

BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY, CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTY of GEOGRAPHY

CROSS BORDER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN MARAMUREŞ

SUMMARY of the PhD Thesis

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Key words: Romania, Ukraine, Maramureş, Transcarpathia, E.U. financing programmes, development projects, cross border cooperation.

Summary

The concept in recent years that, increasingly more a Europe of regions must overlap a Europe of states is reflected best in addressing the systemic and integrated cross border approach. The necessity and effectiveness of designing such border regions, project regions this time, even more complex, may be limited in its natural and positive development by some political factors that are often restrictive. The consequences will be affected both directly and indirectly on the project regions. Basically, the current project regions overlap, in most cases, the old historical regions, the latter proving once again their functionality, also from the complex approaches that cross border cooperation and regional development projects entail.

The element along which the structure of these regions is represented by is the border. The complex issue of cross-border cooperation has evolved to new trends such as regional movement (Popa N., 2006, p.93) and reactivating historical regions, which becomes part of the “bridge” between national states.

In the Maramures Land project region the regional approaches – cross border cooperation projects between Romania and Ukraine, in our case - it must be based on the principles of sustainable development and integrated management of resources generating sustainable economic and social progress.

When these approaches of applied regional geography, which are the projects, take place in the border area between two or more countries, regions and administrative units involved, on both sides of the border, one can speak about cross-border cooperation projects.

These types of projects are more complex because they involve many variables in the equation, the ethnic factor, the national laws of each state in part, the heterogeneity of social aspects, and clearly the presence of the disparities in economic development of border regions. The last factor mentioned is basically the main motivation for designing and releasing such funds for cross-border financing programmes in multiple areas (socio-economic development, environmental protection, tourism cooperation, cultural events, etc.) in order to reduce disparities in the border areas, especially between EU countries and non EU, but not only.

The present PhD thesis aims to research the particular, concrete, type of project implementation of PHARE CBC CBC (Cross Border Cooperation) and ENPI CBC project

types within the region of cross border Romanian-Ukrainian Maramures. Such issues were addressed: research methodology, delimitation and physical-geographical project region of cross border Romanian-Ukrainian Maramures, regionalization by project region criteria, effective integration of Maramures in the CBC programs such as PHARE CBC 2004-2006 (Program with the funding finalized and implemented), analyzing cross-border projects undertaken by institutions (local government, schools, etc..) and associations (NGOs) in the Maramures Land - by type of cross-border cooperation under the above-mentioned aspects of sustainable development, the Integration of Maramures within the Programme under the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine 2007-2013 with funding instrument type ENPI (European Neighbourhood and Partnership instrument), currently under implementation with projects in the first and the second call submission (whose projects have already been contracted and partially being implemented, with a series of statistical data available).

Gnoseological aspects

The problems of border and cross-border relations from a theoretical and systemic perspective, as a component of sustainable development are addressed by many authors because it created a trend among experts to study them in multiple domains (geography, sociology, science of education, etc.). :

- Belova A., (2010), Bergs, R., (2012), Bersin, A., (2012), Buch, T., Peña, S., (2012), Bujdosó, Z., Patkós, C., Radics, Z., (2011), McElroy, W., (2012), de Fátima, A., M., (2013), Francisco, L., V., (2011), Gerber, P., Klein, O., Carpentier, S., (2012), Grama, V., (2011), Gualda, E., Fragoso, A., Lucio-Villegas, E. Jaanus, V., (2012), Kartik, V. R., (2006), Kees, T., (2012), Klatt, M., Herrmann, H., (2011), Scott, J., W., (2010), Spierings, B., van der Velde, M. (2013), Torello, Al., (2011), Wiering, M., (2012), Zimmerbauer, K., (2011).

Labor market issues in cross border residential areas are addressed by:

- Batal, L., Delteil, V., (2012), Bohemer, C.R., Schmidt, T., D., Niebuhr, A., (2009), Birgit, L., (2012), Bălătescu, S., (2011), the latter addressing the issue of the Romanian-Hungarian cross border region.

Cross-border issues on cooperation between universities and school systems have addressed by:

- Herman, G. V., Grama, V., Morar, C., Baias, I., C., Stupariu, M., (2012), Horga, I., (2011), Teperics, K., Czimre, K., Pásztor, I., Z., (2011).

Issues related to mitigation of regional disparities (especially between EU and non-EU countries) by providing funds for cross-border projects in general, but more specifically through the new funding program HU-SK-RO-UA ENPI CBC (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Cross Border Cooperation instrument) and Neighbourhood Programme Romania-Ukraine 2004-2006 PHARE CBC completed, are addressed by a number of authors among which N. Dandis with “*Cross-Border Cooperation – a Strategic Dimension of European Neighbourhood Policy at the Eastern Frontier of the E.U.*”.

