Europe from exclusive borders to inclusive frontiers: case study Romanian - Ukrainian frontier
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EUROPE FROM EXCLUSIVE BORDERS TO INCLUSIVE FRONTIERS: CASE STUDY ROMANIAN - UKRAINIAN FRONTIER

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Abstract: *The approach of the European Union external border has been made on the one hand through an analysis of the concepts of external border from the point of view of official documents and the concepts introduced by authors and specialists in the field; on the other hand, it has been made through an attempt to seize certain types of symbolic and ideological borders. As far as the first category is concerned, resorting to documents and legal regulations of European institutions has been highly important. We have also paid attention to conceptual approaches on the border, as well as on the relation "inclusive – exclusive" border.*

The extention of the European Union favored the development of regional programmes designed to stimulate cross-border cooperation between Romania and Ukraine. The implementation of common policies established by the constitutive agreements of the Euroregions, and operational development of cross-border cooperation have led to the increase of contacts between Romanian and Ukrainian institutions. The European territorial cooperation at the European Union's outer borders has two major components: Cohesion Policy and European Neighborhood Policy. Cohesion policy is designed to reduce disparities between regions and Member States of the European Union, between developed and less developed countries while the European Neighborhood Policy is a new approach in the relations between the EU and its neighbours, an approach that exceeds the traditional one based on cooperation. The frontiers represent the history's after-effects. Europe's diversity is considered a valuable characteristic which should be exploited and promoted. This diversity can be noticed in the social and cultural life of all the countries and regions from Europe. The concept of Euroregion, as well as the cooperation in the international system form imposed in the European area is based on the strength and collaboration of the civil society and the mutual economic and political interests. According to this concept, the future Europe can be understood not only as a Europe of states, but also as a Europe of Regions having economic, political and military interests at an international level.

Keywords: *external border, European Union, exclusive borders, inclusive frontiers, cross-border cooperation, Romania, Ukraine, neighborhood policy, European instruments, euroregions*

Introduction

We can debate on the external borders of the European community considering a complex approach comprising the official point of view of the organisation, as well as that of different concepts as set out in literature in the field.

Right from the beginning of our initiative, we have to point out that the debate has two categories of border areas that are considered to be external: the former results from the geographical boundaries of the European Union, while the latter from the territorial enlargement of the Schengen Implementation Agreement. Considering the double approach, the perspective of a debate on the external border is coordinated by clear legal norms. As a matter of fact, the community border legal status is conferred by: "all legal norms adopted by the members of a community of states concerning access and stay of citizens from another state (be it a member of the community or not), concerning crossing of internal or external borders by persons, means of transportation, goods and assets, as well as joint regulations referring to both internal and external border administration" (Ciocan, 2002:88).

The border, defined by *Dictionnaire de géographie* (Baud; Bourgeat, 1995) as a "limit separating two areas, two states", a clash "between two manners of space organisation, between communication networks, between societies often different and sometimes antagonistic" (Wackermann, 2003:11), represents the "interface of territorial disruption" (Wackermann, 2003:10). Borders mark the

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limit of jurisprudence, sovereignty and political system. Thus, they can act as lines of division, as "barriers" or "landmarks". On the other hand, they also mark the typology of political construction. The border – political system relationship is shown in an interesting manner by Jean-Baptiste Haurguindéguy, who sees „la frontière comme limite du politique" and „le politique comme limite de la frontière" (Haurguindéguy, 2007:154).

From the community perspective, the European Union external border represents the geographical boundaries settled by community agreements and treaties. From the Schengen Agreement perspective, external borders are defined as "terrestrial and maritime border, as well as airports and maritime harbours of the Contracting Parties unless internal borders" (*Convention of 19/06/1990*, 19 June 1990: art. 1). "By derogation to the definition of internal borders, ... airports are considered external borders for internal flights" (*Convention of 19/06/1990*, 19 June 1990: art. 4, paragraph 4). These borders can basically be crossed only at "border crossing points according to their schedule" (*Convention of 19/06/1990*, 19 June 1990: art. 3, paragraph 1). Moreover, the new European treaties stress and regulate the principles of individual freedoms amongst which free circulation of persons has a special place. The final dispositions of the Treaty on the European Union regulated after the reform of the old "European constitution" in Lisbon show in a clear-cut manner, despite the abrogation of article 67 in the text of the former treaty[1], that the Union is a space of freedom, security and justice[2]. In order to reach these standards and to guarantee citizens' rights, the protection and strict control of external borders have become compulsory. Moreover, all protocols on external relations making reference to external borders stipulate "the need for all Member States to provide effective control at their external borders"[3].

1. Border and "inclusive – exclusive" concept

Such a vision on the border has undoubtedly resulted from the need to characterise certain border typologies. Such a conceptual approach can be made when attempting to characterise contemporary European space. The concept acquires new features precisely in such a community construction where regional or sectorial identities are still very powerful irrespective of their forms.

