

### Regional development at the borders of the European Union: introductory studies

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# REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE BORDERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION INTRODUCTORY STUDIES

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Development is a complex process, with multiple values and dimensions. For specialists in many domains of activity, it represents a concept to which intensive research has been dedicated. On the other hand, politicians and governments have adopted it as a phrase that might substantiate their strategies and policies.

As early as the beginning of the 18th century, the representatives of the Enlightenment, who showed interest in understanding the natural laws that determined the growth of plants and animals, tried to outline the meaning of this concept. Development was understood as being conditioned by the presence of favourable circumstances, in which the potential of living organisms could be released and a perfect existential form could be attained.

The understanding of the concept as evolutionary process over time was borrowed by philosophers in the second half of the eighteenth century, in their approach of socio-economic and political issues from a rational and scientific stance. As advocates of rationalism, they managed to promote development as part of the set of principles imposed by the divinity, which governed the physical and human universe. In that context, the process had to be analysed independently of religious issues or explanations, economic and social constraints were challenged, and the state wanted to be the main instrument of progress. Later on, during the nineteenth century, modernist currents of thought, dominant at the time, placed emphasis on humans as emancipated beings who, by the use of their own abilities, became the subject and the main actors of their own development. Before long, the politicians of the time also adopted the phrase, at the same time adding to it the dimension of necessary and inevitable desideratum from the perspective of the success of the new production methods, extended on an industrial scale<sup>1</sup>.

The principles of development were disseminated beyond the borders of Europe with the emergence and consolidation of colonial systems. During the same period, concepts such as “evolution” or “growth” were used in the publications of the time in order to characterize transformations that occurred in society. They heralded a change as regards the association of development with welfare. The term was used mainly in the legislation whereby rulers undertook to guarantee a minimum level of food, education and health care services in the colonies, but also to confirm a certain level of civilization, industrialization and productivity. From that moment on, regardless of the context in which it was used, the concept of development was perceived as encompassing change, evolutionary steps from simple to complex, and stages of growth from lower to higher levels, the factors and determinants involved in the process being only of economic nature. Adam Smith was one of the first theoreticians to demonstrate the influence of factors such as production, savings, and capital accumulation on economic growth<sup>2</sup>. The neoclassical theory developed by him, together with the one founded by Karl Marx, offered several development models that

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<sup>1</sup> Gustavo Esteva, “Development”, in *The Development Dictionary. A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, Second Edition, edited by Wolfgang Sachs, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 3-6.

<sup>2</sup> Gheorghe Zaman, George Georgescu (coord.), *Dezvoltarea economică endogenă la nivel regional: cazul României* [Endogenous economic development at regional level: the case of Romania], Expert Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015, p. 24.

focused on the behaviour of individuals and companies in the context of a perfect competitive environment, with very mobile production factors. In addition, the microeconomics of the early twentieth century were self-regulating through wages, prices, and low interest rates<sup>3</sup>. During the crisis of the 1930s, Keynes examined the role of the state in managing the economic downturn and noted that it was directly involved, as a consumer, investor or job creator, in the recovery of society. Thus, Keynes outlines a new, macroeconomic approach for the analysis of economic growth, the proposed model being oriented towards the priority development of certain activities and the use of a set of indicators to measure growth, the most important of which used to be the gross domestic product<sup>4</sup>.

By the end of World War II, development had become an objective, with economic connotations, for each state, assumed even by the Charter of the United Nations<sup>5</sup>. Keynesian thinking was taken up by other economists, who proposed models for intensifying production through industrialization, for increasing the per capita income<sup>6</sup>, and for increasing the production of per capita goods<sup>7</sup>. Such guidelines did not take into account the consequences of rapid growth and neglected the social realities described in the first World Social Welfare Report, published in 1952 by the UN. During the following decade, starting from the observation that in a global capitalist system there was a systematic exchange of resources from poor to rich countries, neo-Marxist proponents put forward the view that such an exchange was unequal and represented the source of socio-economic imbalances and reflected the way societies were evolving<sup>8</sup>.

