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**DRAFT**

# **ADDED VALUE OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION**

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## **ADDED VALUE OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION**

### **Preface**

Similar to the decision of a company to settle in a specific spot, cross-border cooperation does not only depend on economic aspects, but also on a business-friendly environment. Cross-border cooperation can only exploit its full potential and achieve the highest added value if the right framework conditions are present:

- peaceful living together at borders
- borders as meeting points and not as areas of separation
- a socio-cultural environment, which creates trust (comprehension and understanding of the neighbour and its language).

The full added value of cross-border cooperation in Europe has only become visible in an environment created after more than half a century of peace, European integration and open borders.

### ***European added value***

European added value arises from the fact that in the light of past experience, people who are living together in neighbouring border regions want to cooperate and thereby make a valuable contribution to the promotion of peace, freedom, security and the observance of human rights.

### ***Political added value***

Political added value involves making a substantial contribution towards:

- the development of Europe and European integration;
- getting to know each other, getting on together, understanding each other and building trust;
- the implementation of subsidiarity and partnership;
- increased economic, social and territorial cohesion and cooperation;
- preparing the accession of new members;
- using EU funding to secure cross-border cooperation via multiannual programmes, and ensuring that the necessary national and regional co-financing is committed in the long term.

### ***Institutional added value***

Institutional added value entails:

- active involvement of citizens, authorities, political and social groups on both sides of the border;
- guaranteed knowledge about one's neighbour (regional authorities, social partners, etc.);
- long-term cross-border cooperation in structures that are capable of working efficiently:

- as a vertically and horizontally functioning partnership, which is the base for every cross-border cooperation, despite having different structures and areas of responsibility;
- as a legally accepted target of aid and a working partner, receiving and administering funds;
- joint drafting, implementation and financing of cross-border programmes and projects.

Experience gained throughout Europe shows that jointly developed programmes and projects can be most effectively implemented if the regional and local partners play a relevant role.

### ***Economic added value***

The economic added value becomes apparent in the respective regions, albeit in different ways, through:

- the mobilisation of endogenous potential by strengthening the regional and local levels as partners for and initiators of cross-border cooperation;
- the participation of economic and social players (for example, chambers of commerce, associations, companies, trade unions, cultural and social institutions, environmental organisations and tourism agencies);
- the opening up of the labour market and harmonisation of professional qualifications;
- additional development, e.g. in the fields of infrastructure, transport, tourism, communication, the environment, education, research and cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises, and also the creation of more jobs in these areas;
- lasting improvements in the spatial development and regional policy;
- the improvement of cross-border infrastructure (not solely transport).

### ***Socio-cultural added value***

Socio-cultural added value is reflected in:

- lasting, repeated dissemination of knowledge about the geographical, structural, economic, socio-cultural and historical situation of a cross-border region (including the media's help);
- the overview of a cross-border region provided in maps, publications, teaching material, and so on;
- the development of a circle of committed experts (multipliers), such as schools, youth and adult educational establishments, the conservation authorities, cultural associations, libraries, museums, churches, and so forth;
- equal opportunities and extensive knowledge of the language or dialects of the neighbouring country as a component of cross-border regional development and a prerequisite for communication.

In this way, socio-cultural cross-border cooperation becomes a constituent element of regional development. Only if socio-cultural cooperation takes place, a workable cross-border environment for business, trade and services can be established.

**CONCLUSION:**

Cross-border cooperation was and is successful and creates added values (the concrete examples in the annex underline this). However, the potentials of cross-border cooperation are by far not fully used. One reason are the rather low resources. Cross-border cooperation is and remains a political task and a priority of the EU as the most important instrument for European integration and functioning cohesion.

## ***Annex: Concrete cross-border examples making added value evident***

Following examples make the added value evident. They are selected in such a way that they cover the whole EU territory (similar actions take place also in other border areas):