An interesting survey on the topic entitled *Border in a Changing Europe: Dynamics of Openness and Closure* (Delanty, 2006:46-58) was published by Gerard Delanty, professor of sociology at the University of Liverpool. The survey starts from the premise that societies are spatially organised through different "border" delimitations. From this perspective, each space may be characterised as open or close depending on the typology of the border delimiting it. Fabienne Maron speaks about "frontières barrières" (characterised by restrictions and visa) to design the opposite of "frontières ouvertes" whose crossing is authorised without restrictions (Maron, 2007:115). However, in the context of the new geopolitical mutations in the European area, they all acquire a new significance under the pressure of changes generated by the process of European integration. The old borders fade away leaving room to new border structures resulting from new concepts and approaches on delimitations more or less spatial.

The numerous political borders tend to fade away to fully disappear in importance. In time, former borders turn into mere "symbols of singularity, of independence" (Erique Banus, 2007:139). At the same time, cultural borders, for instance, acquire an ever more visible functionality. The approach is not only internal, in which case one can identify cultural sub-components specific to the European area; there is also an approach characteristic of the European Union external governance system. Such a cultural border makes clear distinction between Europe and non-Europe. Beyond such a theory that might stress scepticism against certain projects for future enlargements of the European Union, we can notice the use of debates on the issue of actual borders of Europe, an issue raised by analysts for centuries.

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[1] The text of *Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe*, title V, chapter 1, shows in articles 67-76 *General dispositions on liberty, security and justice*. See text of constitutional treaty in Marianne Dony, *Après la réforme de Lisbonne. Les nouveaux européens*, Bruxelles, 2008, p. 35-164.

[2] *Charte des droits fondamentaux de l`Union proclamée le 12 décembre 2007*, chapter II, art. 6-19. Apud Marianne Dony, *op. cit.*, pp. 270-277.

[3] This can be found in *Protocol on external relations of the Member States with regard to the crossing of external borders* (1997), annexed to the *Treaty establishing the European Union*. Apud Marianne Dony, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

The cultural perspective gives birth to debates on the notion of European civilisation unity and on the relationship between geography and culture. Can Europe be separated from Asia as a consequence of the cultural delimitation criterion? Professor Delanty approaches the concept of Christian Europe, as well as that of Europe as an heir of Roman and Greek civilisations (Delanty, 2006:46). Beyond the geographical, tectonic delimitation of the two continents, is European culture able to impose new borders? It is a question to which European analysts have very different answers. Perspectives are strongly influenced by current geopolitical subjectivism. In the same manner, in the Middle Ages, Europe was constrained to Catholic West clearly separated from expanding Islamism. Through his endeavours, Peter the Great included Russia in the European diplomatic system. Europe expanded as a concept. For the first time in 1716, the *Almanach royal* published in France put the Romanov on the list of European monarch families. This was undoubtedly due to the harmonisation of Russia with other powers in the European diplomatic system (Anderson, 1968:156). In 1715, the position of the Ottoman Empire was similar to Russia's from several points of view. It entered the European diplomatic scene at the end of the 15th century. In fact, the entrance of the Turks in the relational system amongst European countries was mainly due to rivalries between France and the Habsburgs (Anderson, 1968:157). Nevertheless, the Ottoman Empire did not express as a European state and was never part and parcel of the European diplomatic system all through the 18th century. To Napoleon, the European space meant "French Europe" conceived as a space whose borders had to be settled after pressures on the Ottoman Empire (Delanty, 2006: 46). The examples continue nowadays. Beyond all these, the hypothesis of cultural borders impose certain delimitations that we often assume whether we want it or not.

We do not aim at tracing such borders of the European area. We only point out the fact that our debate imposes rather a characterisation on European identity as a spatial notion protected just like a fortress. Is Europe not only politically, but also culturally a space imposing external borders clearly settled from a territorial point of view? Pursuing the evolution in time of the process of European construction, we can conclude by answering this question as follows: in the European Union, external borders are more and more important (more closed!), while the internal ones become more formal than real (more open!). Europe seen as a "fortress" is thus more open, more "hospitable" from the perspective of its members, and more closed, secure and less permissive for the rest of the world. In such a construction, we can identify not only the advantages of the high level of democracy and welfare the Community citizens may enjoy, but also the exclusivism imposed to others by closing the border. After removing internal barriers, Europe starts to become a super-state reinventing the "hard" border protecting states and politically associated people, excluding others that have not benefitted from such political decisions. In this context, do external borders of the community become expressions of national state border? It is a difficult matter entailing debates not only on the character and typology of the border, but also on aspects introduced by the fact that the Union does not have a border from within which the exterior may be seen. There are several territories that, from a geographical point of view, are comprised "within" the community while not being part of the European Union. Thus the attempt to trace community border to (physically!) separate the "Europeans" from the "non-Europeans" becomes impossible from a cultural point of view. Though recent, the historical heritage after the cold war imposes not only borders; they also impose actual barriers that cannot be crossed from the point of view of political decisions. Borders remain closed, irrespective of cultural heritage. On the other hand, the process of outlining external borders cannot be finished. Starting from such a remark, people and states that will belong to the "interior" are currently outside the borders. Thus the hard border whose construction is more and more obvious excludes the Europeans, not only the non-Europeans. Consequently, the European border is open or close depending on the exclusivist political interests and less from a possible cultural perspective. Hence, political discourses bringing motivations relating to the European cultural heritage concerning European integration of certain states such as Turkey are mere populist actions. It is a political decision of an exclusivist club. "Europe is and should remain *a house with many rooms*, rather than a culturally and racially exclusive club" (Bidelux, 2006:62). Thus, the European Community becomes a close territory on political grounds based on identity motivations.

