, the members of the OstBoh were able to name 10.6 out of 21 possible among OstBoh's members (their own name excluded). Out of these an average 9.2 were from the same country, i.e. the average mayor knows only one (and a half) mayor by name at the other side of the border. However, the variance is big, as some mayors know 3-4 by name on the other side, whereas many do not know any.

Figure 4. *Communication patterns between local governments in Ister-Granum*

Note: The figure is based on measurement of communication on monthly basis. White cicle= Hungarian municipality. Black circle = Slovak municipality. The size of the circle expresses distance to the border (the larger circle, the smaller distance). The names of the local governments have not been included due to readability concerns. Source: author

Figure 5. *Communication patterns between municipalities in Hídverő (Monthly)*
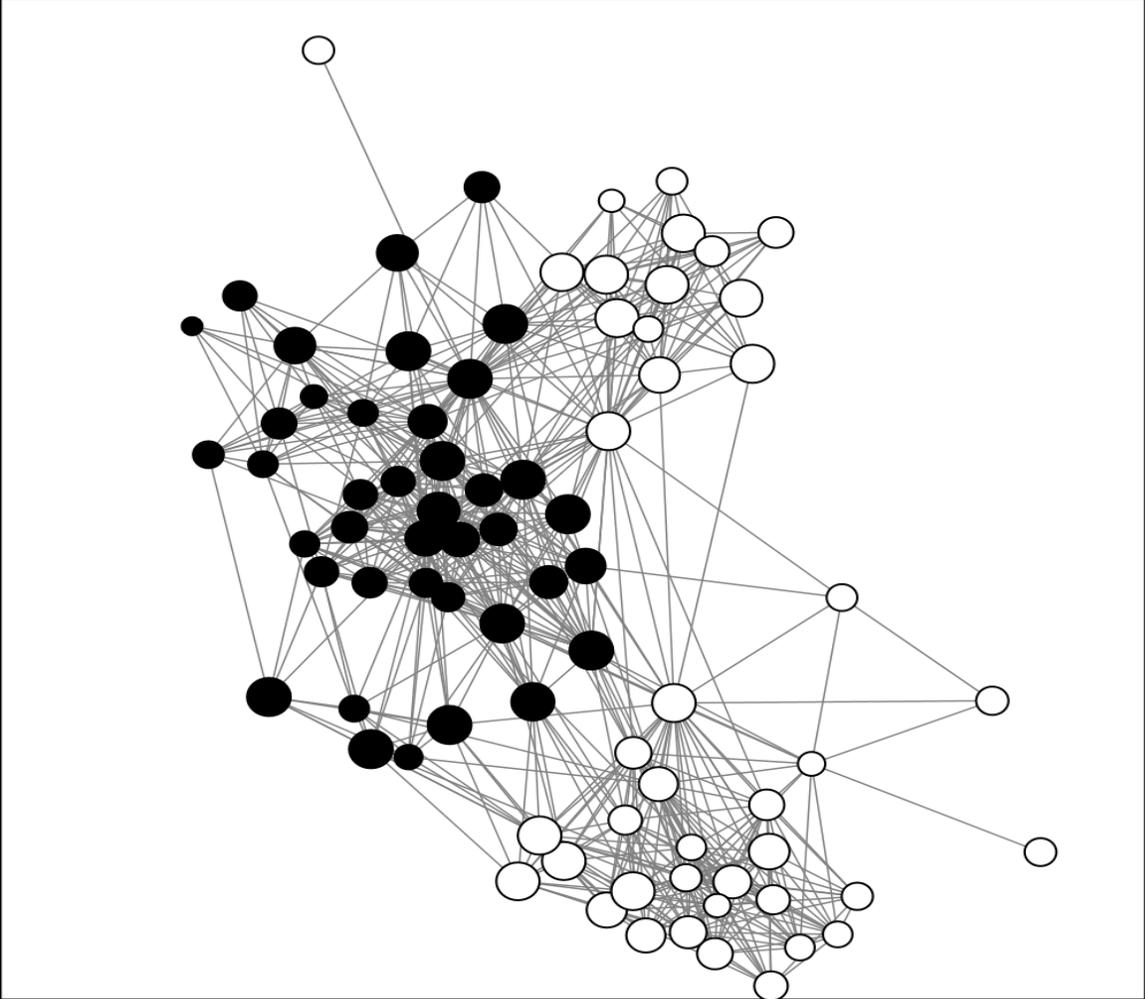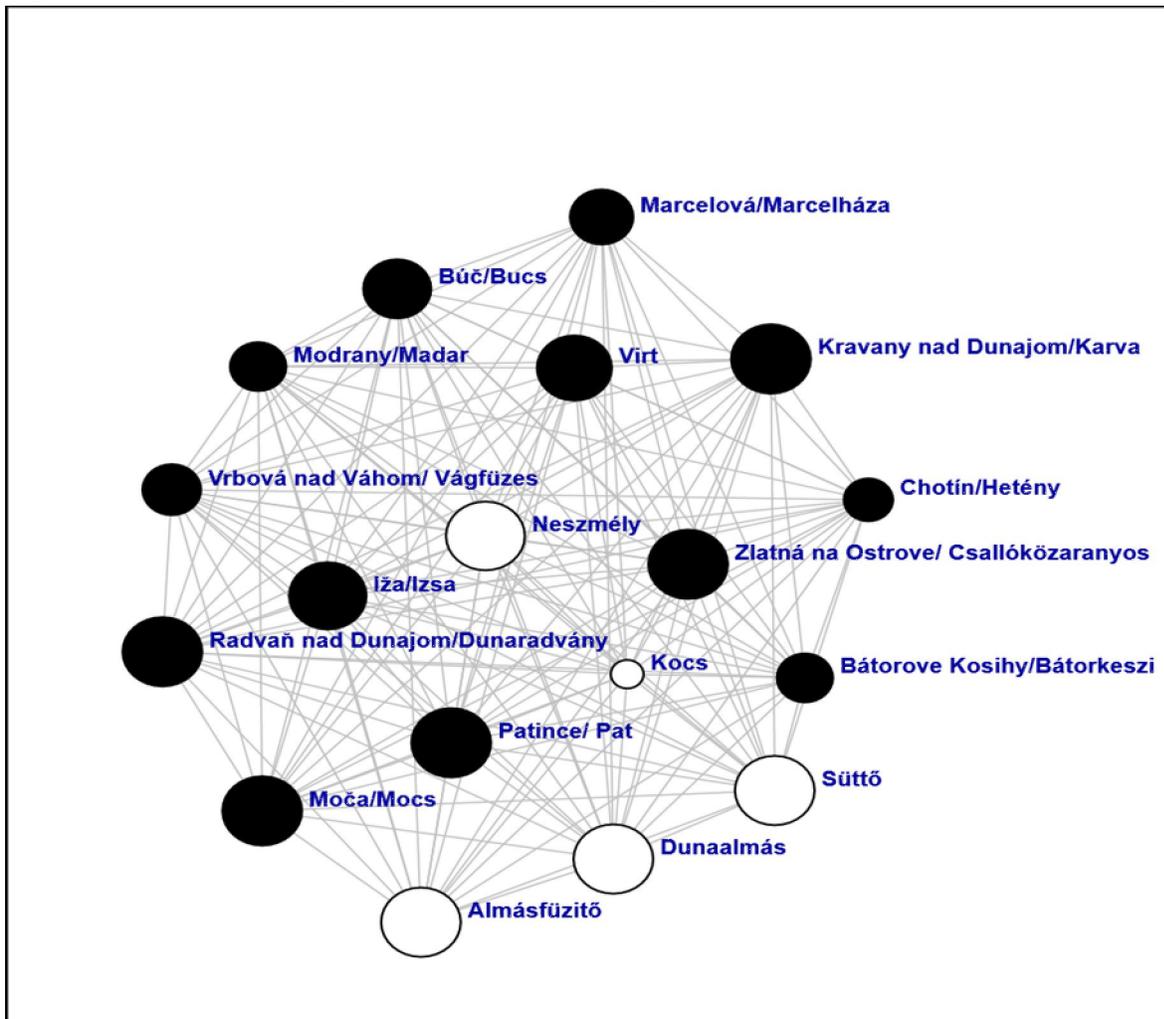
*Note: The figure is based on measurement of communication on monthly basis. White circle= Hungarian municipality. Black circle = Slovak municipality. The size of the circle expresses distance to the border (the larger circle, the smaller distance). Source: author*

While the visualizations already support the H0 hypothesis that state borders constitute a crucial limiting factor for communication between political actors, two sets of calculations were made to measure the extent of such homophily, i.e the tendency to exchange information with those in the same country. In order to enable a comparison with the Metronet project studies, I first calculated the E-I index values for both the group and the network level. Table 23 shows the result both on group level and for the overall network.

Table 22. *E-I index*

| Euroregion | PARTIAL NETWORK | | OVERALL NETWORK | |
	Country 1	Country 2	Unnormalized	Rescaled
OstBoh (22)	-0.837 (S)	-0.529 (N)	*-0.758*	*-0.939*
VarmOst (15)	-0.032 (S)	-0.709 (N)	*-0.552*	*-0.842*
Ister-Granum (81)	-0.724 (H)	-0.746 (SK)	*-0.735*	*-0.735*
Hídverő (18)	0.524 (H)	-0.418 (SK)	*-0.158*	*-1**

Note: The table shows the E-I index values for partial (domestic) networks and overall networks per Euroregion.

*The rescaled value of Hídverő is mis-leading, since the network has a density of nearly 100% and the rescaled value therefore is calculated on only a couple of 'missing' links. Calculations by Ucinet 6.0 (Borgatti, Everett and Freeman 2002)

The E-I index shows that the network is homophilic both on group (country) level and on overall level, with the exception of the Hungarian Hídverő sub-group. This contrasts remarkably against the findings of Walter and Reitel's (2012) and Durand and Nelles (2012). For example, in the Walter and Reitel study of the Basel region governance network on transport policy, Swiss actors had a moderately negative E/I index (-0.271) whereas Germ and French actors actually had positive values (0.63 and 0.033 respectively). (Walther and Reitel 2012: 15) Likewise, by calculating the percentage of homophilic ties, Durand and Nelles study found in their public transit study that "the border effect is not a factor for French actors whereas it appears to play a minor role for Belgian organizations" (Durand and Nelles 2012:31).

I see two likely explanations for the divergent results in this dissertation from the studies mentioned above. First, their studies pertained to a specific policy area in which they actively sought actors dealing with issues of cross-border relevance. A few respondents even were removed from the network analysis because they "had no cross-border activities", and therefore were not considered to belong to the network (Walter and Reitel 2012:6). The study in this

dissertation and this chapter, on the other hand, paints a realistic picture of information exchange between local governments that have taken the decision to join an organization promoting joint coordinated cross-border policy making, but which does not mandate them to do anything about this.

Second, there is a methodological reason that can explain the divergent results. The E-I index does not take the size of the sub-groups into account. As all networks except Ister-Granum have different sizes in the sub-groups, this distorts the E-I values, and makes them misleading for comparisons. Using the percentage of homophilic links (Walter and Reitel 2012, Durand and Nelles 2012) leads to the same problem, unless the results are normalized.

Therefore, I argue that the results of the E-I index displayed in Table 23 above should be interpreted with caution, and I instead advocate the usage of densities of cross-border links in comparison to overall densities as a more reliable measure of homophily. These values are given in table 24. In general, one needs to be careful when comparing networks of different sizes (and here with different rates of missing data), but density is one of the network analytical measures that actually can be compared. The values are scale-free, although a network based on communication obviously has practical limits in how much its nodes can be linked to each other.

Table 23. *Density*

Euroregion	CROSSBORDER DENSITY		OVERALL DENSITY	
	Monthly	**Weekly**	**Monthly**	**Weekly**
OstBoh (22)	0.14	0.02	0.57	0.15
VarmOst (15)	0.30	0.02	0.62	0.23
Ister-Granum (81)	0.05	0.01	0.19	0.07
Hídverő (18)	0.98	0.09	0.99	0.31

Note: *The table shows density values for the investigated Euroregions based on monthly and weakly assessment. See body text for explanations of measurements and*

calculations.

Both values on monthly and weekly scale are given, and clearly show how cross-border density values are considerably less than overall density values, indicating the limiting factor of the state border in all cases. The exception is Hídverő, which on a monthly basis shows nearly the same results between cross-border and overall density. On a weekly level, there is, however, already a stark difference.

*

All in all, there is strong evidence to say that the extent of cross-border communication between political actors (in this case elected politicians) is low, supporting the null hypothesis (H0) that the national state still matters, the existence of a state border therefore makes communication between political actors located close to each other but in different states significantly less likely than communication with local governments in the same state. Hypothesis H1 (corresponding to 1c listed among the theoretical expectations) is, stating that the national state is irrelevant, is on the other hand hand not supported.

7.4. Within-group social capital and between-group social capital on an institutional level

While the previous section established that political communication even in borderlands is heavily tilted towards the nation-state boundaries, it also demonstrated diversity among the cases

in terms of how densely connected the investigated Euroregional networks are. The dissertation has hypothesized that the main characteristics and topogography (the shape) of the communicational networks between the local governments on each side of the border, and across the border, is related to how these organizations function and perform. The task of this section is to entangle the first two steps of this, whether there is a link between the strength of networks on one side, and across the border. This is important, as membership in a Euroregion is expected to foster cross-border political relationships that could have possible spin-off effects in terms of encouraging policy cooperation outside the framework of Euroregion. By this I mean that actors would not only communicate at events arranged by the Euroregion, but that the Euroregion serves as a facilitator of contacts so that local governments initiate cooperation in smaller constellations. Social capital on one side of the border (within-group social capital) would facilitate the creation of cross-border social capital (between-group social capital), which in turn would enhance the likelihood of well-functioning Euroregions.

The general expectation for the step in this chapter is to see a relationship between within-group and between-group social capital, and the null hypothesis and hypothesis would be.

> H0: Having high levels of institutional social capital in the form of network connections does not increase the likelihood that there will also be found high levels of institutional between-group social capital.

> H1: Having high levels of institutional social capital in the form of network connections increases the likelihood that there will also be found high levels of institutional between-group social capital.

This corresponds to the fourth theoretical expectation spelled out in Chapter 2, and to clarify further, this chapter is concerned with the evidence that can be found in the social network analysis of the data, whereas the amalgamation of qualitative and SNA evidence will be used for

interpretations in the final chapter. The section therefore starts by looking at what the findings tell us about the presence of within-group social capital in the investigated Euroregions.

The social network analysis of the domestic networks (the Euroregional networks 'cut in half') are summarized in Table 25 and demonstrate that there is generally a high density of political communication on a monthly basis. The exception is Ister-Granum, which has considerably lower densities on both sides.

Table 24. *Density values for domestic networks*

Network clique (member nr)	DENSITY	
	Monthly	**Weekly**
OstBoh Norway (8)	0.93	0.36
OstBoh Sweden (14)	0.99	0.25
VarmOst Norway (10)	0.98	0.49
VarmOst Sweden (5)	0.80	0.20
Ister-Granum Hungary (42)	0.31	0.14
Ister-Granum Slovakia (39)	0.37	0.13
Hídverő Hungary (5)	1.0	0.30
Hídverő Slovakia (13)	1.0	0.50

Note: *The table shows density and centralization measures for the investigated Euroregions based on monthly and weakly assessment. See body text for explanations of measurements and calculations. Source: author*

An explanation close-at-hand for the lower density on a monthly basis in the Ister-Granum networks is the larger number of members in these networks. However, it is worth noting that one of the smallest networks (VarmOst on the Swedish side) has significantly lower density than the other ones. This means that the relation between number of members and density is not absolute.

On weekly basis the difference between the networks diminishes. The strongest networks can be found in VarmOst (Norway) and Hídverő (Slovakia). The networks in Ostboh and the

250

Swedish VarmOst come somewhat lower, whereas the Ister-Granum domestic networks have the lowest numbers.

If we then look again at the cross-border densities (table 23, previous section) we see that Hídverő has the highest density values, both overall (0.99 and 0.31), and calculated only for cross-border links (0.98 and 0.09). It is followed by VarmOst (0.62/0.23 for the overall network, 0.30/0.02 for cross-border links) and then OstBoh (0.57/0.15 and 0.14/0.02). They can be said to be in the middle range, whereas Ister-Granum has the lowest values (0.19/0.07 and 0.05/0.01).

These density values do not take development over time into account. As mentioned in the methodology section, lack of time-series data that could indicate change, especially to see whether there is staggered effect between within-group and between-group levels, is a deficit.[166] The only substitute for now is to use the actors' own assessment of change over time.

What we can see regarding this in Table 25 is that respondents saw only incremental change over the past 5 years (i.e. stretching back into the previous election cycle). The value 3 in the table below represents no change, whereas lower values indicate change in the direction of more communication. Yet, the tendency is more towards tighter than looser networks, especially on the domestic side. This stronger assessment of relative growth of within-group network resources could be interpreted as tentative support for the claim that there is intensification of communication over time. It can be noted that while assessment of the increase of crossborder contacts is strongest in OstBoh, VarmOst, and Hídverő, the Swedish and Norwegian mayors were significantly surer in their assessment of growing domestic contacts than the Hungarian and Slovak mayors.

---

[166] While a time series of social network analysis is nigh-impossible to include within the time period of a doctorate, it would be possible to return to the same actors in 2015-2016 to do a follow-up series.

Table 25. *Change in estimated contact density over time*

Euroregion	DOMESTIC TREND	CROSSBORDER TREND
OstBoh (22)	1.85	2.43
VarmOst (15)	1.91	2.42
Ister-Granum (81)	2.69	2.79
Hídverő (18)	2.58	2.50

Note: *How would you estimate that your contacts have developed over the past 5 years.*
3 is "no change", 1 is "much more contacts" and 5 "much less contacts".

*

The task of this section was to entangle whether there is a link between the density of communication on one side of the border and the density of communication across the border. The evidence brought forward with the help of social network analysis indicates that this is indeed the case. While the data does not allow for confirming the direction of causality, or development over time, it is reasonable to assume that skills and capacities built up during a period of increased inter-municipal cooperation on one side of the border, will translate to higher probability to achieve the same in the cross-border space. Communication on one side of the border does not create such bonding social capital that is exclusive of others, at least not if the counterpart on the other side of the border is close in terms of cultural-linguistic terms.

7.5. Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated support for two arguments. Firstly, it is too early to speak about the presence of any integrated political networks even in favorable circumstances such as those within which these case study organizations operate. Secondly, it offered support for the existence of a relationship between how political representatives of local governments

communicate with each other on one side of the border, and how they communicate within the overall border. This indicates that resources built up through memberships in, for instance, inter-municipal associations and micro-regions constitute resources that can be used for maintaining and developing Euroregions. However, as will be seen in the next and final chapter, such causal inference will need to be qualified to some extent.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The dissertation has sought to answer the question how institutionalized cross-border cooperation between local governments in Euroregions work, by asking why and how local governments participate in the cross-border cooperation organizations that have become so common on European territory, and by asking whether their motivation and interaction patterns can form social capital that influences the function and performance of these institutions. This chapter synthesizes the findings in relation to these questions across cases, and formulates the dissertation's key arguments. It is structured along the two levels of analysis; in section 8.1 the analysis is carried out at the level of members and in section 8.2 at the level of the organizations. The conclusion (section 8.3) brings forward the answers to the dissertation's research questions.

8.1. The participation and interaction of local governments in Euroregions

In this section I highlight the main findings in relation to what motivated local governments to join the Euroregions under study, how their participation looks like, and the extent of mutual interaction between members. In other words, the analysis was carried out at the level of the members (local governments) of the institutions under study. Special attention is given to similarities and differences across the cases to prepare for the analysis of how this may matter for function and performance, which will be discussed in the subsequent section.