- ***Regional specific cross-border development concepts/strategies as a basic element for sustainable successful cooperation:*** e.g. practically all border areas in Germany and the BENELUX, as well as in Austria with its neighbours, Italian/French border, sea protection areas Corsica/Sardinia (Strait of Boniface), Finland/Sweden (Gulf of Bothnia), territorial observatory Alentejo/Extremadura/Centro (ES-PT), Atlas of the Island of Ireland (IE/UK);
- Creation of the necessary ***cross-border infrastructure (also maritime) as inevitable physical precondition for cross-border cooperation*** with regard to creating growth and jobs: e.g. Spain/France, Spain/Portugal, Alpine area, Kungspilen in Sweden/Norway, new ferry Kvarken-Mitscandia (FI/SE), Euroregion Elbe/Labe (DE/CZ), border crossings at the new internal borders Germany/Poland, Bulgaria/Romania, Hungary/Slovakia, and the external borders like Poland/Ukraine and the Balkans;
- Further promotion of ***cross-border growth and economic development*** in addition to the developments at national levels: cross-border area Ireland/Northern Ireland; Germany/Belgium/Netherlands with new jobs; Spanish/Portuguese border; Vienna/Bratislava (AT/SK); Irish-Welsh Network for Social Entrepreneurship (WINSENT);
- New ***cross-border business relationships*** between producers and suppliers (important role of the Chambers of Commerce): e.g. network of Chambers in Northern Greece/Bulgaria; Czech Republic/Saxony (DE); in other borders of Germany, particularly with Denmark, or France along the Upper Rhine; the cross-border Chamber of Commerce of Gipuzkoa (ES) /Bayonne (FR) (Bihartean), Hungary/Burgenland (HU/AT); agro-food industry (Benelux, DE/DK, IE/UK), Öresund (DK/SE); common branding (Alpine area, Carpathians, Pyrenees); aquaculture (IT/FR, Lake Constance CH/AT/DE);
- New ***cooperation and sales opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises***. These companies typically operate within a radius of some 200 km from their location, which usually covers the geographic area of the neighbouring border region: e.g. Northern Greece/FYROM - entrepreneurship centre for the Balkans and the Black Sea; the Arctic Investors Network at the Finish/Norwegian/Swedish border; forum of entrepreneurs at the Spanish/Portugues border; InterComm (IE/UK); T-Cheesimal (IT/MT);
- ***Promote entrepreneurial skills and the creation of start-ups especially for young people:*** e.g.: Latvia/Lithuania/Belarus, Bulgaria/Serbia, Sweden/Norway, Ireland/Northern Ireland, Spain/Portugal, Morocco/Gibraltar.
- ***A more efficient use (critical mass) of public funds by using greater catchment area for business activities and services*** on both sides of the border (in many

cases, businesses and services, such as research facilities and universities, waste management plants, recycling and infrastructure facilities, would not yield a profit or not even be available at all in border regions if there is no cross-border cooperation): e.g. joint sewage plants on the Polish/German border; joint libraries in the Upper Rhine region, Saar/Lor/Lux area and on the Danish/German border; joint projects in the health sector in many cross-border areas (e.g. emergencies, obstetrics, primary care) with a milestone at the Cerdanya Cross-Border Hospital in Puigcerdá (ES/FR), Telemedicine in Pomerania (PL/DE) and Finland/Russia; Regional Energy Planning in Western Macedonia-Epirus (GR)/Albania; Bio Base Europe in Euregio Scheldemond (NL/BE) and other renewable energies projects;

