

Bringing Europe together

## Transnational cooperation of cities and regions

A contribution by the  
German Presidency of  
the European Union



 2007\*DE

To be presented on the occasion of the  
Informal Ministerial Meeting on  
Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion  
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## Preface

The major political challenges facing Europe require intensive co-operation not only of the states, but of all actors involved in regional development, particularly the regions, cities and communities. In response to these challenges, the European Union supports, on the basis of the European Regional Development Fund, the co-operation among European countries and their cities and regions as part of transnational programme areas. Through intensive territorial, economic and social co-operation in joint projects, increased spatial integration and competitiveness of the regions involved are to be achieved.

The implementation of transnational co-operation programmes in Europe has advanced significantly between 2000 and 2006. The funds for programmes have been earmarked for transnational projects. Initial project results are now available. At the same time, preparations are under way for the new funding period 2007 to 2013. Tens of thousands of actors and hundreds of cities and regions have become part of cross-state networks, promoted European spatial development jointly and are now preparing new development projects together.

The necessity of analysing the results, the effects and the benefits of transnational programmes and projects has given rise to the report "Bringing Europe together — Transnational co-operation of cities and regions". Based on specific project results, the contribution made by transnational co-operation to the implementation of European spatial development policy is demonstrated by way of examples. For this purpose, several hundred projects from different transnational co-operation areas have been analysed. The project examples focus on the co-operation areas Alpine Space, Central European, Adriatic, Danubian and South-Eastern European Space (CADSES), the North Sea Region, North West Europe and the Baltic Sea Region. Going beyond simple cross-sections of aspects, the analysis looks at the extent to which transnational spatial development projects have already incorporated the main ideas of the Territorial Agenda. It shows that transnational co-operation is an important tool to realise the Territorial Agenda of the European Union.

The report, which is a contribution by the German Presidency of the European Union to be presented at the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion on 24 and 25 May 2007 in Leipzig, underlines the priorities and measures for transnational co-operation identified in the Territorial Agenda. The present transnational co-operation in spatial development has impressively shown that a common approach of the EU Commission and the Member States suggests successful solutions for a more competitive and sustainable Europe of diverse regions.

The Federal government, in fact, sees a great potential for territorial development in the pan-European project work. It is the gain in European competence by integrating it with European projects that can contribute significantly to the improvement of economic opportunities and the competitiveness of regions, cities and municipalities. Through this integrative approach to spatial development, transnational co-operation differs, not only spatially, but also in terms of content, substantially from cross-border (joint regional and local activities) and interregional co-operation (exchange of experience).

I hope that the report can help to demonstrate the added value of transnational territorial co-operation and motivate additional actors to become involved in transnational co-operation projects — in an effort to build Europe "from the bottom up"!

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# 1 Europe is growing closer together: the role of transnational co-operation

## The third dimension: territorial cohesion

European cohesion policy must confront the growing regional disparities in the "Europe of 25" and, at the same time, strengthen Europe's competitiveness. It became necessary to reform the Structural Funds for the programme phase 2007 to 2013: The Structural Funds programmes remain committed to equalisation and social convergence, but increasingly concentrate on growth and regional competitiveness. In addition, the objectives of social and economic cohesion are added by a third dimension: territorial cohesion. Territorial co-operation (INTERREG) strengthens the role of regions and cities in Europe and emphasises the importance of co-operation and *governance* structures to achieve a balanced European spatial development - an indispensable prerequisite for equalisation *and* growth.

*"...the concept of territorial cohesion introduces, above all else, a new dimension of solidarity: that of solidarity between territories. Year after year, the Commission notes in its cohesion reports that the per capita income gaps between Member States are decreasing, whilst those between regions within Member States are increasing." (Michel Delebarre, President of the Committee of the Regions 2006)<sup>1</sup>*

## Pioneering role of the European Community initiative INTERREG

Since 1996 the European Commission has supported co-operation between regions in the area of spatial development across national borders as part of the Community initiative *INTERREG II C* (1996-1999) or *INTERREG III B* (2000-2006) respectively. This co-operation has centred, since 2000, on ten large transnational co-operation areas and three overseas territories - cf. map. For the first time the focus of a European political instrument and funding programme included territorial dimension and co-operation. INTERREG was a pioneering programme and was viewed as a "successful experiment", despite many (initial) difficulties. Active participation in the programme reflects the positive feedback from the European regions.

Its success is certainly also based on the fact that INTERREG programmes give priority to spatial development over spatial planning. A cross-sectoral and integrated spatial development policy is an excellent anchor for cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation and makes significant contributions to overcoming differences between national planning cultures and spatial planning systems.

## New challenges confirm yet again that European spatial development is a politically charged issue that needs to be addressed

The topics and areas of action of the ongoing INTERREG programmes pick up on the spatial concepts of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), which was adopted by the then-member states of the EU in 1999. ESDP provides political options for European integration from a territorial point of view. In close interrelation to the ESDP, concepts for an integrated spatial development were also prepared for most transnational cooperation areas. These concepts provide a guideline for sectoral policies. At the same time they have formed and still form an essential background to develop and implement transnational INTERREG programmes.

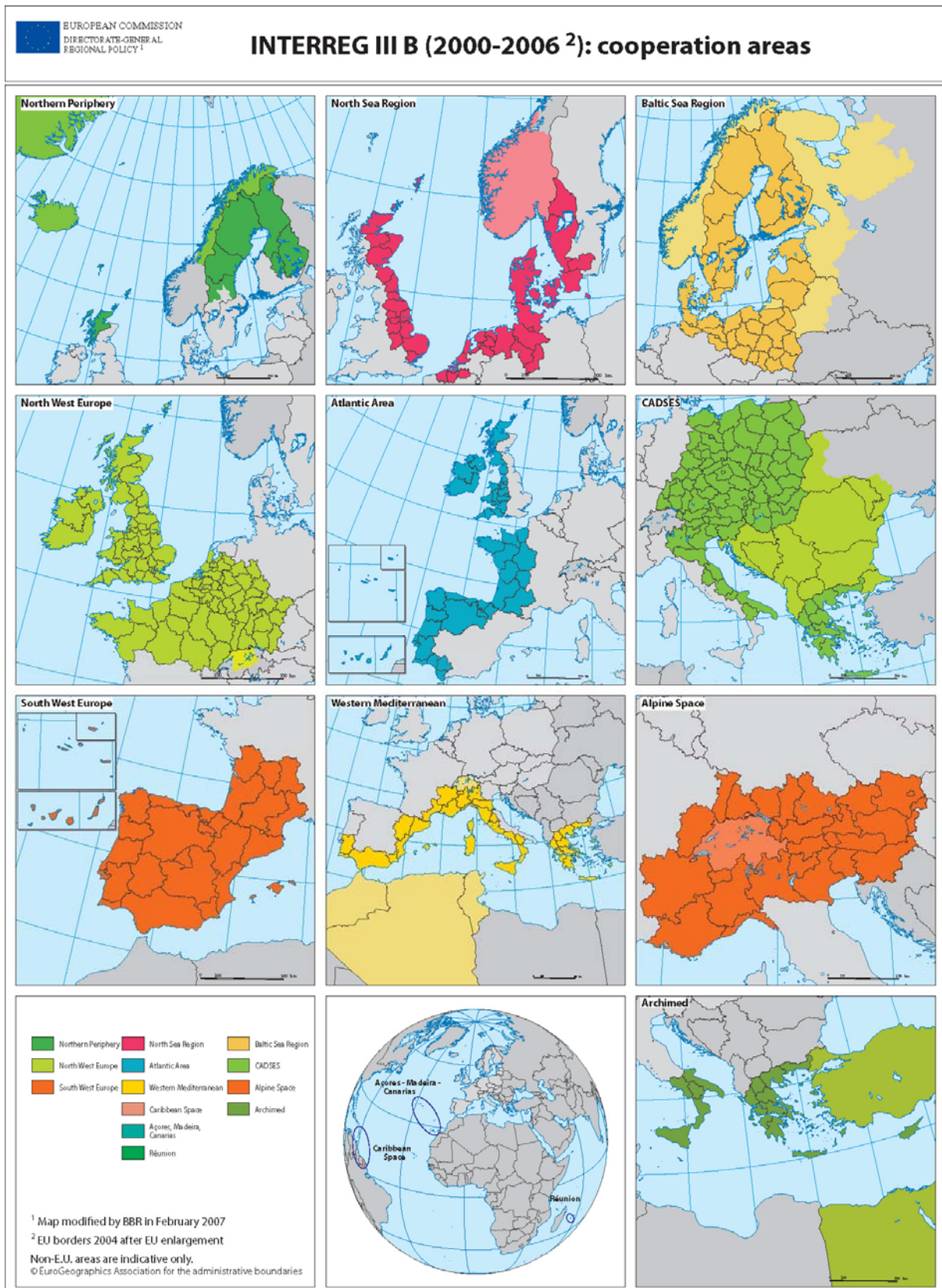
Increased global competition and new challenges in connection with the EU's eastward expansion, migration, growing disparities and demographic shifts underline the necessity of an integrated European spatial development. It therefore makes sense, at the transition to the next programme phase of Structural Funding (2007-2013), to emphasise and update the objectives of the ESDP.

The socio-economic challenges of globalisation are taken into account under the cohesion policy and help to define the core tasks of European integration. The foundation for this undertaking is the *Lisbon Strategy*, which was agreed by the EU member states in March 2000 and reconfirmed in 2005. According to this, Europe is to become the most successful, most competitive and most knowledge-

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<sup>1</sup> Delebarre, Michel (President of the Committee of the Regions, 2006): The Lisbon Strategy and Territorial Cohesion: Towards a New Kind of European Governance. Conference on Territorial Cohesion and the Lisbon Strategy – Exploiting Local and Regional Potential. Amsterdam. 28 June 2006.

based economic area in the world. In 2001 the Lisbon Strategy was supplemented by the *Göteborg Strategy*, which demands sustainable development and adds environmental aspects to the Lisbon targets.





## **Next step: the Territorial Agenda**

One key task of European policy is to create an impetus and the right conditions for more competitive and more dynamic developments in the European Union. The *Territorial Agenda*, a document worked out jointly by the member states of the European Union with the participation of the European Commission, is to make a contribution in this field. It outlines possible action and approaches in order to synchronise the objectives and political options of ESDP with the Lisbon and Göteborg Strategies. Thus, the territorial dimension is given new weight; it is to be integrated with different policies at European and national levels. In addition, the territorial dimension emphasises the "principle of countervailing influence" on the assumption that dynamic and sustainable development in Europe depends to a significant degree on the extent to which European policies are harmonised with the development of European cities and regions.

What does this mean specifically? Primarily it is about making better use of endogenous potential and the "territorial capital" of European regions as well as triggering and supporting regional innovation processes. This requires regions to be given a clearer profile and, at the same time, moving ahead with the networking of cities and regions across Europe. An important prerequisite for this is the establishment and stabilisation of *governance* structures in order to ensure the vertical and horizontal coherence of different, territorially effective policies.

## **What is the "territorial capital" of regions?**

"Territorial capital" refers to the individual talents and potential of each region and its inhabitants. Those talents and the potential are seen as central resources for a sustainable development in Europe. Europe thrives on the diversity of its regions. In the political circles of Europe it has long been known that it is the individual contributions of regions to development and competitiveness, prosperity and quality of life that sustain the European process of cohesion.

*"Policy has to focus a lot more on 'territorial capital', that is, the people living in those regions, the companies and the natives and foreigners who generate the national product. We have to look at the specific living conditions." (Wolfgang Tiefensee, Federal Minister for Transport, Building and Urban Affairs, 2006)<sup>2</sup>*

## **INTERREG projects strengthen the regions and promote European networking**

The joint project-based work as part of the INTERREG programmes helps to spread the spirit of the European community to the regions and the people. INTERREG projects provide the necessary flexibility (and space) to test strategies and approaches for European spatial development and to develop transnationally effective solutions. They provide a framework for innovation, experimentation and practical implementation. They promote European competence in the regions.

Transnational co-operation is a challenging process. Obstacles must be overcome and common work routines must be developed. This is where transaction costs are incurred - something that everyone involved in programmes or projects is aware of: co-operation across national borders requires time and resources, commitment and endurance. Still, the conclusions drawn are positive: INTERREG projects are practical contributions to the territorial cohesion of Europe. There are no alternatives to the joint efforts for a balanced European spatial development anyway: transnational problems can only be solved with transnational measures.

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<sup>2</sup> Tiefensee, Wolfgang (Bundesminister für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung, 2006): Eine Territoriale Agenda für Europa – Ausblick auf die Deutsche EU-Ratspräsidentschaft. Bericht zur EU Stakeholder Konferenz in Amsterdam am 28.06.2006.



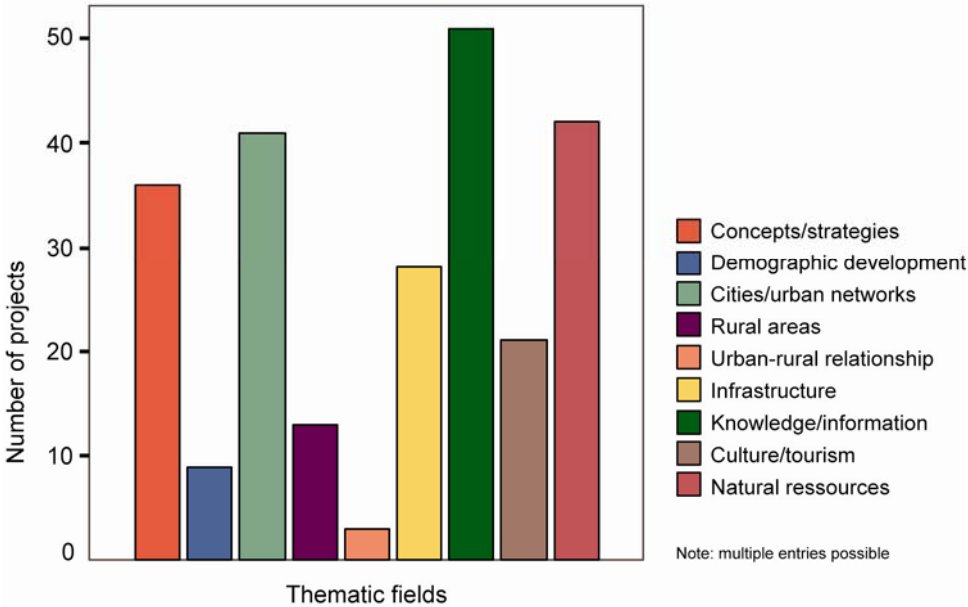
## 2 The effectiveness of INTERREG III B for Europe and its transnational co-operation areas

### 2.1 Transnational programmes make for a sharper profile of the co-operation areas

Once the funding and support was in place for transnational co-operation in spatial development as part of the Community initiative INTERREG II C, the co-operation areas were established as a "regional backdrop" for the various projects. Today, "North Sea Region" or "Atlantic Arc" have become household terms. Those involved in spatial development associate these terms with the respective co-operation areas. This has created a certain image for co-operation areas, which is shaped by the traditional relations between individual states as well as the historical events and cultures of the nation states involved in the respective co-operation areas.