8.1.1. Why they participate

The previous section outlined two main claims in the literature as to what has driven the formation of Euroregions. Blatter argued (2000) for the importance of identification, a normative dimension largely following the explanation of behavior referred to by March and Olsen as logic of appropriateness (March and Olsen 1989), whereas (Perkmann 2003) argued for rational instrumental explanations. I propose that instrumental explanations in turn can be differentiated according to whether it is grant-driven (the importance of EU financial and technical support, Perkmann's argument) or policy-problem based.[167] Grant-seeking coalitions may be rational on part of the actors, but it leads to a situation that resembles non-rational depictions of policy processes (Cohen, March, and Olsen; Kingdon 1984) in the sense that cooperation as a solution is identified before the problem. If, on the other hand, an existing recognized policy problem is the leading factor, cross-border cooperation constitutes a mean to devise appropriate solutions. This aligns with a traditional rational view of policymaking fashion.

Out of the six cases in this study, the only Euroregion that was clearly formed in response to a policy problem was VarmOst at the Norwegian-Swedish border. The catalyzing factor was the deficient condition of European Route E18. The Euroregion was initially created as a single-issue Committee aiming to exert pressure towards the national level on both sides for improvements, and only later transformed into a multi-task body. In all the other cases the identification of policy problems was a process that mainly took place after the organization was formed. In fact, policy problems can potentially even stand in the way of cross-border institution-building as was the case with the OstBoh Euroregion. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the

---

[167] I am much obliged to my fellow PhD candidate Gergő Medve-Bálint for an uncountable number stimulating discussions on cross-border cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe, especially for the dimension of the motivation of local governments. Some of the data on Hungarian members (and non-members) of Euroregions were collected together with him and was used for the publication "Explaining coverage: Why do local governments in CEE join (or not join) Euroregions" (Medve-Bálint and Svensson 2012).

debate around pollution and extensive shipping in Idre fjord was heated to the extent that local politicians feared that joint institution-building would be seen as 'giving in' to the other side. Only when the problem had been partially addressed through interference from the national level did local politicians open up to the idea of closer cooperation.

The political leaders of a few local governments located closest to the border were typically leading actors in the initial phase. Hídverő offered the only variation to this scenario, as in that case those political leaders were active whose town or village had a twin town/partnership with the other side. No evidence was found of administrators in the local government taking on leading or active roles, with the possible exception of the Salzburg Euroregion, where the Austrian city of Salzburg had had some joint technical cooperation with German local governments in the fields of water provision and sewage treatment decades before the Euroregion was established.[168] After the initial negotiations between key actors had taken place, surrounding local governments had to decide whether to join or not. The motivations given by interview respondents (mayors) were in the majority of cases related to either the identification/polity dimension or to instrumental expectations of material returns. A few voices are included in Table 27 to indicate how these themes reoccurred throughout the interviews and across the cases.

Table 26. *Examples of how motivations towards joining a Euroregion were expressed by members*

Identity/polity	Instrumental expectation of material return
"These are Hungarian villages, they belonged to us in the past, and many of their inhabitants often visit us." *(Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: A48)* *"A spiritual bridge'* (Mayor, Slovakia, Hídverő: #A69)	*"We thought that we had better not miss out on something".* (Mayor, Hungary, Ister-Granum: #49) *"I think it was because of development and such things, and the cooperation, EU funding calls, etc".* (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A86)

---

[168] This does not mean that Salzburg was policy-driven. All five Euroregions at the Austrian-German border were created at the time of Austrian accession to the European Union, and were driven by Europeanization norms in combination with an instrumental grant-seeking dimension.

"*It seems reasonable that we are in. Seems cheap other-wise.*" (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh: #A35) "*The vision of Europe was a major reason and a feeling of belonging together. We did belong to Salzburg for 1000 years. Since 1810 we belong to Bavaria, but the mentality is relatively similar, we have the traditions of whip-cracking, the culture is the same on both sides. This ties us more to these people than to those in Berlin or even Munich, which is actually quite far from us. Our center was always Salzburg [...] You don't think anymore in half-circles but in full circles.*" (Mayor, Germany, Interview #A84)	"*The main reason was to get money, from Europe, and regional money too. The idea was that we should get more for development.*" (Mayor, Slovakia, Ister-Granum: #A110) "*It is a part of our stated political objectives and aims to work with contacts in Norway. It is because of the labor market. We have lost 1,700 jobs here.*" (Mayor, Sweden, OstBoh and VarmOst: #A28) "*Earlier each country was on its own. It is still a bit like that, but indeed it is important to have cross-border cooperation for economic development.*" (Chamber of commerce member representative, Austria, Inntal: #A74)

Source: author

In the quotes, the use of the metaphor of the 'half-circle' (policy spaces that are constrained into inefficiency by the nation-state border) as opposed to the 'full circle' (the optimal space) encapsulates the idea of borders as arbitrary 'scars of history'.[169] Likewise the metaphor of the Euroregion as a 'spiritual bridge' refer to the polity-dimension, whereas the expression 'better not missing out on something' articulate the expectations of material returns that were present explicitly or implicitly throughout a large number of interviews.

The two themes of identity and instrumental expectations may occur either separately or in conjunction with each other. However, among the investigated cases the identity/polity theme was present to some extent in all cases (see Table 28), and the variation constituted of differences as to whether instrumental motivations (grant-seeking or policy-solution) also occurred.

Table 27. *Identity versus instrumentality as driving motivations*

	POLITY/IDENTITY	**INSTRUMENTALITY (grant access)**	**INSTRUMENTALITY (solving policy**

---

[169] Martin Klatt traces the expression 'scars of history' back to the first European Symposium on Transfrontier Regions taking place in 1972. It has been frequently mentioned in European policy documents and by the Association of European Border Regions. In his analysis based on the Schleswig-Holstein case, Klatt demonstrates that 'simply reviving a common, cross-border history as a basis for regional cross-border integration is not a easy as envisioned by EU-politicians' (Klatt 2006, 139).

			problems)
Hídverő	√		
Ister-Granum	√	√	
VarmOst	√		√
OstBoh	√	partial (Nordic Council)	
Salzburg	√	√ (EU)	
Inntal	√	√ (EU)	

Source: author

The presence of polity/identity ideas are not entirely surprising given the case selection (all operating in linguistically and culturally similar areas), but it nonetheless confirms the validity of these concepts when applied to cases that are situated differently in time and space. However, it is important to note that the existence of such motivations in itself does not determine accession to a Euroregion, since local governments that do not join a Euroregion might also appreciate identity-based community-building, material gains or joint solutions to policy problems. In fact, interviews with representatives of nearly 40 local governments in the Hungarian county of Komarom-Esztergom that were not members of any Euroregion supports the claim that other factors are at play as well (a list of interviews with non-members is included in Annex C, see also Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012 for an extended theoretical framework of the interplay between normative and instrumental incentives and obstacles in the Central and Eastern European context).

The most important of these additional factors was the affiliations the local governments already had with other local governments, especially in inter-municipal cooperation bodies, but also to regions.[170] The presence of this factor indicates a certain herd mentality; many joined a Euroregion because others in the same area/cooperation organization did the same. Furthermore,

---

[170] In Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012a I referred to this factor s 'administrative embeddedness'. The affiliation does not have to be contemporary to play a role for the decision. In the Ister-Granum Euroregion, representatives of some of the local governments which in the 19th century belonged to the historical church county of Esztergom in the would bring this up as a reason to join.

active recruitment on the part of the Euroregion played a role, especially in the two German-Austrian cases, and to a lesser degree in the Ister-Granum case.

Further research might focus also on local governments that have been members of a Euroregion, but exit the organization. Except OstBoh, all cases have such experiences. For instance, in 2011 four local governments left Euroregion Ister-Granum, one left Euroregion Salzburg and one left Euroregion Inntal. While this study did not approach these systematically, the accumulated evidence speaks for exit often happening in conjunction with change of political majority in a local government and a questioning of memberships in organizations overall. This then leads to a cost-benefit analysis, and if that is negative, overrides the initial normative/identity motivations that were at hand. Further research of non-members, both those which never joined and those that exited, would be fruitful for consolidating the findings in this study.

Moving on, I turn to how local governments participate and interact within Euroregions, and how that form social capital.

8.1.2. How they participate

This sub-section focuses on the theme of participation, first in terms of engagement with the organization and then in relation to endowments of different types of social capital the organizations might have access to. In terms of participation patterns in Euroregions, local governments of all six cases were divided into three groups:

- Detached: rarely participating in meetings or events, information is received in writing;
- Listeners: regularly attending meetings and events to get information on 'what is going on' in terms of possibilities, but without a strategic objective for its membership, sometimes low-ranked representation at meetings;

- Active: regularly attending meetings and events with a strategic approach and contributing to the agenda.

All case study organizations showed variation along these categories, but the general tendency was to have a large share of the members falling into the 'detached' group, attending a maximum of one or two meetings or events per year. The cases that stand out from this pattern are the two Hungarian-Slovak Euroregions. One (Hídverő) was characterized by an even and active membership pattern, whereas the other (Ister-Granum) had many members who at the time of the interview had not attended any meeting for more than two years. Along the Swedish-Norwegian border, both organizations had some detached members, but in the case of OstBoh this was mainly due to its membership strategy of allowing indirect membership on the Swedish side via an inter-municipal organization, whereas it posed a strategic challenge for the VarmOst Euroregion to engage its two biggest members in terms of population size: Moss in Norway and Karlstad in Sweden, situated geographically at the two ends of the Euroregional territory. The two Euroregions at the Austrian-German border had large detached groups, but worked strategically to conceive activities that could attract member representatives (mayors), and to place organizational meetings such as assemblies in connection with those.

Participation is also affected by the motivation for membership. As seen in the case of the Ister-Granum EGTC at the Hungarian-Slovak border, an organization in which many of the members base their membership on the expectation to receive external funding, may suffer from an output legitimacy problem (see Scharpf 2007:19). Grants would here correspond to an 'output' whereas socio-econonomic integration would be a long-term outcome, that does not play such a crucial role.

The empirical case studies referred to whether institutional social capital can be classified as bonding, bridging or linking.[171] Based on the degree to which the organization and its members interact with 'outsiders', and whether they incorporate interaction with different sectors (civil society, business) and carry out lobbying activities towards the national or European areana, I have classified the investigated Euroregions according to the dominating type of social capital resources they have access to. Table 29 cross-tabulates that with the polity/identity vs. policy dimension discussed above.

Table 28. *The investigated Euroregions according to dominating type of social capital endowments*

Type of network	Polity/Identity	Policy
Bonding	Hídverő	
Bridging	Ister-Granum Inntal	
Linking	Ostboh Salzburg	VarmOst

Source: author

Table 29 shows that the Euroregion that primarily holds bonding social capital is Hídverő. Ister-Granum and Inntal have bridging social capital, due to their broader range of interaction activities with actors from other sectors (e.g. regional development agencies, trade chambers), and OstBoh, VarmOst and Salzburg are the ones working most effectively towards the national and European level.

To sum up, there is variation across local governments and across cases regarding the motivations for joining a Euroregion. There is also variation in terms of communication patterns and involvement in Euroregional events, as well as in the strength of within-group institutional

---

[171] As discussed in Chapter 2, bonding social capital refers to ties existing in close networks, whereas bridging and linking social capital both emphasize links outside the immediate community.

social capital and what type of social capital dominates. This may then be hypothesized to have an impact on the organizations' performance and function, which is the main theme of the next section.

8.1.3 Participation and different types of social capital

According to the model proposed in chapter 2, the social capital created by the interactions of local governments on one side of the border (within-group institutional social capital) was expected to play an important role in the creation of joint recourses (between-group institutional social capital). My analysis of (1) presence and strength of inter-municipal associations, and (2) the density of communication between political leaders, showed that there is a trend towards increased inter-municipal cooperation in all investigated areas.

By inter-municipal cooperation I largely follow the definition by Swianeiwicz (2011) and refer to institution-building, policy coordination and joint delivery of services[172] by two or more local governments", that is voluntary and not incidental. "At the same time, and in contrast to amalgamation, there is no definitive transfer of local tasks or competencies; municipal governments keep at least indirect control over the decisions and services that result from cooperation." (Swianeiwicz 2011, 3) The major difference from Swianeiwicz is that I also include institution-building and policy coordination (via for instance best practice exchange) and not only joint service delivery.

All investigated borderlands have seen increased policymaker attention to inter-municipal cooperation within the borders of the country. The difference lies in the temporal dimension. In Austria and Germany cooperation became institutionalized in the 1970s, Sweden and Norway

---

[172] But I also count cooperation on projects and significant policy coordination via best practice exchange

followed in the 1980s and 1990s, whereas inter-municipal cooperation in Slovakia and Hungary must be interpreted in the context of regime change bringing an increase in the number of independent local governments, thereby creating both need and opportunity for cooperation. As mentioned above, the inter-municipal cooperation network also creates administrative boundaries that influences which local governments join a Euroregion or not. This could especially be seen in the Hungarian-Slovakian cases, the Ostboh Euroregion (both sides) and the Norwegian side of VarmOst.

For instance, in Hungary the micro-regions of Tata and Esztergom played a crucial role. The former was officially a part when the Hídverő Euroregion was still called the Danube Euroregion, and the municipal members of the Esztergom micro-region constitute the core of the Ister-Granum Euroregion, although members have also joined from the micro-regions of Dorog, Szob, Szentendre and Vaci. References to micro-regions were frequently made during the interviews with the mayors, much more often than to the county regional level. They could for instance state that a local government joined a Euroregion because the others in the micro-region did so. (For instance, the mayor of a Hungarian member of Ister-Granum: "It was a natural thing to do because we are part of the Esztergom micro-region, and Esztergom had an important role in bringing this together," Interview #A45). Likewise, references were frequently made to other (non cross-border) projects in the micro-region such as cooperation on schools or elderly care.

Inter-municipal cooperation networks on one side of the border therefore creates important infrastructure for communication. The density of communicational networks (how often political representatives of local governments communicate with each other personally, via phone or email) was measured with the help of social network analysis based on data from four of the Euroregions under study. The results of the analysis was presented in Chapter 7, and showed that among those four the Euroregion standing out as having the strongest domestic networks is

Hídverő. Ister-Granum has less of such a domestic communicational network base to build on, especially on the Slovak side. OstBoh and VarmOst both can draw on strong networks, although VarmOst is significantly weaker on the Swedish side. While such asymmetry (when only one side has strong networks) might have carryover effects in the creation of between-group social capital, it can also lead to the network not being developed fully. I checked for this possibility by comparing with the density values of the overall cross-border networks. This value is very low for Ister-Granum Euroregion, very high for Hídverő, and medium-level for OstBoh and VarmOst.[173] VarmOst does not, however, seem to 'suffer' from the asymmetry (in terms of the Norwegian side being more connected than the Swedish) as its values is higher than those of OstBoh.

The social network analysis tool is not designed to capture what the communications entail, but the remarks and comments expressed by the interviewees point at the following. First, across cases bilateral spontaneous contacts are rare, except between a local governments and its few (usually two or three) directly adjoining municipalities. The bulk of the communication takes place within the context of institutions (inter-municipal associations, micro-regions, the Euroregions, meetings arranged by regional level). Hence, the communication depends on the frequency of such meetings. Second, the communication at Euroregional forums is often general and impersonal. The only Euroregion where the average political representatives (mayors) could mention more than one or two mayors on the other side by name was Hídverő.[174] Third, more

---

[173] A more in-depth analysis of the communicational networks is available in Swedish in Svensson and Ojehag 2012..

[174] The data underlying this claim is not fully comparable. Although the aim was to ask all mayors to write down the name of the highest political representatives of other local governments, interviews conducted via phone were not conducive to this and there is a low number of respondents in the Austrian-German cases. Nonetheless, with the exception of Hídverő there is no reason to see substantial variation from the case of OstBoh, where – on average – a mayor was able to name the mayors of 10.6 OstBoh members. Out of these an average 9.2 were from the same country, i.e. the average mayor knew fewer than two mayors by name at the other side of the border. However, the variance was big, as some mayors know 3-4 by name on the other side, whereas many did not know any.

intense cross-border communication occurs primarily when a municipality has an official partnership/twin town, or when two local governments are directly adjoining. This again underscores the relative absence of policy needs as a driving motivation for membership. Fourth, communication between administrative staff is rare, except in Euroregion Salzburg.

<div align="center">*</div>

This leads to the overall assessment of within-group institutional social capital in Table 30, on each side, and an average value. The table also indicates which of the two countries is the driving in the cooperation in terms of hosting the secretariat/administrative support. The average assessment therefore gives a higher value to cooperative power for VarmOst.

Table 29. *Within-group institutional social capital*

Euroregion+ ⁄ Indicators	Ister-Granum (HUSK)	Hídverő (HUSK)	OstBoh (SENO)	VarmOst (SENO)	Inntal (AUGE)	Salzburg (AUGE)
First country in acronym	medium (driving)	high	medium (driving)	low	medium	high
Second country in acronym	low	high (driving)	medium	high (driving)	medium	medium
Average	low	High	medium	medium (asymmetrical)	medium	medium-high

Note: The values for Inntal and Salzburg is based on qualitative interviews, and not on SNA-analysis. Source: author

8.2. Function and performance of the investigated Euroregions

In this section I provide a summary of the analytical results pertaining to the functions and performance of the investigated Euroregions, treated here as the primary unit of analysis. The section is divided into two parts. I first present the Euroregions by briefly describing what they actually do (areas of activity, typical projects, roles performed) and then outline the assessments of their performance in terms of the indicators and criteria discussed in chapter 3.

8.2.1. What they do

On an aggregate level the Euroregions, through the total amount of activities, can take on three different roles, the role of a seismograph, a loudspeaker or a window display[175]. These three are not mutually exclusive. To the contrary, the simultaneous undertaking of all three roles implies a more multifaceted organization that is more likely to endure. How did the investigated Euroregions relate to these three roles? To answer that question I will first outline general activities. The statutes of Euroregions typically state that they can act within a broad range of policy fields, but in practice they often become associated with a few concrete events or projects. Members of the investigated areas were asked both to assess the importance of cross-border cooperation in different policy fields and activities, and to name the activities the Euroregions engage in. The case studies have displayed and discussed the types of cross-border cooperation that are most important to members together with presentations of 'typical activities', activities that were commonly mentioned by members or featured highly in their written material. While all

---

[175] I am much obliged to Christian Bidner, District Governor of Kufstein and former Director of the joint Brussel representation of the Europaregion Tirol-Südtirol-Trentino, for suggesting these metaphors.

information will not be repeated here due to space reasons, Table 31 lists the policy areas and typical activities. The purpose is not to capture the breadth of activity within one case, but serves to highlight the diversity of practices across cases, and also the potential for conflict when members' priorities and symbolic projects do not converge.

Table 30. *Typical cooperation areas and activities of the investigated Euroregions*

Euroregion	Most important to members	Typical activities
Ister-Granum (HUSK)	(1) culture (2) economic development (3) regiona identity-building	Ipoly fish ladders Ipoly river bridges lobbying
Hídverő (HUSK)	(1) culture (2) regional identity-building (3) European identity-building	Bridge-building Days (cultural event) Historical site preservation Iza/Izsa and Almasfuzito
OstBoh (SENO)	(1) infrastructure (2) economic development (3) facilitate cross-border mobility	The Contact Fair (business event) Border obstacle assessment work.
VarmOst (SENO)	(1) infrastructure (2) facilitate cross-border mobility (3) economic development	High-speed train connection lobbying. Children's borderland
Inntal (AUGE)	(1) infrastructure (2) European identity-building (3) economic development	Coordinated hail prevention Multi-generational house – Flintsbach
Salzburg (AUGE)	(1) infrastructure (2) European identity-building (3) environment	Euroregion Summit Meeting (EuRegio Gipfel). Spatial Planning Coordination project

Source: author

A case that demonstrates the potential for conflict between priorities and actual practices is the fish ladder project of the Ister-Granum Euroregion. While this constitutes an example of the kind of concrete projects that many members want to see as output from the Euroregion, it also serves as an example of how there is a struggle for resources that are seen as finite. Several members on the Hungarian side far from the Ipoly river expressed the sentiment that fish ladders might be a 'good thing' but that they do not have anything to do with their settlements. Therefore

267

a fish ladder project cannot serve to legitimize the local government's further involvement in the Euroregion.