The debates on current European borders have often acquired the image of polemics on their place, role, shape, or consistency. Kalipso Nicolaides considers that *Eurolimes* is „un paradigme qui lie l'integration a l'interieur et a l'exterieur, les liens intercultureles, interethatiques et interclasses tisses au

sein de l'Union d'aujourd'hui et les liens inter-Etats tisses avec ses nouveaux membres potentials" (Nicolaides, 2007 :287). Beyond the image of national states' borders, the definition of this paradigm is carried out in the survey entitled *Why Eurolimes?* (Horga, 2006:5-13). According to the same pattern, the *Eurolimes* paradigm designs, according to several researchers in the field, what we understand by "inclusive frontier" (Nicolaides, 2007: 275-290; Zielonka, 2002; Zielonka, 2006; Bronislaw, Pitch:2007) that is, the borders to which the European construction tends. The main idea of the integration process is not to settle barriers, but to attenuate them. From this perspective, internal borders become more and more *inclusive* and less visible. Security and border traffic control are transferred to external borders that become more and more *exclusive*, more restrictive if we respect the logic above. Such a theory is valid up to a point. Internal borders do not simply become more open, more *inclusive* (Delanty; 2006: 51) there is an integration process taking place in steps. On the other hand, we cannot consider as fully equal good and *inclusive/open*, or bad and *exclusive/close*. A simple example can confirm our hypothesis: in war areas, borders are relatively open to refugees (Delanty, 2006:50). However, we cannot conclude that we have an *inclusive* border "open just for pleasure" like European borders to which community integration tends as a model.

As a methodological and conceptual approach from the perspective of the topic, surveys published in volume 4 of the Eurolimes Journal, *Europe from Exclusive Borders to Inclusive Frontiers*, are very interesting. The debate focuses on possible interpretations on typology, form and structure of the new borders in central and eastern European space after the accession of the first communist countries to the European Union in 2004. The new Europe is made up of eastern territories on the continent. The external border of the EU has been pushed to the east, to the traditional limits of Europe (Horga; Pantea, 2007:7), which entitles us to wonder when and if this enlargement process should stop: before or after reaching these limits? European spaces and peoples might remain outside the more or less *inclusive* border. Then the European border cannot be only geographical with people living on both sides. Cultural distances between people can increase even within the community as the number of immigrants, refugees, and transnational communities is constantly increasing (Nicolaides, 2007:287). Moreover, immigrants' integration is mainly crossing an *inclusive* community border (Quispel, 2007:102-110).

Beyond cultural and political perspectives, the situation in the past years has shown a new type of *inclusive* border resulting from states' economic interests, either belonging to the community or not. Business development bringing benefits to both sides has been able to provide a more flexible trend to political norms and regulations (Kundera, 2007:69-77).

All these and others can identify a process of community transformation developing with passing from *exclusive* to *inclusive* border.

Without greatly differing from others, such a conceptual approach suggests an image of the border from several points of view. The concepts of territory, border, or frontier are historically determined constructions to a great extent. This is how administrative, military, and cultural borders as well as the market focused in territory delimited by border constructions came into being (Maier, 2002:17-37). Yet, in time, the concept of border has been diluting. This is also due to the process of European integration and construction. In certain cases, the physical border has even disappeared, while other "borders" that are no longer superposed over national states have appeared. The globalisation process has a considerable influence on the erosion of borders and barriers crossing the European continent (Neuwahl, 2005:24). In the European Union, there are several governing systems, cultures and administrative borders. Many of them do not coincide with national borders. At the same time, the multinational and transnational character of some organisations funded by community programmes lead to integrating huge areas devoid of barriers against communication, cooperation, working together, cross-border circulation.

In general, the concept of border is associated with the *hard* physical border, a concept related to the barrier that can be crossed provided certain special conditions and requirements (visa to enter that country is the best example of a restrictive requirement in the case of *hard* border). On the other hand, a state can have *hard* borders with a neighbouring country, while having *soft*, open borders with another neighbouring country (Neuwahl, 2005:24). A border can be both *hard* and *soft* at the same time. A state can eliminate visas for the citizens of a state while strengthening and reinforcing requirements in border control (Potemkina, 2005:165-182). In the European Union, community institutions suggest that

Member States should have *hard* external borders and *soft* internal borders. Visa, border police control on people and goods crossing the border are characteristic of *hard* border. Unlike this type of border, the *soft* border is characteristic of a more flexible transit system with no restrictions of circulation for goods and persons (DeBardeleben, 2005:11). There are several steps to reach this type of border. They consist of the following: eliminating visa, reducing taxes for people and goods to zero, facilitating and strengthening human contacts on both sides of the border including cultural, educational, and training programmes, etc.