These area-specific images help to sharpen the profile of co-operation areas as well as to raise political and public awareness of their specific strengths and weaknesses, challenges and problems regarding spatial development in various co-operation areas. It also raises awareness for and sensitivity to the necessity and possibilities of having transnational solutions and action.

Thematic fields of projects implemented in North West Europe



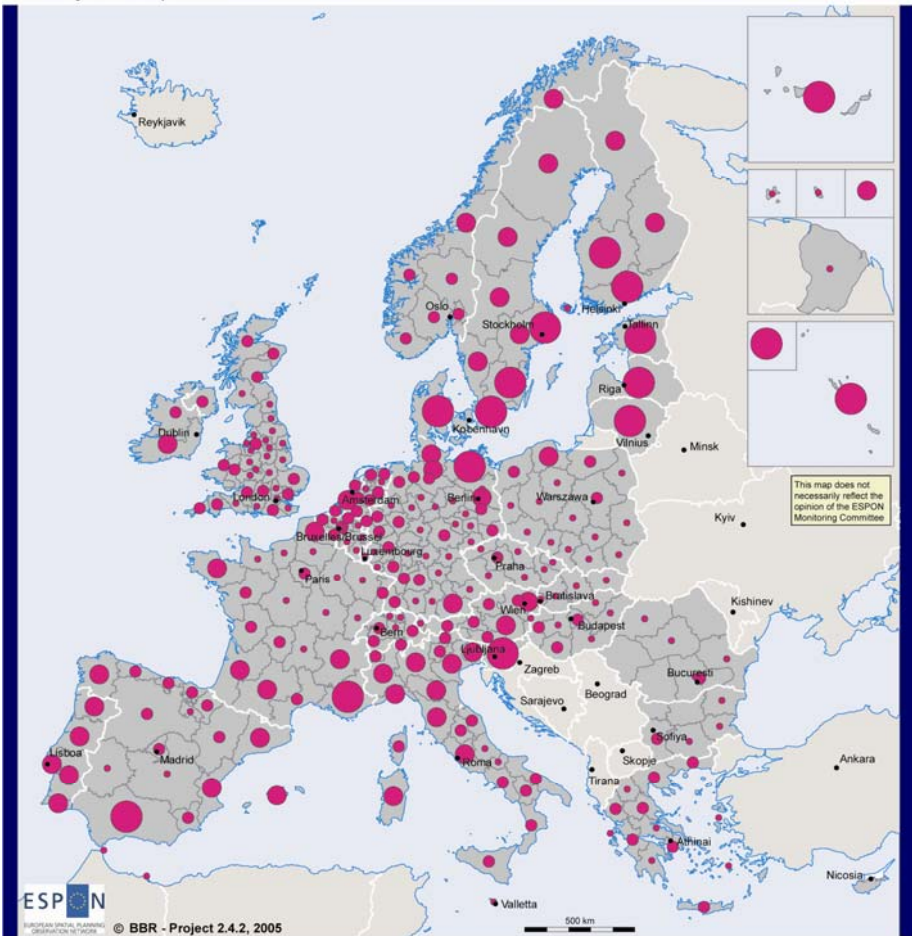
Although co-operation areas share many of the same themes in their programmes, there are also area-specific focal points, which have evolved from the different characteristics and challenges of spatial development in those regions. North West Europe (NWE), for example, has a high concentration of metropolitan and urban regions, high population density, above-average accessibility and is one of the economic core zones of Europe. As such, it is faced with challenges in spatial development that are quite different from, say, CADSES. In North West Europe, the focus in transnational co-operation is therefore on fostering co-operation among powerful metropolises and agglomerations and on dealing with related conflicts stemming from utilisation, the management of river areas and flood control as well as on the development of intelligent models of transport that can ensure a high level of accessibility and, at the same time, an environmentally acceptable development of transport (cf. fig.). In CADSES, however, the main challenge consists in reducing the enormous economic and social disparities and pushing forward the integration of new EU member states. This area, structurally and administratively heterogeneous, comprises a total of 18 countries, of which only four were EU member states at the start of the co-operation in 2000. Following rounds of EU extension in 2004 and 2007, this number went up to eleven in total. This area is of crucial importance for the integration of the new EU member states, accession states and other neighbours within transnational co-operation. Co-operation on "equal footing", however, had yet to be practised in many cases and institutionalised over the long term. In this complex area, particularly affected by structural changes, one of the primary aims was therefore to develop a common understanding of area-relevant

perspectives, processes and methods. As for project topics, subsidisation of decentralised structures, conservation of development perspectives for expansive rural areas, improvement of transnational transport links, management of transnational river systems such as Oder, Elbe or Danube as well as the handling of specific environmental problems dominate the spectrum. In addition, attempts are under way to strengthen the cultural identity of this very large and heterogeneous co-operation area through transnational cultural projects and tourism routes.

## 2.2 Assets of transnational co-operation

The transnational INTERREG programmes have contributed to the intensive building of networks and co-operative efforts of cities and regions across Europe. Cities and municipalities of all countries and regions involved have been included in the co-operation networks (cf. map). This is also true of locations in the new member states and the countries seeking EU membership, even though they have only been able to partake of the INTERREG funding since 2004.

Intensity of co-operation



Number of project co-operations according to operational programmes\*

**Absolute number**

- 1 up to 10
- 11 up to 40
- 41 up to 80
- 81 and more

© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries  
 Regional level: NUTS 2  
 Origin of data: ESPON 2.4.2, INTERREG project survey  
 Cyprus: data for government-controlled areas only

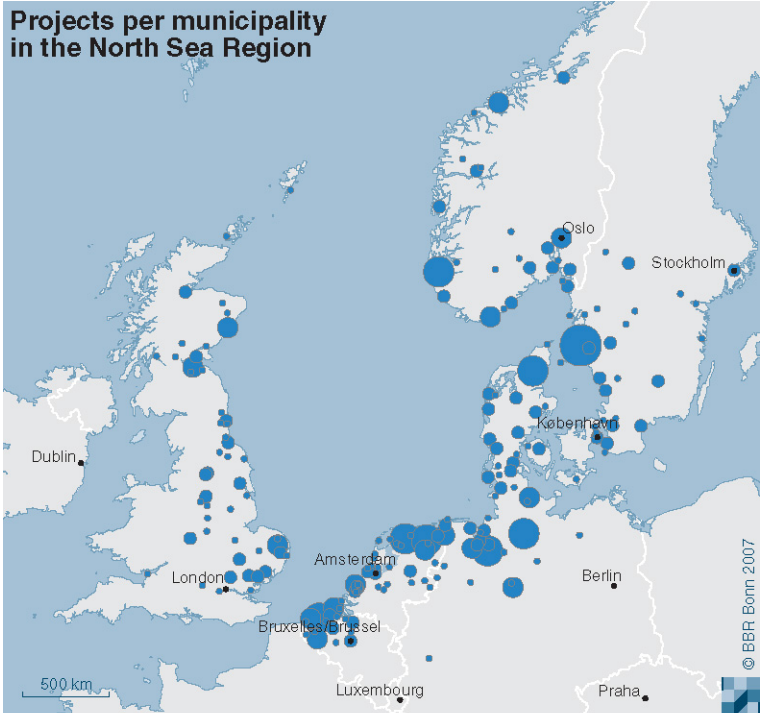
Source: ESPON database

\* based on the INTERREG co-operation areas: Alpine Space, Atlantic Area, Baltic Sea Region, CADSES, Caribbean Space, Azores - Madeira - Canary Islands, North Sea Region, North West Europe, Northern Periphery, South West Europe, Western Mediterranean, Réunion

Regions along coastlines and in border areas are especially closely integrated within these transnational co-operation networks. Here, we see a greater interest in and awareness of not only immediate border-area co-operation, but also co-operation across national borders. People living in border areas and along coastlines have depended on exchanges with neighbours for generations.

Some of the reasons for this can be found in the trading traditions that have developed over time in such regions or a special need for transnational co-operation. A specific need for transnational co-operation, for example, is given with respect to shared resources like international waters, river systems, coastal areas and the sea. The management of the corresponding land, the careful handling of the related resources, etc. can only be achieved through international co-operation. Given this "shared heritage", it may be easier for the affected regions to expand their co-operation to other thematic fields as well. Conversely, more central regions in individual countries farther away from border areas are usually less well integrated within transnational co-operation networks.

Individual locations are particularly actively integrated with transnational co-operation. It is remarkable, however, that many other places outside the capital cities and metropolises stand out as headquarters for a multitude of institutions. It is particularly the medium-sized cities across Europe that participate in an especially large number of transnational projects. Cities such as Bolzano, Turin, Innsbruck and Trento have the highest participation rate in the Alpine Space with respect to projects—as well as Munich, Vienna, Milan and Ljubljana. These cities play a vital role in the European integration of spatial development. The North Sea Region, for example, illustrates impressively how the INTERREG programme has managed to integrate almost all regions in this area with transnational co-operation projects. It also shows that medium-sized cities in particular such as Göteborg, Aalborg, Leeuwarden, Bruges, Bremen and Groningen have become assets and anchors in transnational co-operation through their intensive project participation.



**Number of projects per municipality (status: 31.12.2006)**

Projects in which at least one institution located in a displayed municipality is involved

- 1
- 2 up to 5
- 6 up to 10
- 11 up to 20
- more than 20

Geometric basis: Eurostat GISCO  
Source: INTERREG III B database of the BBR

The differences in the integration of cities of similar location and size with transnational projects indicate that the effectiveness of the projects is also due to political factors. Individual cities and regions rely more heavily on the strategic and practical advantages of integration with transnational co-operation networks than others. So, apart from the specific project results derived from participation in international networks, they benefit from a range of business contacts and starting points for future co-operation. For example, there are 14 institutions, headquartered in Potsdam, that participate in 14

transnational spatial development projects in CADSES and in the Baltic Sea Region—in areas such as transport, urban development and economic co-operation, tourism, use of cultural heritage, flood prevention, armament conversion and bioenergy production. In practice it is clear that the transnational networks created as a result of projects do open doors for the local economy.



Location of partners of institutions situated in Potsdam participating in transnational projects (INTERREG III B. Status: 2005)

□ EU member state   □ non-EU member state

Geometric basis: Eurostat GISCO

Source: INTERREG III B database of the BBR

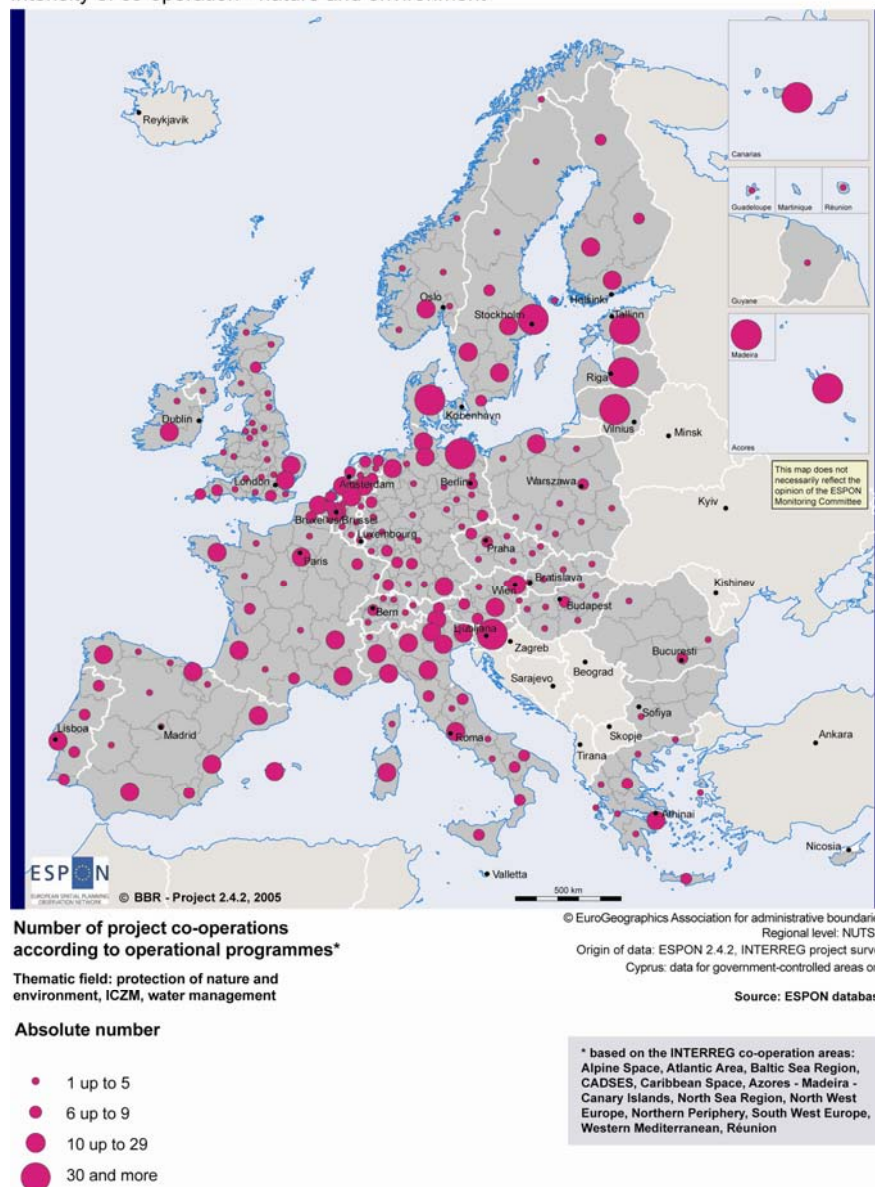


## 2.3 Transnational projects provide answers to key questions in spatial development

Transnational projects deal with key questions in Europe's spatial development. This is borne out by the main topics of the transnational projects dealt with by a large number of regions.