In the cases of Hídverő and OstBoh, the activities most strongly associated with the Euroregion by its members are events entirely in line with their own priorities. The cultural event 'Bridge-building Days' is probably one of the most well-known cross-border activities along the whole Hungarian-Slovakian border (the event was frequently mentioned also by members of the Ister-Granum Euroregion). It strongly resonates with the importance members attach to the joint Hungarian heritage of the inhabitants living on the two sides of the border. Likewise, the contact fair organized by OstBoh responds to the primacy assigned to economic and business development[176], and resonates with a commonly held belief among members that borders constitute an obstacle to economic development. Nonetheless, the contact fair also generates discontent among some local governments that are disappointed by low interest from companies in their own municipality, or overrepresentation by Swedish companies. The perception prevails that Swedish companies have more to win by extended contacts with the booming Norwegian border area than the other way around.

The 'typical activities' derived from the analysis of what members and written material emphasized as activities undertaken by the Euroregion also highlight differences in scale and resources. The coordinated hail prevention (Inntal) or coordination spatial planning (Salzburg) are not contested and are in line with priorities, but are examples of entirely different scales of activities. The former required a limited coordination task involving few actors, whereas the latter demanded the cooperation of a series of authorities across multiple levels and sectors. The development of a spatial plan requires much more resources than a typical Euroregion can

---

[176] It can be noted that the contact fair was inspired by EU activities, in spite of the OstBoh Euroregion not wanting to actively take part in European work. However, it is active in the Nordic Council cooperation. See chapter 2.

provide on its own, whereas other projects are relying on general calls for European funding applications (the Ister-Granum fish ladders) or pooling of resources (the Hídverő 'Bridge-building Days', the 'Children's Borderland' project of VarmOst).

These activities can be related back to the types of social capital endowments discussed in section 8.1.3 (bonding, bridging, linking) and the three roles (seismograph, loudspeaker, display window) outlined at the beginning of this section. Taking on the role of 'loudspeaker' increases linking social capital, whereas the 'seismograph' role is important both for the creation of bonding and bridging social capital. Carrying out the 'display window' role, thereby portraying the cross-border region as a coherent unit to the outside world, may generate linking social capital, but can also reinforce bonding social capital. An example of the loudspeaker function is the advocacy of VarmOst on behalf of European route E18, or high speed trains towards both national governments would be a typical example of this role. Ister-Granum has been active towards one government (Hungary) but less so towards the other (Slovakia), and has also been present at many European forums. Among the investigated Euroregions, Ister-granum and Salzburg were the Euroregions most active in carrying out the role of window display.

Figure 11 suggests how the different types of social capital (bonding, bridging, linking) are conducive to the three different functions analyzed in this chapter.

Figure 10. *Links between different functions and types of social capital*

TYPE OF INSTITUTIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE EUROREGIONAL FUNCTIONS
SEISMOGRAPH   **bonding, bridging**
LOUDSPEAKER   **bridging, linking**

DISPLAY WINDOW
bonding, linking

Source: author

This sub-section focused on Euroregional activities and the different functions they perform, i.e. it related to non-ranked categories. The next section focuses on performance as a continuum, assuming that performance can be assessed more or less favorably.

8.2.2. Assessing performance and function

The dependent variable in research on cross-border cooperation is frequently ill defined and its operationalization even more problematic (discussed in chapter 3 of the dissertation, but left out here for reasons of space). My fieldwork aimed at assessing a performance index consisting of two dimensions: between-group social capital and cross-border cooperation intensity. Between-group social capital was operationalized as strength of personal contacts between member institutions, perceived trend of personal contacts, intensity of agreement-based service-policy cooperation in at least one field and level of trust and appreciation/absence of border-related conflicts. Cross-border cooperation intensity was operationalized as strength of legal arrangement, control over budget, robustness of its administrative arrangement, meeting activity, adherence to development strategy-mission statement and project intensity. The result for each case is displayed in Table 31, and show how OstBoh, Euroregion Salzburg and Ister-Granum score highest overall, Inntal and VarmOst receive middle values and Hídverő scores lowest. Function was assessed in terms of playing the role of seismograph, loudspeaker and display window, influencing the capacity to appropriate policy space, the degree to which

270

Euroregions have become the main actors to turn to regarding cross-border activities. One additional indicators of performance was added to the investigation as a consequence of ongoing analysis of fieldwork. This was the internal evaluation indicator of performance, which is the satisfaction of members with the organization, i.e. the belief that the collective action channeled via the formalized institution is indeed achieving what the individual members could not achieve independently (see Provan and Kenis 2008, 230 for this definition of network effectiveness).

Table 31. *Overview of cases – Function and performance*

	Euroregion+ / Indicators	Ister-Granum (HUSK)*	Hídverő (HUSK)	OstBoh (SENO) **	VarmOst (SENO)	Inntal (AUGE) ***	Salzburg (AUGE)
CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION INTESNTIY	*Strength of legal arrangement*	high	low	low	medium	medium	medium
	Robustness of its administrative arrangement	high	low	medium	medium	medium	high
	Meeting activity	low	high	medium	medium	medium	high
	Adherence to development strategy/mission statement	medium	low	high	medium	medium	high
	Budget	medium	low	medium	low	low	medium
	Project intensity	medium	low	high	medium	low	high
BETEWEEN-GROUP SOCIAL CAPITAL	*Strength of cross-border communications*	low	high	low	medium	medium	medium
	Perceived trend of contacts	some-what increasing	increasing	increasing	increasing	somewhat increasing	increasing
	Level of trust to other side	medium	high	medium	high	high	high
	Absence/presence of conflict (politisization of issues)	low	low	low	low	low	low
FUNCTI ON	*Appropriation of cross-border governance space*	medium	medium	high	medium	medium	high
INTERNAL EVALUATI ON	*Member satisfaction*	low	high	medium	high	medium	high

*Note: +Full name of cases: Ister-Granum EGTC, Hídverő Tarsulas, Granskommitten Ostfold-Bohuslan-Dalsland, Granskommiten Varmland-Ostfold, Euregio Inntal-Chiemsee-Kaisergebirge-Mangfalltal and Euregio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein. *HUSK=Hungary and Slovakia, **SENO=Sweden and Norway, ***AUGE=Austria and Germany. Source: author*

The key conclusion that should be drawn from Table 31 is that the two dimensions between-group social capital and cross-border cooperation intensity do not co-vary, but that there

is a congruent pattern between between-group social capital and the the internal evaluation of member satisfaction. The results therefore pointed towards a need to modify the model to integrate these findings. This is the focus of the conclusion, which does this by returning to the two research questions.

8.3. Conclusion

This final section summarizes findings from the case studies that answer the research questions, relate these to the initial theoretical expectations, and present a revised theoretical model.

The first research question asked *why and how do local governments participate in cross-border cooperation institutions (Euroregions) and how do they interact?* The dissertation found that local governments are mostly driven by a normative dimension of identity, possibly in conjunction with the instrumental motivation to access funds, or only rarely to solve policy needs. The dissertation further found a link between the type of motivation and the amount of social capital created; for the creation of between-group social capital in the Euroregion it is important that there is a fit between the motivation of the members and the range of activities a Euroregion conducts. Euroregions for which instrumental grant-seeking played an important role are less likely to reinforce and create the kind of networks that are beneficial for Euroregional performance. Overall, the emerging image of Euroregions even in these 'most likely cases' (in terms of having good preconditions for cooperation', see George and Bennet 2005) is that cross-border interaction between local governments is generally sparse. Although significant variation can be measured across the cases, many members of these organizations are passive. Passiveness is often explained by 'not much happening in the Euroregion', although some might also not want more; in line with what research on processes of (new) regionalization domestically ha

shown (Herrschel and Tallberg 2011), local governments in cross-border cooperation sometimes prefer institutionally thin arrangements. As 'thin organizations' they are vulnerable, members may and do exit, which also change the geographic territories of the border areas the Euroregions represent, and the only protection against this is often a certain level of institutional 'stickiness', or institutional inertia (Pierson 2000), manifested as unwillingness to question already existing memberships.

These findings support two out of the three theoretical expectations spelled out in Chapter 2. Local governments' motivation for joining and maintaining membership in a Euroregion is based primarily on normative identity-based factors (no. 1), and cross-border cooperation draws on the experience of inter-municipal cooperation with the national state (no. 2). However, the national border still determines (and limits) communication between local government to a significant degree, and there was no evidence that integrated political communities was created within the Euroregions (no support for no. 3).

The second research question was *whether motivation and interaction patterns form social capital that influences how the Euroregions function and perform?*

Blatter (2000) argued against the use of cross-case indicators of cross-border cooperation in his comparative study of two Euroregions with cross-border cooperation in two North American regions. In his view, the 'dependent variable' is extraordinarily complex because the forms of cross-border cooperation vary according to their different functional logics, and indicators cannot be coded in easy dichotomous categories (Blatter 1998:71). I have taken a different stance on this, and maintain the standpoint that it can be done, but that some frequently used indicators (e.g. Perkmann 2007) are not related in the way they were thought to be.

The conventional measures focus on indicators related to cross-border cooperation intensity and organizational capacity, such as the sophistication of the legal instrument used by the

organization, the presence of a secretariat, the size of the budget and the number of projects. I assessed this in conjunction with between-group social capital. However, these did not turn out to be two sides of the same coin. Instead the research suggests that Euroregions should be understood in the context of the general process towards networked governance taking place on the global as well as on the European policy arena. A deepening of cross-border networks and trust relationships is a process happening both after and parallel to processes of intensified cooperation and multi-level networking on the domestic side.

Dense communication patterns, indicating presence of social capital, are not clearly associated with high cross-border cooperation intensity, but for Euroregions to be evaluated favorably by its own members, both within-group and between-group social capital matters. Normative motivations is more conducive for the creation of social capital than instrumental motivations, especially grant-driven expectations can lead to output legitimacy problems if not fulfilled.

How does this compare to the second set of theoretical expectations stated in Chapter 2? It was expected (no. 4) that high levels of within-group social capital would serve as a pre-condition for high levels of between-group social capital, i.e. a pooled and integrated reserve belonging to the entire cross-border area and not parts thereof, and this was supported by the empirical data from the six case studies. Inter-municipal cooperation is a resource that plays an important role both at the time of Euroregional formation and later into its operation, and dense communication networks on one side of the border are related to how actively and engaged the members become in the Euroregional organization. The only qualification is that the creation of institutional within-group social capital via associations and communication is not happening at one point in time. Instead, processes of intensified cooperation and multi-level networking on the

domestic side are taking place both before and parallel to the deepening of cross-border networks and trust relationships.

However, as indicated above, evidence could not be found to support the expectation (no 5.) that a high-level of between-group social capital in the form of cross-border communication is associated with high organizational performance in the form of cross-border cooperation intensity. While social capital may still be important for Euroregional function and performance long-term (it is likely to enhance the chance for organizational survival), there is no clear evidence that it has an impact in the short time-span within which most Euroregions have operated so far.

As stated in connection with presenting the theoretical expectations in Chapter 2: in the dissertation I did not only aim at examining examining theoretical expectations (i.e. hypothesis-testing), but I also sought to refine and build theory in relation to the overall research question (hypothesis-generation). My theoretical argument in relation to the second research question is therefore related to time and resource management, and states that long-term successful appropriation of cross-border space is dependent on high levels of within-group social capital, which generates between-group social capital. Short-time boosting of a Euroregion's cross-border cooperation intensity (project, budget) through external grants without that underlying resource in the form of communication and trust networks, is risky and requires solid and skillful technical management to place it in the cross-border governance space. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that it can be done, and that sole reliance on 'networks' is not a long-term viable option either.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

There is a saying frequently heard and displayed at the US-Mexican border: "I did not cross the border – the border crossed me.[177]" While it is used as a political slogan to protest US border management and immigration policies through allusions to both colonization and the US-Mexican war, it also encapsulates the idea of borders as man-made, a perspective which I presented already in the opening sentence of this dissertation. But borders as man-made and as social constructs still need to be related to, for instance as accepted ends of political realms, or as obstacles hindering efficient policy-making. This dissertation investigated local level politicians' involvement in cross-border cooperation initiatives, and made statements on their relation to the borders, to the 'other side', and to the relatively new type of policy actor that Euroregions constitute.

On these last pages I will provide a summary of the dissertation and recapitulate its main arguments (section 9.1. and 9.2), comment on the generalizability and limitations of results, as well as on findings that will require further research (section 9.3). Finally, I will elaborate on how it contributes to academic literature and policy making (section 9.4), before making some final remarks (section 9.5.)

9.1. Summary of findings

---

[177] The sentence can be seen on t-shirts and bumper stickers, pops up at art exhibitions and was included in the Grammy-winning *Somos mas Americanos* performed by Los Tigres del Norte: "A thousand times they have shouted at me / 'Go home, you don't belong here' / Let me remind the Gringo / That I didn't cross the border, the border crossed me / America was born free–Man divided her".

The introduction argued that the study of policy-making in borderlands is important, since borderlands constitute territorial spaces where new governance arrangements are clearly emerging, and where it is therefore possible to study both their opportunities and constraints. It made a case for local governments having been neglected in earlier research, and that knowledge on how they participate in cross-border cooperation would therefore enhance knowledge on how governance works, something that might be transferable to other fields of governance as well.

Chapter 2 started out by reviewing literature related to globalization and increased use of multi-level governance systems for political systems. It argued that the existence of local cross-border governance institutions can be seen as a proof, not a consequence, of systemic transformation, and that more knowledge is needed on what makes them work. An important part of the chapter was to clarify my view of Euroregions as a policy actor within a network of actors with different competencies and interests in relation to the policy issues of the cross-border region. The Euroregion is, in turn, also a network consisting of public authorities, sometimes including non-state actors. I defined Euroregions as formalized cooperation initiatives between sub-national authorities, potentially including private and non-profit actors, located close to a border in two or more countries in Europe. Instead of relating to the policy process as a rational cycle (the stages heuristics model, Lasswell 1958) or to a non-rational 'garbage can' (Cohen, March and Olsen 1972, Kingdon 1984), I outlined how the Euroregion can function as a seismograph, loudspeaker and display window in relation to other actors.

The chapter argued that social capital is a convenient shorthand for the resource that may emerge from motivation, participation and interaction patterns among the local governments that constitute the basis of most Euroregions. Following Coleman, I defined social capital as a as a set of social relations of which a single or collective subject can make use at any given moment, and

278

I narrowed the type of social capital of interest to institutional social capital as a collective asset, and proposed a model to be investigated by empirical work.

Chapter 3 claimed that the case study method would be the most appropriate for answering the question, due to lack of quantitative, survey or secondary material. A comparative perspective would nonetheless be beneficial and therefore a multiple case-study research design was chosen. The case studies would be embedded, i.e. both the members and the organizations would constitute levels of analysis. The case selection procedure was laid out in detail, ensuring transparency as well as giving an extended context around these organizations. The chapter also contained a literature review relating to measurement of cross-border cooperation intensity, cross-border cooperation and cross-border development, before arguing for the operationalization taken in this dissertation. It further discussed that methods of analysis used, and how I stand in terms of ethical consideration, argued for considerations taken to reliability, validity and replicability.

Chapter 4 through 6 presented the case studies. Each of those contained two Euroregions at one border between two nation states, the Hungarian-Slovak, the Swedish-Norwegian and the Austrian-German. In each of those, the chapters had a uniform structure. First I elaborated on the case selection criteria, and how those played out when moving from the macro-perspective in the case selection phase to the actual situation at the border. I then proceeded to analyze the empirical data yielded through interviews in terms of motivation, participation and interaction. This showed significant variation across cases in terms of motivation and interaction, whereas participation patterns were more similar. The analysis of performance and function showed different linkages to the membership base. Each chapter ran a different theme as well: The case study of the Hungarian-Slovak border advanced the argument that conventional external indicators of performance do not match internal evaluation of satisfaction among members, i.e. a Euroregion

which 'looks good on paper' may have severe sustainability problems. The chapter on the two Swedish-Norwegian Euroregions found that the European Union is not as important for cross-border development as has been thought, as the Nordic Council has been more important. The case study of Euroregions at the German-Austrian chapter argued that while Euroregions could be expected to be an arena for struggle about resources, even though they are given implementation powers for some part of EU Funds, there is usually a shortage of applicants to apply for funds, and challenges and policy problems with a cross-border agenda is something that needs to be actively sought.

Chapter 7 looked at the same overall research question (how does local cross-border cooperation between local governments work), but did so by using a different method, social network analysis. The chapter showed how the application of this method is in line with the activities of major research projects underway in Europe, which looks at policy networks in cross-border settings. The data analysis demonstrated the significant extent to which communication between local governments is constrained by national borders, and provided support for existence of a link between the strength of domestic communication and the capacity for dense communication in the cross-border area.

Chapter 8 integrated the findings from the empirical case studies and the social network analysis exercise, and compared the results across cases. I highlighted how two different logics of behavior are at play when it comes to local governments' involvement in formalized cross-border cooperation institutions (Euroregions). The decision to join tends to be influenced mostly by a logic of appropriateness centered around normative values such as group cohesiveness, cooperation as a positive public good, and Europeanization. However, the behavior once the local governments are inside the organization is more guided by a logic of consequences, making the

capacity of the Euroregion to deliver in terms of material benefits and policy cooperation a key factor.

I further demonstrated that the networks among municipalities generally intensify on one side of the border before they extend to the entire borderland, including cross-border links. The creation of institutional social capital on one side of the border increases the likelihood that local transnational institutional social capital will be created as well. However, contrary to expectations, such a social capital is not a precondition for short-term successful Euroregional performance in terms of becoming a leading policy actor in the cross-border governance landscape. Even if long-term, successful appropriation of cross-border space is likely to be dependent on high levels of within-group and between-group social capital, short-term it is possible to hold this place via short-time boosting of a Euroregion's cross-border cooperation intensity (project, budget) through external grants in combination with solid and skillful technical management.

The key arguments following from these findings are summarized in the next section.

9.2. Key arguments

Related to the first research questions on why and how local governments participate in Euroregions I argue that:

(1a) Local governments do not form or join Euroregions primarily due to policy concerns. Instead these organizations are mostly driven by a normative dimension of identity, possibly in conjunction with the instrumental motivation to access funds, but only rarely to solve policy needs.

(1b) For the creation of between-group social capital it is important that there is a fit between the motivation of the members and the range of activities a Euroregion conducts. Euroregions for which instrumental grant-seeking played an important role are less likely to reinforce and create the kind of trust-based networks that are beneficial for Euroregional performance.

(1c) Overall, the emerging image of Euroregions even in these 'most-likely cases' (in terms of having good preconditions for cooperation) is that cross-border interaction between local governments is generally sparse. Although significant variation can be measured across the cases, many members of these organizations are passive.

Based on variation in outcome (across national borders with similar preconditions and across cases located at the same national border) and related to what influences the performance and function of Euroregions (the second research question), I argue that:

(2a) Euroregions should be understood in the context of the general process towards networked governance taken place on the global as well as on the European policy arena.

(2b) Following the above statement, deepening of cross-border networks and trust relationships, taking place in conjunction with intensified cooperation and multi-level networking, is a process taking place both after and parallel to processes of intensified cooperation and multi-level networking on the domestic side.