The enlargement of the European Union to the east, a process materialised by integrating several former communist countries, has led to changing the view on former community borders, to pushing the external frontiers to the border of these countries. The *hard* border that would provide protection to community citizens according to European institutions has thus become the concern of the newcomers. Nevertheless, within the community there are supporters of other European states: Poland constantly supports Ukraine, Romania supports the Republic of Moldova and Serbia, Hungary or Slovenia support Croatia and the examples can continue. Despite community restrictions, these states try to develop contacts and *soft* border constructions with their partners outside the community. These states' European integration has led to a certain isolation of Russia (associated with a *hard* type reaction), which was disturbed by the enlargement of the EU at the same time with the enlargement of NATO. They are all part of a complex process generated by community mechanism, geopolitical realities and macroeconomic strategies. Thus, European enlargement determines the outline of new models of neighbourhood relations somehow different from the former relations between nation states.

Without getting into details, we wish to show some concepts leading to the same interpretations in general lines. Besides, several authors consider that *hard, exclusive, close, sharp-edges* or *barrier* are equal. They are all associated with restrictions and strict control being characterised by the numerous conditions imposed to those intending to cross them. On the other hand, *soft, open, inclusive, porous, communicative* or *bridge* type borders remove transit restrictions by rendering traffic more flexible (DeBardeleben, 2005:11).

From another perspective, Charles Maier identifies three possible conceptual approaches of the border (Maier, 2002: 41-43) : the first, „*positive and constructive*", considered as a border providing political order and good neighbouring relationships; the second, „*negative and revolutionary*", seen as an illogical obstacle against normality, peace and unity; and the third approach, „*dialectical and evolutionary*", characterised by the dissolution of a border and the inevitable settling of another, yet not necessarily at the same level of formality. Another approach originates in the clear separation of people, institutions and organisations as compared to the European Union. The perspective is either internal, in which case the border does not constraint community expression, or external, in which case the border interferes as a barrier, as an obstacle against freedom of circulation. Thus, the European Union is the expression of a *fortress* protecting its citizens against external perils (immigrants, imports, insecurity, etc.) (Delanty, 2006:52-53). Such a perspective released again and doubled by the trend for world anti-terrorist fight has more and more supporters amongst political leaders of the European Union Member States. Joint or not, the security policy has provided new coordinates and even European neighbourhood policy despite the fact that many countries neighbouring the EU are not insecurity "exporters". In this context, the issue of immigration turns more and more into a security issue (Matuszewicz, 2007:103-117; Wackermann, 2003: 63-84) that has to be managed even through a reform of the border crossing system.

2. The Romanian-Ukrainan Cross-Border Cooperation

The European territorial cooperation at the European Union's outer borders has two major components: Cohesion Policy and European Neighborhood Policy. The Cohesion Policy is designed to reduce disparities between the more developed regions and Member States of the European Union and the less developed ones, while the European Neighborhood Policy is a new approach in the relations between the EU and its neighbours, an approach that exceeds the traditional one based on cooperation[4]. The cross-border cooperation with Ukraine is included in the framework offered by the European Instrument for Neighborhood and Partnership. The Strategic Document on cross-border cooperation in

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[4] „Cooperare Transfrontalieră", http://europaindirect.ecosv.ro/cooperare_trans.htm (accessed March 20, 2010).

the period 2007-2013 establishes that Romania should develop border cooperation activities which are to be financed by the European Neighborhood and Partnership with hte Republic of Moldavia and Ukraine in a trilateral programme. Area eligible for this programme will include the four counties of Romania which lie at the border with Moldavia, plus the counties of Suceava and Tulcea at borders with Ukraine and Brăila county adjoining that area. According to the provisions of the draft strategy document, Romania also participates with two counties, Maramureş and Satu Mare (to these are it is added the adjoining area of Suceava), in the joint operational programme in quadruple format of cross-border cooperation with Hungary, Slovakia and Ukrain.

The frontiers represent the history's after-effects. Europe's diversity is considered a valuable characteristic which should be exploited and promoted. This diversity can be noticed in the social and cultural life of all the countries and regions from Europe. All along Europe's history these social and cultural systems have led to the formation of some political and administrative structures and also some different political actions. Europe's people were born and lived their lives in these different social and cultural backgrounds. So they are not willing to sacrifice their customs just to be in harmony with the rest of Europe, especially if this results in losing the diversity. Despite the freedom of moving all over Europe and the elimination of frontiers, the social and cultural differences (including different structures and administrative systems) will still continue to exist from now on and will face each other at the border. Not a single country within or outside the European Union will try and change their traditional structures, power or competence due to problems around the border area. Moreover, no country will ever be able to totally harmonize their laws with the ones of neighbour countries, and the consequences are going to be felt in a longer period of time: economical, social and juridical problems and the obstacles met along this process of cooperation will affect the people on both sides of the frontier (Sturza, 2006:182).