The focus exclusively on economic growth has been heavily criticized, especially with the worsening of social problems (persistence of poverty, environmental degradation, emergence of ecological imbalances, uncontrolled expansion of urbanization, persistence of unemployment, the emergence of new forms of crisis, loss of confidence in government, etc.)<sup>9</sup>. Another term gradually entered the vocabulary of specialists, i.e. "social situation". If initially the concept was only a set of statistical indicators adjacent to development, later the concept started to be widely debated and studied as being part of both reality and of economic growth. In 1962, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) characterized development processes as having two dimensions, economic and social, recommending a balance between the two aspects and their integration within the same concept, given the interdependence between the factors and determinants of each dimension. Thus, a new paradigm was born in which resources, technological progress, economic aspects and social changes were integrated<sup>10</sup>, and the system of indicators (GDP, labour productivity, money flow, trade balance, etc.) was completed with indicators regarding the quality of life. In 1975, the human-centred dimension of development was added, starting from the idea that human beings have a huge impact on development processes. Indicators relating to aspects of community life, to relations with the outer world and with one's own consciousness (the human development index and the human freedom index)<sup>11</sup> were also added. In the late 1980s, development was equated with the idea of well-being, which encompassed growth, expansion, economic progress, continuous enrichment (of an individual, community, or society as a whole), and improved living conditions.

When the indicators mentioned above refer to a more or less defined area, the development acquires a spatial character, in addition to the temporal one, conferred by the evolution in time of the growth

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<sup>3</sup> Mihail Lupașcu, *Concepte și teorii cu impact asupra dezvoltării durabile a așezărilor umane* [Concepts and theories with an impact on the sustainable development of human settlements], available at [https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag\\_file/161-165\\_11.pdf](https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/161-165_11.pdf), [accessed in August 2021], p. 161.

<sup>4</sup> Gheorghe Zaman, George Georgescu (coord.), *op.cit.*, p. 21-22; Mihail Lupașcu, *op.cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>5</sup> Gustavo Esteva, *op.cit.*, p. 8; U.N., *United Nations Charter*, available at <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter>, [accessed in August 2021].

<sup>6</sup> Lewis W. Arthur, *The Theory of Economic Growth*, Homewood, Ill., Richard D. Irwin, 1955.

<sup>7</sup> Paul N. Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1957.

<sup>8</sup> Mihail Lupașcu, *op.cit.*, p. 162.

<sup>9</sup> Maria Prisacari, *Abordări teoretice ale politicilor de dezvoltare regională* [Theoretical approaches to regional development policies], available at [https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag\\_file/490-493\\_1.pdf](https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/490-493_1.pdf), [accessed in August 2021], p. 490-491.

<sup>10</sup> Gustavo Esteva, *op.cit.*, p. 8-10.

<sup>11</sup> Maria Prisacari, *op.cit.*, p. 490-491, Gustavo Esteva, *op.cit.*, p. 11.

processes. In this context, development theories can be extrapolated and translated into local, regional, rural, urban or territorial development models. In addition, the emergence of the globalization phenomenon has intensified interest in this type of analysis, the territorial impact of direct and unmediated relationship between different areas of the globe, situated at a great distance from each other, being an important factor in the development of an area<sup>12</sup>. The broad issues addressed in these analyses can be grouped into 4 broad categories, depending on the theories of regional development underlying the studies. Thus<sup>13</sup>:

1. Analyses that address the issue from the perspective of neoclassical theories of growth, in which the quantity and quality of natural resources, the level of technology, monetary resources, labour and the cost of transport are considered the main determinants of regional growth. To these the following factors are added: full employment, maintaining a certain level of wages, flexibility of prices and wages, population growth, the degree of savings and investments, etc. In order to have constant and equal growth rates, labour and capital should move freely in a homogeneous economic space and in a perfect competitive environment, without taking into account social, political, innovation and regional geographical features. The model developed by Solow brings an improvement to these theories by integrating, along with labour and capital, the third factor - technical progress. In this way, the model manages to provide an explanation for the existence of convergence in the case of growth indicators for certain regions or for the deepening of discrepancies in underdeveloped areas. In order to reduce the gap, the model proposes investments in human and technical capital, the import of know-how and the training of a highly qualified workforce.