(2c) Long-term successful appropriation of cross-border space is dependent on high levels of within-group social capital, which generates between-group social capital. Short-time boosting of a Euroregion's cross-border cooperation intensity (project, budget) through external grants without that underlying resource in the form of communication and trust networks, is risky and requires solid and skillful technical management to place it in the cross-border governance space.

9.3. Further findings and suggestions for future research

There are three themes that have resurfaced repeatedly during my fieldwork, but which have not been worked into the model I proposed for Euroregional performance and function. With further research and elaboration, they might constitute fruitful terrain for new projects.

First, Euroregions should not be seen as static agents representing set territorial boundaries. The investigated cases instead demonstrate how Euroregions expand and contract as determined by political games, recruitment strategies by Euroregions and development strategies by its members. This challenges the image of Euroregions as put forward by the European Union, which through its policy documents portray them as institutions that uncovers or pushes the cohesion of natural economic spaces.

Second, evidence from the case studies suggests that the relationship between Euroregions and the disbursement institutions of European Structural Funds through the Interreg/European Territorial Cooperation program is both contested and diverse. Preliminary observations indicate that occasionally bottom-up initiatives like Euroregions risk being side-lined as stakeholders prefer direct engagement with Interreg/European Territorial Cooperation rather than engagement in the slow democratic process of cross-border assembly work.

Third, Euroregions constitute new arenas for executing political power. Yet, it is striking how frequently these organizations are portrayed by their members as 'non-political' or 'de-politicized" consensus-oriented entities. Mayors generally deny that lines of conflicts exist along partisan lines, between the two sides of the border or between larger and smaller members. The only line of conflict that is to some extent acknowledged is the different interest that members located directly at the border have in comparison with those located further away. More research

is needed on 'who gets what, when and how' (Lasswell 1935/1958) when policy is shaped by and within Euroregions would be valuable.

9.4. Contribution to literature and policy relevance

Regarding the generalizability of the results, the results can be expected to be valid for the universe of cases (all Euroregions) as well as to institutionalized forms of cross-border cooperation between sub-national units in other parts of the world. For cases with other combinations of preconditions (e.g. unfavorable politico-administrative or language differences), the process whereby between-group social capital is furthered by within-group social capital may be slower. However, there is no reason to believe that the existence of within-group social capital as such would not be conducive for the creation of within-group social capital, thereby enhancing the chances for performing well in internal evaluation by its members.

In addition to the arguments outlined above, the dissertation offers added value to the growing stock of literature on borderlands by providing in-depth knowledge of the role of local governments in local political cross-border organizations, and better understanding of the function and performance of Euroregions, and the factors that may influence that. To the best of my knowledge, the former has not been done previously (except by Medve-Balint and Svensson 2012a, 2012b, and 2013), whereas the latter is part of an ongoing debate to which the research design of this study offers several advantages. For instance, the excellent works of Blatter (1998/2000) and Perkmann (2002, 2003, 2007) have been cited extensively in this dissertation. Both have used well-justified comparative methods in arriving at their conclusions, as opposed to many borderland scholars who either base their work on single cases or more or less random

comparisons. Nonetheless, there were a number of reasons while their work needed to be taken further.

First, neither in their empirical data collection nor in their analysis do they assign much importance to the local governments that constitute the backbone of the organizations in question. Although Blatter observed a shift towards a network-mode of governance in the European and North American borderlands he investigated, he did not elaborate on how these networks function, especially in light of local governments taking part. Second, both put forward powerful arguments regarding what drives the emergence of Euroregions, but seeing their different conclusions, it was worth reconsidering this in the light of new data. Third, Blatter's work did not differentiate between different consociations/Euroregions or discuss what would make them perform differentially. Fourth, they primarily base their conclusions on fieldwork carried out in the mid 1990s, at the time when a large number of Euroregions were being formed around Europe. Even though Perkmann later added some empirical data, (Perkmann 2007a; Perkmann 2003) most of his arguments were still based on his early work. On the other hand, the fieldwork constituting the basis of this dissertation was carried out roughly 15 years later, making it possible to test some of their outcomes again.

The dissertation is also relevant for researchers interested in domestic inter-municipal cooperation and domestic policy network. The research found that participants themselves did not see Euroregions as only one inter-municipal organization among others; but, nevertheless, there are many similarities. In a cross-border context there is much of similar clash between a normative belief in 'cooperation' and rather thin real communication taking place across administrative boundaries.

Finally, in terms of policy practice, the findings are relevant both at the local level (Euroregions and their members[178]) and for national and European policymakers seeking to further promote cross-border integration. For instance, the research suggests that support for proliferation of specific legal forms (i.e. the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation) is unlikely (in itself) to lead to well-functioning organizations if the member network is loose and there is a misfit between motivations and activities. While not going into depth on the relation between funding mechanisms and Euroregions, which would be an issue for future research, the empirical data from six cases show very different patterns as to the engagement. Whether this would justify a more uniform system or it is good to tailor these locally, would be up to policy-makers. For local governments involved or considering involvement in Euroregions, the case studies and overall conclusions can stimulate discussions and reflections on their own motivations and expectations from the kind of all-purpose cross-border cooperation bodies referred to as Euroregions in the dissertation, and compare the use to for instance bilateral partnerships or function-specific cooperation structures.

---

[178] Dissemination of early findings to some of the Euroregions studied in the dissertation generated much interest. On December 14,, 2011, I gave a presentation to members of the VarmOst Euroregion in Karlstad, Sweden. Similar presentations are planned for Hídverő and Ister-Granum in 2012, and contact will be taken with the other three studied Euroregions as well.

ANNEX A – LIST OF EUROREGIONS

Name and country of Euroregions that were considered for case selection. Euroregions were defined as formalized cooperation initiative between sub-national authorities, potentially including private and non-profit actors, located close to a border in two or more countries in Europe, and the list therefore excludes macro-regions as well as Euroregions formalized less than five years before the start of the dissertation project.

Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea
1 Oresundskomiten SE DK
2 Granskommitteen Østfold - Bohuslan /Dalsland SE NO
3 Granskommitteen Østfold – Varmland SE NO
4 Mittnorden FI NO SE
5 Kvarkenradet FI/SE
6 Nordkalottrådet FI NO SE
7 Tornedalsradet FI SE
8 Euregio Helsinki-Tallinn FI EE
9 Skargardssamarbetet ('Archipelago') SE FI
10 Euregio Pskov-Livonia EE LV RU
11 Euroregion Country of Lakes - Ezeru Zeme BY LV LT
12 Euroregion Saule LT/LV/RU/SE
13 Euroregion Sesupe LT PL RU
14 Euroregion Nemunas -Niemen-Hemah BY/LT/PL/RU
15 Euroregion Pomerania DE PL
16 Fehmarnbelt region DE DK
17 Sonderjylland-Slesvig DE DK
18 Arko Co-operation SE NO

Central and Eastern Europe
19 Euroregion Puszcza Bialowieska PL BY
20 Euroregion Bug PL/BY/UA
21 Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina DE PL
22 Euroregion Spree-Neisse-Bober DE PL
23 Euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa DE/CZ/PL
24 Euroregion Glacensis CZ, PL
25 Euroregion Praded - Pradziad CZ/PL
26 Euroregion Silesia CZ PL
27 Euregion Tesinske Slezsko - Slask Cieszynski CZ/PL
29 Euroregion Elbe/Labe DE, CZ
29 Euroregion Erzgebirge Krusnohori DE/CZ
30 Euregio Egrensis
31 Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Bohmerwald-Sumava AT/CZ/DE
32 Euregio Silva Nortica AT/CZ
33 Euregio Weinviertel-Sudmahren/West-Slovakia AT/CZ/SK
34 Euroregion Bile-Biele-Karpaty CZ/SK
35 Euroregion Beskidy-Beskydy PL/CZ/SK

49 PAMINA DE/FR
50 Euregio TriRhena CH/DE/FR
51 Euroregion Oberrhein (Trirhena plus Pamina) CH/DE/FR
52 Comite regional franco-genevois-canton de geneve region rhone alpes CH/FR
53 Conseil du Leman CH/FR

Alpes and Danube Area
54 Conference des Alpes franco-italiennes CAFI, IT/FR
55 Conference des Hautes Vallees FR/IT
56 L'Espace Mont-Blanc CH/IT
57 conseil Valais-Valee d'aoste du Grand St. Bernard IT/FR
58 Region Insubrica CH/IT
59 Hochrheinkommission CH/DE
60 Euregio Via Salina AT DE
61 Euregio Zugspitze-Wetterstein-Karwendel AT
62 Euregio Inntal AT/DE
63 Euregio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein AT/DE
64 Inn-Salzach-Euregio AT/DE/HU
65 Europaregion Tirol AT/IT
66 Euregio Steiermark - Slowenien AT SI
67 Hungarian-Austrian Cross-border Regional Council (West-Pannon Region') HU/AT
68 Euroregion Podunajsky Trojspolok / Harmas Duna-videk Euroregio HU/SK
69 Ister-Granum Euroregio HU/SK
70 Duna/Hídverő Euroregion
71 Euregio Neogradiensis HU/SK
72 Euroregion Ipel HU/SK
73 Ipoly Euroregion HU/SK
74 Euroregion Sajo - Rima - Slaná - Rimava HU/SK
75 Hajdu-Bihar-Bihor Euroregio HU/SK
76 Zemplen Euroregion HU/SK
77 Danube-Körös-Maros-Tisza Euroregion HU/RO
78 Euroregion Middle Danube-Iron Gates + Euroregion Danube 21 BG/RO/SRB
79 Euroregion Lower Danube MD/RO/UA
80 Euroregion Siret-Prut-Nistru MD/RO

South West Europe

36   Euroregion Tatry SK/PL

North West Europe

37   North West Region Cross Border Group GB/IE
38   Irish Central Border Area Network - ICBAN GB/IE
39   East Border Region Committees GB/IE
40   Transmanche Euroregion BE/FR/UK
41   Lille Eurometropole franco-belge FR/BE
42   Scheldemond BE/FR/NL
43   Ems Dollart Region DE/NL
44   EUREGIO DE/NL
45   Euregio Rhein-Waal DE NL
46   Euregio Rhein-Maas Nord DE NL
47   Euregio Maas-Rhein BE/DE/NL
48   Euregio SaarLorLuxRhein DE/FR/LU

81   Pyrenees Mediterranean Euroregion ES/FR
82   Euroregion Euskadi-Navarre-Aquatiaine ES/FR
83   Communidade de Trabalho Regiao Norte de Portugal-Galicia ES/PT
84   Castilla y León - Regiáo Norte ES/PT
85   Castilla y León - Regiáo Centro ES/PT
86   Extremadura - Centro ES/PT
87   Comunidad de Trabajo Extremadure-Alentejo ES/PT

South East Europe

88   Euroregion Morava-Pcinja-Struma BG/MK/SRB
89   Euroregion Nestos-Mesta BG/GR
90   Euroregion Delta - Rhodopi BG/GR
91   Euroregion Evros - Meric - Maritsa BG/TR/GR

ANNEX B – MAPS OF SELECTED EUROREGIONS
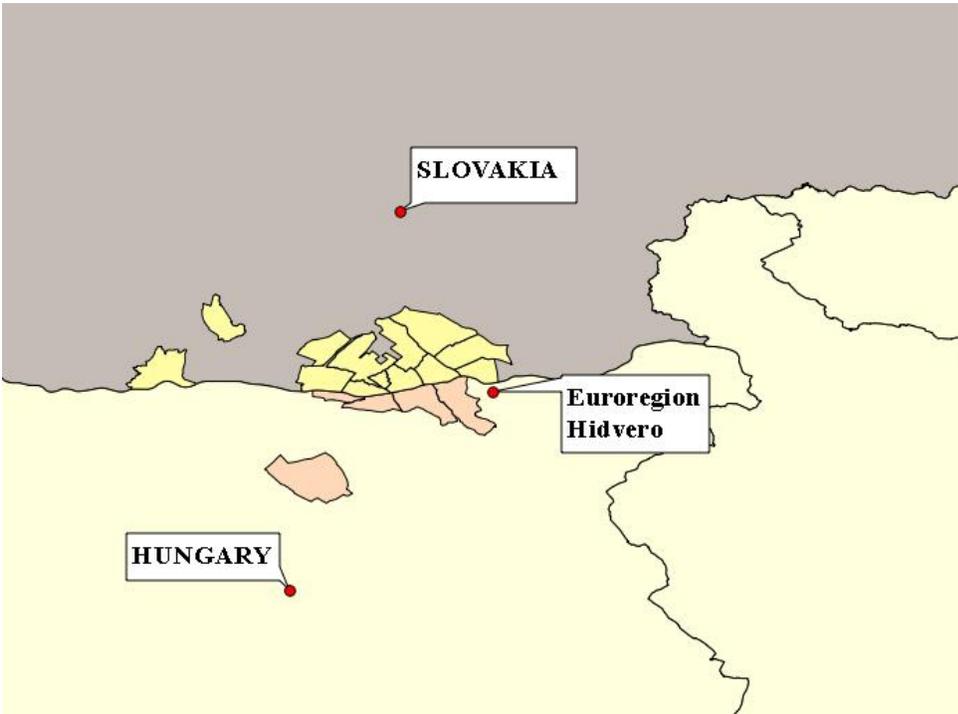
Member municipalities of Hídverő Euroregion at the Hungarian-Slovak border.
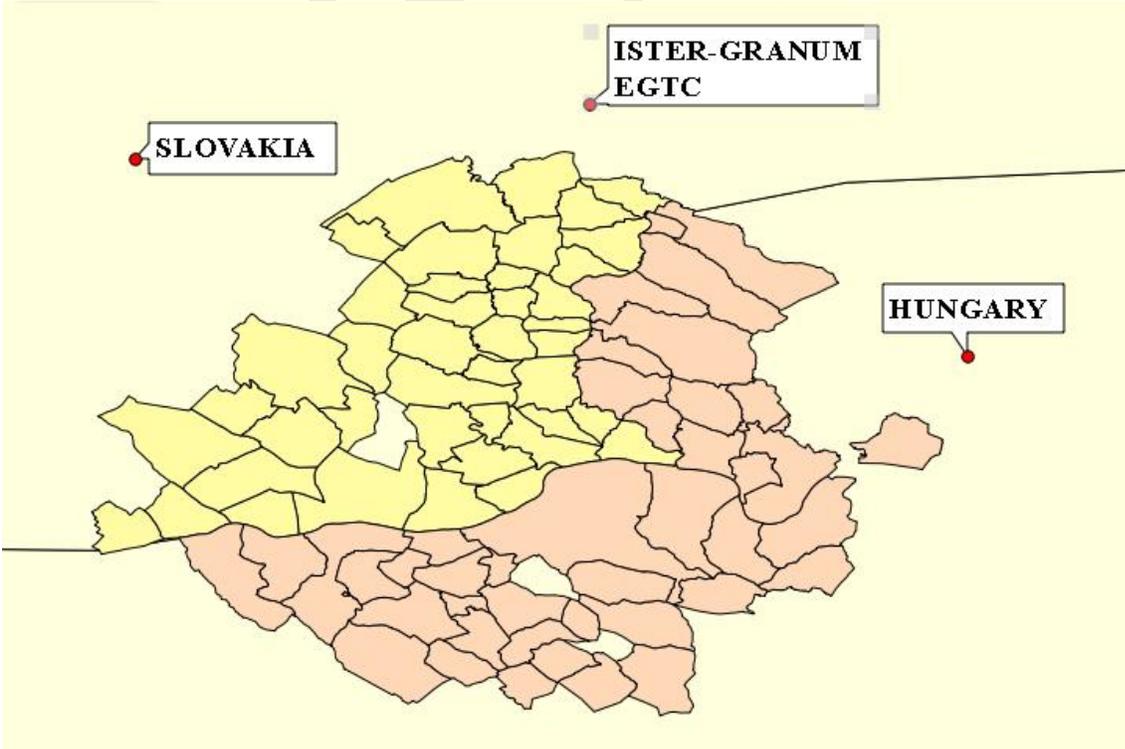
Member municipalities of Ister-Granum Euroregion at the Hungarian-Slovak border.
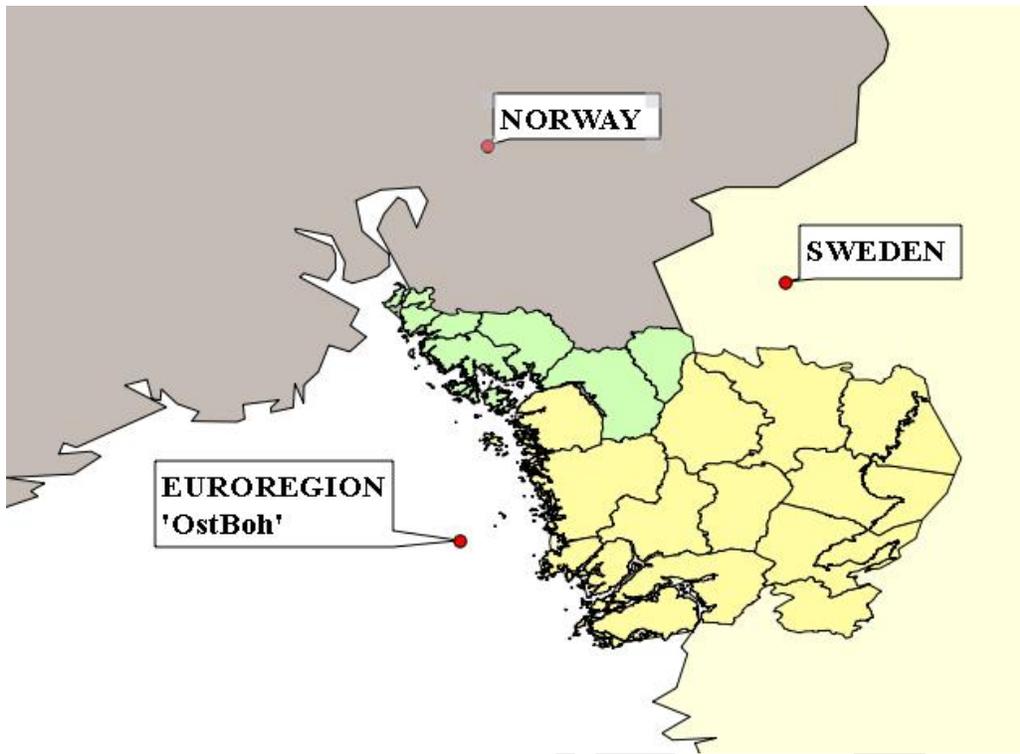
Member municipalities of Granskommitten Ostfold-Bohuslan-Dalsland, Euroregion 'OstBoh at the Swedish-Norwegian border.
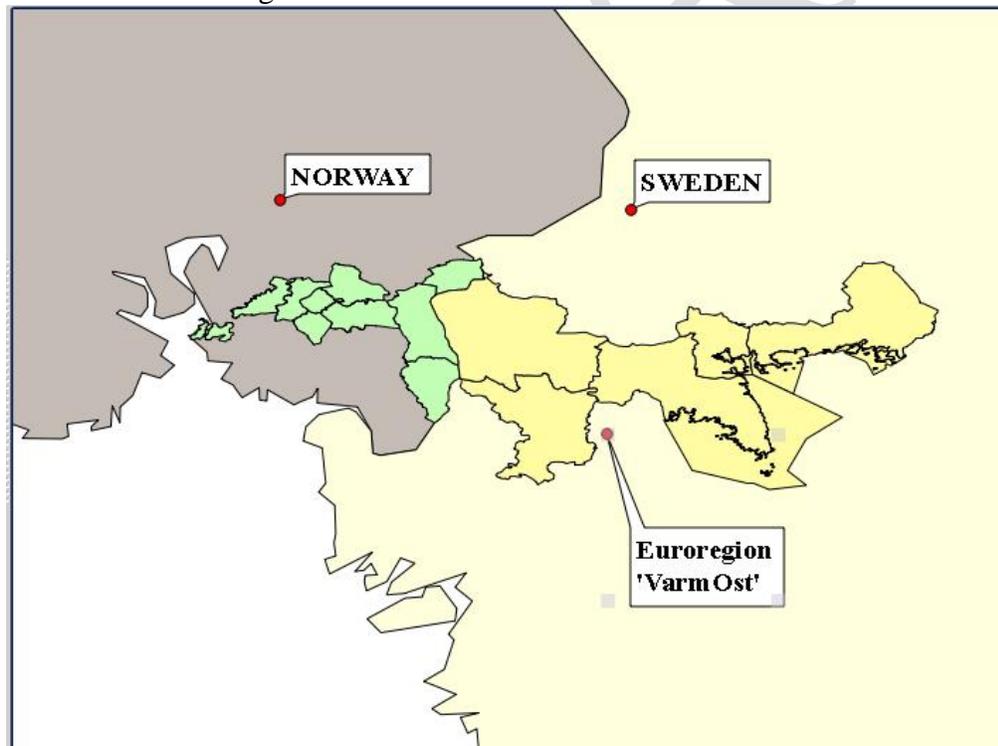
Member municipalities of Granskommitten Varmland-Ostfold (Euroregion VarmOst) at the Swedish-Norwegian border.
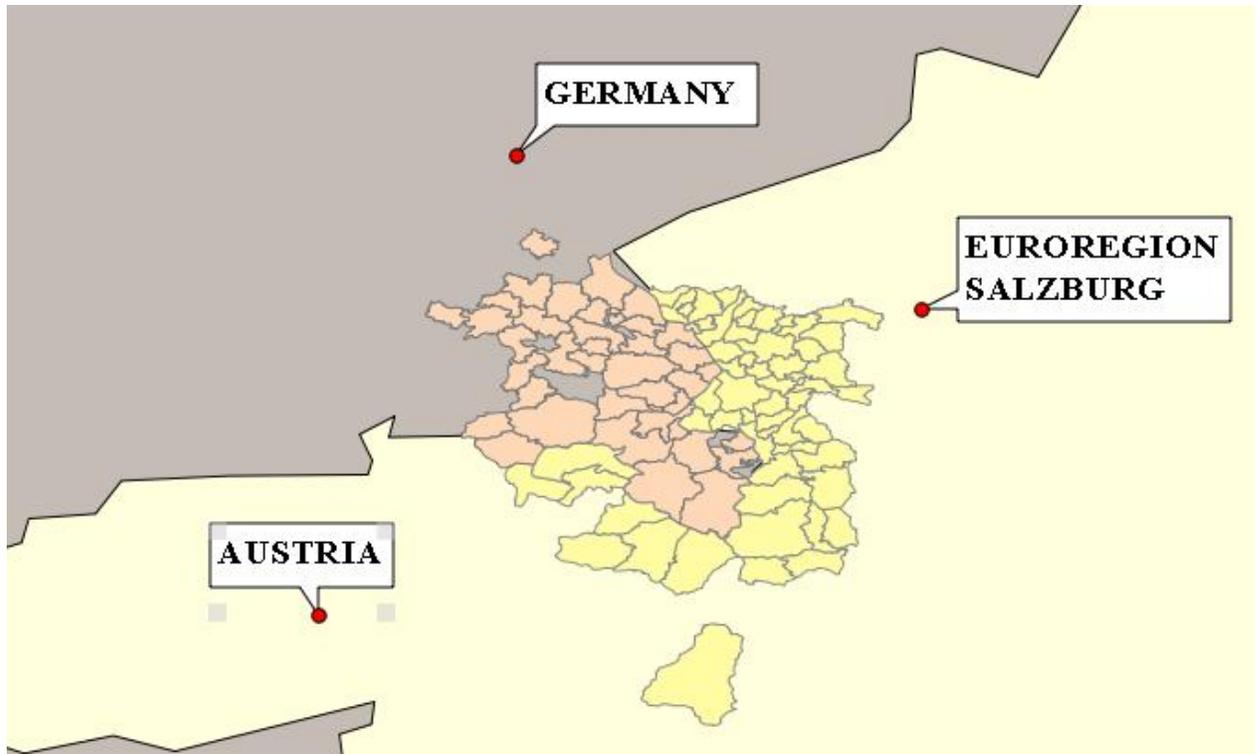
Member municipalities of Euroregion Salzburg at the Austrian-German border.
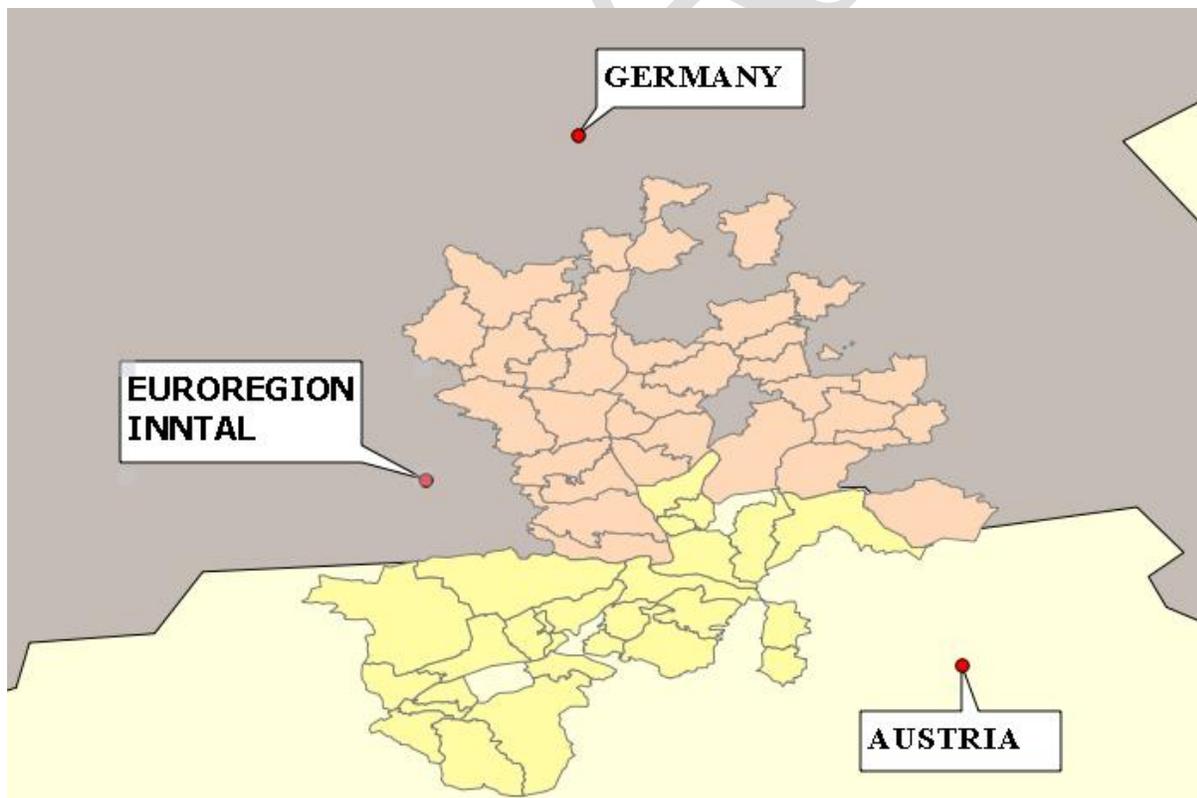
Member municipalities of Euroregion Inntal at the Austrian-German border.