In terms of nature and the environment, for example, projects form clear geographic areas of concentration in the North Sea Region, the Baltic Sea Region and the Alpine Space as well as along the basin of the Rhine river. These spatial clusters reflect the key issues in European spatial development and specific spatial challenges of the co-operation areas:

Intensity of co-operation - nature and environment

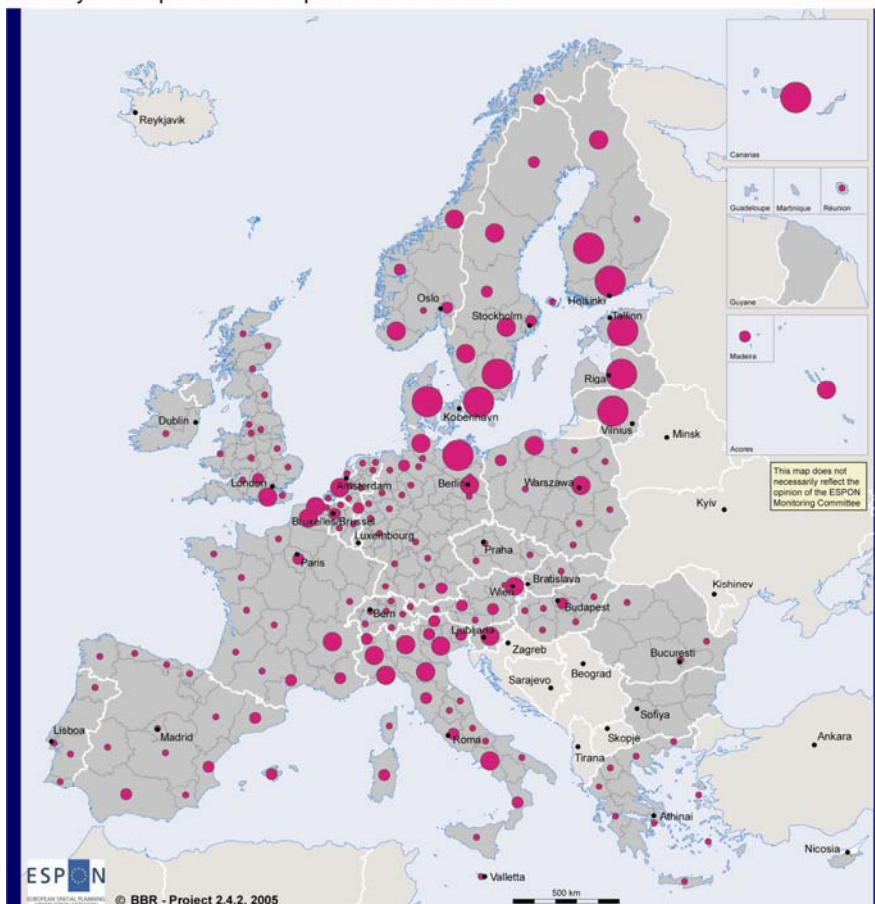


The high level of co-operation in connection with nature and the environment in the North Sea Region can be explained by the need for transnational activities primarily with respect to water and coastal zone management. In the Baltic Sea Region, however, co-operation reflects the need and objective of the Baltic Sea states to preserve, improve and put to a more sustainable use the valuable natural potential, especially of the eco-system of the Baltic Sea, the coastal areas and the large forested and lake landscapes. The motivation of cities and regions to co-ordinate and implement flood-control measures in the large European river basins at a transnational level is borne out by the high concentration of project activities along the basin of the Rhine river. As for the concentration of project activities in the Alpine Space, this is the result of a demand for common perspectives, approaches and solutions to protect and use shared natural resources as well as to protect against natural risks—these

are all issues that pose a special challenge for spatial development policy in transnational eco-systems such as the Alps.

There is clearly a special demand for transnational co-operation with respect to transport and infrastructure, particularly in the Alpine Space and in the Baltic Sea Region, which can be seen in their intensity of co-operation. This intensity of co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region illustrates the efforts of Baltic Sea states and their regions to improve internal accessibility of regions by closing gaps in the transport infrastructure and through better links between the different modes of transport and to expand the region's external links with Central, Western and Southern Europe, while creating a gateway to the markets of Russia, Belarus and the Far East. Coping with the increasing traffic volume in and crossing through the Alpine region as well as improving passage through and accessibility of the Alps are some of the central challenges in European spatial development—in an area where transport and the environment collide.

Intensity of co-operation - transport and infrastructure



**Number of project co-operations according to operational programmes\***

Thematic field: multimodal transport systems, improved access to infrastructure

**Absolute number**

- 1 up to 5
- 6 up to 10
- 11 up to 20
- 21 and more

© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries  
Regional level: NUTS 2  
Origin of data: ESPON 2.4.2, INTERREG project survey  
Cyprus: data for government-controlled areas only

Source: ESPON database

\* based on the INTERREG co-operation areas: Alpine Space, Atlantic Area, Baltic Sea Region, CADSES, Caribbean Space, Azores - Madeira - Canary Islands, North Sea Region, North West Europe, Northern Periphery, South West Europe, Western Mediterranean, Réunion

## 2.4 Transnational projects link the EU to its neighbours

Transnational programmes also support focussed co-operation with neighbouring countries, primarily to the south and east of the European Union, and their involvement in strategic spatial development projects. It is mainly with respect to efforts to convert INTERREG programmes to ones dealing with neighbouring countries that the chances of project development and implementation "from a single source" have drastically improved. Examples of this include Croatia and Russia, whose participation is quite similar to that of EU member states. In mid-2006 50 Croatian partners participated in 33 transnational projects in the CADSES region. The projects focus on water management, innovative services and the valorisation of cultural heritage. In the Baltic Sea Region, there were 165 Russian partners involved in 69 transnational programmes. Russian partners primarily co-operate with their Nordic and Baltic neighbours (cf. map "Co-operations in the Baltic Sea Region").

The inclusion of Russian cities, municipalities and institutions in transnational development projects in the Baltic Sea Region helps to strengthen the processes that shape economic and social changes. This has yielded, in particular, immediate economic and locational effects, sharing and exchange of experience, increase in competence as well as benefits from the use of networks. Russian partners have participated in projects covering all the topics. There was particularly high demand for projects with respect to transport and environmental protection, the use of natural resources, the modernisation of housing, the promotion of tourism, the development of rural areas, efficient co-operation between business, science and administrations in promoting innovation as well as in modernising public administration. For example, the energy-saving solutions developed under the BEEN project (Baltic Energy Efficiency Network for the Building Stock) for residential buildings (particularly for prefabricated buildings using concrete slabs) can be applied to a wide section of the Russian building stock. The project "BEN - Baltic Euroregional Network"<sup>3</sup> shares experience from co-operation in border areas of Euroregions with partners from Russia and Belarus, among others.

Through project-specific co-operation and "learning by doing" it is possible to benefit directly from experience gathered in other countries and regions of Europe and utilise this in the difficult transformation from a centrally planned to a market-based society. Cities such as St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad benefit from their inclusion in international networks. A crucial "by-product" of all this is the establishment of varied business contacts with international partners, which can also be utilised outside the framework of programme and project co-operation. Rural areas and smaller municipalities in north-west Russia are also included in transnational networks. By integrating them with strategic transnational networks and partnerships, these regions are given new opportunities for economic development.

The added experience shared with Russian regions, however, is not a one-way street with information running from the West to East only. Instead, Russian cities and regions are placed in a position that allows them to develop innovative solutions through critical analysis of "Western" experience against their own know-how and structures and to provide "new answers" to strategic challenges in European spatial development.

## 2.5 Groups of states as drivers of project development and implementation

Some individual groups of states take on a kind of "driver function" with respect to the project's development and implementation in the respective co-operation areas.

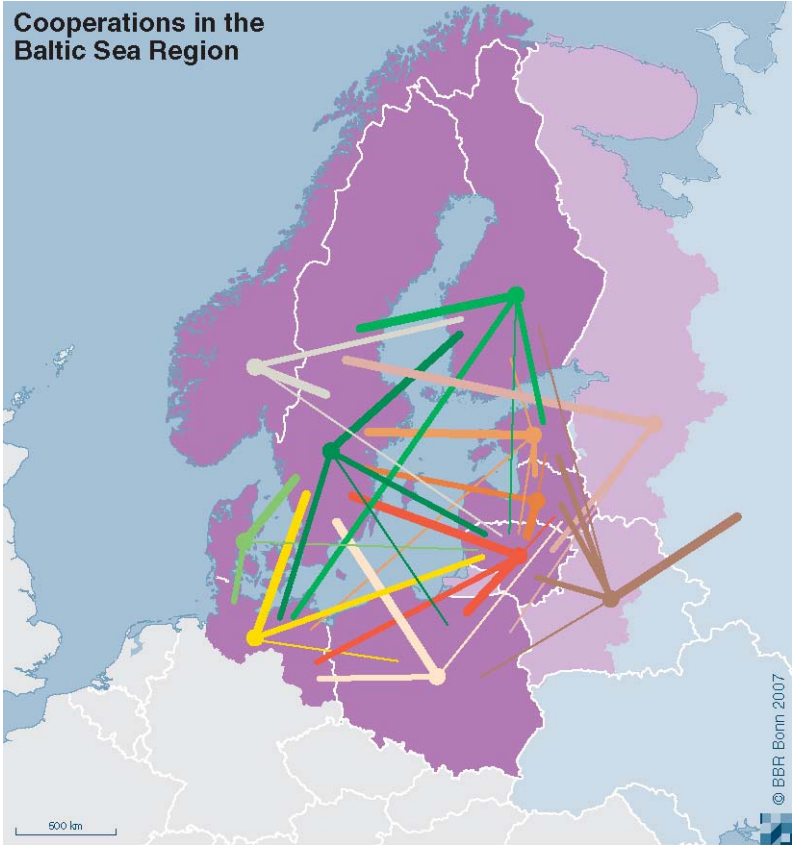
Essentially we see that the co-operative relations between neighbouring states are generally particularly intensive, for example, between Germany and Poland or between Finland and Sweden in the Baltic Sea Region (cf. map "Co-operations in the Baltic Sea Region"). In addition, there are very intensive co-operative relations between those countries that have a long history of co-operation and whose interests are a perfect match regarding transnational co-operation. But transnational co-operation has also helped to break down old barriers, pick up where co-operative relations have been cut off for decades and integrate the new EU member states. In the CADSES region, only one of the 134 projects does not involve a partner from the new member states—but even there, they participate in an informal role. This is even more remarkable given the fact that co-operation was extremely difficult prior to their joining the EU in 2004 and 2007, respectively.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf.: <http://www.benproject.org>



The especially close co-operation with neighbouring states, however, goes far beyond the immediate border areas. It has resulted, for example, in German and Polish partners taking on "driver functions" for a series of transnational projects in CADSES and in the Baltic Sea Region. The development of strategic projects, in particular, one of the main concerns of the Community initiative INTERREG III B, has been pushed forward successfully between partners from Germany and Poland. This is demonstrated particularly well by projects on strategic development corridors or zones in the field of transport. Other examples of transnational projects that have come out of the co-operation between neighbours include the "ODERREGIO" project on integrated river-area development and preventive flood control for the Oder river basin and the "South Baltic Arc" project, as part of which Germany, Poland and the Baltic states with the co-operation of the Kaliningrad region have established spatial concepts and development measures for the southern part of the Baltic Sea Region.



**Interreg III B - cooperation structures between European countries regarding transnational projects in the Baltic Sea Region**

Geometric basis: Eurostat GISCO  
 Source: INTERREG III B database of the BBR  
 Status: 31.12.2006

- Partner countries with the strongest project participation
- Partner countries with the second strongest project participation
- Partner countries with the third strongest project participation

Germany	Norway	Lithuania
Sweden	Poland	Russia
Finland	Estonia	Belarus
Denmark	Latvia	

At least one partner from a country participates, several partners per project in a country are counted as one participating partner unit.

**2.6 INTERREG is building Europe "from the bottom up"**

As part of transnational co-operation, it has been possible to bring together the different groups of actors and decision-makers, so that they can work out common solutions to problems in spatial development. In that sense, INTERREG has created "short paths" and broad networks, with which the actors can optimise and accelerate decision-making processes even after specific projects have ended. By implementing joint projects, those involved can learn from each other and share their know-

how with others. This has positive effects on what is known as the "project periphery": decision-makers—at the political, scientific or private level—can benefit from results of projects that they were not or only marginally involved in.

Such project co-operation has made it possible to build trust between a variety of regions and countries. The first funding period of transnational co-operation from 1997 to 2000 (INTERREG II C) concentrated on "learning the ropes of co-operation" and the exchange of knowledge and experience. In addition, given the very limited financial budget of approx. €415 million, the focus was on carrying out studies and developing concepts or visions for spatial development in transnational co-operation areas. The trust thus created through transnational projects and an improved understanding of each other was a decisive prerequisite for the specific measures taken and the preparation/realisation of investments during the funding period 2000-2006. Correspondingly the co-operation as part of INTERREG III B built upon the success of and the knowledge learnt from INTERREG II C and also expanded on it. With a significantly bigger budget (approx. €1.4 billion), findings from studies were finally implemented as part of the preparation and realisation of investments. The understanding of how spatial development can affect areas beyond one's own national territory has convinced the actors involved that investments—even if they are not made right at one's doorstep—benefit the entire co-operation area and thus one's own population.

In hindsight, it should be noted that each of the programme phases in transnational co-operation so far has been significant in its own right and has contributed to building a Europe "from the bottom up". INTERREG II C was instrumental in creating Europe "from the bottom up" by fostering direct contact between people and various administrative levels, science and those who implement measures and programmes. INTERREG III B is building Europe "from the bottom up" by bringing about improvements in people's quality of life through specific projects, thus allowing people to get a real "feel" for Europe. The broad-based participation of the public in INTERREG III B projects is also a helpful factor.