2. The creators of cumulative growth theories have improved the Solow model with the intention of providing solutions to long-term growth. Thus, David Romer considers the human factor as being more efficient than material investment, the transformation of unskilled labour into skilled labour involving the use of more complex equipment, and therefore determining technological progress. Even the short-term investment in human capital might trigger a constant or progressive rate of growth while also preventing the slowing down of growth. In this case, the engine is innovation. In order to have a sustainable economic growth, the theories focus on activities that involve innovation and creativity, on professionalized education and an infrastructure that is adapted to the requirements. For Gunnar Myrdal, all these factors lead to the concentration of development in growth centres. Drawing on the centre-periphery theory developed by John Friedmann, which is based on the hypothesis that relations between central and peripheral areas are the engine of regional development, Myrdal attributes the differences in growth between regions to the relations of autonomy - dependence between central and peripheral regions. Manifested in a space delimited by national borders or centres of power, these relations attribute control over their own destinies to the central regions, the peripheral ones being dependent and controlled by the former. Based on this theory, Walt Whitman Rostow promotes the staged development model, whereby the large discrepancies recorded at the beginning are gradually reduced as the development spreads from the growth centres to the periphery. Another perspective is offered by Francois Perroux, a researcher of the growth pole theory, who considers that locating companies with a high capacity for innovation becomes a centre of attraction for capital and resources. He also points out that ports, airports, industrial platforms or large companies can have a similar effect, since by their mere presence they attract and facilitate the emergence or location of potential economic activities. The development manifested in these growth poles then spreads through various channels, involving the adjacent area or even the entire regional economy. Later, P. Pottier demonstrates that the transport links between these poles favour the flow of resources and the spread of innovation, becoming axes of development. The cumulative regional growth rate and the development model obtained,

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<sup>12</sup> Daniela Antonescu, *Noile perspective teoretice ale dezvoltării economice la nivel regional* [New Theoretical Perspectives of economic development at the regional level], Romanian Academy, Bucharest, 2011, p.3.

<sup>13</sup> Irina Azarova, "Key Factors and Tools of Regional Development", in *Управління розвитком складних систем* [Management of complex systems development], vol. 37/2019, p. 154; Gheorghe Zaman, George Georgescu (coord.), *op.cit.*, p. 26-28; Maria Prisacari, *op.cit.*, p. 491-493; Daniela Antonescu, *op.cit.*, p.4-5, Mihail Lupaşcu, "Characteristics and Essence of Sustainable Development of the Territory and Community Development", in *Tribuna tânărilor cercetător* [Tribune of the Young Researcher], no. 2/2020, p. 110; Simona Iammarina, Andres Rodriguez-Pose, Michael Storper, *Why Regional Development matters for Europe's Economic Future*, Publication Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2017, p. 4.

which can also be of a continuously polarized type, depend on the quality of the diffusion and of the transport routes.

3. In an attempt to explain the inequalities in the level of development of some regions, a group of regionalist theorists have developed a new current of thinking based on theories of international trade. Long-cycle theory promotes models whereby a competitive advantage is created, in conditions of imperfect competition, by the stimulation of technological innovation and the financial services sectors, factors on which the economies of large metropolitan areas depend. These cycles, based on long-term technological changes, are often coupled with the mechanisms of globalization of trade and favour, in particular, metropolitan regions rather than areas in the vicinity or on the periphery. At the same time, proponents of exogenous development theory recognize the importance of localization and public intervention. In the models proposed by them, they employed concepts such as diversified space, regions of knowledge, smart regions, etc., where the most innovative activities take place and which concentrate the best jobs. Therefore, the solutions offered to achieve homogeneous levels of development do not exclude the functioning of a predominantly endogenous framework of local development. Thus, the theory of endogenous development, founded by John Friedmann and Walter Stöhr in the late 50s, becomes central to the currents of thought, with an emphasis on local resources, ways of cooperation and cultural values of the community. Thus, based on this theory, development encompasses the three dimensions mentioned above: a spatial dimension, in which geographical, economic, social and cultural factors are manifested; a community-related dimension, which involves the inclusion of communities in the development process; a democratic dimension, based on the existence of structures within which people can express their views.