ANNEX C – LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Group A: Members of the Euroregions under study (core interviews with mayors and managers)

Nr   Name, Organization & Title, Country, Date

A1   Yvonne Samuelsson, Euroregion OstBoh: Manager, Sweden, 2009.06.26, 2010.06.21, 2012.06.11
A2   Rudolf Szép, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Štúrovo/Parkany, deputy mayor, Slovakia, 2009.07.23
A3   Walter J. Mayr, Euroregion Inntal: Chair, Austria, 2009.08.03, 2012.06.25 (via phone)
A4   Mihály Pánczél, Ister-Granum EGTC: Tokod, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.03.11
A5   János Czermann,Ister-Granum EGTC: Süttő, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.03.16
A6   Bódis Jánosné, Hidverő: Kocs, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.08
A7   Kálmán Murczin, Ister-Granum EGTC: Máriahalom, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.08
A8   József Bánhidi, Ister-Granum EGTC: Annavölgy, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.09
A9   Tamás Steiner, Ister-Granum EGTC: Dág, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.18
A10   László Benkovics, Ister-Granum EGTC: Pilismarót, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.19
A11   Lajos Novák, Ister-Granum EGTC: Dömös, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.19
A12   Lajos Szenes, Ister-Granum EGTC: Tát, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.19
A13   János Tittmann, Ister-Granum EGTC: Dorog, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.19
A14   Béla Horváth, Ister-Granum EGTC: Neszmély, Mayor,Hungary, 2010.06.03
A15   Tamás Meggyes, Ister-Granum EGTC: Esztergom, Mayor*, Hungary, 2010.06.03
A16   István Török, Ister-Granum EGTC: Lábatlan, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.06.03
A17   József Petrik, Ister-Granum EGTC: Tokodaltáró, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.06.07
A18   Istvan Ferencsik,Euroregion Ister-Granum: manager,Hungary, 2010.06.08
A19   Janos Tóth, Ister-Granum EGTC: Leányvár, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.06.16
A20   Péter Lévai, Hidverő: Dunaalmás: Mayor (via phone), Hungary, 2010/7/26
A21   József Miskolczi, Ister-Granum EGTC: Nyergesújfalu, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.08.04
A22   Eivind Norman Borge, Euroregion OstBoh: Hvaler, Mayor, Norway, 2010.06.20
A23   Lars Braekke, Euroregion OstBoh: Staff member, Norway, 2010.06.21
A24   Jan Gunnarsson, Euroregion OstBoh: Uddevalla, Deputy Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.22
A25   Lars-Goran Ljunggren, Euroregion OstBoh: Vänersborg, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.22
A26   Sture Svennberg, Euroregion OstBoh: Uddevalla, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.22
A27   Gerg-Inge Andersson, Euroregion OstBoh: Trollhättan, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.23
A28   Per Eriksson, Euroregion OstBoh and Euroregion VarmOst: Bengtsfors, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.23
A29   Tore Johansson, Euroregion OstBoh and Euroregion VarmOst: Aremark, Mayor, Norway, 2010.06.24
A30   Paul-Erik Krogsvold, Euroregion OstBoh and Euroregion VarmOst: Moss, Mayor, Norwa, 2010.06.24
A31   Inger Skartlien, Euroregion OstBoh: Rygge, Mayor, Norway, 2010.06.24
A32   Clas-Åke Sörkvist, Euroregion OstBoh: Tanum, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.24
A33   Mats Abrahamsson, Euroregion OstBoh: Sotenäs, Mayor,Sweden, 2010.06.28
A34   Robert Svensson, Euroregion OstBoh: Mellerud, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.28
A35   Martin Carling, Euroregion OstBoh: Dals-Ed, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.29
A36   Lars-Åke Gustavsson, Euroregion OstBoh: Orust, Mayor Sweden, 2010.06.29
A37   Alf Sifversson, Euroregion OstBoh: Munkedal, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.06.29
A38   Ronnie Brorsson, Euroregion OstBoh: Strömstad, Mayor Sweden, 2010.06.30
A39   Kenneth Carlsson, Euroregion OstBoh: Färgelanda, Mayor Sweden, 2010.07.02
A40   Roland Karlsson, Euroregion OstBoh: Lysekil, Mayor ,Sweden, 2010.07.02
A41   Kjell Lökke, Euroregion OstBoh: Råde, Mayor, Norway, 2010.07.06
A42   Per-Kristian Dahl, Euroregion OstBoh: Halden, Mayor, Norway, 2010.07.07, 2012.05.15
A43   Kurt Svensson, Euroregion OstBoh: Amal, Mayor, Sweden, 2010.07.07
A44   Zoltán Tóth, Ister-Granum EGTC: Bajót, Mayor (via phone), Hungary, 2010.07.20
A45   Imre Muszela, Ister-Granum EGTC: Epöl, Mayor (via phone), Hungary, 2010.07.26
A46   József Pósfai, Ister-Granum EGTC: Úny, Mayor (via email), Hungary, 2010.07.28

A47   Mária Nagy, Ister-Granum EGTC: Piliscsév, Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.02
A48   Károly Kollár, Ister-Granum EGTC: Sárisáp: (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.03
A49   Tibor Pallagi, Ister-Granum EGTC: Bajna, Mayor (via phone), Hungary ,2010.08.03
A50   József Bérces, Ister-Granum EGTC: Csolnok, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.08.04
A51   Lukács Karánsebesy,Hidverő: Almásfüzitő, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.08.12
A52   Tibor Havrancsik,Ister-Granum EGTC: Mogyorósbánya, Mayor (via phone), Hungary   2010.08.24
A53   Lajos Gaál,Ister-Granum EGTC: Kesztölc, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.10.06
A54   Gyula Ocskay, Euroregion Ister-Granum: former manager, Hungary, 2010.11.24
A55   Eva Kristin Andersen,Euroregion OstBoh: Fredrikstad, Mayor, Norway, 2010.12.21
A56   Jan Engsmyr, Euroregion OstBoh: Sarpsborg, Mayor, Norway, 2010.12.21
A57   István Domin, Hídverő: Iza/Izsa, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.02.23
A58   Gabriel Duka, Ister-Granum EGTC and Hídverő: Kravany nad Dunajom/Karva, Mayor Slovakia 2011.02.23
A59   Robert Csuda, Ister-Granum EGTC: Hronovce/ Lekér, mayor, Slovakia, 2011.03.07
A60   Robert   Kis, Ister-Granum EGTC: Nova Vieska/Kisújfalu, mayor, Slovakia, 2011.03.07
A61   László Magat, Ister-Granum EGTC: Kamenný Most / Kőhídgyarmat, mayor, Slovakia, 2011.03.07
A62   Jan Varga, Ister-Granum EGTC: Čata/Csata, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.03.07
A63   Alexander Hubac, Ister-Granum EGTC: Bruty/Bart, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.03.21
A64   Etelka Michlian, Ister-Granum EGTC: Zalaba mayor, Slovakia, 2011.03.21
A65   Anna Mormarova,Ister-Granum EGTC: Male Kosihy/Ipolykiskeszi, mayor, Slovakia, 2011.03.21
A66   Stefan Edes, Hídverő: Modrany/Madar, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.04.19
A67   Ľubomír Púchovský, Ister-Granum EGTC and Hídverő: Radvan nad Dunajom/Dunaaradvány, Mayor Slovakia, 2011.04.19
A68   Jozsef Sipos, Hídverő: Bátorove Kosihy/Bátorkeszi, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.04.19
A69   Olga Szabó, Hídverő: Patince/ Pat Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.04.19, 2012.06.11 (via email)
A70   János Szigeti, Ister-Granum EGTC and Hídverő: Búč/Bucs, Mayor Slovakia, 2011.04.19
A71   Ladislav Forró, Hídverő: Vrbová nad Váhom/ Vágfüzes, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.04.20
A72   Sara Lucza, Hídverő: Chotin/Hetény, Mayor Slovakia, 2011.04.20
A73   Eva Varju, Hídverő: Zlatná na Ostrove/ Csallóközaranyos, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.04.20
A74   Bruno Astleitner, Euregio Inntal: Wirtschafskammer Tirol: Managing director, Austria, 2011.05.09
A75   Wolfgang Berthaler, Euregio Inntal: Flintsbach, Mayor, Germany, 2011.05.09
A76   Josef Dillersberger, Euregio Inntal: Schwoich, Mayor Austria, 2011.05.09
A77   Christian Bidner, Euregio Inntal, Bezirkshauptmannschaft, Austria, 2011.05.10
A78   Gerhard Prentl,   Euregio Inntal: Landesratsamt Rosenheim, Leader of the department of economic develoment, former Euregio manager, Germany, 2011.05.11
A79   Steffen Rubach,Euregio Salzburg: Managing Director, Austria, 2011.05.11, and 2012.05.06 (via phone)
A80   Walter Weiskopf, Euregio Inntal: Managing Director, Austria, 2011.05.11, 2012.06.19 (via phone)
A81   Josef Flatscher, Euregio Salzburg: Freilassing, Mayor Germany, 2011.05.12
A82   Moller, Christian Euregio Salzburg: Wirtschaftskammer, international contacts Austria 2011.05.12
A83   Pfisterer, Stefan   Euregio Salzburg: Wirtschaftskammer Salzburg, Responsible for Euregio Contact s Austria, 2011.05.12
A84   Hans Eschlberger, Euregio Salzburg: Ainring, Mayor Germany, 2011.05.13
A85   Peter Schroder, Euregio Salzburg: Oberndorf bei Salzburg, Mayor , Austria, 2011.05.13
A86   Arnold Azsvald, Ister-Granum EGTC: Ipelsky Sokolec/Ipolyszakallas, mayor, Slovakia, 2011.07.27
A87   Karol Drapak,Ister-Granum EGTC: Mužla/Muzsla, mayor, Slovakia, 2011.07.27
A88   Zuzana Matuskova, Ister-Granum EGTC: Nana, mayor, Slovakia, 2011.07.27
A89   Jan Teglas, Ister-Granum EGTC: Strekov/Kurt, mayorSlovakia, 2011.07.27
A90   Ervin Varga, Hídverő: Marcelová/Marcelhaza, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.07.27
A91   Pál Bakonyi, Ister-Granum EGTC: Želiezovce/Zseliz, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.07.28
A92   Monika Gora, Ister-Granum EGTC: Pavlová/Garampald, mayor, Slovakia, 2011.07.28
A93   Pál Banai Tóth, Hídverő: Moča/Dunamocs, Mayor, Slovakia, 2011.07.28
A94   Vidar Östenby, Euroregion VarmOst: former manager, Norway, 2011.10.05
A95   Alf Johansen, Euroregion VarmOst: manager, Norway, 2011.10.12, 2012.06.29
A96   Håvard Jensen, Euroregion VarmOst:Hoböl, Mayor (via email), Norway, 2011.10.20
A97   Svein Olav Agnalt, Euroregion VarmOst: Skiptvet, Mayor (via phone) Norway 2011.10.21
A98   Katarina Johannesson, Euroregion VarmOst: Arjang, Sweden, 2011.10.31