"European territorial co-operation", as a new objective of structural policy, will now be going one step further. Funding for transnational co-operation has remained stable in most co-operation areas, or may even have risen slightly. It is now up to co-operation under INTERREG IV B, more than before, to contribute to the pan-European goals of the Lisbon and Göteborg strategies. One way in which this is to be achieved is by increasing the orientation of future transnational projects towards paving the way for investment and through strategic thinking beyond the actual duration of the project. The building of Europe "from the bottom up" is continued and stabilised by strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion through the networking of activities across sectoral and administrative borders and with the support of transnational co-operation.

### 3 Placing projects in a strategic context

#### 3.1 INTERREG projects bundle responses to strategical challenges

The joint concept processes in co-operation areas, such as the "VASAB initiative" in the Baltic Sea Region, VISION PLANET in the CADSES region or NorVision in the North Sea Region, provide stimuli for projects that deal with specific and large-area challenges or the potential of the respective INTERREG co-operation area. Such projects thus deal with key issues in European spatial development and transnational co-operation.

In addition, the fact that partners from all or almost all co-operation areas in the countries involved participate illustrates the special national interest and the strategic approach of projects. In the Baltic and North Sea Region in particular, partners from over 80% of the countries represented in the co-operation area have been included in a number of projects. Direct involvement at a national level is an indication of the strategic approach. For example, Germany supports projects of special Federal interest with its Federal Programme "Transnational Co-operation".

Projects that raise the profile of co-operation areas effectively by employing a specific thematic or spatial focus include, for example, cultural and tourism routes. These help to form an identity for the entire co-operation area and to bring the INTERREG programmes and thus European policy closer to the people in the regions.

#### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Dealing with challenges for co-operation areas:** In the CADSES region, dealing with basic transformation processes and support for institution-building take centre-stage. An example of this is the "PlaNetCenSE" project with a wide range of topics: its purpose is to work out the basics and objectives of spatial development in the CADSES region and also deals with, among other things, developing a corridor between the Baltic Sea and the Adriatic or the metropolitan network in Central Europe. In North West Europe development of urban and metropolitan areas as well as flood control are among the central issues. The "POLYNET" project was about the internal and external interdependencies of knowledge-based service companies in polycentric city regions. The project also dealt with the challenges faced by any future spatial development policy that could accommodate such interdependencies as well as the changing functions and hierarchies of urban systems. The "Urban Water" project combines regional and urban development with the issue of water.

PlaNet CenSE: PLAnners NETwork for CENtral and South East Europe | <http://www.planet-cense.net>

POLYNET: Sustainable Management of European Polycentric Mega-City Regions | <http://www.youngfoundation.org.uk/index.php?p=47>

Urban Water: Sustainable Water Management in Urban Space | [www.urban-water.org](http://www.urban-water.org)

- ➔ **Gathering partners from many countries:** Some INTERREG partnerships in the North Sea Region, the Baltic Sea Region and the Alpine Space managed to involve project partners from all countries in the co-operation area. Examples are the projects "North Sea Commission Fisheries Partnership", "ICTs for SMEs", "COMMIN" and "VIA ALPINA".

The Partnership – North Sea Commission Fisheries partnership | [www.northsea.org/nsc\\_fisheries\\_partnership](http://www.northsea.org/nsc_fisheries_partnership)

ICTs for SMEs: Regional Strategies and Solutions to Enhance ict-Access and Use for SMEs | <http://ictsmes.rkk.no/>

COMMIN: Promoting Spatial Development by Creating COMon MINdscapes) | <http://www.commin.org/>

Via Alpina: Promoting the natural and cultural heritage of the Alps on a network of hiking trails | <http://www.via-alpina.org>

- ➔ **Developing co-operation area profiles and strengthening European identity:** Culture routes represent the special cultural heritage and communicate the specific profiles of the co-operation areas. By relying on a marketing offensive and public relations, they convey positive images of Europe and its regions. Successful examples include the European Route of Brick Gothic (EUROB II), the TRANSROMANICA project and the European Route of Industrial Heritage (ERIH).

EUROB II: European Route of Brick Gothic | [www.eurob.info](http://www.eurob.info)

TRANSROMANICA: Transnational Network and Itineraries of the Romanesque | [www.transromanica.de](http://www.transromanica.de)

ERIH: European Route of Industrial Heritage | [www.erih.net](http://www.erih.net)

### 3.2 Project clusters and umbrella initiatives increase added value

When projects are combined that deal with similar topics or the same area, they can generate strategic developments and synergies. This ranges from joint conferences that comprise several INTERREG projects and intensive exchanges in project clusters to institutionalised networks and "umbrella initiatives". Essentially there is a great potential to increase the added value of INTERREG projects significantly in the future through more intensive networking at a programme level.

Growth effects can be seen primarily where different project partners pursue the same objectives in a shared territorial context. This is especially obvious for risk management in the catchment area of large rivers. INTERREG III B projects are deployed in many areas and with different measures, e.g., through upstream river management, to reduce the risk of flooding for downstream areas.

Such networking can certainly go beyond the co-operation area or establish links to other programmes at the European or national level. For example, a link to other development programmes such as Leader+, URBAN or URBACT can increase the implementation chances of larger projects and ensure that different funding programmes can complement each other.

#### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Info-hub for sustainable tourism in the Baltic Sea Region:** As part of the Baltic 21 process (agenda process of the Baltic Sea states), the Agora project provides a dynamic data pool for often EU-funded tourism projects, further-training opportunities and methods for tourism experts. It also develops, e.g., a "toolbox" that includes a "sustainability check" for tourism projects or a guideline of practice for market research. In the "Strategic Factory" proposals for the sustainable development of tourism in the Baltic Sea Region are developed.

Agora: Network Sustainable Tourism Development in the Baltic Sea Region | <http://www.agora-tourism.net/>

- ➔ **Maritime safety - a "global" topic:** This makes it all the more important to create a European network of actors and projects in this field. The "Maritime Safety Umbrella Operation" (MSUO) is a umbrella organisation bringing together several co-operation areas. It is part of the North Sea Programme Secretariat, but also involves projects in the Baltic Sea Region, North West Europe and the co-operation area of the "Northern Periphery".

MSUO: Maritime Safety Umbrella Operation | <http://www.maritime-safety.org/>

- ➔ **Many projects - one goal:** The SUMAD project yielded the "Rivers Need Space" initiative, an umbrella initiative for the networking of INTERREG III B projects concerned with flood control. The goal is to disseminate the project results thus far and to create a platform for future exchange, including beyond the borders of the co-operation area. By contrast, the Bavarian initiative "Gemeinsam weiterdenken – Naturgefahren und Ressourcenmanagement im Alpenraum" (Taking it a step further together - natural risks and resource management in the Alpine Space) combines INTERREG projects with a large variety of different topics (e.g., ClimChAlp, CatchRisk, ALPRESERV and Living Space Network) and thus demonstrates ways in which projects in the Alpine Space work together and synergy effects can be utilised.

SUMAD: Sustainable use and management of alluvial plains in diked river areas | [www.sumad.org](http://www.sumad.org)

„Gemeinsam weiterdenken – Naturgefahren und Ressourcenmanagement im Alpenraum“ | [http://www.flussraumagenda.de/cms\\_files/44download.pdf?PHPSESSID=f373446f95a7cb3f7679dbf941693a75](http://www.flussraumagenda.de/cms_files/44download.pdf?PHPSESSID=f373446f95a7cb3f7679dbf941693a75)

ClimChAlp: Climate Change, Impacts and Adaptation Strategies in the Alpine Space | [www.climchalp.org](http://www.climchalp.org)

CatchRisk: Mitigation of hydro-geological risk in Alpine catchments | <http://www.alpine.space.org/catchrisk.html>

ALPRESERV: Sustainable Sediment Management of Alpine Reservoirs | <http://www.alpreserv.org> | <http://www.alpreserv.at/>

Living Space-Network: [www.livingspacenetwork.bayern.de](http://www.livingspacenetwork.bayern.de)

### 3.3 Joint perspectives for macro-regions, development areas and transnational corridors

A major concern of INTERREG programmes is the strategic and integrated development of large connected transnational areas. Using macro-regions, development areas and corridors, joint perspectives have been worked out for future spatial development. The goal is to co-ordinate projects with a spatial impact, make better use of territorial capital, improve accessibility rates and bundle economic potential.

One focus under this approach so far has been placed on the Baltic Sea Region. A separate area of support was created for the "drafting and implementation of strategies for transnational development areas" in that region. These projects are generally supported vigorously at the national level, because they are of vital importance to the Member States given their large-area and strategic approach.

#### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Creation of a north-south corridor for innovation and co-operation in Central Europe:** This ambitious undertaking is complemented by the "COINCO" project. Its task is to explore innovation potential and added-value strategies in the energy sector (keyword: "hydrogen motorway"), in safety-relevant industries (e.g., satellite monitoring, disaster prevention, safety of capital city) and in "creative" industries (product design, fashion and music). As a first step, co-operative efforts are to be expanded and strengthened. Its agenda also includes the search for multipliers and targeted image-modelling for the corridor.

COINCO: Corridor of Innovation and Cooperation | [www.coinco-cms.dk](http://www.coinco-cms.dk)

- ➔ **"New Banana" Berlin-Prague-Vienna-Budapest-Zagreb - is a new European economic centre:** The "SIC! Sustrain Implement Corridor" project shows that an optimised transport infrastructure in the Central European corridor is an essential prerequisite for creating a second European core area. This is based on socio-economic forecast models, transport-infrastructure scenarios and accessibility analyses as well as a model for accessibility-dependent regional-economic growth effects. Furthermore, specific infrastructure projects are subjected to a financial evaluation to see whether they are viable if implemented in co-operation between public and private sectors (PPP). This approach provides the basis for a transnationally coordinated spatial planning in co-ordination with public and private actors, the steering of infrastructure investments via a comprehensive demonstration of all effects as well as pro-active lobbying for the future economic area. For that purpose, the results of each scenario are processed in a cartographic way via a WebGIS portal.

SIC!: SUSTRAIN Implement Corridor | [www.sustrain-ic.net](http://www.sustrain-ic.net)

- ➔ **Transnational co-operation contributes to the strategic bundling of funding programmes and follow-up investments:** The projects "SIC!", "COINCO" and "Rail Baltica" deal with large transport infrastructure projects and development zones. They try to bundle different sources of funding, for example, from the Cohesion Fund, the budget line for the Trans-European Networks (TEN) or the Research Framework Programme and/or to prepare follow-up investments as part

of these programmes in future funding periods. In addition to this, the Austrian-Czech-Slovakian-Hungarian "Centropo Initiative" to develop a core zone within the "North-South corridor" ("New Banana"/COINCO) is also based on cross-border INTERREG III A funding for sub-projects.

SICI: SUSTRAIN Implement Corridor | [www.sustrain-ic.net](http://www.sustrain-ic.net)

COINCO: Corridor of Innovation and Cooperation | [www.coinco-cms.dk](http://www.coinco-cms.dk)

Rail Baltica: Transnational Integration through Coordinated Infrastructure and Regional Development | <http://www.rail-baltica.net/>

## 4 What are the regional and transnational effects of INTERREG projects?

### 4.1 Preparing investments for Europe

The realisation of investment measures was a special challenge for many INTERREG projects. These served as a platform for joint learning and as pilot projects for larger strategic investments. They opened up opportunities for experiments and innovation. However, INTERREG is not an investment programme, but rather generates added value through transnational co-operation. Essentially this creates a problem as many projects are torn between locally or regionally effective investments and those of transnational importance. Only few investments have a direct transnational effect. Pilot projects generally provide model solutions for transnational issues and point to the transferability of the tried and tested implementation. It is also possible for projects or pilot investments to result in transnationally effective follow-up investments and/or to specifically pave the way for such investments.

Investments and specific measures as part of INTERREG projects can have direct or indirect effects on regional economies and improvements in accessibility as well as on the design of urban areas and the minimisation of environmental risks. It is true that the direct effects of pilot projects are usually limited to the local area but there are often synergy and secondary effects in the regions, in terms of both regional development and risk management.

Integration within a transnational thematic and strategic context, such as in the case of theme trails, can raise the profile of individual locations and of entire regions and may even, over the medium term, contribute to economic stabilisation and the creation of new jobs. This is particularly true of the links between large-area development areas and corridor projects with regional development (cf. ch. 3.3).

#### Contributions by transnational projects:

➔ **High levels of investment for transnational flood control:** As part of the "SDF" project, the project partners invested 32 million euros into the setting back of dikes, the creation of polders, secondary flow and inlet structures along the Rhine as well as the lowering of alluvial meadows, the re-connection of river branches and ecological flooding. "SDF" was thus the project within INTERREG III B with the highest level of financing, with a range of specific investment measures.

[SDF: Sustainable Development of Floodplains | www.sdfproject.nl](http://www.sdfproject.nl)

➔ **Preparing follow-up investment:** Under the "PROSIDE" project, land-management methods were developed to facilitate the re-use of commercial/industrial brownfields in cities. The close co-operation between cities and investors laid the groundwork for future investments. For example, the project provided support for the establishment of university buildings on an urban brownfield in Milan; it is assumed in this case that future investments will amount to about 100 million euros.

[PROSIDE: Promoting sustainable inner urban development | www.proside.info](http://www.proside.info)

➔ **Impetus for private investments and PPP financing:** The "Artery" project managed to double the financial added value for the regions involved to approx. 25 million euros on the basis of a "Public-Private-Partnership" (PPP) approach. This was made possible in part by third-party investments in construction as a result of improvements to locations in river landscapes, additional non-cash contributions or land-use agreements.

[Artery: Restoring & Redeveloping Riverside Landscapes as Regions' Artery | www.artery.eu.com](http://www.artery.eu.com)

➔ **Bundling funding programmes in socially problematic areas:** The "B-Sure" project aims to concentrate funds on social focal points, which are taken from, for example, the programmes "Social City", "Urban Restructuring in West Germany" and from national urban development grants, in socially problematic areas. Whereas INTERREG funds are primarily used for measures regarding civic participation, communication and identity-forming, the urban development assistance programmes come with larger budgets available for investment.