4. Other theories of regional growth promote growth patterns that focus on the core economic sectors that produce goods and services for export, or on achieving flexible regional specialization that allows for a transition from a competition related to prices to a competition based on innovation. The newest theoretical orientation, sustainable development, is based on the concordance between resources and their capitalization, offering a development model that creates a system of interdependence between the environment and the socio-economic development. These relationships, which are ultimately found in indicators that reflect the quality of life, include governance, and its effectiveness in strengthening decision-making capacity in areas important for long-term development.

All these theories ultimately lead to models that combine the economic development of a region and its progress through the emergence of new roles and functions, with human development and the strengthening of individual capacities through education and adherence to ethical values, and with social development that has in view socio-cultural relations and citizen participation in the decision-making process<sup>14</sup>. In reality, the models that aim towards the achievement of well-being must take into account the interaction between global economic forces and regional characteristics, this generating a fragmented space in countries, regions, region-cities or region-states with different roles and functions.

The constructivist and reflectivist doctrines have changed the classical perspective of approaching the region<sup>15</sup>, defining it as a process, as an entity in continuous evolution, with borders that are built, deconstructed and rebuilt from the outside or from the inside following the collective actions of the people and the process of identity formation. The structural elements that deconstruct and rebuild the borders of the regions are the economic flows and the communication infrastructure. The concept of “region-actor” has also been introduced, which defines the position of a region in terms of regional cohesion, representing the process whereby “a geographical area turns from a passive object into an active subject, able to express the transnational interests of the region”<sup>16</sup>. Thus, the concept becomes a comparative analytical tool for

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<sup>14</sup> Mihail Lupașcu, *Concepte și teorii...*, p. 162.

<sup>15</sup> Fredrik Söderbaum, “Exploring the Links between Micro-Regionalism and Macro-Regionalism”, in *Global Politics of Regionalism. Theory and Practice*, edited by Mary Farrell, Björn Hettne and Luk Van Langenhove, Pluto Press, London, 2005, p. 90-91.

<sup>16</sup> Björn Hettne and Fredrik Söderbaum, “Theorising the rise of regionness”, in *New Regionalisms in the Global Political Economy*, edited by Shaun Breslin, Christopher W. Hughes, Nicola Phillips, Ben Rosamond, Routledge, New York, 2002, p. 38.

understanding the construction and consolidation of regions and their formation as important actors in the international system.

Regions have very different economic performances (among themselves) compared to states, induced by a number of determinants, such as: geography, demography, degree of specialization, economic productivity, physical and human capital, infrastructure, capacity for innovation. In this context, some regions are taking greater advantage of the benefits and opportunities of globalization and interconnection, being better connected to global markets. Thus, there are significant differences in the global regional landscape, related to production capacity, comparative advantage, economic indicators (GDP, GDP / capita, annual growth rate), income level, employment rate, labour productivity, demographic characteristics, institutions, policies, resources.

The paradigm in which these structures operate no longer focuses on achieving convergent or equal levels of development, but on identifying regional models that allow sustainable development for prosperous regions and provide opportunities, in the short and medium term, aimed at eliminating disparities persistent in less prosperous regions<sup>17</sup>. For the latter category of areas, there has recently been a major concern in Central and Eastern Europe, driven by the need to find solutions to the new difficulties posed by the restructuring and reform processes experienced by the Member States that joined after 2004.