A99 Torbjörn Bood, Euroregion VarmOst: Grums, Mayor, Sweden, 2011.10.31
A100 Daniel Bäckström, Euroregion VarmOst: Chair and Mayor of Saffle, Sweden, 2011.11.03, 2012.06.29
A101 Britt Gulbrandsen Euroregion VarmOst: Spydeberg, Mayor (via phone) Norway 2011.11.08
A102 Nils Nilssen, Euroregion VarmOst: Römskog, Mayor, Norway, 2011.11.09
A103 Stein Erik Lauvås (vice ordförande), Euroregion VarmOst: Marker, Mayor, Norway, 2011.11.09
A104 Trygve Westgaard, Euroregion VarmOst: Askim, Mayor Norway, 2011.11.09
A105 Per-Inge Liden, Euroregion VarmOst: Sweden, 2011.11.11
A106 Herland, Knut Jørgen, ordfører, Euroregion VarmOst: Eidsberg, Mayor (via phone), Norway 2011.11.25
A107 Tor Melvold, Euroregion VarmOst: Trögstad, Mayor, Norway, 2011.12.14
A108 Eva Čákváriová, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Bény/Bíňa, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia, 5.6.2012
A109 Iren Mikus, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Érsekkéty/Ket, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia, 5.7.2012
A110 Ing. Alexander Mezei, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Leléd/Leľá, Slovakia, 5.7.2012
A111 Tibor Nagy, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Ebed/Obid, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia 5.9.2012
A112 Oto Mészáros, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Ipolypásztó/Pastovce, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia, 5.9.2012
A113 Gabriel Mihalik, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Köbölkút/Gbelce, Slovakia, 5/10/2012
A114 Mgr. Štefan Kuczman, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Lontó/Lontov, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia 5/10/2012
A115 Ing.Ľudovít Nagy Euroregion Ister-Granum: Oroszka/Pohronský Ruskov, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia 5/10/2012
A116 Beata Székelyová, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Sárkányfalva/Šarkan, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia, 5/10/2012
A117 György Illés, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Pilisszentlászló, Mayor (via phone), Hungary, 5/11/2012
A118 Peter Nagy, Manager, Ister-Granum, Hungary, 5/31/2012
A119 Eva Tetenyi, Deputy Chair, Ister-Granum, Hungary, 5/31/2012
A120 Rita Pásztorová, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Kicsind/Malá nad/Hronom, Mayor, Slovakia, 6/4/2012
A121 Lendvai József János, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Pilisszentkereszt Hungary, 6/4/2012
A122 Jan Oravec, Chair, Ister-Granum, Slovakia, 6/4/2012
A123 Zoltán Kanizsay, Euroregion Ister-Granum, Ipolytölgyes, Hungary, 6/6/2012
A124 Katarína Grófová, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Kisgyarmat/Sikenička, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia, 6/7/2012
A125 Zoltán Bacsa, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Kisölved/Malé Ludince, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia, 6/7/2012
A126 Ján Elzer, Euroregion Ister-Granum:Garamkövesd/Kamenica nad/Hronom, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia 6/9/2012
A127 Ján Józsa, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Ipolyszalka/Salka, Slovakia, 6/9/2012
A128 Irena Skladanová, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Ipolybél/Bielovce, Mayor (via phone), Slovakia 6/10/2012
A129 Bethlen Farkas, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Verőce, Pilisszentlászló, Hungary, 6/11/2012
A130 Emmerich Riesner, Euregio Salzburg, deputy chair (via phone), Austria, 6/11/2012
A131 Ferenc Rományik, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Ipolydamásd, Mayor (via phone), Hungary,6/18/2012
A132 János Bedros, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Kemence, Mayor, Hungary, 6/18/2012
A133 Laszlo Kiss, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Letkés, Mayor Hungary,6/18/2012
A134 Gyuláné Antal, Euroregion Ister-Granum Nagybörzsöny, Hungary,   6/18/2012
A135 Zoltán Remitzky, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Szob, Mayor, Hungary, 6/18/2012
A136 Vilmosne Sinko, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Zebegeny, Mayor, Hungary, 6/19/2012
A137 Irma Gembolya, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Perőcsény Hungary   6/21/2012
A138 László Petrovics, Euroregion Ister-Granum: Nagymaros, Mayor (via phone), Hungary, 6/25/2012

Group B. Informants (interviews that informed the context of the study)

B1 Gábor Rajnai, Oroszlány: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.0816
B2 Imre Csöbönyei, Acs, Mayor, Hungary, 2010.03.11
B3 József Áy, Mocsa: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.08
B4 István György, Kerékteleki: Mayor, Hungary 2010.04.08
B5 István Weilandits, Bakonysárkány: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.08

B6	István Aranyosi, Csém: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.09
B7	Lajos Futó, Tárkány: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.09
B8	Klára Horváth, Bábolna: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.09
B9	István Maszlavér, Naszály: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.12
B10	György Nagy, Szomor: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.12
B11	Ferenc Mezei, Szárliget: Mayor (in person*), Hungary, 2010.04.22
B12	Attiláné Szücs, Dad: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.22
B13	Gusztáv Imre Takács, Császár: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.04.22
B14	Imre Petőcz, Bana: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.07
B15	Oszkár Harmados, Vértestolna: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.18
B16	Ferenc Kiss, Kömlőd: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.18
B17	Sándor Nagy, Vértesszőlős: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.05.18
B18	Dr. Erzsébet Udvardi, Kisbér: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.06.07
B19	György Lunk, Ácsteszér: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.06.10
B20	Eva Lakatos-Novak, Secretariat of the West Pannonia Euroregion and Hármas Duna-vidék Eurorégió (Office of the Győr-Moson-Sopron Region): official, Hungary, 2010.06.16
B21	János Zatykó, Komárom: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.06.16
B22	László Rohonczi, Ete: Mayor (via email), Hungary, 2010.06.30
B23	Lajos Pintér, Bakonyszombathely: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.07.20
B24	Alajos Valter, Bokod: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.07.22
B25	Pál Pogrányi, Dunaszentmiklós: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.07.26
B26	Lajos Árvai, Ászár: Mayor (via phone) , Hungary, 2010.07.27
B27	Sáros, György, Gyermely: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.07.27
B28	János Dékán, Héreg: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.07.30
B29	Zoltán Grúber, Kecskéd: Mayor (via phone), Hungary, 2010.08.02
B30	Antal Hanig, Csatka: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.02
B31	László Kálmán, Szákszend: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.02
B32	Miklós Sógorka, Súr: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.02
B33	Antal Mór, Aka: mayor (via phone), Hungary, 2010.08.03
B34	József Pölöskei, Réde: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.03
B35	János Jelli, Tarján: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.04
B36	Ferencné Szijj, Nagyigmánd: (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.04
B37	László Beke, Környe: Mayor* , Hungary, 2010.08.09
B38	József Hartdegen, Vértessomló: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.08.09
B39	Gabriella Menoni,Várgesztes: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.08.09
B40	Csaba Schmidt,Tatabánya: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.08.09
B41	József Hajnal,Vérteskethely: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.08.10
B42	Attila Pécsvárady, Kisigmánd: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.17
B43	Károlyné Lamanda, Bársonyos: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.18
B44	Béla Csabán, Tardos: Mayor (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.08.23
B45	József Michl, Tata: Mayor, Hungary, 2010.08.30
B46	Brigitta Lászlo, Carpathian Euroregion: manager, Hungary, 2009.04.27
B47	Márta Regner, Europrosperitas 2010 Foundation: staff member, Hungary, 2009.05.07
B48	András Barányi,VATI Hungary (Public Nonprofit Company for Regional Development and Urban Planning): manager, Hungary, 2009.05.14
B49	Yvonne Brodda,Joint Technical Secretariat, Austria-Hungary Cross-border Cooperation Program 2007-2013, (VATI Kht.): manager, Hungary, 2009.06.09
B50	Andrea Frauschiel,Eisenstadt: Mayor, Austria, 2009.06.09
B51	Csaba Horváth, Joint Technical Secretariat, Austria-Hungary Cross-border Cooperation Program 2007-2013, (VATI Kht), Hungary, 2009.06.09
B52	Istvan Bihari, Sopron-Fertőd micro-region: official, Hungary, 2009.06.10
B53	Sarolta Jenei, Regional Development Agency (Štúrovo): staff member, Slovakia, 2009.07.23
B54	Anders Olshov, Øresundsinstituttet (think tank): Manager, Sweden, 2009.08.31
B55	Igor Lyubashenko, PAUCI Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation Foundation: Research Fellow, Poland 2009.12.10

B56   Imre Székely, Regional Development Council of the Gyor-Moson-Sopron County: Director, Hungary, 2010.02.10

B57   Tibor Schunder,, Baj: (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.06.10

B58   Bo Hamra, Interreg/European Territorial Cooperation Program: Manager, Euroregion OstBoh: former manager, Sweden, 2010.06.21

B59   Anette Olofsson, Interrreg/European Territorial Cooperation Program: staff member, Sweden, 2010.06.21

B60   László Major, Bakonybánk: (via telephone), Hungary, 2010.07.22

B61   Manuela Brockler, Interreg Joint Technical Secretariat: Managing Director, Austria, 2011.05.12

B62   Christian Dirninger, University of Salzburg, Expert on regional economic history, Austria, 2011.05.12

B63   Walter Scherrer, University of Salzburg: expert on regional development, Austria, 2011.05.12

B64   Paul Nemes,Varmland County: international strategic analyst; the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR): Varmland representative, Sweden, 2011.11.17

B65   Magnus Dagerhorn, Interreg Joint Technical Secretariat (Länsstyrelsen Värmland): Director, Sweden, 2011.11.28

B66   Maria Takatsne Tenki, Advisor to the City Council of Szombathely, Hungary, 2012.01.13

ANNEX D – SAMPLE OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES

Note: The questionnaires to local government representatives were administered in Swedish, Hungarian and German. The first sample below is a translation into English of the Swedish questionnaire for the VarmOst Euroregion. The second sample is a translation into English of questionnaires for follow-up interviews with Chairs and managers.

C1. Translation into English of the Swedish questionnaire for the VarmOst Euroregion

Project title: "Local government participation in cross-border cooperation initiatives and cross-border contacts"	Sara Svensson, +30-343 5647 svensson_sara@ceu-budapest.edu	Central European University Nador u. 9 1051 Budapest, Hungary

1. LOCATION	2. PERMISSION
a/ Name	a/ Use name
b/ No. of inhabitants	b/ Quote
c/ Distance from border (using nearest route, city center to border crossing)	c/ Record

3. INTERVIEWEE
a/ Name
b/ Civil profession
c/ Political position
d/ Holding position since year

PART I: ON GRÄNSKOMMITTEN
In this part of the questionnaire we try to get a picture of the municipality's engagement in Granskommitten.

4. What do you know about the local government's early membership in Granskommitten?

a/ Reasons for joining
b/ Activities
c/ Contact person for more information

5. What activities do you know about that have been carried out by Granskommitten in the past two years?

6. Have you taken part in any meeting or activity arranged by Granskommitten in the past two years?

7. Do you think that the local government's involvement in Granskommitten will increase or decrease in the next years? Why?

8. Can you describe the decision-making process in Granskommitten? Who decides on strategy and projects, and how?

9. Who (which actor) would you say have the greatest influence/power in the cross-border cooperation network? Concerning

    a)   Generation of ideas
    b)   Take part in projects
    c)   Make the work flow smoothly
    d)   Get resources

The following questions are quantitative, i.e. I would like to ask you to assess the importance of different areas on a scale. But comments and reflections are welcome and have as much value in the analysis of the interview.

10. Assess the importance of presence or absence of intereset conflicts in the Euroregion according to the following dimensions (use the 1-5 scale, where 1 means that it does not have any importance and 5 that is of major importance)

a/ municipalities 'close' vs 'far' from the border	b/ small municipalities vs big municipalities	c/ municipalities governed by left parties vs municipalities governed by right parties	d/ administrative vs political actors	e/ Swedish vs Norwegian municipalities
Kommentarer:				

11. The Euroregion gives priority to six policy areas. How important do you consider these to be (use the 1-5 scale where means no importance and 5 major importance)

a/ Infrastructre	b/ Information & exchange of experience	c/ Dealing with border obstacles	d/ Health care	e/ Economic sector/business development	f/Competence developmen t

12. In order to enable international comparison, I also ask you to assess how important cross-border cooperation is within the following areas (use the 1-5 scale, where 1 means that it has no importance and 5 that it has big importance.

a/ Culture	c/ Environment	e/ Higher education	g/ Service provision	i/ Creation of joint regional identity	k/ Creation of joint European identity

b/ Emergency/ fire	d/ First and secondary education	f/ Commuting & cross-border migration	h/ Administration	j/ Prevent conflicts	

DEL II: ON CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROREGION

In this part of the questionnaire I try to map out the local government's other international and border close activities. If the local government has an employee dealing with this, I would appreciate the contact details of him/her.

12. In what other contexts is the local government interacting cross-border than within the framework of Granskommitten?

12 a) Partner town
A1. Background.
A2. Year of formal agreement
A3. Main activities

12 b) International municipal cooperation on service delivery
B1. Area
B2. Type of agreement
B3. Year
B4. Reason for cooperation.
B5. Evaluation
B6. Contact person

12c) Civil society cross-border cooperation
C1. Most active associations
C2. Area and type of cooperation
C3. Background.
C4. Trend (increasing, decreasing)
C5.: Contact person

12d) Business sector cross-border cooperation
C1. Most active/important actors
C2. Area and type of cooperation
C3. Background
C4. Trend (increasing, decreasing)
C5.: Contact person

13. Has the municipality taken part in externally financed (i.e. EU) projects with partners from *Norway/Sweden*?

DEL III: ON SUPPORT FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

In this part of the questionnaire I want to know more about how external actos and local attitudes influence the degree of cross-border engagement.

14. What is your opinion about EU's importance for the scope and quality of cross-border cooperation?
a) technical assistance & know-how
b) financal assistance
c) legal framework development
d/ rhetoric & values
e/ other

15. What is your opinion about the government's importance for the scope and quality of cross-border cooperation?
a) technical assistance & know-how
b) financal assistance
c) legal framework development
d/ rhetoric & values
e/ other

16. What is your opinion on local democracy's importance for cross-border cooperation? What is the role of the local and the regional level, respectively?

17. In your opinion, how much do the inhabitants of the local government in general turst ...
(Assess on the 1-8 scale where 1 is the lowest and 8 is the highest level of trust)

a/ ……each other?							
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
b/ …local authorities?							
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
c/ …national government?							
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
d/ …business and other private enterprises?							
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
e/ …people on the other side of the border?							
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
f/ …local authorities on the other side of the border?							
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
g/ …national government on the other side of the border?							
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
h/ …business and other private enterprises?							

8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8

14. Fill in the frequency of contacts with other local governments in Granskommitteen and with other municipalities in the Ostfold and Vastra Gotaland Regions.

Add 1, 2, 3 or 4 for local governments with which you are in contact (political or administrative staff)

(1) = at least weekly you or your staff talk/meet/or communicate in writing with the local government leader or its staff

(2) = at least monthly you or your staff talk/meet/or communicate in writing with the local government leader or its staff

(3) = at least every 6 months you or your staff talk/meet/or communicate in writing with the local government leader or its staff

(4) = at least yearly you or your staff talk/meet/or communicate in writing with the local government leader or its staff

(-) = never in contact

If you know the *ordfører/ordförande* by name (first and family), please add that after the name of the local government.

14. Fill in the frequency of contacts with other local governments in Granskommitteen and with other municipalities in the Ostfold and Vastra Gotaland Regions.

Add 1, 2, 3 or 4 for local governments with which you are in contact (political or administrative staff)

MEDLEMMAR I GRÄNSKOMMITTEN

Kommun	Frekvens (nr)	Ordfører/ordförande	Kommun	Frekvens (nr)	Ordfører/ordförande
Aremark (N)			Hoböl (N)		
Askim (N)			Moss (N)		
Eidsberg (N)			Säffle (S)		
Römskog (N)			Årjäng (S)		
Marker (N)			Grums (S)		
Trögstad (N)			Bengtsfors (S)		
Skiptvet (N)			Karlstad (S)		
Spydeberg (N)					

ANDRA KOMMUNER I ØSTFOLD

Kommun	Frekvens (nr)	Ordfører/ordförande	Kommun	Frekvens (nr)	Ordfører/ordförande
Fredrikstad (N)			Rygge (N)		
Halden (N)			Råde (N)		
Hvaler (N)			Sarpsborg (N)		

ANDRA KOMMUNER I VÄRMLAND

Kommun	Frekvens (nr)	Ordfører/ordförande	Kommun	Frekvens (nr)	Ordfører/ordförande
Arvika			Kil		
Eda			Kristinehamn		
Filipstad			Munkfors		
Forshaga			Storfors		
Hagfors			Sunne		
Hammarö			Torsby		

Andra kommuner i närområdet i Sverige eller Norge:

18. Regarding domestic contacts, compare the situation with how it was five years ago.

a/ Much more contacts	b/ Somewhat more contacts	c/ The same	d/ Somewhat fewer contacts	e/ Much fewer contacts	f/ Don't know

19. Regarding cross-border contacts, compare the situation with how it was five years ago.

a/ Much more contacts	b/ Somewhat more contacts	c/ The same	d/ Somewhat fewer contacts	e/ Much fewer contacts	f/ Don't know

PART V: ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BORDERS (*if there is time*)

This part of the questionnarie has been included to enable an international comparison and contains two questions on how borders can be perceived in many European discourses.

20. What of the following statements do you agree with (you can state several)	
a/ In a modern Europe there should not be any borders	e/. It is not realistic to expect much out of cooperation across borders. There are too many obstacles.
b/ Borders prevent economic development	f/ If there are not any borders there is a risk that cultures will disappear and everywhere will be the same.
c/ It is good to be able to travel without a passport, but I don't think that borders will ever disappear.	g/ A people talking a similar language and sharing a culture should not be separated by borders.
d/ People should not be separated by borders.	

21. How accurate is the following statement:				
The inhabitants here have much more common with the inhabitants in Ostfold-Varmland than with the inhabitants of, for instance, Blekinge/Troms county				
a/ correct	**b/** fairly correct	**c/** not quite correct	**d/** incorrect	**e/** don't know

PART VI: ON THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (*if there is time*)

This part of the questionnaire has been included to enable an international comparison of how the economic situation in the local government is associated with other parts of the questionnaire.

22. How would you characterize the financial position of the local government?				
a/ very strong position	**b/** strong position	**c/** average position	**d/** less than average position	**e/** very bad position
23. How would you characterize the economic situation of the inhabitants?				
a/ doing well	**b/** doing rather well	**c/** average	**d/** struggling	**e/** poor
24. What is the state of entrepreneurship and business in the settlement?				
a/ We are doing splendid, so do not need any outside investment	**b/** We are doing fine, but could need some outside investment	**c/** Average, more business would be good.	**d/** we have nothing here, outside investments might help	**e/** We have nothing, but I don't think any outsider would be interested in investing here anyway.

C.2. Translation into English of the Swedish follow-up questionnaire with Managers and Chairs

Follow-up interviews with Euroregion Managers and Chairs

Name:

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Chair or manager since:

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Permission to use quotations:

………………………………………………………………………………………….

Section A: Internal policy-decision making

Research findings: The organizational set-up of Euroregions tend to be relatively similar: Assemblies (plenary sessions), Executive Committees (Boards) and Working Groups (specific committees) are usually the most important bodies. However, there is variation in terms of the tasks and responsibilities each of these have and how they relate to each other. A specific challenge seems to be to create and sustain effective working groups. In order to be able to describe the process in your Euroregion in more detail, I will ask you questions on these bodies and your function in relation to them.

A1: On the Assembly

Q1: What is your role in Assembly meetings?
Q2: How many times did the assembly meet in 2009, 2010 and 2011?
Q3: What was the approximate attendance rate at those meetings?
Q4: Who prepares the Assembly meetings and chooses the agenda items?
Q5: Who follows up on what has been decided by the Assembly?
Q6: Can you give an example of when a discussion during an Assembly meeting led to a decision you had not foreseen?

A2: On the Executive committee:

Q1: What is your role in Executive Committee meetings?
Q2: Who is sitting on the Executive Committee?
Q3: What is the average time a member usually spends on the Executive Committee?
Q4: How many meetings were held in 2011?
Q5: Who prepares the meetings of the Executive Committee and chooses the agenda items?
Q6: Who follows up on the work of the Executive Committee?

A3: On Working Groups (if there are any in your Euroregion):

Q1: What working groups does the Euroregion have?
Q2: What is your role in relation to these groups?

Q3: How many times did each of these groups meet in 2011?
Q4: How were the themes/policy areas of the working groups selected?
Q5: Do the working groups have the power to take any decisions on its own?
Q6: To whom does the working group report?

A4: Om dina ansvarsuppgifter
Q1: What are your main responsibilities?
Q2: Which of these responsibilities are most time-consuming?
Q3: Approximately what percentage of your work time is devoted to the Euroregion?