B-SURE: Building on small scale regeneration of urban heritage along rivers and canals | <http://www.b-sure-interreg.net>

- ➔ **Support for raising research funds:** The "BioSmile" project builds on transnational network structures in the life sciences field. One core aspect is the networking and linking of actors for the purpose of the further development of innovation as part of the Seventh Research Framework Programme.

BioSmile: To strengthen and promote the competitiveness of NorthWest Europe in the field of biotechnology, through transnational cooperation | <http://www.lifescience-dus.de/pages/BioSmile.asp> | [http://www.maastricht.nl/maastricht/servlet/nl.gx.maastricht.client.http.GetFile?id=203216&file=7.\\_collegenota.pdf](http://www.maastricht.nl/maastricht/servlet/nl.gx.maastricht.client.http.GetFile?id=203216&file=7._collegenota.pdf) | <http://www.maastricht.nl/maastricht/show/id=203206/framenoid=39719>

- ➔ **Synergy effects in regional development through "pinpoint measures":** The fact that even small measures and investments can have regional effects is borne out by the "SEAPORT" project. An innovative information system was installed in Bremerhaven and the surrounding region as part of a pilot project. Information, sales and other services are marketed via modern info terminals, focusing on regional tourism and services and linked to a navigation system. In addition, there is a multimedia presentation of the location's maritime history.

SEAPORT: Stimulating Economic Regeneration and Attractiveness of Port towns | [www.seaport-northsea.nl](http://www.seaport-northsea.nl)

- ➔ **Transnational networks generate gains for locations in the regions:** The "SuPortNet II" project boosts the touristic-economic development of smaller ports by setting up a transnational network of attractive sports boat ports. Water sports enthusiasts are provided with extensive information via an internet information system, but the project also supports planning processes and promotes joint marketing efforts. It will be continued as part of the INTERREG III B project "Maritour". A permanent marketing organisation is to ensure the project's success over the long term. Marketing and product development are also core tasks of the European Route of Industrial Heritage (ERIH): The "ERIH platform" integrates individual locations with European theme routes and helps in the development of regional routes. Besides joint marketing efforts, the individual partners also conduct "cross-marketing" of routes and locations.

SuPortNet II: Sustainable Spatial Development with a Network of Ports for Boat Tourism | [www.suportnet.com](http://www.suportnet.com)

ERIH: European Route of Industrial Heritage | [www.erih.net](http://www.erih.net)

## 4.2 Integrating sectoral policies and facts relating to spatial monitoring

The projects based on many sectoral policies at the level of member states or the European Union have a direct spatial impact, for example where they concern transport and agricultural policies, flood control and nature conservation. They make essential and strategic contributions to spatial development in Europe. INTERREG programmes promote intensive, cross-sectoral co-operation and integrative project methods in order to better fit sectoral projects and basic information into harmonised European spatial development while also optimising the conditions for regional value creation.

European environmental legislation must be implemented both within the national legal systems of the various Member States and, in practical terms, in the regions. INTERREG projects that relate to the Water Framework Directive, the "Flora Fauna Habitat" (FFH) Directive and/or the directive on the assessment of the effects on the environment illustrate the differences or commonalities in the way the instruments are used and contribute to the qualification and harmonisation of planning procedure. This is also true, accordingly, of international agreements such as the "Kyoto Protocol" on climate protection: There are big differences in the way emission credits are traded in different countries. In future, the operationalisation of European and international guidelines and standards should become an even stronger focus of transnational co-operation.

## Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Flood control, agriculture and regional land management:** Area protection for flood control measures in large catchment areas often requires a reallocation of land. The "Amewam" project developed a three-dimensional simulation on the basis of geographic information systems (GIS) in order to illustrate for land owners and farmers the effects of land reallocation and to shorten in this way the often long and complicated procedures. Image data from Central Europe was integrated with the programme, which originated overseas, so as to adapt the visual simulation to local conditions and ensure transferability.  
[Amewam: Agricultural Measures for Water Management and their Integration into Spatial Planning | www.uni-hohenheim.de/amewam](http://www.uni-hohenheim.de/amewam)
- ➔ **Flood control and sustainable management of river basins:** The "Flussraumagenda" ("Agenda for River Basins") project involved water management experts who worked out strategies for joint management of spatial resources with respect to 11 "model river basins" with an especially high pressure for land use. The demands on flood control measures, spatial planning and ecology in river basins were harmonised as part of pilot projects. This resulted in, among other things, a river basin management plan for the Alpine region, a dialogue on river basins and a number of other good examples of, for example, structures used for flood control and prevention, flood risk assessment, expansion of river basins, creation of "river experience areas" and even a local "water parliament" on the Drôme river (France).  
[River Basin Agenda / Flussraumagenda: River Basin Agenda Alpine Space | www.flussraumagenda.de](http://www.flussraumagenda.de)
- ➔ **Preventive soil conservation and sustainable strategies for spatial development:** The "TUSEC-IP" project developed an assessment method for urban soil that can be used transnationally. The method can be used, for example, to optimise location decisions in urban land-use planning. Having exact knowledge and assessments of ecological functions such as the soil's capability for seepage and water storage also facilitates the planning of drainage systems or decentralised seepage measures in the case of construction projects.  
[TUSEC-IP: Technique of urban soil evaluation in city regions – implementation in planning procedures | www.tusec-ip.org](http://www.tusec-ip.org)
- ➔ **Basic data as a prerequisite for sustainable regional development:** The DIAMONT project contributes to the overall Alpine SOIA information system of the Alpine Convention. By the help of appropriate indicators clusters of regions with identical development (conditions) are defined and tools are created to control spatial development. Workshops in test areas are to assist in merging theory and practice. As urbanisation trends in the Alpine Space were selected to be a focus of the project activities, the project partners expect to achieve synergy effects by linking up with the "ESPON/SMESTO" project, which concentrates on small and medium-sized towns in Europe.  
[DIAMONT: Data Infrastructure for the Alps Mountain Orientated Network Technology | http://www.uibk.ac.at/diamont/home.htm](http://www.uibk.ac.at/diamont/home.htm)
- ➔ **Creating the foundation for long-term planning:** The projects "ALPS GPS QUAKENET" and "SEAREG" involve the taking of precision measurements of earth movements in mountains or under the sea on the basis of the GPS navigation system. The findings of such "geomonitoring" are to provide a basis on which risk management can be adjusted, for example, by measuring submarine movements in the earth's crust and their effects on the rise in the sea level in connection with climate change, or by determining the effects of earthquakes on landslides in the Alps.  
[ALPS GPS QUAKENET: Alpine Integrated GPS Network | http://www.alps-gps.units.it/](http://www.alps-gps.units.it/)  
[SEAREG: Sea Level Change Affecting the Spatial Development in the Baltic Sea Region | www.gtk.fi/projects/seareg | http://www.gtk.fi/slr/](http://www.gtk.fi/projects/seareg)

### 4.3 Transnational learning processes and solutions "Europeanise" projects and actors

Transnational co-operation targets a "Europeanisation" of projects, processes, administration and actors. Transnational learning processes occur at different levels: within transnational co-operation projects as well as the institutions involved, at the regional level - "learning region" - or within a wider European context, provided that transferable solutions are applied outside the project partnership and context.

Specific tasks and projects seem to be especially well-suited to transnational learning processes. When it comes to direct implementation and application, regional and local results and experience can be interpreted and "processed" well at the transnational level. This is the objective of many pilot projects and "best practices manuals". They provide other regions with exemplary solutions for transnationally relevant issues. But the reverse is also true: When applied practically, the objectives of European spatial development become reproducible and can be transferred specifically to regional and local situations in line with the idea of "learning by doing".

Projects with a greater emphasis on strategy and programmes show the variety of different approaches in spatial planning across the nation more clearly and more fundamentally, which is why they are more difficult to handle. The added value of INTERREG projects, however, can often be increased by the fact that strategic data sets or tools are developed and then deployed in additional co-operation areas. An especially far-reaching form of this know-how transfer concerns the exchange between co-operation areas or the utilisation of experience obtained from different programmes and projects for countries or regions not involved in them.

Much experience and many of the results from the INTERREG projects still remain limited to the circle of partners involved, because there is only very little intensive exchange between different projects and actors of spatial planning/development as well as other disciplines. The potential added value locked into the various results and experience of those active within INTERREG is therefore often underutilised. But apart from the official partners, there are generally other regional actors or even networks. Sometimes even broader segments of the population may be involved directly via participatory processes. This reveals that learning effects occur not only within project partnerships, but also in a wider regional and institutional context.

Some INTERREG projects have developed their own methods in order to institutionalise transnational learning within the project's framework and thus create a platform for working jointly. Language skills and finding out about differences in planning approaches, work routines, negotiation strategies and participation culture enhance the European competence of administrations and regional actors. By providing training and further education programmes, qualification measures and exchanges of expert personnel, the added value of transnational learning processes and experience can be increased significantly. This is where universities, schools and research institutes play a vital role.

European competence is a locational factor and belongs in the group of "*soft skills*" of regions. They get better access to information, knowledge, assistance programmes and companies that are active across Europe or globally. Overall the system of INTERREG partnerships provides excellent conditions for building intercultural competence.

#### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Creating tools that can be used transnationally:** The "FLOWS" project developed web-based applications and study modules for regional and sector planners in the field of flood control. The topics covered are mathematical-technical modelling and forecasting of flood events, adaptive strategies for flood risks, risk awareness within the affected population and a system for experts in urban and regional planning participating in water-management-related tasks.

FLOWS: Flood Plain Land Use Optimising Workable Sustainability | [www.flows.nu](http://www.flows.nu)  
<http://flows.wb.tu-harburg.de/>

- ➔ **Creating example solutions for transnational issues:** The project partnership "CONVERNET" created a manual summarising "best practices" examples, tools, contact persons, transnational solutions and recommendations regarding the conversion of land previously used by the military in the Baltic Sea Region. Plans are in place to expand the "CONVERNET Network" across Europe.

[CONVERNET: Development of a Conversion Network in the Baltic Sea Region | www.conver.net](#)

- ➔ **INTERREG projects develop methods for transnational learning:** Within the "SAUL" project, Joint Planning Groups (JPGs) provided support for the planning and implementation processes of the regions involved. Experts from the international partner regions developed regional pilot projects in co-operation with local actors. As part of the SAUL "review scheme" external experts assessed the regional projects and issued recommendations for further improvement. The transnational project and finance management was organised via an interactive web site.

[SAUL – Sustainable and Accessible Urban Landscapes | www.saulproject.net](#)

#### 4.4 Providing impetus for politics and planning

Apart from specific cases of successful implementation, the results obtained from transnational co-operation are incorporated into policies, programmes and plans. This can affect both the European and the national or regional level. In this respect, INTERREG projects have only an indirect and medium to long-term influence on spatial development, but their reach is much wider as a result. This is especially true when plans, regulations or directives become legally binding.

The chances of success in shaping and qualifying policies, programmes and plans rise when the project partners ensure at the start that there are interfaces with formal and informal processes in spatial planning as well as with sectoral policies and when they create a feedback loop with the key actors. The integration of decision-makers and key actors can support the transfer of results from the projects to policies and planning.

##### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Establishing Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and "marine spatial planning" as transnational policy:** Based on the Wismar Declaration at the 5th Conference of Ministers Responsible for Spatial Planning of the Baltic Sea States and the VASAB programme 2010, the "Baltcoast" project worked out recommendations for ICZM. For the first time it was recognised that spatial planning had a role to play in coastal zone management, contributed to economic development and could provide solutions to conflicts regarding the use of the sea. In addition, transnational planning strategies and tools were developed. On this basis national ICZM strategies have been worked out. ICZM is now a separate topic of spatial planning in the Green Paper of the EU.

[BALTCOAST: Integrated Coastal Zone Development in the Baltic Sea Region | www.baltcoast.org](#)

- ➔ **"Sulphur ahoy" - harmonisation and drafting of EU directives:** Ships anchored at ports cause the bulk of SO<sub>2</sub>, nitrogen oxide, benzene, fine dust and soot emissions in port cities! The technical prerequisites for land-based power supply, which can reduce these emissions substantially, were set out in the "New Hansa" project. By implementing what is known as "shore-to-ship power supply" it is possible to reduce noxious emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, benzene and fine dust by 60% to 80%. Noise pollution stemming from ship engines will be almost entirely eliminated. Implementation in the Baltic Sea Region is secured via a memorandum of understanding and supported by a recommendation of the European Union "on the promotion of shore-side electricity for use by ships at berth in Community ports (2006/339/EC)".

[New Hansa: New Hansa of Sustainable Ports and Cities | www.newhansa.net](#)

- ➔ **INTERREG projects affect transnational planning procedures:** The "BSR Haz Control" project aims to create a transnational management system to regulate the sustainable disposal of hazardous waste. The transnational "Waste Council Network", which was established as part of the project, and the web-based "Waste Communication Platform" supplement the implementation of European waste regulations, such as the correct coding of hazardous waste. A web-based atlas, for example, provides information on disposal plants and capacities and thus shows authorities and private actors possible methods for the logistic disposal of hazardous waste.

[BSR Haz Control: Baltic Haz Control: Development and institutional implementation of a transnational monitoring system for hazardous waste streams in the Baltic Sea Region | http://www.europeanwasteplatform.org/news](http://www.europeanwasteplatform.org/news)

#### 4.5 Creating new partnerships and networks

Even though the INTERREG Community initiative continues to support integrated spatial development, it has long gone beyond the internal sphere of spatial planning and administration. Spatial development and transnational co-operation depend on the commitment and involvement of many actors in the regions. A new level of quality has been achieved by actively involving economic and social partners. The future success of national and European spatial development will depend directly on intensive co-operation between public and private partners. This is the only way to take that next step from spatial planning to spatial development.

The provisions in the INTERREG programmes and EU funding directives are the reason why partners from the business sector often play only an informal role in project partnerships. There is, however, still a keen interest on the part of business in participating in INTERREG projects. Reasons for such interest include improved image and strengthening one's European competence, access to know-how and relevant networks, the opportunity of gaining leeway for experiments and innovation or exerting direct influence on regional developments.

##### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Support of *governance structures at transnational and regional level:*** As part of the "Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum" project, partners developed strategies for the sustainable development of the Wadden Sea. Actors from the fields of energy, fishing, agriculture, industry and ports, nature conservation and tourism as well as the local, regional and national administrative authorities are actively involved in the process. The project-oriented action plan, which has been worked out jointly, will be implemented by those involved over the next few years.