Interest in the European Union's regional development and cohesion policy has also increased as a result of obstacles to deepening economic and political integration<sup>18</sup>. Being a horizontal policy, it addresses areas considered strategic by the European Commission (education, employment, energy, environment, single market, research and innovation, etc.) by funding the territorial development programs proposed by the Member States and implemented at regional level by local authorities. The new thematic objectives developed for the period 2021-2027 aim at: a smarter Europe through innovation, digitalisation, economic transformation and support for SMEs; a greener, low-carbon Europe; a more connected Europe through strategic transport and digital networks; a more social Europe that respects social rights and supports quality jobs, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to health care; a Europe closer to its citizens by supporting locally responsible development strategies and sustainable urban development<sup>19</sup>.

One of the instruments that might ensure the implementation of the European Union's Cohesion and Regional Development Policy is undoubtedly the one that promotes cross-border cooperation (CBC). During the construction and integration processes of Europe, a number of forms of CBC<sup>20</sup> have developed, in several stages, as shown by Durr-Guimerr and Gonzales, depending on the growth of cross-border initiatives, the territorial expansion, and the development of instruments of institutional support to cooperation (see Fig. 1)<sup>21</sup>.

**Figure1.** The history of cross-border co-operation in Europe (1950-2010)

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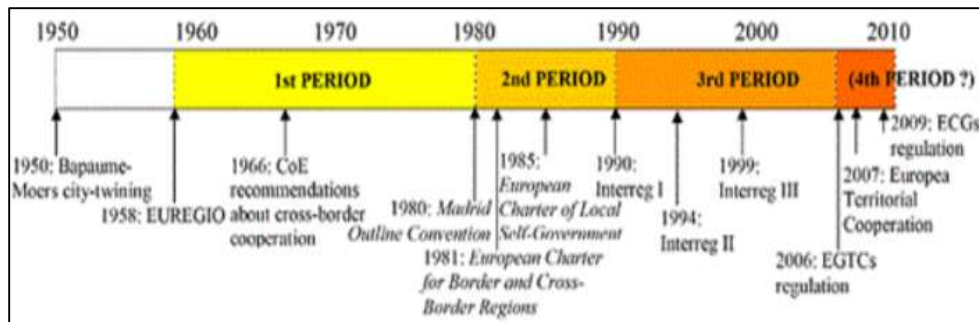
<sup>17</sup> Simona Iammarina, Andres Rodriguez-Pose, Michael Storper, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Dorin Jula, Nicoleta Jula, Dorel Ailenei, Ananie Gârbovean, "Competitivitatea și dezechilibrile regionale" [Competitiveness and regional imbalances], in *Dezvoltarea regională și integrarea Europeană* [Regional development and European integration], edited by Eugen Simion, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, 2001, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup> Daniela Antonescu, *Politica de coeziune și dezvoltare regională în noua perioadă de programare 2021-2027* [Cohesion policy and regional development in the new programming period 2021-2027], Romanian Academy, Bucharest, 2019, p. 1, 10; European Commission, *Priorities for 2021-2027*, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/ro/policy/how/priorities](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/ro/policy/how/priorities), [accessed in August 2021].

<sup>20</sup> Klára Czimre, *Cross-Border Co-operation: theory and practice*, Debreceni Egyetem Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó, Debrecen, 2006; Klára Czimre, *Kisközségtől Az Eurorégióig* [From a small village to a Euroregion], Didakt Kft, 2005, Debrecen, p. 65-69.

<sup>21</sup> Antoni Durf - Guimerr, Xavier Oliveras González, "Recent dynamics in European cross-border cooperation: towards a new period?", in *Regional Studies Association Annual International Conference 2010*, available at <http://www.regional-studies-association.ac.uk/events/2010/may-pecs/papers/Guimera.pdf>, [accessed in August 2021].