Section B: Examples of work in practice

*Research findings: Euroregions can take on different roles, which can be referred to in shorthand as that of a seismograph, a loudspeaker and a window display. A **seismograph** is an instrument designed to measure regular and irregular ground movement; taking on this role, a Euroregion measures the intensity of attitudes and preferences that have crossborder relevance, and can could also warn of potential eruptions of conflict, and handle those in advance. When 'movement on the ground' leads to the identification of gaps and needs pertaining to the crossborder area, the Euroregion can take on the role to make those heard by relevant policymakers at local, regional, national and European level (the **loudspeaker** role). Finally, as a **display window**, the Euroregion bring together and showcase symbols and resources available within the territory of the local governments (or regions) forming the Euroregion, thereby strengthening the image towards investors, tourists and the local population of the Euroregion as one cohesive region. Your contribution to this section will help me better to assess if and how your Euroregion carries out these roles.*

B1. Seismograph function

Q1: Do you consider it typical for your Euroregion to cooperate with non-governmental organizations or the business sector?
Q2: On what issues would you typically cooperate with these?
Q3: Can you describe an issue (topic/event/project) that required such cooperation? How did you work on this issue?
Q4: Many members mentioned _____ as an important activity carried out by your Euroregion. Why did you decide to focus on this issue? Did it involve the cooperation or decisions of other institutions?

B2: Loudspeaker function

Q1: Do you consider it typical for your Euroregion to try to influence decision-makers on the regional, national and European level?
Q2: If this is an important part of your work, can you give examples such work?
Q3: What issues do typically require such activities?

B3: Display window function

Q1: Do you consider it typical for your Euroregion to devote resources towards presenting yourself as one cohesive region?
Q2: If yes, how do you represent the Euroregion towards:
     a/ the local population
     b/ potential tourists
     c/ potential investors
     d/ the national government
     e/ the European Union
     f/ other actors:

Del C: Relations with other policy actors

Research findings: Euroregions are essentially networks of local governments. Whereas local governments belonging to one state interact with each other at multiple arenas in a variety of ways, the research shows that most crossborder communication takes place either face-to-face at meetings organized by the Euroregion or between local governments having formal twin town agreements. However, Euroregions are also embedded in larger policy networks (formal and informal) that deal with issues that have relevance for policymaking and daily lives in borderlands. The aim of this section is to learn more on how you and your Euroregion relate to such other actors (e.g. regional or national government agencies, regional and national governments, other crossborder cooperation forums, non-governmental organizations, etc).

C1: Cross-border forums
Q1: What other networks/institutions that deal primarily issues of crossborder relevance? Do you represent the Euroregion or another institution (e.g. your municipality) in those networks?
Q2: What are the reasons for working with those institutions?
Q3: How much of your working time to you spend on these networks? Indicate if it is closer to 1, 5, 10 or 20 hours a week.

C2: Other institutions important for your Euroregional work
Q1: List institutions that you consider very important for your Euroregional work. In order to be as comprehensive as possible, think through if there are institutions that matter on local, regional, national, European and international level. Also try to think if there are any non-governmental organizations (such as business organizations, civil society organizations) that you work with.
Q2: For each of the institutions above, add a contact person if you have one.

Q3: For each of the institutions above, indicate if you can remember the last time you contacted any of these, or they contacted you. What was the contact about?

Q4: Who is usually responsible for initiating and/or maintaining contacts with these institutions?

Your answers will provide input into the dissertation project "Social capital and governance in European borderlands: A comparative study of Euroregions as policy coordinators". Please indicate your permission for your answers to be used for research analysis and possibly published in research publications (dissertation, academic journals).

Thank you for your participation!

Sara Svensson, PhD Candidate
Central European University
Nador u. 9, 1051 Budapest
Tel: +36 30 - 7586848
Email: svensson_sara@ceu-budapest.edu

ANNEX E – OVERVIEW OF CASES: KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Euroregion+ / Characteristics	Ister-Granum (HUSK*)	Hídverő (HUSK)	OstBoh (SENO**)	VarmOst (SENO)	Inntal (AUGE***)	Salzburg (AUGE)
Founded	*2003 Euroregion 2008 EGTC*	*1999 Association 2003 Euroregion*	*1980*	*1990*	*1999*	*1995*
Local governments in 2011	*89*	*18*	*22*	*15*	*66*	*95*
Approximate population 2010	*200,000*	*30,000*	*470,000*	*210,000*	*630,000******	*800,000******
Working language	*Hungarian (dominant), Slovak (rarely)*	*Hungarian (dominant), Slovak (frequently)*	*Swedish (dominant), Norwegian*	*Norwegian (dominant), Swedish*	*German*	*German*
Border existing since	*1919 (except 1938-1944)*	*1919 (except 1938-1944)*	*1751, 1905 (dissolved union)*	*1751, 1905 (dissolved union)*	*1813 (Treaty of Ried), except 1938-1945*	*1816 (Treaty of Munich), except 1938-1945*
State form	*unitary*	*Unitary*	*unitary*	*unitary*	*federal*	*federal*
National GDP(IMF 2010, in USD)	*HU: 14,808, SK: 17,889*	*HU: 14,808, SK: 17,889*	*SE: 61,098, NO: 96,591*	*SE: 61,098, NO: 96,591*	*AU: 50,504, GE: 44,558*	*AU: 50,504, GE: 44,558*
Regional GDP (Eurostat, NUTSII 2008)	*Kozepdunantol: 9,500 SK02:Západné Slovensko 11,400*	*Kozepdunantol: 9,500 SK02:Západné Slovensko 11,400*	*SE31/Norra Mellansverige: 31,100, Ostfold 32,755 *****	*SE31/Norra Mellansverige: 31,100, Ostfold 32,755 *****	*Niederbayern: 29,900 , Tirol: 35,200*	*Niederbayern: 29,900 , Tirol: 35,200*

+Full name of cases: Ister-Granum EGTC, Hídverő Tarsulas, Granskommitten Ostfold-Bohuslan-Dalsland, Granskommiten Varmland-Ostfold, Euregio Inntal-Chiemsee-Kaisergebirge-Mangfalltal and Euregio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein.

*HUSK=Hungary and Slovakia

**SENO=Sweden and Norway

***AUGE=Austria and Germany

****Norwegian Statistical Office, data for Ostfold (NUTSIII) in *2007, 272883 NOK in 2007, converted to EUR according to exchange rate Dec 3, 2012.*

*****Based on regional membership, some local governments are not members.*

REFERENCES

Adler, Paul S., and Seok-Woo Kwon. 2002. "Social Capital: Prospects for a New Concept." *The Academy of Management Review* 27 (1) (January): 17. doi:10.2307/4134367.

Anderson, Stanley V. 1967. *The Nordic Council: a Study of Scandinavian Regionalism.* Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Association of European Border Regions, and European Commission. 2000. "Practical Guide to Cross-border Cooperation. Third Edition. Texts Prepared by Gabbe, J., Malchus, V., and Martinos, H, Preface of European Commissioners M. Barnier and G. Verheugen. Available Online at Http://www.aebr.net/ (accessed February 8, 2010)."

Bache, Ian. 2012. "Multi-level Governance in the European Union." In *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*, ed. David Levi-Faur, 628–641. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baranyi, Béla. 2006. "Euroregions Along the Eastern Borders of Hungary: A Question of Scale." In *EU Enlargement, Region Building and Shifting Borders of Inclusion and Exclusion.*, ed. James Wesley Scott. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Barbour, Rosaline. 2007. *Introducing Qualitative Research: A Student's Guide to the Craft of Doing Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Baron, Stephen, John Field, and Tom Schuller, ed. 2002. *Social Capital - Critical Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bartal, Anna Maria, and Krisztina Molnar. 2006. "Civil Kapcsolati Hálók Az Ister-Granum Eurorégióban". Esztergom: Eurohid Alapitvany.

Blatter, Joachim. 1997. "Explaining Crossborder Cooperation: A Border-Focused and Border-External Approach." *Journal of Borderland Studies* 12 (1 & 2).

———. 2000. *Entgrenzung Der Staatenwelt?: Politische Institutionenbildund in Grenzüberschreitenden Regionen in Europa Und Nordamerika*. Weltpolitik Im 21. Jahrhundert. Baden-Baden: Nomos.

———. 2004. "From 'spaces of Place' to 'spaces of Flows'? Territorial and Functional Governance in Cross-border Regions in Europe and North America." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 28 (3): 530–548. doi:10.1111/j.0309-1317.2004.00534.x.

Borgatti, S.P., K Carley, and D Krackhardt. 2006. "Robustness of Centrality Measures Under Conditions of Imperfect Data." *Social Networks* 28: 124–136.

Borgatti, S.P., M.G. Everett, and L.C. Freeman. 2002. "Ucinet for Windows: Software for Social Network Analysis". Harvard, MA: Analytic Technologies.

BORZEL, Tanja A. 1998. "Organizing Babylon - On the Different Conceptions of Policy Networks". Article. http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/16679.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge University Press.

———. 1986. "Bourdieu, P. (1986) The Forms of Capital. In J. Richardson." In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J Richardson, 241–258. New York: Greenwood.

Bouwens, Sophie. 2004. "The Dynamics of Cross-Border Labor: Commuting from the Dutch to the German Part of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, 1960-2000." *Journal of Borderland Studies* 19 (2).

Brusis, M. 2002. "Brusis, M. (2002), Between EU Requirements, Competitive Politics and National Traditions: Re-creating Regions in the Accession Countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Governance, 15, 531-559."

Castells, Manuel. 1996. *The Rise of the Network Society: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture Volume I*. Wiley-Blackwell.

———. 2009a. *The Rise of the Network Society: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture Volume I*. 2nd Edition with a New Preface. Wiley-Blackwell.

———. 2009b. *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture Volume II*. 2nd Edition with a New Preface. Wiley-Blackwell.

———. 2010. *End of Millennium: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture Volume III*. 2nd Edition with a New Preface. Wiley-Blackwell.

Christopoulos, Dimitrios C. 2006. "Relational Attributes of Political Entrepreneurs: a Network Perspective." *Journal of European Public Policy* 13 (5): 757–778. doi:10.1080/13501760600808964.

Christopoulos, Dimitrios, and Karin Ingold. 2011. "Distinguishing Between Political Brokerage & Political Entrepreneurship." *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 10 (January): 36–42. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.01.006.

Cohen, Michael, James March, and Johan P. Olsen. "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice." *Administrative Science Quarterly*.

Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (January 1): S95–S120.

Coleman, James Samuel. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Collins, Lyndhurst. 1998. "The Dynamics of Regional Identity in a Frontier Region: The Case of Alsace." *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 13 (1): 29–55. doi:10.1080/08865655.1998.9695508.

Courchene, Thomas J. 1995. "Glocalization: The Regional/international Interface." *Canadian Journal of Regional Science* 18 (1): 1–20.

Dahal, Ganga Ram, and Krishna Prasad Adhikari. 2009. "Briding, Linking, and Bonding Social Capital in Collective Action". CAPRi Working Paper No. 79.

Deas, Iain, and Alex Lord. 2006. "From a New Regionalism to an Unusual Regionalism? The Emergence of Non-standard Regional Spaces and Lessons for the Territorial Reorganisation of the State." *Urban Studies* 43 (10): 1847–1877.

Demidov, Andrey, and Sara Svensson. 2011. "Friendly Neighbours: Increasing the Potential of European Neighbourhood Policy Cross-Border Cooperation Initiatives. PASOS Policy Brief". Policy Association for an Open Society.

———. 2013. "Local Cross-border Cooperation at the European Union's External Border: The Meaning of Local in European Neighborhood Policy." *Regions & Cohesion*.

Deppisch, Sonja. 2008. "Social Capital and Other Main Influences on Governance Processes in Cross-border Micro-regions: The Case of the Austrian-German Euregio 'Via Salina'." In *Cross-border Governance and Sustainable Spatial Development. Mind the Gaps!*, ed. Markus Leibenath, Eva Korcelli-Olejniczak, and Robert Knippschild, 67–83. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Verlag.

Dirninger, Christian. 2004. "Wirtschaft Und Bevölkerung Vom 18. Bis Ins 20. Jahrhundert." In , ed. Gabriele Pursch, 98–118. Freilassing: EuRegio.

Dopsch, Heinz. 2004. "Lander Und Landesgrenzen Bis 1803." In *Heimat Mit Geschichte Und Zukunft*, 49–57. Freilassing: Euregio Salzburg - Berchtesgadener Land - Traunstein.

Dörry, Sabine, and Antoine Decoville. 2012. "Transportation Policy Networks in Cross-border Regions. First Results from a Social Network Analysis in Luxembourg and the Greater Region". CEPS INSTEAD Working papers No 2012-22.

Duchacek, Ivo. 1984. "The International Dimension of Subnational Self-government." *Publius* 14 (4): 5–32.

———. 1986. The Territorial Dimension of Politics. Within, Among, and Across Nationals. Boulder, London.

Durand, Frédéric, and Jen Nelles. 2012. "Cross-border Governance Within the Eurometropolis Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai (ELKT) Through the Example of Cross-border Public Transportation". CEPS INSTEAD Working papers No 2012-16.

Ekman, Stig. 2005. "Stig Ekman: Förbindelser Under Krig." In Goda Grannar Eller Morska Motståndare : Sverige Och Norge Från 1814 till Idag, ed. Öystein Sörensen and Nilsson Torbjörn, 197–214. Stockholm: Carlsson.

Eriksonas, Linas. 2006. "Historic Borders and Ethnic Arguments in Eastern Europe After 1918." In Crossing the Border: Boundary Relations in a Changing Europe, ed. Thomas Lundén. Eslov: Forlags AB Gondolin.

Esaiasson, Peter, Mikael Giljam, Henrik Oscarsson, and Lena Wägnerud. 2007. Metodpraktikan: Konsten Att Studera Samhälle, Individ Och Marknad. Stockholm: Norsteds Juridik.

Eskelinen, Heikki, and Juha Kotilainen. 2005. "A Vision of a Twin City: Exploring the Only Case of Adjacent Urban Settlements at the Finnish-Russian Border." Journal of Borderlands Studies 20 (2): 31–46.

Foucher, Michel. 1998. "The Geopolitics of European Frontiers." In The Frontiers of Europe, ed. Malcolm Anderson and Eberhard Bort, Chapter 15. Pinter Publishers Ltd.

Gabbe, Jens, and Viktor von Malchus. 2008. Cooperation Between European Border Regions: Review and Perspectives. Association of European Border Regions. Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Gerő, Márton, and István Micsinai. 2012. "Mapping Cross-border Networks: Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine." Conference paper. "EUBorderregions", Budapest, May 12, 2012.

Goldman, Minton F. 1999. Slovakia Since Independence: a Struggle for Democracy. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Gränskommitten Östfold-Bohuslän-Dalsland. 2005. "Gränskommitten 25 År."

———. 2011. "Annual Report 2010."

Grix, Jonathan, and Vanda Knowles. 2003. "The Euroregion and the Maximization of Social Capital: Pro Europa Viadrina." In New Borders for a Changing Europe. Cross-border Cooperation and Governance., ed. James Anderson, Liam O'Dowd, and Thomas M Wilson.

Haagensen, Klaus Munch, ed. 2012. "Nordic Statistical Yearbook". Nordic Council.

Haase, Annegret, and Andreas Wust. 2004. "Advancing Integration or Construction New Barriers to Co-operation? Stimuli and Restrictions for Cross-Border Communication at the Polisy Eastern Border on the Eve of the EU Enlargement." Journal of Borderland Studies 19 (2).

Häkli, Jouni. 2009. "'Boundaries of Trust: Building a Transnational Space in Haparanda-Tornio." In Social Capital and Urban Networks of Trust, ed. Jouni Häkli and Claudio Minca, 205–232. Surrey, Burlington: Ashgate.

Hamann, Brigitte. 2000. The Reluctant Empress. Ullstein Tb.

Hammersley, Martyn. 1990. Reading Ethnographic Research: A Critical Guide. London: Longmans.

Hanneman, Robert, and Mark Riddle. 2005. Introductio to Social Network Methods. Riverside, CA: University of California Press.

Hansen, Niles. 1986. "The Nature and Significance of Transborder Cooperation in the Mexico-U.S. Borderlands: Some Empirical Evidence." Journal of Borderlands Studies 1 (2): 57–65.

Hansen, Niles M. 1977. Employment Structure and Change in Southwest Borderlands Functional Economic Areas, 1968-1972 and 1972-1976: An Analysis Using One Percent

Continuous Work History Sample Data. Southwest Borderlands Regional Economic Development Project, Mexico-United States Border Research Program.

Hardi, Tamas. 2005. "Az Eurorégiók, Mint a Határon Átnyúló Fejlesztés Eszközei a Kárpát-medencében [Euroregions, as the Means of Cross-border Development in the Carpathic Basin]". Available at www.magyarorszag2015.hu/tanulmanyok/Hardi_Tamas051103.pdf <last accessed on 3 January, 2007>.

Harvey, David. 2006. Spaces of Global Capitalism: A Theory of Uneven Geographical Development. 1st ed. Verso.

Heclo, Hugh. 1978. "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment." In The New American Political System, ed. Anthony King. American Enterprise Institute.

Heclo, Hugh, and Aron Wildavsky. 1974. The Private Government of Public Money: Community and Policy Inside British Politics. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Herrschel, Tassilo, and Pontus Tallberg. 2011. "Introduction: Regins, 'Fuzziness' of Opportunity?" In The Role of Regions: Networks, Scale, Territory. Region Skåne.

Hill, Michael, and Peter Hupe. 2002. Implementing Public Policy: Governance in Theory and in Practice. First Edition. Sage Publications Ltd.

Hooghe, Liesbet, and Gary Marks. 2001. Multi-Level Governance and European Integration. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

———. 2003. "Unraveling the Central State, but How? Types of Multi-level Governance." American Political Science Review 97 (02): 233–243. doi:10.1017.S0003055403000649.

Hooper, Barbara, and Olivier Kramsch, ed. 2004. Cross-Border Governance in the European Union. 1st ed. Routledge.

Van Houtum, Henk. 2000. "European Geographical Research on Borders and Border Regions." Journal of Borderlands Studies 15 (1).

Van Houtum, Henk, and James W Scott. 2005. "Policy Considerations of Project Results: 'Good Practices' and Situational Ethics of Cross-Border Cooperation. Berlin and Nijmegen: Exlinea Policy Paper, Available at http://www.ctc.ee/exlinea/pub/EXLINEA_Policy_Paper.pdf (accessed 29 April, 2010)."

Hudson, R. 1999. "The Learning Economy, the Learning Firm and the Learning Region." European Urban and Regional Studies 6 (N1): 59–72.

Huisman, M. 2009. "Imputation of Missing Network Data: Some Simple Procedure." Journal of Social Structure 10 (1).

Interreg Bayern-Osterreich 2007-2013. 2007. "Operationelles Programm 'Ziel Europaische Territoriale Zusammenarbeit' Deutschland/Bayern-Osterreich 2007-2013. CCI-Nr 2007CB163PO004". Genehmigt am 18.09.2007 Entscheidung der Kommission E/2007/1971 - C(2007)4242.

Interreg Sverige-Norge 2007-2013. 2007. "Program for Europeiskt Territoriellt Samarbete. Interreg Sverige-Norge, CCI:2007CB163PO016". Godkant av EU kommissionen 2007-11-15 C(2007)5461.

Jeffery, C. 2000. "Jeffery, C. (2000), Sub-National Mobilization and European: Integration: Does It Make Any Difference? Journal of Common Market Studies, 38, 1-23."

Jessop, Bob. 1993. "Towards a Schumpeterian Workfare State? Preliminary Remarks on post-Fordist Political Economy." Studies in Political Economy 40: 7–40.