[WSF: Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum | www.waddensea-forum.org](http://www.waddensea-forum.org)

- ➔ **Participation of business, social partners and non-governmental organisations (NGOs):** In the "ScanBaltCampus" project 31 project partners from ten countries representing public authorities, universities, hospitals and medical-pharmaceutical companies work together. In other words, administrators and researchers co-operate with the business sector ("triple helix"). Networks from the field of life sciences are also represented here. They all share an interest in creating networks and co-operation between post-graduate institutes in the area of "regenerative medicine". At the same time critical mass is achieved in the education and research sectors in order to support the development of relevant clusters (ScanBalt Umbrella).

[ScanBaltCampus: ScanBalt Campus – a European model case for transnational and transectoral institution building in education, research and development \(borderless biotech\) | www.scanbaltcampus.eu](http://www.scanbaltcampus.eu)

- ➔ **Active involvement of citizens:** The "GenderAlp!" project specialised in the gender-specific social roles in spatial development ("gender planning") and in public budgeting ("gender budgeting"), particularly the effects of administrative actions on the daily routines of men and women. For example, GenderAlp! tested participatory procedures for citizens for the purpose of achieving a more active involvement of different social groups in specific projects. The



development of "gender competence" in the administration of cities, municipalities and regions as well as the dissemination of results are supported in the international educational network "GenderAlp! Competence" from within the project network.

[GenderAlp!: Spatial Development for women and men | www.genderalp.com \(englisch\)](http://www.genderalp.com) | [www.genderalp.at \(deutsch\)](http://www.genderalp.at) | [www.genderbudget.it \(italienisch\)](http://www.genderbudget.it) | [www.genderalp.si \(slowenisch\)](http://www.genderalp.si)

#### 4.6 Doing good and talking about it!

Spatial planning and development has not exactly taken centre-stage in the member states of the European Union so far. The INTERREG programmes and projects ensure that spatial planning activities reach a much wider target group. There are multiple reasons for this. One central aspect is the diverse partner structure: A variety of protagonists from society participate in INTERREG projects and communicate the results through their networks. Another reason is project orientation: As a rule, projects deal with more specific issues and generate results with a greater public relations effect - beyond the programmes and plans typical of spatial planning. Flood control measures, tourism concepts, conversion projects, measures regarding natural and cultural heritage and, in particular, specific local investments are areas that can be easily communicated, also to the general public.

Surely there is still much work to be done, since the actors in spatial planning and in most of sectoral planning have had limited focus on professional communications, intensive contacts with citizens or efforts to "popularise" their work. Through targeted and target-group-oriented dissemination of the results it is possible to increase the number of beneficiaries significantly.

#### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Keeping people informed - a touring exhibition on flood control:** The touring exhibition, which is part of the "ELLA" project, raised people's awareness for flood control in so far twenty cities and towns located in the catchment area of the Elbe river. The exhibition was accompanied by the "Kaffenkahn", a reconstruction of a historical Elbe barge, and supported by presentations, films, painting competitions and lotteries. This attracted a large number of various visitors, among them many school classes and children, and was instrumental to the success of the exhibition.

[ELLA: ELBE – LBE Vorsorgende Hochwasserschutzmaßnahmen durch transnationale Raumordnung | www.ella-interreg.org](http://www.ella-interreg.org)

- ➔ **Advising people - information and demonstration centres:** As part of the "SmartLIFE" project, information and demonstration centres were set up to illustrate techniques employed in sustainable urban construction. The centres advise on a range of topics, for example, refurbishment of existing building stock, greening measures, energy supply and efficiency. Life-sized models and construction details demonstrate new techniques to both the general public and experts in a graphic and vivid manner. In addition, the centres serve as "places of learning", transferring knowledge for the actors in the construction industry.

[SmartLIFE: Smart Lifestyle Innovations for our Environment | www.smartlife-project.net](http://www.smartlife-project.net)

- ➔ **Experimenting - virtual museums and internet radio:** The "HERMES" project appeals to diverse, especially younger target groups by using new multimedia presentation platforms to demonstrate the cultural heritage of regions. Examples include portable multimedia mini-computers (PDAs) for museums, a virtual "Museum of the Argonauts" showing their routes through the region of the Black Sea and the "Heritage Radio Network". Radio stations in six countries produce a joint radio programme. Downloads and magazines are two ways of delivering cultural topics to the new target groups free of charge.

[HERMES: Heritage and New Media for Sustainable Regional Development | www.swkk.de/hermes](http://www.swkk.de/hermes)

- ➔ **INTERREG for children and youth:** The project "Flussraumagenda" (River Basin Agenda) was the subject of school projects in the Alpine Space for several weeks. Events such as the creative

design of fishways or fish ladders, an "open-air school class" or an adventure week along a mountain river all the way to where it drains into the sea helped to raise awareness among pupils for issues related to streams.

[River Basin Agenda / Flussraumagenda: River Basin Agenda Alpine Space | www.flussraum-agenda.de](http://www.flussraum-agenda.de)



## 5 INTERREG projects and their contributions to a future-oriented European spatial development

In the Territorial Agenda the following priorities regarding Europe's territorial development are identified:

- Strengthening innovative co-operative urban development of metropolitan regions, urban areas and regional centres
- New forms of partnership and territorial governance between rural and urban areas
- Strengthening and extending Trans-European Networks
- Promoting trans-European risk management
- Strengthening ecological structures and cultural resources as new development strategy

Territorial co-operation as well as public and private initiatives are prerequisites for promoting spatial development in this respect. Transnational co-operation, part of the new objective "European territorial co-operation", serves a key function in implementing the Territorial Agenda by way of concrete projects.

In the past Structural Funds period (2000-2006) already, a number of transnational projects were initiated, which picked up themes of the Agenda. This is shown by some examples referring to the thematic fields mentioned above:

### 5.1 Driving urban development

Cities and urban areas play a key role in the "Europe of the Regions". Eighty percent of the population lives in these areas. They are hubs and anchors for social and economic change. Jobs and growth are concentrated in urban regions; they are the engines of sustainable regional development. Attractive cities with distinct profiles, lively inner cities and a high level of quality of life, excellent educational opportunities and cultural events have the best chances in the competition between regions. At the same time, disparities and polarisation trends within and between cities are on the rise. This marks an area of increasingly urgent action - at a time when public resources become scarce.

Urban-policy issues in the context of European spatial development are of great importance. The strengthening of individual profiles and Europe-wide networking of urban and metropolitan regions should contribute to balancing competition and the division of functions.

Innovative and economic power is centred in metropolitan regions. European and national policies have acknowledged the significance of metropolitan regions as internationally anchored key centres and are fostering their potential. But even outside the economic core zones of Europe, the historically grown, polycentric urban system provides potentials for a balanced and stable spatial development. The ESDP has already stressed the necessity for polycentric development in Europe in order to create sustainable development centres in rural and/or peripheral regions as providers of public services and as economic anchors.

#### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Creative support of urban transformation:** Cities in Central and Eastern Europe are experiencing adjustments to changed framework conditions at lightning speed. Here new approaches are necessary in order to cope with dynamic developments and transformation. Examples of this are the reconstruction of large housing estates (LHASA) or the energetic refurbishment of the building stock (BEEN). The BEEN project serves to highlight legal and financial framework conditions and strategies for improving energy efficiency against the background of European energy-efficiency standards.

[BEEN: Baltic Energy Efficiency Network for the Building Stock | www.been-online.net](http://www.been-online.net)

[LHASA: Large Housing Areas Stabilisation Action |](http://www.cadses.net/projects/apprpro.html)

<http://www.cadses.net/projects/apprpro.html?projectId=1365&topic=projects/apprpro&PHPSESSID=2d9e507516f9154725cf41afb61d80c1>

- ➔ **Revitalisation and strengthening of settlement, economic and supply structures in peripheral areas:** The "AlpCity" project aims to improve the efficiency of places with central economic and public functions in Alpine peripheral regions. At the core, there are project approaches for the subsequent use of vacant residential areas and buildings as well as an integrated settlement development to strengthen the economic carrying capacity or in connection with the Olympic Winter Games in Italy. The projects "PUSEMOR" and "TRANS-IT" expand on specific aspects of endogenous development in peripheral areas: on the one hand, innovative strategies to secure public services (PUSEMOR), and on the other, measures to disseminate knowledge and innovation as well as to strengthen wellness tourism.  
[AlpCity: Local endogenous development and urban regeneration of small alpine towns | www.alpcity.it](http://www.alpcity.it)  
[PUSEMOR: Public services in sparsely populated mountain regions. New needs and innovative strategies | http://www.pusemor.net/](http://www.pusemor.net/)  
[TRANS-IT: Transfer Regional Activities in Networks for Business Development and Wellness Tourism supported by Information Technologies | http://www.transit-eu.net](http://www.transit-eu.net)
  
- ➔ **Revitalising inner cities - strengthening retail!** This task was the focus of the project "VITAL CITIES". In view of the very different formal control instruments used to strengthen the retail sector in the inner cities of the countries involved, the project partners came up with the CURTIS strategy as a joint model. This strategy has a governance approach at its core that allows the relevant actors to design and define, in a binding manner, regional retail concepts in a co-operative process. The European Charter "Network of VITAL CITIES", signed by representatives from politics and business, requires that retail projects be permitted in non-integrated locations only if the respective municipality can demonstrate that there is no better and more suitable location available.  
[VITAL CITIES: Consolidation of Polycentric Urban Systems through the Promotion of the Settlement of Retail Trade Businesses in Inner Urban Areas | www.vital-cities.eu](http://www.vital-cities.eu)
  
- ➔ **After university and training: keep skills in the city region!** The project "Brain Drain" analyses the extent and causes of the migration of highly qualified individuals. This is done on the basis of an impact model for factors influencing the *brain drain* and *brain gain*. Thus, the regions are to participate in working out strategies to promote *brain gain*.  
[Brain Drain: Human Capital in European peripheral regions | www.brain-drain.org](http://www.brain-drain.org)
  
- ➔ **A "green" infrastructure makes for a better quality of life and locational advantages for cities and regions.** The "Artery" project uses the revitalisation of river landscapes as a driver for "river-based" regional and urban development. The ten pilot projects have provided a stimulus for the further valorisation and economic development of partly devastated river landscapes and intercommunal co-operation as part of efforts to enhance the regions.  
[Artery: Restoring & Redeveloping Riverside Landscapes as Regions' Artery | www.artery.eu.com](http://www.artery.eu.com)
  
- ➔ **From local competition to regional co-operation as a long-term strategy for a stable and polycentric development:** The building of regional co-operative structures requires a rethink on the part of local authorities. The "Town-Net" project initiated this change in perspective in an English region by involving four working groups (economic development strategy, cluster development, inward investment, retail trade development) as a starting point for such a long-term strategy. These groups provided first results, such as a joint database for investors or brochures on the joint marketing of local retail shops.  
[Town-Net | www.town-net.nl](http://www.town-net.nl)
  
- ➔ **The strengthening of metropolitan regions outside the economic core of Europe provides anchors for a balanced and polycentric development.** In this respect the project partnership "metropolitan areas +" developed strategies aimed, among other things, at the harmonisation and networking of spatial planning processes that pave the way for investments. Other common

topics were the identification and assessment of spatial and sector-oriented innovation potential as well as the integration of rural areas into metropolitan regions.

metropolitan areas +: Network of Regional Systems of European Capitals in the Baltic Sea Region – Strengthening of Competitiveness by Sustainable Development of Functional Metropolitan Areas | [www.metropolitan-areas.net](http://www.metropolitan-areas.net)

## 5.2 Re-defining urban-rural partnerships

Demographic shifts, concentration processes and migration worsen the disparities between the core, its surroundings and the periphery. In rural and peripheral areas, therefore, the issue of carrying capacity with respect to settlement and economic structures, accessibility and public services is becoming more and more urgent.

The ESDP calls for a strengthening of urban-rural partnership in connection with the creation of a more balanced urban system. The ESDP (1999, p. 24) refers to the functional-spatial unit of city and countryside in its various relations and dependencies: *"[...] the small and medium-sized towns and their inter-dependencies form important hubs and links, especially for rural regions. In rural "problem" regions only these towns are capable of offering infrastructure and services for economic activities in the region and easing access to the bigger labour markets."*

At the same time, urban-rural partnerships have an interregional aspect in terms of sharing functions over a larger area between urban/metropolitan regions and rural areas: *"In principle an approach based on partnership also aims at achieving a balance between the various interests on a larger scale, in which both economic and environmental interests and social aspects are taken into account."* (ESDP 1999, p. 25). This special form of partnership is gaining new momentum and currency as a result of the growth of European metropolises.

New forms and qualities of partnership relations between cities and rural areas - in regional and inter-regional terms - will determine the quality of life and the carrying capacity of rural and peripheral areas. But it is also these areas that have a lot to offer, which is why urban-rural partnerships should not be seen as creating one-sided dependence, but rather as complementary development and a new sharing of tasks.

There have only been a few projects so far that deal with the linking of urban and rural areas. What needs to be done in this field is to develop specific examples of manageable solutions for urban-rural partnerships.

### Contributions by transnational projects:

➔ **Linking cities and rural areas: securing specific qualities and utilising different potentials.** The "URBAL" project deals with areas made up of a patchwork of urban and rural utilisation patterns. Integrated land management, governance approaches and a separate "urbal economy" aim to improve the relationship between urban and rural areas and minimise regional and functional imbalances. New approaches have been put to the test as part of specific services and measures such as farmer's markets, "care farms" or "social service networks".

URBAL: [Urbal Development | www.urbaldevelopment.com](http://Urbal Development | www.urbaldevelopment.com)

➔ **The demographic shift and its consequences necessitate careful exploration of co-operation potential between the "hinterland" and the "cities":** The "HINTERLAND" project's goal is to raise awareness for negative growth processes, solidify endogenous potentials and develop adjustment strategies. A central approach to stabilising the "hinterland" is the building of bridges to the cities, that is, the accessible metropolitan regions. Urban-rural partnerships are examined for their sustainable effectiveness, and key co-operations and pilot projects are initiated.