Also in this category of studies we mention:

- (2010), Şoproni, L., Popoviciu, A. C., (2008),
- Boar, N., Koşinszki, S., (2011, 2012), Koşinszki, S., (2012) with focusing on the cross border Romanian-Ukrainian Maramures.

For delimitations and approaches of physical-geographical nature a regiunii of the whole cross border Romanian-Ukrainian Maramures we mention:

- Ardelean G., Béreş I., (2000), Bashta A. T., Potish L., (2007), Chiş V. T., (2008, 2010), Chiş, V. T., Koşinszki, S., (2011).

We also mention Boar N., Kosinszki S., Simion A. (2010) which, in “*The Cross-Border Regions – Strips of Contiguity and Dysfunction at the Eastern Border of the European Union. The Case of Romania*”, addresses, in addition to the above-mentioned also development related issues but concentrated and statistics related to various areas of cooperation provided by the Neighbourhood Programme Romania-Ukraine 2004-2006 and Romania-Moldova Neighbourhood Programme 2004-2006 directly related to the financial allowances for each area as well as the ranking by value and number of projects managed by a variety of applicants and partners (county councils, municipalities, NGOs, educational institutions, health, etc.).

For the study of the actual Romanian subsystem of the Marmureş Land we mention Ilieş, Gabriela (2007), " Marmureş Land Regional Geography Study," a complex work, which, in our opinion, has received sine qua non status regarding its consultation in subsequent geographical approaches of this region.

For tourism and the geography of tourism approaches having presented in their contents aspects connected to the actual Romanian subsystem of the Marmureş Land we mention:

- Ciangă, N., (1996), „*Possibilities for heritage tourism in Maramures*”, Ciangă, N. (1998), „*Tourism in the Eastern Carpathians. Study of Human Geography*”, and Ciangă, N. (2007), „*Romania. The Geography of Tourism*”.
- Hotea, M., (2010), „*Spa Tourism in the Villages of the Maramureş Mountains*”

Among the approaches of cultural - tourism branding who presented in their composition also the Romanian subsystem issues we mention Rus Claudia, Ciangă, N., Hodor, N. (2010), „*Cosau Valley and its importance in the cultural brand Maramures*”.

For the study of rural tourism as a complex phenomenon with all the socio-economic implications we mention Petrea, D., Petrea, Rodica (2001), *Rural Tourism – revised second edition*.

Among the studies that have addressed in a complex manner the issue of cross border Maramures we mention:

- N. Boar - „*The Romanian-Ukrainian Cross Border Region of Maramureş*” and Al. Ilieş (2004), *Romania. Euroregions*.

We also mention Popa, N., (2006) with “*Borders, cross border regions and regional development in Middle Europe*”. With utmost importance, and also with reference character for our thesis, focused on the geographical study of projects, we mention *Diana Elena Alexandru (2009), “Structural changes of the rural space in Romania following the implementation of EU-funded programme SAPARD.”*

Chapter I. Geographic and project regionalization of the cross border Romanian-Ukrainian Maramureş

The Romanian-Ukrainian cross border region of Maramures as physical-geographical and historical entity corresponds roughly (with some exceptions), with the upper basin of the Tisa. Therefore, in this brief review of the physical-geographical regionalization of the territory studied, in terms of cross-border cooperation projects, we specify the limits of space. This chapter provides a brief overview about the location, boundaries, topography, hydrography, climate and protected areas in the upper basin of the Tisa, which, from the perspective of cross border cooperation projects becomes a common physical and geographical entity.

Chapter II. The areas of activity of the cross border Romanian-Ukrainian cooperation in Maramures made a survey of the socio-economic, cultural, educational, Environmental, Planning and tourism sector.

Chap. III. Integration of the Maramures Land in the Neighbourhood Programme Romania -Ukraine 2004-2006 - PHARE Cross Border Cooperation

This chapter presents all projects implemented under the Phare CBC Instrument Cross Border Cooperation (through the Neighbourhood Programme Romania-Ukraine 2004-2006), with all its subcomponents: 2004, 2005, 2006, among which were highlighted and detailed the projects of institutions in the Maramures Land and also whole county of Maramures (Baia Mare - Maramures County Council, various NGOs) that had as project areas the Maramures Land and effects on target groups in the Maramures Land as well.