Transboundary cooperation is not a new phenomenon. People and goods have moved across the shifting borders of Europe with varying degrees of ease during the last several centuries. Following World War II, however, Western and Eastern Europe were divided into two opposing ideological as well as geographical entities. In Eastern Europe, the political role of international borders was strengthened and their degree of openness decreased accordingly. Crossing borders became difficult, if not impossible; borders became almost impenetrable barriers between peoples (Sturza, 2006:182). By contrast, in Western Europe the political and economic function of international borders gradually diminished as the European Community concept took hold.

Bilateral or trilateral local or regional cooperation is thus a key point in preventing not only conflicts or psychological barriers but most of all to ease the foundation of partnerships which will reduce the differences existent in the Euro regions or similar structures. Cross-border cooperation is, in consequence a European objective which should be implemented locally or regionally in partnership.

The advent of euro regional phenomenon in Europe is linked to the evolution of local autonomy and regionalization, the collaboration within the euro regions consists in creating direct relations between the regions and the communities found on one side and the other of frontiers. In Western Europe these euro regions work very efficiently and the advantages of such cooperation can be seen in the increase of economical and commercial relations between the member states, the cultural, artistic and scientific exchanges, the contacts between people, the cooperation in the field of environment, the development of cross-border cooperation in various fields. An important role in this cooperation is represented by the allowance from the European Union and other financial international organizations of funds for investments and cooperation programs in these regions.

2.1. Euroregions – organisms of the cross-border cooperation

The term Regio comes from the Latin *regere*, meaning to draw a line or border. In ancient Rome the "Regio" was used for demarcating an area rather than governing it. It did not correspond to any legislative or governmental institution. The Euroregions or other forms of cross-border cooperation "are not aimed at the establishing new structures of regional governance through voluntary association of different administrative structures or natural borders" (Ilieş, 2004:23). Euroregions can be defined as areas or regions of economic interference and not only, in which two or more States jointly exploit the material and human resources by initiating and carrying out agricultural, industrial, transport and communications, tourism, business activities and programmes (Neguţ, 1988:148). By means of these

programmes there are established not only relationships between equals in the common interest, but also there are given powers to local authorities in the international order[5]. The concept of Euroregion, as well as the cooperation in the international system form imposed in the European area is based on the strength and collaboration of the civil society and the mutual economic and political interests. According to this concept, the future Europe can be understood not only as a Europe of states, but alsoas a Europe of Regions having economic, political and military interests at an international level[6].

A Euroregion is, by definition, located along a country's borders often at some distance from the capital. In Central and Eastern Europe, these border areas are especially affected by the negative results of the transformation taking place in the region: unemployment is high; development, poor; foreign investment, absent; state enterprises, weak. Attracting private sector development and foreign investment could build confidence in the border areas and begin to address the volatile economic, social and political problems with their potential for conflict. One of the premises of the Euroregion is to create the possibility for transboundary economic, social and political cooperation. In some parts of Central and Eastern Europe - and especially in the Carpathian Euroregion - this race between conflict and cooperation is underway.

Romania has ratified the agreement on cross-border cooperation in 1998 so that the legal framework for cross-border cooperation is set and the local authorities, communities or organisms which can associate with their neighbours from across the border can begin their cooperation. According to Romania's legal system the institutions appointed to represent these interests are the county and local councils. Currently Romania takes part in 11 Euroregions (Ilieş, 2004:9-12) the first Euroregion is the Carpathian Euroregion, then the Danube-Kris-Mures-Tisza Euroregion, the Danube 21 Euroregion, Siret-Prut-Nistru Euroregion, Upper Prut Euroregion, Lower Danube Euroregion, Giurgiu-Ruse Euroregion, Danubius Euroregion, Danube South Euroregion, Danube-Dobrogea Euroregion, the "Middle Danube - Iron Gates" Euroregion[7], and adding the Bihor-Hajdu Bihar Euroregion and Bihor – Hajdu-Bihar Euroregion.

The Euroregions represent a new cooperation model to which Romania has familiarized step by step in opposition to the disproof coming from the social and political mediums which did not understand the phenomena. Even though the local authorities still have administrative and financial problems with the cooperation process, Romania has finalized a lot of projects and gathered a lot of experience which will be lucrative after Romania's integration in the EU. In Western Europe the euroregions are very efficient and they are directly supported by the European Commission which allocates funds to encourage this type of cooperation through the INTERREG programme for the countries that are already part of the European Union and through PHARE programmes for the countries on the border or which are about to become part of the European Union (Sturza, 2006:183). Then the cross-border cooperation with Ukraine is included in the framework of the European Neighborhood and Partnership, through the operational programmes of cross-border cooperation.

The three euroregions which include both Romania and Ukraine are: the Carpathian Euroregion, the Lower Danube Euroregion and the Upper Prut Euroregion.