- **Joint research and innovation** (critical mass) generating additional synergies: e.g.. cooperation in the field of technology in Extremadura/Alentejo; Technology and Business Park on the Austrian/Czech and Austrian/Hungarian border; Mechatronics project and Centre for Microscope and Spectroscopy Analyses in EUREGIO (DE/NL); in Öresund (DK/SE), in the Danish/German border area, in South Tyrol (IT)/Tyrol (AT), the Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory in Braga (Portugal/Spain);
- Establishment of a **cross-border labour market** which offers new and additional employment opportunities, also for women, and collectives under risk (e.g.: minorities, handicapped and long term unemployed people): France/Switzerland with adjustment payments for commuters that work in Switzerland; German/French border area along the Upper Rhine; Öresund with its specific labour market strategy; Hedmark/Värmland (NO/SE); Eurocity Torneo (SE)/Haparanda (FI); Slovenia/Steiermark (AT); Galicia/Norte (ES/PT); cross-border EURES projects in several cross-border areas like Galicia/Norte, Bavaria (DE) /Czech Republic,
- Additional synergies and spin-off effects thanks to the **cooperation of universities, colleges of higher education and other educational institutions**: cooperation of universities Strasbourg/Basel/Freiburg/Karlsruhe in the Upper Rhine or in Lorraine/Saarland as well as between universities in Friuli Venezia Giulia/Slovenia/Austria; Collegium Polonicum between Poznan-Slubice (PL)/Frankfurt (Oder) (DE);
- **Bilingual cross-border professional training**: German/Polish, Dutch/German and French/German border areas, Pyrenees; hotel management, especially addressed to rural areas (DE/CZ, ES/PT, IE/UK); farming and livestock (ES/PT); crafts and design (DE/DK, SE/NO);
- Sustainable **cross-border environmental management and environmental protection** in Extremadura/Castilla y León/Centro (ES/PT); the Pyrenees; Bavaria/Upper-Austria/ Czech Republic; Poland/ Ukraine/ Belarus; the Baltic States/ Russia/ Belarus; Belgium/ the Netherlands/ Germany; North Karelia (FI)/Republic of Karelia (RU); international rivers Duero and Tagus (ES/PT); Ore Mountains (CZ/DE); Peipsi Lake (EE/RU), cross-border water management and supply in the River Mur (AT/SI), Krompach (CZ/DE); waste management at city of Dorst (DE/FR/LU), and other areas along the Rhine and the Moselle, cooperation of fire brigades in ES/PT, Euroregion Spree-Neiße-Bober (DE/PL), environmental training between NPC (FR)/Canterbury (UK); Stanca Costesti (RO/MD);

- Establishment and improvement of **cross-border public transport links** (buses, railways, trams) for the benefit of citizens, commuters and tourists: e.g. Austrian/German border close to Salzburg, in the Euregio Egrensis (CZ/DE) and Euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa (DE/CZ/PL) with a cross-border public transport system including throughout tariffs; bus Frankfurt (Oder) / Slubice (DE/PL); multimodal transport terminal with a trade centre in Frankfurt (Oder) (DE/PL); research centre for logistics in Euregio Rhine-Meuse-North (DE/NL); tram Strasbourg/Kehl (FR/DE); public transport across the Öresund Bridge (DK/SE);
- **Cross-border tourism concepts and projects:** Lake of Constance (DE/AT/CH); Euroregions along the Czech/German border; joint touristic service centre Poland/Lithuania; Galicia/Norte with a touristic map for Spanish/Portuguese area; Tatry (Poland/Slovakia) in the Carpathian Mountains; joint touristic marketing and promotion activities in Ireland/Northern Ireland and in the Working Community of the Pyrenees (Andorra/France/Spain); joint touristic strategies for Kent/Nord-Pas-de-Calais (UK/FR), Via Julia Augusta (AT/IT); Egnatia (GR/AL); Border Castles (ES/PT); Gothic Castles (PL/LT/RU); Baltic Fortresses (Baltic Sea Region); Cross-Country Skiing (CZ/PL); Augustów Canal and Neman River (BY/PL); Livonian Pearls (EE/LV); Route of POW camps (DE/PL); the witch trail (CZ/PL); Cross-Border Air Tourism (LT/PL); Cross-Border Wine Routes (HU/HR); Friuli Venezia Giulia/Slovenia (IT/SLO);
- **Cross border culture and media** provide in-depth knowledge of the daily-life and culture of the neighbours and facilitate the generation of trust: Many cultural activities in Central Europe, Scandinavia, Southern Europe, the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Black Sea area, the Carpathians often very much connected with tourism promotion. Furthermore, there are networks of professionals and creative industries (Musicians in ES/PT, Museums in AT/SI, Fine Arts in Meuse-Rhine); joint festivals (Saxony-Bohemia, PL/SK, BY/LT); summer camps for young people (DE/PL, GR/AL); training for creative industries (Great Region) and so forth;
  - Media: early cross-border radio projects (ES/PT, Radio Sami in NO/FI/SE, Radio Pomerania in DE/PL), TV (DE/DK, Cross-border Citizenship in BE/FR), cross-border newspapers in several European areas;
- **Cross-border cooperation as a model for “new governance”** (everywhere in Europe through EGTC’s, Euroregions and similar structures, which practice subsidiarity and partnership in a daily basis and networks, despite different structures, competencies and laws on both sides of the border (asymmetries); electronic government tools in the Eurocity Valença-Tui (ES/PT), Haparanda/Torneo (SE/NO), eSENS - cross-border e-government in Central Europe, led by North Rhine-Westfalia.