*Source:* Antoni Durf-Guimerf, Xavier Oliveras González, *op.cit.*

The emergence and development of cooperative relations between border regions has been supported by other European Commission initiatives, most of which have been transposed into EU law. We refer to: Resolution on Co-operation between Local Communities in Frontier Areas (1974); European Outline Convention on Cross-Border Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities (1980); European Regional / Spatial Planning Charter (1983); European Charter of Local Self-Government (1985); Legal Declaration on Cross-border Co-operation (1987); Community Charter of Regionalization (1988); European Convention on Transfrontier Television (1995); Additional Protocol to European Outline Convention on Cross-Border Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities (1998); Strategies for Promoting Cross-Border and International Co-operation in an Enlarged EU (2002); Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European grouping of cross-border co-operation (2006, with the 2013 amendments)<sup>22</sup>. Under this legislation, the first mechanisms for effective interregional integration have been developed at the level of border regions, leading to the emergence of the first forms of cross-border cooperation<sup>23</sup>. The first Euregio created (it coined the term) consisted of Twente-Oostgelderland (NL) Westmuensterland and Grafschaft Bentheim (FRG), the second being the Maas-Rhine region around Maastricht (NL), Aachen (FRG) and Liege (B)<sup>24</sup>. The two examples of good practice have been replicated in other EU Member States, with the process starting in the western part of the European Union and moving towards Eastern Europe. This develops a network of such structures along the EU's internal or external borders<sup>25</sup>. Another form of cooperation, based on the 2006 Regulation<sup>26</sup>, is represented by European cross-border cooperation groups. The first group was Euromtropola Lille-

<sup>22</sup> Klára Czimre, *Cross-Border Co-operation ...*, p. 45.

<sup>23</sup> Klára Czimre, *Studia Geografica. Euroregionalis fejlődés az EU csatlakozás kuszobon különös tekintettel Magyarorszag euroregioira* [Geographic Study. Euroregional development in the context of EU accession with special regard to the Euroregions of Hungary], Debrecen, 2005, p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> Willem Molle, "Half a Century of Cross-border Cooperation in Europe. Insights from the Cases of the EUREGIO and the EMR", in *Eurolimes*, Vol 21/2016, p. 23-26.

<sup>25</sup> Constantin – Vasile Țoca, Ioan Horga, "Sociological Research: University of Oradea's Students Knowledge Regarding the Bihor–Hajdú Bihar and Carpathian Euroregions", in *Regional Development in the Romanian-Hungarian Cross-Border Space–From national to European Perspective*, edited by István Süli-Zakar, Ioan Horga, Debrecen University Press, 2006, p. 129-136; Florentina Chirodea, Luminița Șoproni, Constantin – Vasile Țoca, "Cross-border Cooperation in Bihor – Hajdu Bihar Euroregion. Achievements, Opportunities and Perspective", in *Achievements, Contemporary Approaches and Perspectives in the Evaluation of CrossBorder Cooperation*, edited by Constantin-Vasile TOCA, Ioan HORGA, Luminita SOPRONI, University of Debrecen Press, Debrecen, 2017, p. 49-62.

<sup>26</sup> European Parliament, *Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)*, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2007/gect/ce\\_1082\(2006\)\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2007/gect/ce_1082(2006)_en.pdf), [accessed in August 2021]; European Commission, *Assessment of the application of EGTC regulation. Final report*, 2018, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/assess\\_egtc\\_applic\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/assess_egtc_applic_en.pdf), [accessed in August 2021].

Kortijk-Tournai, registered in 2008 in France and Belgium<sup>27</sup>, and the last of the 79 European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation is set up in 2020, EGTC Pirineos Pyrenees (between France and Spain)<sup>28</sup>.

From the perspective of financial support for cross-border cooperation, a number of programs have been carried out at the internal borders of the European Union during various budget years and financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the name INTERREG Community Initiative: Interreg I (1990-1993); Interreg II (1994-1999); Interreg III (2000-2006); Interreg IV (2007-2013); Interreg V (2014-2020); Interreg Europe (2021-2017)<sup>29</sup>. At the external borders of the European Union, a series of programs, aimed at the stimulation of cross-border cooperation, while also providing opportunities for the development of regions close to the EU's external borders, have been developed. They include<sup>30</sup>: Phare CBC (1994-1998, 1998-2000, 2000-2006), Phare CREDO, LACE Phare (Linkage Assistance and Cooperation for the European Border Region); TACIS CBC (Technical Assistance to the Community of Independent States); MEDA - financial instrument for the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership; CARDS (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization); IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance); ENPI (European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument); ENI (European Neighborhood Instrument).