The Carpathian Euroregion (1993) is the single largest Euroregion in terms of area (104,989 km2) and population (about 10 million people). It covers parts of five countries (Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine and Poland) and contains a mosaic of nationalities, cultures and religions. In the words of the The Institute for EastWest Studies, the Carpathian Euroregion is "a microcosm of the new Europe, containing a potentially volatile mixture of nations and peoples"[8]. There are at least three principal dimensions to this volatility: ethnicity, religion and isolation. The area of the Carpathian

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[5] Mihail Rariţa, *Euroregiunile - începutul unei noi Europe*, in *Analele Universităţii Dunărea de Jos*, *Filosofie*, http://www.filosofie.ugal.ro/anale%204/rarita.doc (accessed March 18, 2009), p. 231

[6] „Euroregiunea - viitoarea forma a cooperării transfrontaliere", http://www.euractiv.ro/uniunea-europeana/articles%7CdisplayArticle/articleID_5260/Euroregiunea-viitoarea-forma-a-cooperarii-transfrontaliere.html (accessed March 20, 2010).

[7] See the site of Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, http://www.mae.ro/index.php?unde=doc&id=7283 (accessed March 18, 2010).

[8] Zofia Kordela-Borczyk, *The Case for Economic Cooperation and Development in the Central Carpathian Region: The Euroregion Model,* http://www.dartmouth.edu/~gsfi/gsfiweb/htmls/papers/index.htm (accessed March 12, 2010).

Mountains and the Tisra River was considered by many international experts as a region of enormous volatility, a former Yugoslavia awaiting a spark. The Carpathian Euroregion, states the Institute's 1994 report, "is one of the greatest friction plates in Europe, with significant potential for conflict and cooperation.

Furthermore, this remote and economically underdeveloped region has been largely overlooked by central governments and by Western assistance programs"[9].

The objectives of the Carpathian Euroregion are:
- Promoting local interests of the involved regions by raising economic , cultural, scientific and tourist contacts in neighboring states;
- influencing the lowering of tensions and building good neighbourhood relations;
- making lobby with the national authorities in order to improve cross-border traffic by opening new border crossings.
- Romania's priorities in the Euroregion concerns the improvement and development of the crossing point from Halmeu and Tarna Mare

The bordering areas of the region are: for Hungary: Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Hajdú-Bihar, Heves, Jasz-Nagykun-Szolnok, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg counties, for Poland: Subcarpathian region, for Romania: Bihor, Botosani, Maramures, Salaj, Suceava, Satu Mare counties, for Slovakia: Kosice and Presov region, for Ukraine: Cernivska, Ivano-Frankivska, Odesa, Zakarpatská oblast (region).

The Lower Danube Euroregion (1997) includes regions from Moldavia, Ukraine and Romania. As a geographical position occupies a place in the Central-Eastern part of Romania, Moldavia and the South-West of Ukrain (Ilieş, 2004:95). The euroregion covers 53.3 thousand km^2 where there live around 4 million people. The bordering areas of the region are: Based on the Constitution Agreement, the "Lower Danube" Euroregion has the following members: for Moldavia: Cahul, Cantemir, Vulcăneşti, for Romania: Brăila, Galaţi, Tulcea counties and for Ukraine Odessa oblast.

Among the projects[10] proposed by the Euroregion we can mention: drawing up the strategy of Development of the "Low Danube "Euroregion, the implementation of Romania-Ukraine-Moldova 2007-2013 cross-border operational programme; establishing of a border crossing point of Isaceea-Orlovca goods and passengers; improving the conditions of border crossing for people, the Tulcea Izmail route; creating a quick intervention unit in case of accidental populating of Danube and Danube Delta, creating a center of cross-bord information ,the promoting green tourism in the Euroregion, creating a map of cultural tourism in the Euroregional space, developing common tourism products in Tulcea and Odessa, establishing a center of first sale of fish in Galati to represent an outlet for Euroregion partners, the rehabilitation of Romania-R. Moldova-Ukraine road, the establishment of routes between Galaţi - Giurguleşti (R. Moldova) - Reni (Ukraine),the establishment of direct routes between Odessa and Tulcea airports

The Upper Prut Euroregion (1997) includes also regions from Moldavia, Ukraine and Romania. The bordering areas of the region are: for Romania: Suceava and Botoşani, for Moldavia: Bălţi and Edinet counties and for Ukraine: Cernăuţi (Chernivtsi) oblast. This Euroregion started due to the Romanian initiative and were included in the Treaty on good-neighborly relations and cooperation between Romania and Ukraine on 2 June 1997 (Ilieş, 2004:74). It has the status of a secretaryship and committees working on different themes and even the presidency, by rotation. Despite criticism that followed the signing of the Treaty, the Euroregion was an ingenious idea, offering solutions to maintain direct contacts with Romanian ethnicity on Ukrainian territory and solving problems of the North- East part. There were organized international scientific conferences on problems of interethnic relations and environmental protection, exchange of experience in administrative, socio-economic, cultural, educational field, taxes cancellation and local payments to the state border crossing by individuals and legal persons residing or registered in the Euroregion[11]. The Euroregion falls into the category of those with potentially high functional level and requires the identification of solutions for the interconnection

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[9] *Ibidem*

[10] See the site of Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, http://www.mae.ro/index.php?unde=doc&id=33347 (accessed March 18, 2010).