HINTERLAND: [Hinterland potentials for a spatial development under the aspects of decline | www.hinterland-info.de | www.hinterland-info.net](http://Hinterland potentials for a spatial development under the aspects of decline | www.hinterland-info.de | www.hinterland-info.net)

### 5.3 Promoting regional innovation processes

In future, the Structural Funds and funding programmes are to be geared more closely to the Lisbon objectives in order to push ahead with the development of a knowledge society and a knowledge-based economy at all levels. This approach has many different aspects: It refers to an internationalisation of the European economy and its regions, the promotion of knowledge transfer and networking - primarily between science and business - as well as the strengthening of the social foundation of innovation.

INTERREG programmes have already implemented measures on competitiveness, support for SMEs and innovation in the Alpine Space and North Sea Region. As for INTERREG, the primary issue is the territorial component of such a strategy towards more growth and more innovation. A central aspect of this approach is the formation of clusters across national borders and their linking to the development of (macro-) regions. The focus of INTERREG projects is certainly not on subsidising technological innovation or the business sector itself. Instead, interfaces with European spatial and regional development are supported in order to utilise the "territorial capital" for innovation processes and exploit the contributions resulting from growth and innovation for the purposes of territorial cohesion.

The intention is to strengthen the competitiveness of regions as far as possible on a European and global scale. When comparing regions it becomes clear that the innovation potential does not only depend on "hard" - economic and infrastructural - factors, but also, quite indisputably, on "soft" factors. These include support for cultural and creative potentials and for the "human capital" as well as the quality of urban services and the environmental quality of a region. As far as the strengthening of urban and metropolitan regions is concerned, internationalisation, achieving recognition, specialisation and co-operation are the tools to be used to improve competitiveness. It is in the funding of and support for such non-technical aspects of innovation potential that INTERREG programmes show their full strength.

Some INTERREG III B programmes have already dealt with the interfaces between business actors, innovation clusters and territorial development. Their focus was on co-operation between regions with similar or complementary profiles (functional clusters), the Europeanisation of small and medium-sized enterprises and the transnational networking of competence centres in co-operation areas.

New partnerships where business people and scientists meet with actors from the public sector to move specific projects forward play a crucial role as a basis for regional innovation processes. A successful cluster policy requires an intensive network and clear *governance* competences - both aspects that have not been developed sufficiently in the regions.

#### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Transnational cluster policy - development of a knowledge-economic region across national borders:** One example of that is the "ELAT" project, the Eindhoven-Leuven-Aachen Technology Triangle. The formation of clusters in this area is based on the areas of micro-electronics, nanotechnology, information technology, biotech, mechatronics and automotive technology. Through intensive support for transnational networks, the strengths of the region are bundled, innovation strategies for new products developed and start-up companies launched. The Triple Helix alliance of business, science as well as local and regional business development constitutes a major contribution to development and international marketing in the region.

[ELAT: Eindhoven, Leuven, Aachen Technology Triangle | www.elat.org](http://www.elat.org)

- ➔ **Bundling excellence - setting up an Academy of Excellence for the meta-region ScanBalt:** The "ScanBaltCampus" project creates a knowledge and competence network for research and development in the fields of life science and biotechnology in the meta-region ScanBalt, which aims to achieve recognition in these innovative areas. ScanBaltCampus comprises universities, hospitals and companies, serves as a platform for networking actors and also acts as an image factor for the "cluster of excellence". The ultimate goal is to achieve a brain gain and to improve the competitiveness of the location.

ScanBaltCampus: ScanBalt Campus – a European model case for transnational and transectoral institution building in education, research and development (borderless biotech) | [www.scanbaltcampus.eu](http://www.scanbaltcampus.eu)

- ➔ **Multiplier effects through transnationally networked incubators:** The "NENSI" project promotes the establishment of "incubators" as a tool of business development. Companies in the start-up and pre-start-up phases are given access to information and knowledge as well as economic and social capital. Transnational networking increases the added value through knowledge transfer to set up incubators and, subsequently, once operational, through pan-European support of companies.  
[NENSI: North European Network for Service Incubators | www.service-incubator.com](http://www.service-incubator.com)
- ➔ **Transnational "springboards" for company founders:** As part of the "CBSR+" project, high-tech-oriented company founders receive assistance in the form of "springboards" to develop their business plans with qualified experts. Access to technical/planning and financial resources is provided through financing and business partner forums. On the basis of over 850 "springboards", about 1,000 jobs have been created and approximately EUR 850 million has been raised as venture capital.  
[CBSR+: Connect Baltic Sea Region Project | http://www.hier-beginnt-die-zukunft.de/typo3\\_src-3.5.0/index.php?id=700](http://www.hier-beginnt-die-zukunft.de/typo3_src-3.5.0/index.php?id=700)
- ➔ **Supporting transnational activities of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs):** As part of the "B-SME" project, a network called "Hanse Parliament" has been created with the involvement of all eleven Baltic Sea countries: it provides support with respect to qualification, training, cross-border co-operation at corporate level and the product development and marketing of SMEs. An electronic company register serves as a "b2b platform" for national and transnational co-operative efforts of SMEs. In addition, among other things, a dual Bachelor's degree programme for entrepreneurs and executives is being set up, which combines practical on-the-job training with an academic education in two locations. The plan envisages co-operation of eight universities to set up the *Baltic Sea Academy*, which is to conduct research and development for and with SMEs and, in particular, to promote the application of innovation at SMEs.  
[B-SME: Spatial development Measures for Enterprise | www.hanse-parlament.de](http://www.hanse-parlament.de) und <http://www.hanse-parlament.de/Projekte/Bsme.php> | [www.baltic-cooperation.eu](http://www.baltic-cooperation.eu)
- ➔ **Knowledge transfer and innovation management in traditional business sectors:** Creating clusters outside the high-tech sectors is also meaningful and necessary. The "NENA" project creates a network in which SMEs in the sectors of the wood industry, renewable energy and passive houses and oriented towards sustainability develop innovative technologies in co-operation with universities. Launching a Master's degree programme in the field of "wood value creation" (energy use, timber construction) ensures a qualified education.  
[NENA: Network Enterprise Alps – Enhancing sustainable development, competitiveness and innovation through SME and cluster co-operation | http://nena.telesis.at/](http://nena.telesis.at/)
- ➔ **Service for public tenders in the Alpine Space - facilitating access to cross-border markets:** In the ALPPS project partners from Slovenia, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, France and Germany have prepared a guide that describes the legal regulations in the individual countries regarding public tenders. This "key" to being awarded public contracts under the EU threshold also provides information about where tenders are published in the countries and who are the biggest clients.  
[ALPPS: Alpine Public Procurement Services | http://www.alpps-online.com/](http://www.alpps-online.com/)

#### 5.4 Connecting Trans-European technology networks and regional development

Mobility and accessibility, access to knowledge and secure energy supply are among the central concerns of European spatial development. Specifically, this refers to the expansion and the linking of



transport routes and services, funding for communication and information technologies as well as the efficient and environmentally-friendly production of renewable energy.

The concept of Trans-European Networks (TEN) is a significant contribution to territorial cohesion. This is to improve the integration of the regions across Europe via a basic system of rapid transport routes and secondary connections to national and regional networks. This concept refers to transport by road, rail, air and sea. The decisive factor in this is not only the expansion of an efficient transport infrastructure, but also, and in particular, the improvement of connections through an intelligent and sustainable organisation of traffic flows as well as the optimised use and linking of existing infrastructure.

Transport-policy decisions are of great consequence for regions, particularly if they trigger European-scale developments as a result of the expansion and enhancement of transnational corridors. Large-area transport projects and their linking to secondary networks can give a substantial and specific impetus for spatial integration and regional value creation. For this purpose they need to be embedded in a regional context. At the same time, a very large traffic volume results in an extreme burden - ranging from urban housing to the Alpine region as a key region for transit and tourism. Action is required in this area in order to counter a possible devaluation of cities and regions. A number of INTERREG projects aim to link the expansion and optimisation of transport systems and effective mobility management to an integrated spatial development.

Consistent funding and support for information and communication technologies (ICT) as well as the expansion of the trans-European ICT networks create the foundation and prerequisites for a knowledge society and a knowledge-based economy. They are key factors for regional innovation processes and thus for achieving the Lisbon targets. In addition, modern ICT technologies can help to secure or improve the organisation and "*governance*" of urban agglomerations as well as public services in rural and peripheral areas. INTERREG projects essentially deal with the application and distribution of ICT technologies in connection with spatial development.

A secure and environmentally-friendly energy supply is the basis for sustainable spatial development. Renewable energy sources are an important building block in this approach. The expansion of renewable energy sources can also broaden the economic basis of structurally weak regions - the focus of INTERREG projects.

### **Contributions by transnational projects - transport:**

- ➔ **Optimising existing railway networks and providing relief for the sensitive environment of the Alpine region: railway services from one single provider!** The objective of the "AlpFRail" project is to consistently transfer goods transport from the road to rail in the whole Alpine arc by developing innovative concepts. The "Alpine" transport policy must overcome national borders and reach European dimensions. It is necessary to stop thinking of single axes and to speak of systems and networks. The entire logistics chain of goods' flows from the origin to the destination across Europe is being analysed to find ways to provide railway logistics "from one single provider", which have been coordinated with the political, the economic and the scientific sector and which are in line with economic, ecological and social sustainability, together with national and regional actors.

[AlpFRail: Alpine Freight Railway | www.alpfrail.com](http://www.alpfrail.com)

[Konzept Adriazug | www.adriazug.com](http://www.adriazug.com)

[Konzept Trailer Train | www.trailertrain.com](http://www.trailertrain.com)

- ➔ **Regional development and value creation along the future trans-European corridor between Warsaw and Tallinn:** The "Rail Baltica" project aims to combine regional development in the German-Polish border region with the expansion of the transport corridor between Warsaw and Tallinn. This requires a closer look at the regional potential for the development of commercial areas in the border region by establishing a link with *Rail Baltica*. In addition to this, the economic potential of the three goods transport centres in Brandenburg is analysed with respect to the flow of goods into the Baltic region and possible effects on the regional economy.

[Rail Baltica: Transnational Integration through Coordinated Infrastructure and Regional Development | http://www.rail-baltica.net/](http://www.rail-baltica.net/)

- ➔ **"Sea motorways" - from the road to the sea:** As part of the "Baltic Gateway" project, a compendium was drawn up regarding desirable transport corridors for the shipping transport in the southern Baltic Sea in connection with different rail- and road-bound axes ("Quick Start Programme"). The "Baltic Gateway +" project is building on that and working on feasibility studies and recommendations regarding specific investments for select corridors. The core elements are multimodal transport concepts, co-operation between ports and improvements to the infrastructure for transport and logistics.  
[Baltic Gateway +: Implementation plan for realizing the Baltic Gateway Quick Start Programme | www.balticgateway.se](http://www.balticgateway.se)
  
- ➔ **Multimodal goods transport along rivers and transport based on seaports and inland ports create many advantages!** The IPPN project utilises the various potentials of multimodal goods transport in combination with shipping. This includes, for example, transport via seaports/inland ports by ship (cost benefits), multimodal logistics chains of door-to-door transport via shipping lines for heavy goods on the Rhine (time benefits compared to transport by lorry) or concepts for self-unloading container vessels equipped with cranes.  
[IPPN: InterPortsPromotioNet | http://www.interports.org/](http://www.interports.org/)

### Contributions by transnational projects - ICT:

- ➔ **eHealth - securing health-care services in peripheral areas:** By making a comparison of health-care systems in the countries involved, the "eHealth for Regions" project has identified transnational co-operation areas for the use of state-of-the-art ICT technologies in the health-care sector. In the field of telecardiology, e.g., potentials are being assessed in the framework of a pilot project. It demonstrates ways of simplifying the electronic exchange of patient data and facilitating access to information about medical facilities via the internet.  
[eHealth for Regions: www.ehealthforregions.net](http://www.ehealthforregions.net)
  
- ➔ **GIS and governance in spatial planning and regional management:** The "VBNDZ" project shows how spatial information can be bundled and made accessible by means of strategic, intercommunal information management. This means that a local-regional showcase is available on the internet at all times showing information about living and housing, recreational activities and tourism as well as economy and planning. In addition, a web-based form of civic participation in regional planning is being tested as part of the project. The LoG-IN project is another test of e-governance. Using an information infrastructure shared by all project partners, spatial/regional information is visualised and made accessible to the public via the internet beyond the limits of the system. There are a variety of ways of utilising modern web technology: A shared electronic register of all trade and commercial registration data creates a vertical network of local administrative structures. Electronic building files and permits help to increase transparency and the workflow of processes, which saves the applicant time and often money. Decentralised motor-vehicle registration offices are to reduce travel times to central offices in future.  
[VBNDZ: Via Baltica Nordica Development Zone | www.brandenburg-portal.de | www.viabalticanordica.com](http://www.brandenburg-portal.de)  
[LoG-IN: Building better business services through e-government! | www.login-project.net](http://www.login-project.net)

### Contributions by transnational projects - energy:

- ➔ **Exploring new territory together - innovation: offshore wind-power generation** The "Power" project initiated a competence network for the production, installation and operation of plants and training programmes for skilled workers. The project thus lays the cornerstone for embarking on this area of innovation and includes the public in the process by disseminating information on the environmental effects of offshore energy.  
[Power: Pushing Offshore Wind Energy Regions | www.offshore-power.ne](http://www.offshore-power.ne)



- ➔ **Setting up local and regional value chains in wind-power generation:** The WEBSR project is setting up a co-operation platform for wind power in the Baltic Sea Region. This is to improve the competitiveness of small domestic companies and open up operating models for smaller local authorities. Not least, it is about building a uniform wind-power planning culture in the Baltic Sea Region. Practical examples of the project work are reliable feasibility considerations prior to investment by means of a wind-measuring mast, a curriculum for skilled workers involved in the *workflow* of wind-power generation or a manual on the repowering of wind-power plants.  
[WEBSR: Wind Energy in the BSR | www.windenergy-in-the-bsr.net](http://www.windenergy-in-the-bsr.net)
  
- ➔ **The future: bio-energy!** The "ProBioEnergy" project supports making bio-energy use competitive by way of information campaigns and counselling, distribution of "best-practices technologies" and funding for pilot concepts. Close co-operation with the platform "Zukünftig Bioenergie" (The Future: Bio-Energy), located at the Innovation Foundation of the State of Schleswig-Holstein, and the INTERREG project "NSBE" in the North Sea Region creates a network among actors and institutions.  
[ProBioEnergy: Promotion of Bio-Energy by Marketing, Implementation and Trading in the North Sea Region | www.probioenergy.net](http://www.probioenergy.net) | [www.zukuenftig-bioenergie.de](http://www.zukuenftig-bioenergie.de)  
[NSBE: North Sea Bio Energy | www.northseabioenergy.org](http://www.northseabioenergy.org)
  
- ➔ **Utilisation of mine water for the purpose of power generation as a contribution to structural changes:** Making use of the geothermal energy of the mine water from abandoned mining sites is the innovative idea behind the Minewater project. The water, which is heated underground, is brought to the surface by drilling, then processed and introduced into its own circulation system for heating purposes. Feasibility studies and efficiency calculations prior to any pilot projects are an important component in the preparation of investments.  
[Minewater: Sustainable Redevelopment of Mining Communities | www.minewaterproject.info](http://www.minewaterproject.info)

## 5.5 Increasing safety and reducing risk: trans-European risk management

Natural risks such as earthquakes, floods and tidal waves, as well as technological risks that originate, for example, in locations belonging to the oil and chemicals industry, nuclear power plants and large port areas, often affect large areas - beyond national borders. To tackle such risks, transnational strategies and concepts of risk prevention or minimisation are required as well as measures for dealing with catastrophic events. The current debate on climate change and its consequences illustrates the dimension and highly charged nature of trans-European risk management.