Chapter IV. The Cross Border cooperation Programme Hungary - Slovakia – Romania - Ukraine ENPI 2007-2013

This chapter presents data on the projects submitted and won on the Instrument ENPI CBC Cross Border Cooperation (through the Hungary - Slovakia - Romania - Ukraine 2007-2013 Programme), the subcomponents represented by the first call for submitting proposals, the second call for submitting proposals and the third call for submitting proposals.

The programme area is located on the border between Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine. The programme area includes approximately 598, 9 km of common frontier with Ukraine which covers fully the Slovak-Ukrainian (97, 9 km), the Hungarian-Ukrainian (134, 6 km) and partly Romanian-Ukrainian border (366.4 km).

Was also analyzed in detail as a case study, the project "Maramures - Transcarpathia Info Tour", beneficiary Săpânța Town Hall, approved for funding under the Second Call for submitting proposals in HUSKROUA Programme - ENPI Cross Border Cooperation.

4.2.1. Case study project HU-SK-RO-UA ENPI CBC 2007-2013 - "Maramureș - Transcarpathia Info Tour" - Beneficiary: Town Hall and local council of Săpânța, Village, Maramureș. Total grant amount: 205.828,00 EURO. Tipology: Tourism cross border cooperation for the development / promotion of rural tourism through a cross-border network of tourist information centers.

Local Partner(s): (1) Town Hall of Sapanta Village; (2) Town Hall of Botiza Village; (3) Association Maramures Project Link; (4) Center for Ecology and Tourism Maramures (5) Association of Applied Geography Sighetu Marmatiei

Target group(s): The families of the people involved (employed) in the rural and curative tourism: Sapanta 200 people, Botiza 400 people, Solotvino 600 people. Total approximately 1200 people.

Final beneficiaries: Final beneficiaries: the population of the 4 localities + the tourists that visit the localities

Sapanta : population 3345 + tourists 30000 = 33345 people; Botiza : population 2906 + 35000 tourists = 37906 people; Sighetu Marmatiei: populations 41909 + 50000 = 91909 people; Solotvino : population 8920 + 100000 tourists =108920 people; Total : approximately 272 080 people

Project activities: (1) Establishing the tourist information centers in Săpânța, Botiza, Sighetu Marmatiei (RO) and Solotvino (UA), purchasing equipment, hiring the personnel; (2) Tourism prospective research in the tourism development poles of Săpânța, Botiza, Sighetu Marmatiei (RO) and Solotvino (UA) and in the cross border region of Maramureș – Transcarpathia; (3) Rural tourism course for guesthouse administrators ; (4) 6 workshops with the rural guesthouse administrators and craftsmen; (5) Marking 8 tourist tracks at Săpânța, Botiza, Sighetu Marmatiei, Solotvino; (6) Editing and printing the project publications (tourist guidebook, maps, leaflets); (7) Designing web site for the project region; (8) Designing the double electrically lit tourist panels; (9) Organizing a scientific symposium concerned with the tourism development in the cross border region of Maramureș – Transcarpathia; (10) Distributing publications, project results, and final seminar; (11) Monitoring and evaluating the project.

Conclusions

Cross-border cooperation between EU and non EU countries in general, and between Ukraine and Romania, in particular, in the project region of Maramures - Transcarpathia and Ivano Frankivsk, acquired through funding programmes PHARE CBC 2004-2006 and ENPI CBC 2007-2013, a new dimension characterized by financial consistency and magnitude of the positive effects in territory for the target groups and final beneficiaries.

Institutions and organisations from Maramureș county have marked, implemented and are still implementing projects in all the targeted domains of the measures and priorities of the financing programmes.

Some of the major projects undertaken and described in Chapter III were those that were proposed for and conducted feasibility studies to open new border crossing points with Ukraine for higher tonnage vehicles in Sighet, (the Camara aree) RO - Bila Tserkva (White Church) UA but also for their frequent spatial dispersion. These border crossings, facilitating cross-border relations, economic exchanges and flows of people, are designed to mitigate the negative effects the localities whose hinterland was "split" by the imposition of border line on the Tisa river are recording. An example in this respect is the case study project "Maramureș-Transcarpathia Info Tour", currently underway, which was presented in detail in the last chapter, and has met the quality assessment phase, in 2011, 92 out of 100 points possible (93

points from Romanian evaluators and 91 points from Ukrainian assessors with an average of 92 points).

This approach of cross border cooperation proves once again that applied geography of tourism projects have a high degree of viability and manage to carve a trend by experts, even within the quadrilateral cross-border financing programs, which are very demanding and complex concerning application and implementation conditions.

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