[11] Roxana Mazilu, *Euroregiunile - realitate şi confuzii*, in *Cadran Politic*, http://www.cadranpolitic.ro/view_article.asp?item=1692 (accessed March 22, 2010).

of two systems with common traditions but which differ from the point of view of their position towards the EU

2.2. The European stimulating instruments of a good neighborhood between Romania and Ukraine

In the region of Central and Eastern Europe, Ukraine is the largest country and the way it builds and develops the relations with the neighbouring countries is very important both for Ukraine and for other states and also for Europe's stability and security. From this point of view, Romania's relationship with Ukraine is very important, especially after Romania's integration in EU. As an EU state Romania manages around 1800 km external EU border including the border along the Danube and the open border along the Black Sea. EU supports Romania in strengthening its efforts continuing to have good relations with Ukraine.

Ukraine took advantage of TACIS programme of Cross-Border Cooperation which was launched in 1996 to finance the cross-border activities on the western border of the EU countries, the countries from the west of Russia: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldavia. The CBC TACIS programme is focused on the border network such as facilities of crossing the border, cross-border cooperation and the environment. TACIS CBC is a subprogram of TACIS which seeks to give assistance for the economical reform and reconstruction of the new independent states of Mongolia. TACIS CBC mainly concentrates upon:

- The importance of cross-border cooperation projects: stable relationships and partnerships, identification of weaknesses and strong point of their partners, understanding the motivations and the aims.
- Durable cooperation: activities local support, the implication of the local partner, capacities transfer, the impact on the group and the beneficiaries.

In this respect the European Commission suggests that besides the already existent co-operation instruments (PHARE CBS, INTERREG, TACIS, CARDS), they should introduce a new neighbouring instrument meant to help countries found on the border. So a New Neighbouring Instrument starting from 2007 will function, the objectives of which are the following:

- Promoting sustainable economic and social development in the border areas;
- Working together to address common challenges in the fields of environment, public health, the prevention of and against organised crime;
- Ensuring secure and efficient borders;
- Promoting local "people-to-people" type actions.

The Common Romania-Ukraine-Moldova 2007-2013 Operational Programme - European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument. The Common Operational Programme ENPI CBC Romania-Ukraine-Moldova 2007-2013 sets the framework for cross-border cooperation in the European Neighborhood Policy which aims to avoid creating new dividing lines between the EU and its neighbors and also to provide them the opportunity to participate in various EU activities through closer political cooperation, economic, cultural and security. According to paper, the following areas constitute the main area of the program: the Romanian counties of Suceava, Iasi, Botosani, Vaslui, Galati and Tulcea the Ukrainian " oblasts" Odesska and Chernivetska and the territory of Moldavia. In addition, adjacent regions that may influence the positive cooperation in the border area, were included in the program area: Romanian county of Braila, Ukrainian "oblasts" Ivano Frankivsk, Vinniytska ten districts of oblasti Khmelnyitska and twelve districts of Ternopilska[12].

Its aim is to improve the economic, social and environmental programmme in the area, in the context of secure borders, intensifying the contacts between partners on each side of the border.

The general objectives of the Strategic ENPI CBC Document will be followed by three priorities:

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[12] *Programul Operaţional Comun România-Ucraina-Moldova 2007-2013*, http://www.fonduri-structurale.ro/Document_Files//transfrontaliera/00000041/yujkx_POC_Ro-Ua-Md_feb_romana.pdf (accessed March 22, 2010).

Priority 1. Towards a more competitive economy of the border area, aimed at improving economic performance of the frontier zone by diversifying and modernizing the economy in a sustainable manner.

Priority 2. Environment and prepare for emergencies in order to support long-term solutions to environmental problems facing the border areas, particularly those related to environmental emergencies in which a coordinated approach is essential.

Priority 3. Promoting people to people activities aimed at promoting an increased interaction between people and communities living in the frontier zone.

The Technical Assistance of the Program is aimed at effective and efficient implementation of the program through administrative and technical support and strengthened by the support of the preparation and monitoring.

The general financial contribution of the EU to the program will be 126,718,067 million Euros. The partner countries will contribute from their own resources to co-finance the projects (except technical support) with a minimum of 10% of the EU.'s contribution

Given the long border, the Joint Technical Secretariat for the Operational Program will work in two locations: Regional Office for cross-border cooperation Suceava (headquarters) and the Regional Office for cross-border cooperation Iasi. Joint Technical Secretariat will have, during the implementation, the following tasks:

a) performing information, advertising and public relations activities on the opportunities offered by the Operational Cooperation Romania-Ukraine-Moldova;

b) coordinating the generation of projects activity by organizing info-days of public sessions for potential applicants on the procedures for submitting applications, establishment of help-desk organizations to provide consulting writing projects

c) collect and register applications, organize the evaluation sessions and provide the secretary of evaluation committees;

d) coordinates and supervises the work of the Joint Technical Secretariat offices;

e) cooperate with organizations, institutions and networks relevant to the program;

f) assist the beneficiaries in the implementation process, with support offices, organizes and coordinates the monitoring program, including field visits[13].

The operational programme of Romania - Ukraine - Hungary - Slovakia cross-border cooperation[14]

According to the provisions of the draft strategy Document, Romania participates with two counties, Maramures and Satu Mare in the program.