In this context, areas adjacent to borders are often described as laboratories of European cohesion, in which processes of change can be analysed on a small scale. Researchers have shown particular interest in areas delimited by the EU's internal borders, which are more or less open, as they face 3 major changes: increased trade and cross-border service flows, and labour mobility, due to the process of European integration; the expansion of transport networks, utilities and public services by increasing the volume of investments in transnational infrastructure; strengthening cooperation between communities on both sides of the border by standardizing legal and administrative processes and developing cross-border initiatives<sup>31</sup>. Moreover, the border regions delimited by the old border dividing Western Europe from Eastern Europe, also called "small Europe", seem to be the most appropriate areas for analysing opportunities for political, economic, cultural, environmental and social welfare<sup>32</sup>. As for the regions at the EU's external borders, their disadvantage prevails, especially when the "fortress of Europe" closes to its neighbours. However, as the good neighbourhood policy is implemented, regional growth also manifests itself at the EU's eastern border<sup>33</sup>.

The present volume of studies and analyses, the second one in a series dedicated to investigating regional development at the borders of the European Union<sup>34</sup> was conceived starting from the theoretical underpinnings presented above. However, it does not claim to be exhaustive. The chief purpose of its two

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<sup>27</sup> Constantin – Vasile Țoca, *Romanian – Hungarian cross-border cooperation at various territorial levels, with a particular studies of the Debrecen – Oradea Eurometropolis (EGTC)*, Debrecen University Press, 2013, p. 61-66.

<sup>28</sup> European Committee of the Regions, *List of European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation*, 2021, available at [https://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc/CoRAactivities/Documents/Official\\_List\\_of\\_the\\_EGTCs.pdf?Web=0](https://portal.cor.europa.eu/egtc/CoRAactivities/Documents/Official_List_of_the_EGTCs.pdf?Web=0), [accessed in August 2021].

<sup>29</sup> Klára Czimre, *Development of cross-border regions*, Debreceni Egyetem, Debrecen, 2013, p. 48-56; European Commission, *Interreg: European Territorial Co-operation*, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/), [accessed in August 2021].

<sup>30</sup> Klára Czimre, *Development of...*, p.60-74

<sup>31</sup> Peter Nijkamp, "Moving Frontiers: A Local-Global Perspective", in *Developing Frontier Cities. Global Perspective – Regional Context*, edited by Harvey Lithwick and Yehuda Gradus, Springer-Sciences+Business Media, 2000, p. 18.

<sup>32</sup> Sabrina Ellebrecht, "Qualities of Bordering Spaces. A Conceptual Experiment with Reference to Georg Simmel's Sociology of Space", in *Borders and Border Regions in Europe. Changes, Challenges and Chances*, Political Science, Vol. 15, edited by Arnaud Lechevalier and Jan Wielgohs, Transcript Verlag - Independent Academic Publishing, Bielefeld, 2013, p. 95.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 24-25.

<sup>34</sup> Some of the studies and analyses were included in a book entitled *Border Regions: Area of Cooperation and good Neighbourhoods* and published in 2020. See *Eurolimes*, volume 29/2020, edited by Florentina Chirodea, Khrystyna Prytula, Klara Czimre.



sections is to improve approaches to regional development through new levels of analysing contemporary realities. At the same time, its aim is to bring to the attention of the academic community, researchers and policy makers the particularities in the development of the EU's eastern border regions. The topics were discussed during the international conference Jean Monnet Regional Development at the Borders of the European Union, organized in Oradea in November 2019, within the project "Development of the border regions in Central and Eastern Europe countries", funded by the Erasmus + program of European Union, the Jean Monnet Program.