———. 2002. "Jessop, Bob (2002), 'The Political Economy of Scale', in M. Perkmann and N-L Sum, (eds.) Globalization, Regionalization and Cross-Border Regions,." In , 25–49. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Johnson, Corey M. 2009. "'Cross-Border Regions and Territorial Restructuring in Central Europe: Room for More Transboundary Space." European Urban and Regional Studies 16 (2): 177–191.

Jukarainen, Pirjo. 2006. "Border Research in Practice and Theory." Cooperation and Conflict 41 (4): 470.

Keating, Michael. 1998. "Is There a Regional Level of Government in Europe?'." In Regions in Europe, by Patrick Le Gales and Christian Leusne, 11–29. London and New York: Routledge.

Kingdon, John W. 1984. Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, Update Edition, with an Epilogue on Health Care (2nd Edition). 2nd ed. Longman.

Klatt, Martin. 2006. "Regional Cross-broder Cooperation and National Minorities in Border Regions - a Problem or an Opportunity." In Explanding Borders: Communities and Identities, ed. Zaneta Ozolina. Riga: University of Latvia.

Knippschild, Robert. 2008. "Inter-urban Cooperation in the German-Polish-Czech Triangle." In Cross-border Governance and Sustainable Spatial Development. Mind the Gaps!, ed. Markus Leibenath, Eva Korcelli-Olejniczak, and Robert Knippschild, 101–115. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Verlag.

Knoke, David, Franz Urban Pappi, Jeffrey Broadbent, and Yutaka Tsujinaka. 1996. Comparing Policy Networks: Labor Politics in the U.S., Germany, and Japan. First Edition. Cambridge University Press.

Koff, Harlan. 2007a. Deceiving (Dis)Appearances: Analyzing Current Developments in European and North American Border Regions. Bruxelles; New York: P.I.E. Peter Lang.

———. 2007b. "Power, Politics and Deceiving (Dis)Appearances." In Deceiving (Dis)Appearances: Analyzing Current Developments in European and North American Border Regions, 11–33. Bruxelles; New York: P.I.E Peter Lang.

Kohler-Koch, Beate. 2009. "The Three Worlds of European Civil society—What Role for Civil Society for What Kind of Europe?" Policy and Society 28 (1) (April): 47–57. doi:10.1016/j.polsoc.2009.02.005.

Kohler☐Koch, Beate. 1996. "Catching up with Change: The Transformation of Governance in the European Union." Journal of European Public Policy 3 (3) (September): 359–380. doi:10.1080/13501769608407039.

Kolossov, Vladimir. 2006. "Theoretical Limology: New Analytical Approaches." In Crossing the Border: Boundary Relations in a Changing Europe, ed. Thomas Lundén. Eslov: Forlags AB Gondolin.

Kossinets, Gueorgi. 2005. "Effects of Missing Data in Social Networks." Social Networks 28 (3): 247–268.

Krackhardt, David, and Robert Stern. 1988. "Informal Networks and Organizational Crises: An Experimental Simulation." Social Psychology Quarterly 51 (2): 123–140.

Kramsch, Oliver, Henk van Houtum, and Wolfgang Zierhofer, ed. 2005. B/ordering Space. Aldershot; Burlington: Ashgate.

Kramsch, Oliver, and Virginie Mamadouh. 2003. "Crossing Borders of Political Governance and Democracy." Journal of Borderland Studies 18 (1).

Kramsch, Olivier, and Barbara Hooper, ed. 2004. Cross-Border Governance in the European Union. London and New York: Routledge.

Krok, Katarzyna, and Maciej Smetkowski. 2006. "Local and Reigonal Cross-Border Cooperation Between Poland and Ukraine." In EU Enlargement, Region Building and Shifting Borders of Inclusion and Exclusion., ed. James Wesley Scott, 177–191. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Lasswell, Harold Dwight. 1958a. Politics: Who Gets What, When, How. World Pub. Co.

———. 1958b. Politics: Who Gets What, When, How. World Pub. Co.

Laumann, Edward O. 1987. The Organizational State: Social Choice in National Policy Domains. University of Wisconsin Press.

Laumann, Edward O., and David Knoke. 1987. The Organizational State: Social Choice in National Policy Domains. Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press.

LGI. 2009. "Annual Report 2008". Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, Open Society Institute. http://lgi.osi.hu/publications/2009/404/AR_2009_landscape_01_06_2009.pdf.

Lidström, Anders. 2003. Kommunsystem i Europa. Liber.

Lijphart, Arend. 1977. Democracy in Plural Societies: a Comparative Exploration. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative. 2006. The State of Local Democracy in Central Europe: Reports from Bulgaria, Estonia, and Slovakia. LGI Books. Budapest: Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, Open Society Institute.

Lorentzon, Sten. 2006. "Västra Götaland Och Östfold - Gränsland i Omvandling. Forskningsansats Och Frågor." Kulturgeografiska Institutionen. Handelshögskolan, Gothenburg University, Occasional Papers 2006:4.

Losch, August. 1975. "The Nature of Economic Regions.' Reprint from 1938." In Regional Policy: Readings in Theory and Applications., ed. John Friedmann and William Alonso. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Lowi, Theodore J. 1964. At the Pleasure of the Mayor: Patronage and Power in New York City, 1898-1958. Free Press of Glencoe.

March, James G, and Johan P. Olsen. 1989. Rediscovering Institutions. New York: Free Press.

Marks, Gary. 1993. "Structural Policy and Multilevel Governance in the EC." In The State of the European Community: The Maastricht Debates and Beyond, ed. A Cafruny and G Rosenthal, 391–410. London: Longman.

Martinez, Oscar. 1990. "Transnational Fronterizos: Cross-border Linkages in Mexican Border Society." Journal of Borderlands Studies 5 (1).

Marzano, Marco. 2012. "Informed Consent." In The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research. The Complexity of the Craft, ed. Jaber F. Gubrium, James A. Holstein, Amir B Marvasti, and Karyn D. McKinney, 443–456. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mason, Jennifer. 2002. Qualitative Researching. 2nd ed. Los Angeles, London, New Dehli, Singapore, Washington DC: Sage Publications.

Mayoux, L. 2001. "Talking the Downside: Social Capital, Women's Empowerment and Micro-finance in Cameroon." Development and Change 32: 435–454.

McLean, Scott L., David A. Schultz, and Manfred Steger, ed. 2002. Social Capital: Critical Perspectives on Community and "Bowling Alone". New York: New York University Press.

Medeiros, Eduardo. 2009a. "(Re)defining the Euroregion Concept". working paper available at <http://www.ccmar.ualg.pt/gostodofrio/ct/Euroregion_Eduardo_Medeiros.pdf>.

———. 2009b. "Old Vs Recent Cross-border Cooperation: Portugal-Spain and Norway-Sweden". available at Old vs Recent Cross-Border Cooperation: Portugal-Spain and Sweden-Norway, http://www.ccmar.ualg.pt/gostodofrio/ct/PSvsSN_Eduardo_Medeiros.pdf.

———. 2009c. "The Cross-border Cooperation Between Sweden-Norway (Interreg-A)". available at http://www.ccmar.ualg.pt/gostodofrio/ct/CBC_Swe_Nor_Eduardo_Medeiros.pdf.

———. 2011. "(Re)defining the Euroregion Concept." European Planning Studies 19 (1): 141–158. doi:10.1080/09654313.2011.531920.

Medve-Bálint, Gergo. 2012. "Incentives and Obstacles to Cross-Border Cooperation in Post-Communist Central Europe." In Europe's Changing Geography, ed. Nicola Bellini and Ulrich Hilpert. London: Routledge.

Medve-Bálint, Gergo, and Sara Svensson. 2012. "Why Do Local Governments Join (or Not Join) Euroregions?" In The Border Multiple: The Practicing of Borders Between Public Policy and Everyday Life in Europe., ed. Martin Klatt, Dorte Andersen, and Marie Sandberg. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate.

Medve-Bálint, Gergő, and Sara Svensson. 2012. "A Helyi Önkormánysatok Eurorégiokban Való Részvétele Közép-Európában." Észak-magyarországi Stratégiai Füzetek 9 (1): 19–32.

———. 2013. "Diversity and Development: Policy Entrepreneurship of Euroregional Initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe." Journal of Borderlands Studies.

Mill, John Stuart. 2012. A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive: Being a Connected View of the Principles of Evidence, Methods of Scientific Investigation. Forgotten Books.

Mintrom, Michael. 1997. "Policy Entrepreneurs and the Diffusion of Innovation." American Journal of Political Science 41 (3) (July 1): 738–770. doi:10.2307/2111674.

Moosleitner, Fritz. 2004a. "Die Zeit Er Römischen Herrschaft." In Heimat Mit Geschichte Und Zukunft, 12–17. Freilassing: Euregio Salzburg - Berchtesgadener Land - Traunstein.

———. 2004b. "Urgeschichte." In Heimat Mit Geschichte Und Zukunft, ed. Gabriele Pursch, 6–11. Freilassing: Euregio Salzburg - Berchtesgadener Land - Traunstein.

———. 2004c. "Das Frühmittelalter - Baiuwaren Und Romanen: Grabfunde Und Siedlungen." In Heimat Mit Geschichte Und Zukunft, ed. Gabriele Pursch. Freilassing: Euregio Salzburg - Berchtesgadener Land - Traunstein.

Müller, Martin Heinz. 2008. "Taking Stock of the Austrian Accession to the EU: With Regard to the Arguments of Its Referendum Campaign in 1994. Master Thesis. Collection Euryopa Vol 57-2009". Institut Europeen de L'universite de Geneve.

Müller, Sonja. 2009. "Strukturprobleme Und Entwicklungspotentiale Der Eurego. Am Beispiel Der EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land - Traunstein, Der EuRegio Maas-Rhein Und Der EuRegio Bayeerischer Wald-Böhmerwald - Unterer Inn. Magisterarbeit". Universität Salzburg.

Muller, Verena, and Hein Hoebink. 2003. "25 Jahre EUREGIO-Rat Rückblick Auf Die Arbeit Eines Politischen Gremiums Im 'kleinen Europa'". EUregio. http://www.euregio.de/cms/publish/content/downloaddocument.asp?document_id=17.

Newman, David. 2003. "On Borders and Power: A Theoretical Framework." Journal of Borderland Studies 18 (1).

O'Dowd, Liam. 2003. "The Changing Significance of European Borders." In New Borders for a Changing Europe: Cross-border Cooperation and Governance., ed. Liam O'Dowd, James Anderson, and Thomas M Wilson, 13–36. London: Frank Cass Publishers.

Olsson, Eva, Sune Berger, and Hans Olof Gottfridsson. 2011. Gränslöst Liv? En Studie Av Två Gränskommuner i Värmland. Karlstad: Karlstad University Press.

Oresundsregionen, Oresund Network, and Interreg IIIA. 2004. "Oresundskompass Slutrapport. Available at Http://www.oresundskomiteen.dk/public_site/webroot/cache/article/file/slutrapport__regionale_analyser_januar_200422.pdf (accessed January 1, 2009)."

Ostrander, Susan A. 1987. "Shifting the Debate: Public/Private Sector Relations in the Modern Welfare State." Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly 16 (1-2) (January 1): 7–10. doi:10.1177/089976408701600102.

Pandeia. 2009. "Ex-Post Evaluation of INTERREG 2000-2006. Initiative Financed by the Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (No. 2008.CE.16.0.AT.016) 1st INTERIM REPORT TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION DG REGIO. Main Report. Available at Http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/rado2_en.htm."

Perkmann, Markus. 2002. "Institutional Entrepreneurship in the European Union." In Globalization, Regionalization and Cross-Border Regions, ed. M Perkman and N-L Sum, 103–124. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.

———. 2003a. "Cross-border Regions in Europe. Significance and Drivers of Regional Cross-border Cooperation." European Urban and Regional Studies 10 (2): 153–171.

———. 2003b. "Cross-border Regions in Europe. Significance and Drivers of Regional Cross-border Cooperation." European Urban and Regional Studies 10 (2): 153–171.

———. 2007. "Policy Entrepreneurship and Multilevel Governance: a Comparative Study of European Cross-border Regions." Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy 25 (6): 861–879.

Perkmann, Markus, and N-L Sum. 2002. "Globalization, Regionalization and Cross-border Regions: Scales, Discourses and Governance." In Globalization, Regionalization and Cross-Border Regions, ed. M Perkman and N-L Sum, 3–21. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Pfeffer, Jeffrey, and Gerald R. Salancik. 1978. The External Control of Organizations: a Resource Dependence Perspective. Stanford Business Classics. New York: Harper & Row.

Putnam, Robert, ed. 2002. "Sweden: Social Capital in the Social Democratic State." In Democracies in Flux: The Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. 2000. Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rhodes, R. a. W. 1994. "THE HOLLOWING OUT OF THE STATE: THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN BRITAIN." The Political Quarterly 65 (2): 138–151. doi:10.1111/j.1467-923X.1994.tb00441.x.

Rhodes, R. A. W. 2006. "Policy Network Analysis." In The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy, ed. Michael Moran, Martin Rein, and Robert Goodin. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, Lyn. 2005. Handling Qualitative Data: A Practical Guide. 1st ed. Sage Publications Ltd.

Sabatier, Paul A. 2007. Theories of the Policy Process, Second Edition. 2nd ed. Westview Press.

Säll, Line. 2011. Kluster Som Teori Och Politik: Om Den Regionala Tillväxtpolitikens Diskursiva Praktiker. Licentiate Thesis, Monograph. Karlstad: Karlstad University Press.

Sassen, Saskia. 2006. Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages. Princeton University Press.

Sassen, Saskia, ed. 2007. Deciphering the Global: Its Spaces, Scales and Subjects. 1st ed. Routledge.

Schack, Michael. 2001. "Regional Identity in Border Regions: The Difference Borders Make." Journal of Borderlands Studies 16 (2): 99–114.

Scharpf, Fritz W. 1978. "Intergovernmental Policy Studies: Issues, Concepts and Perspectives." In Interorganizational Policy Making. Limits to Coordination and Central Control, ed. Kenneth Hanf and Fritz W. Scharpf, 57–125. London: SAGE Modern.

———. 1994. Community and Autonomy Multilevel Policy-Making in the European Union. EUI-RSCAS Working Paper. European University Institute (EUI), Robert Schuman Centre of Advanced Studies (RSCAS). http://ideas.repec.org/p/erp/euirsc/p0082.html.

———. 1997a. "Economic Integration, Democracy and the Welfare State." Journal of European Public Policy 4 (1): 18–36. doi:10.1080/135017697344217.

———. 1997b. "Introduction. The Problem-solving Capacity of Multi-level Governance." Journal of European Public Policy 4 (4): 520–538.

Schmitter, Philippe C., and Gerhard Lehmbruch. 1979. Trends Toward Corporatist Intermediation. Sage Publications.

Scott, James W. 1999. "European and North-American Contexts for Cross-Border Regionalism." Regional Studies 33 (7): 605–617.

———. 2003. "Cross-border Governance in the Baltic Sea Region." In New Borders for a Changing Europe. Cross-border Cooperation and Governance., ed. James Anderson, Liam O'Dowd, and Thomas M Wilson, 135–153. London: Frank Cass Publishers.

Scott, James W, ed. 2006. EU Enlargement, Region Building and Shifting Borders of Inclusion and Exclusion. Ashgate Pub Ltd.

Scott, James Wesley. 2012. "European Politics of Borders, Border Symbolism and Cross-Border Cooperation." In A Companion to Border Studies, 83–99. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Scott, Professor John P. 2000. Social Network Analysis: A Handbook. 2nd ed. Sage Publications Ltd.

Scott, W. Richard. 2002. Organizations: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems. 5th ed. Prentice Hall.

Silverman, David. 2009. Doing Qualitative Research. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Skomsöy, Gunnar, and Alf Sundin. 2005. "Varför Inte Mer Samarbete När Möjligheter Finns? Kommunal Samverkan Och Näringslivsutveckling Mellan Norge Och Sverige". Karlstad, CERUT.

Smismans, Stijn. 2006. "Civil Society and European Governance: From Concepts to Research Agenda." In Civil Society and Governance in Europe: From National to International Linkages., ed. Stijn Smismans. Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Soós, Gábor. 2010. "Hungary." In Changing Government Relations in Europe - From Localism to Intergovernmentalism, ed. Michael Goldsmith and Edward Page. London: Routledge.

Soós, Gábor, Gábor Tóka, Glen Wright, and Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative. 2002. The State of Local Democracy in Central Europe. Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, Open Society Institute.

Sparke, Matthew. 2002. "Not a State, But More Than a State of Mind: Cascading Cascadias and the Geoeconomics of Cross-Border Regionalism." In Globalization, Regionalization and Cross-Border Regions, ed. Markus Perkmann and Ngai-Ling Sum, 212–238. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Stoddard, Ellwyn R. 1986. "Border Studies as an Emergent Field of Scientific Inquiry: Scholarly Contributions of U.S.-Mexico Borderlands Studies." Journal of Borderland Studies 1 (1).

Stork, D, and W.D. Richards. 1992. "Nonrespondents in Communication Network Studies: Problems and Possibilities." Group and Organization Management 17 (2): 193–209.

Strassoldo, Raimondo. 1982. "Frontier Regions: Future Collaboration or Conflict?" West European Politics 5 (4) (October): 123–136. doi:10.1080/01402388208424389.

Swianeiwicz, Pawel, ed. 2010. Territorial Consolidation Reforms in Europe. Budapest: OSI/LGI.

Szabó, Gyula, and Gábor Koncz. 2006. "Transboundary Interaction in the Hungarian-Romanian Border Region: A Local View." In EU Enlargement, Region Building and Shifting Borders of Inclusion and Exclusion., ed. James Wesley Scott, 163–170. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Topaloglou, Lefteris, Victor Cupcea, Dmitris Kallioras, and Panagiotis Pantazis. 2012. "Types, Domains and Driving Forces of Territorial Cooperation in the Old EU, New EU and Non EU Neighboring Regions. Workshop Paper. RISC Writing Workshop, June 21st -23d, Luxemburg."

Topaloglou, Lefteris, Dmitris Kallioras, Panos Manetos, and George Petrakos. 2005. "A Border Regions Typology in the Enlarged European Union." Journal of Borderland Studies 20 (2).

Travers, Max. 2001. Qualitative Research Through Case Studies. SAGE.

Trigilia, Carlo. 2001. "Social Capital and Local Development." European Journal of Social Theory 4 (4) (November): 427–442.

Trost, Jan. 2005. Kvalitativa Intervjuer. Lund: Studentlitteratur AB.

University of Salzburg. 2008. "Working Papers from the Course 'Aspekte Grenzüberschreitender Interkommunaler Beziehungen an Hand Bayerisch-Salzburger Grenzgemeinden', Convened by Michael Ritter. Obtained by the Author."

Vallet, Elisabeth, and Charles David. 2009. "'Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Why Is There a Wall After All? The (re)building of the Wall in International Relations.' Papers Presented at the Conference Borderscapes II Another Brick in the Wall, Sicily, September 13-16, 2009."

Walther, Olivier, and Bernard Reitel. 2012. "Cross-border Policy Networks in the Trinational Region of Basel". CEPS INSTEAD Working papers No 2012-26.

Warren, Carol. 2002. "Qualitative Interviewing." In Handbook of Interview Research, ed. Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein, 83–102. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Wasserman, Stanley, and Katherine Faust. 1994. Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications. Cambridge University Press.

Winter, Sören. 2006. "Implementation." In Handbook of Public Policy, ed. Guy B Peters and Jon Pierre, 151–166. London - Thousand Oaks - New Dehli: SAGE.

Woolcock, M, and T Sweetser. 2002. "Bright Ideas: Social Capital—The Bonds That Connect." ADB Review 34 (2): 26.

Yin, Robert K. 2009. Case Study Research: Design and Methods. Fourth edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.