Concentrated action is needed in the maritime area and coastal regions, in the catchment areas of rivers and in mountain regions. If densely populated areas are situated in regions with a high natural risk such as coastal towns, densely populated Alpine valleys or the agglomerations found in the Rhine Plains, the variety of different risks is increased, as is the "vulnerability factor". The flood events of recent years have shown Europeans that a sustainable settlement and spatial development will have to be based on such risk factors even more so than has been the case in the past. Trans-European risk management has been one of the main topics in a number of sets of measures and projects implemented within the INTERREG programmes.

### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Safe Alps - weather-risk alerts:** The "meteorisk" project compiles weather events and assesses them on a four-level weather scale that is common to the countries involved and thus allows for the data to be interpreted across different countries. For example, the same amount of precipitation that causes a three-year flood event in Germany results in a ten-year flood event in Austria due to different drainage conditions. Using a web-based platform, it is possible to retrieve standardised weather warnings across the Alpine region.  
[meteorisk: alpinewide project to coordinate weather forecasts in case of exmeteorological events | www.meteorisk.info](http://www.meteorisk.info)

- ➔ **Safe coasts - today and tomorrow:** The "ComCoast" project lays the groundwork for expanding coastal protection from a linear system focussed on coastlines only to one based on different zones. Multifunctional coastal protection zones are created which, from the point of view of all users involved (agriculture, nature conservation, coastal protection, tourism etc.), offer advantages. Potentials of such zones are assessed with respect to technical, social, economic and ecological effects at European pilot locations together with the local population. Using innovative technology, main dikes, for example, can be expanded in a way that prevents them from overflowing and allows water to be stored in a transition zone. This achieves a higher level of safety with respect to dike failure and allows for the implementation of temporary uses in coastal zone management.  
[ComCoast: COMBined Functions in COASTal Defence Zones | http://www.comcoast.org](http://www.comcoast.org)
  
- ➔ **Safe seas - transnational co-operation in rescue operations and marine protection:** As part of the "Safety at Sea" project, marine risks are analysed in connection with the transportation of oil and hazardous goods, accidents at sea and offshore wind-power generation. An inventory for the sea routes of oil tankers, a classification of types of oil transported used for risk assessment in emergencies as well as action plans for disaster and rescue operations are worked out and improved among the countries.  
[S@S: Safety at Sea | www.safetyatsea.se](http://www.safetyatsea.se)
  
- ➔ **Safe river basins - protection against flood risks:** A central result of the "OderRegio" project is the set of transnational flood-risk maps on a scale of 1:50,000 for the entire basin of the Oder river (120,000 km<sup>2</sup>). They are used in the preventive securing of land, land use and design as well as for the purposes of minimising the potential damage in flood-risk areas. They constitute an important basis for improving urban land-use planning as well as disaster prevention and keeping citizens informed.  
[OderRegio: Transnational Action Program Spatial Planning for Preventive Flood Protection in the Oder Catch | www.oderregio.org](http://www.oderregio.org)

## 5.6 Utilising regional resources: natural and cultural heritage

European natural and cultural heritage requires protection; this requires responsible and transnational management. In this respect, the European Union has already taken important steps, for example, Natura 2000 or the FFH Directive. The harmonised implementation of these EU strategies and initiatives has already been successful in several locations.

In addition, ecologically and culturally valuable areas - in urban or rural regions - provide an ideal starting point for regional innovation processes. Natural and cultural heritage, a "soft locational factor", can improve regions' attractiveness and have positive effects on their socio-economic development as "territorial capital". Its economic significance, in particular, has so far been underestimated. The economic potential of cultural and natural heritage can be "capitalised" particularly well when it is integrated with the general spatial development of regions and when synergies are created in a European context. INTERREG can make a number of crucial contributions here; several projects have given initial incentives.

### Contributions by transnational projects:

- ➔ **Creating a foundation for the monitoring and management of protected areas across the Alpine region:** The standardised survey and assessment of colour-infrared aerial photos as part of the "HABITALP" project aims to create a map of the Alpine region on a scale of 1:5000. The results can be used, for example, to create models on landscape diversity, defining search spaces for Natura 2000 habitats or tracking changes in landscape. For this purpose, a standardised database is created that is to result over the long term in cross-border management of protected areas of the Alpine region.  
[HABITALP: Alpine Habitat Diversity | www.habitalp.de/](http://www.habitalp.de/)
  
- ➔ **Experiencing nature - tourism potential of Natura 2000 areas:** The "AlpNaTour" project is about assessing the risk to Natura 2000 areas in connection with tourism and integrating tourism

proactively as a factor in management planning. Actors from the tourism sector are involved in the preparation of management plans. In this context, tests have been carried out on the use of new cost-efficient methods to measure the volume of visitors as well as agent-based procedures for simulating visitor volumes in GIS or new methods in analysing aerial shots.

[AlpNaTour: Integration of recreation and tourism concerns in NATURA 2000 management planning processes to support sustainability in the alpine area | www.alpnatour.info](http://www.alpnatour.info)

- ➔ **Seeing cultural heritage as an opportunity - revitalisation of historic cities and towns:** The "Hist.Urban" project is committed to the revitalisation of smaller and medium-sized towns in the CADSES region that stand out due to their exceptional historic architectural heritage. This ties in with the question about the opportunities and risks of cities and towns designated as World Heritage sites. The project aims to show ways of preserving architectural heritage, while valorising it economically. The "CulturALP" project also picks up on cultural heritage and assesses both the risk and potential of historic settlements and cultural heritage objects in the Alpine Space - as a basis for enhancement and development measures.

[Hist.Urban: Integrated revitalization of historical towns to promote a polycentric and sustainable development | http://www.histurban.net/](http://www.histurban.net/)

[CulturALP: Knowledge and Enhancement of Historical Centres and Cultural Landscapes in Alpine Space | http://www.culturalp.org/ted/index.asp](http://www.culturalp.org/ted/index.asp)

- ➔ **A difficult legacy - dealing with the consequences of mining creatively:** The "REKULA" project is developing a holistic approach to the future of landscapes in line with the European Landscape Convention and avoids taking a purely historical or aesthetic perspective. One example is the development of the strip-mining landscapes in Niederlausitz to convert them to sustainable energy landscapes (renewable resources) as an opportunity for landscapes in declining regions. Complementary partner projects that have been conducted are READY and REVITAMIN.

[REKULA: Restrukturing Cultural Landscapes | www.iba-see.de/rekula](http://www.iba-see.de/rekula)

[READY: Rehabilitation and Development in Mining Regions | http://www.ready-network.de](http://www.ready-network.de)

[REVITAMIN: Revitalisation of former brown coal mining areas / Development of a transnational computer-aided multicriteria decision aid for mining regions | http://www.revitamin.net/](http://www.revitamin.net/)

## 6 Transnational co-operation faces new challenges

### INTERREG and the "Territorial Agenda of the EU"

Transnational co-operation in spatial development is entering a new phase. At the start of the new Structural Funds period 2007, the activities of the INTERREG initiative became part of the general structural policy of the EU.

Given this change, the focus of transnational co-operation has been expanded for the upcoming funding period. Financial support for measures and projects with Structural Funding from the European Union serves essentially as a way to implement the overriding objectives of the Community. These include, in particular, the Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment as well as the Göteborg Strategy for sustainable development. Transnational co-operation in spatial development will also have a stronger focus on implementing these strategies in future.

Thus, future transnational projects are faced with the challenge of finding answers to the issues of the Lisbon and Göteborg Strategies from within a spatial context. Integration of different sectoral policies with the project work will be of special importance against this background.

With regard to sustainable action, it will become increasingly important to consider spatial terms of reference when drafting sectoral policies and to integrate them accordingly. As a result, transnational programmes push in the same direction as the "Territorial Agenda of the EU" worked out by the ministers responsible for spatial development of the Member States. The transnational programmes, with their tried and tested tools and contents, offer specific opportunities to combine economic and social development with the preservation of natural necessities of life in accordance with the "Territorial Agenda of the EU".

### Topics of co-operation

The new programmes have set four thematic priorities that are to be processed as part of projects. **Innovation** must be considered one of the key topics of transnational co-operation, particularly in relation to the objective of making a contribution to the implementation of the Lisbon and Göteborg Strategies. The new programmes introduce innovation as an independent priority for activities that are aimed particularly at improving organisational, legal and financial conditions, the transfer of technology, knowledge and information as well as at broadening the social base. Apart from that, innovation is also anchored horizontally in the programmes, i.e., in relation to all the main areas of funding. Since transnational co-operation is concentrated on funding and supporting regional development, programmes revolve less around technological innovation than improvement of the general conditions for technological developments and efforts to build a knowledge-based economy. The networking of universities and competence centres—with one another and with companies as well as with the political and administrative sector—will be given greater weight in future transnational co-operation.

Improving **risk prevention**, e.g., with respect to flood control along rivers and coasts, is already a major part of INTERREG co-operation. In future programmes this area will also play an important role—especially when it comes to taking preventive steps with respect to climate change. Co-operation will centre primarily on creating synergies for EU strategies and initiatives and implementing the same, developing concepts for maritime safety, contributing to improved protection of the maritime environment as well as developing and implementing transnational strategies for dealing with risk and disaster prevention. In addition, funding and support for the use of renewable energy and the energy efficiency of private households and companies will play a crucial role together with measures to ensure more efficient use of potential with respect to "green technologies" and eco-innovation.

As for **accessibility**, the new programmes will pick up the results of the current co-operation. There will, however, be greater emphasis on more intensive use of the existing transport infrastructure, e.g., through more intelligent organisation of transport (keywords: multimodality, interoperability, use of communication technologies). Lowering the need for mobility is also a point of interest. Thus, the core of future transnational co-operation will not be "constructed" infrastructure as such, but rather its use and sustainable management against the background of sustainable regional development. Reliable access and ensuring the quality of public services and transport systems will continue to be relevant in all areas, including in peripheral and sparsely populated regions. The positive stimuli coming from transport infrastructure in transnational development corridors will also continue to be significant. Promotion of the concept of "sea motorways" has also become feasible for the first time.

The **development of cities and regions** will play a central role in future structural policy. The same is true of territorial co-operation. Cities are the engines driving regional development and it is therefore important that urban infrastructure will be strengthened and management (i.e., governance) be improved. The new programmes will reflect the aspects of demographic shifts more than before. There will also be more emphasis on urban-rural partnerships and a move away from isolated concepts for rural areas. Natural and cultural heritage will continue to be part of the programmes, but its economic importance will be given more prominence (as an environment for companies, "soft locational factor").

### **New project requirements**

As for the new programmes, the idea is to put out to tender more strategic lead projects that are characterised by their effects on the entire co-operation area and/or important segments of a co-operation area as well as by strong political support at the national and international level. It is particularly such projects that give reason to expect lasting and transferable results, which can be relevant for the entire EU. But this will require increased political co-operation in the development of projects and more intense co-operation in the implementation of the programmes.

Future projects should be utilised to create even closer links with other programmes, for example, by allowing territorial co-operation projects to prepare larger investments in the other objectives of the EU Structural Funds or national programmes. To achieve this, different administrative levels of projects will have to co-operate more intensively. Bilateral or multilateral contacts and relationships between national ministries could thus serve as starting points for new projects and their realisation.

Integrating key actors from the business sector is central to the future funding period. Without this participation, in particular, of small and medium-sized enterprises, it is hard to imagine that the Lisbon Agenda could be implemented. This is why the process needs to build on previous experience. In addition, difficulties with respect to regulations on state subsidies must be dealt with in co-operation with the European Commission.

The effectiveness and visibility of project results must also be improved, while communications must become more professional.

Future projects will concentrate more intensively on key issues of the respective co-operation areas which require to be treated at a transnational level, and concentrate on transnational tasks more than before. Sector-specific measures that do not affect economic development or general spatial development will not be funded, and the same is true of activities creating exclusively local or regional added value.

### **Clearer regional profiles, integration of European neighbours**

Besides improving thematic differentiation, transnational co-operation will be even more instrumental in defining the profiles of individual areas and regions in future. In this respect, co-operation will essentially be continued in the existing co-operation areas. In order to ensure more effective programme implementation and to take into account the special circumstances of individual areas, however, a joint programme has been created for the Mediterranean region and the CADSES programme has been split into two single programmes. To a certain extent, opportunities for co-operation will be created beyond the individual areas in future so as to include other regions of the European Union as well as neighbouring states. This will be achieved primarily through the integration of thematically suitable actors.

Overall, transnational co-operation will make even more and improved contributions: enhancing and strengthening "Europa von unten" (Europe from the bottom up) through specific transnational co-operation projects and preparing strategic decisions for the future through transnational activities.

## **Additional information**

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[www.bbr.bund.de](http://www.bbr.bund.de)  
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