Area eligible:
• Hungary: the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg
• Romania: Maramureş counties, Satu Mare
• Slovakia: Regions Presovsky kraj, Kosicky
• Ukraine: Zakarpatska region, Ivano-Frankovsk

The Strategic ENPI CBC 2007-2013, establishes general policies and objectives of the EU activities in transboundary cooperation. These are:

o Promotion of economic development and social development in border areas;

o A common approach to common challenges in fields such as environment, public health and prevention and fight against organized crime;

o Provide a safe and efficient borders;

o Promoting a local action of "people-to-people".

Measures are grouped into priorities, each having its own target, as follows:

Priority 1.: Promote economic and social development

Priority 2.: Improving environmental quality

Priority 3.: Increased efficiency in border management

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13   http://cbc.mie.ro/Moldova/1pub/read.php?art_name=7_1%20-
%20postaderare%20coop%2E%20transfrontaliera%20-%20RO#2_1_1 (accessed March 10, 2010).

14 http://www.fonduri-structurale.ro/Detaliu.aspx?t=transfrontaliera (accessed March 22, 2010).

Priority 4.: Supporting cooperation "people to people

The operational programme of Black Sea basin cross-border cooperation[15]

Under this program are participating 10 countries: Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Greece and the Managing Authority will work in Romania.

The Romanian eligible area: South East Region Bulgaria: Severoiztochen, Yugoiztochen Russia: Rostov, Krasnodar, Adygea, Ukraine: Odessa, Nikolayev, Kherson, Crimea, Sevastopol Zaporosh'ye, Donetsk, Moldavia, Georgia, Armenia; Azerbaydzhan:the whole teritory; Greece: Kentriki Makedonia, Makedonia Thraki Anatoliki, Turkey: Istanbul, Tekirdag, Kocaeli, Zonguldak, Kastamonu, Samsun, Trabzon

The overall objective of the program is to support a more powerful economic and social development in the Black Sea basin based on strong partnerships and close regional cooperation. This objective is based on promoting local development, local common values, promote equality, particularly reducing gender discrimination and valuing women's contribution to economic and social development, improving the sustainability of the environment, especially those with regional impact, and promoting cultural integration and mutual exchanges between the Black Sea basin[16].

The budget of each program comes in 50% of the European Regional Development Fund, representing the allocation of the participating Member States and it is supplemented with a similar assignment (50%) from the "Foreign Relations" budget that represents the community financing according to the third states. The two sums come up with a common budget that can be used jointly for the benefit of both countries- member state or a third country

The Romanian eligible border area is situated in the North Western, North Eastern and South Eastern part of the country and consists of five counties that are administrative units of NUTS III level: Satu Mare county, Maramureş county, Suceava county, Botoşani county and Tulcea county. The area has a surface of 32.760 km^2 that is 13.74 % of Romania's total area. The number of inhabitants living in the area is 2.366.179. This represents 10.56% of the total population of Romania. The population density in the region has big disparities: in Botosani county it is as much as 93.35 inhabitants/km^2, while Tulcea county has the lowest density with 30.9 inhabitants/km^2.

The Ukrainian eligible border is situated in the South Western, South Eastern and Northern Eastern part of the country. The Ukrainen border is made up of five regions: Chernivtsi, Zakarpatska, Ivano-Frankovsk, Odesa. The area has a surface of 68.100 km^2 that is 11.2% of the total area of Ukraine. The number of inhabitants living in the area is 6.654.900, this representing 12.6% of the total population of Ukraine.

The economical relationships between the two countries are quite few. Even though the imports and exports on the border area are higher than in the rest of the country, they are still irrelevant. The same holds true for the direct investments. The degree of economical development at the border is pretty low, the GDP being lower than the national one. The Odesa region is the only exception where the local GDP is higher than the national one. One possible way of accelerating the economical development in the eligible area would be the development of SME (Small and Medium Size Enterprises) sector in the area as a solution for the closing down of the old enterprises and the economical reforms. The analysis shows that the eligible area has a big potential for tourism which could be better exploited if there was a closer cooperation between the two countries.

The Development of the Small and Medium Enterprise Sector is a very important issue in this area as both countries have difficulties in this respect. Most part of SME on Romania's border are involved in commerce, industry and services. The SME development in both countries is impeded by the lack of information regarding the long term credits that could be obtained for investments and in some cases by the local authorities' support which double the taxes together with other administrative barriers.

Regarding the tourism development the problems occur from the lack of tourist facilities (the access to the public utilities in the rural area is limited, especially in Ukraine), the lack of an integrated information system that could allow the access from one country to the other, the lack of border-cross

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[15] *Ibidem*

[16] http://www.fonduri-structurale.ro/Document_Files//transfrontaliera/00000041/ac8lk_Fisa%20program%20Marea%20 Neagra.pdf (accessed March 22, 2010).

points, the lack of some trained persons in the tourist sector. The main tourist attractions in the area are the natural landscape (the Danube Delta, mountains, lakes), the painted churches located in Suceava, many of which are protected by UNESCO, the historical and architectural monuments, natural reservations, festivals, traditions and fairs.

The infrastructure represents another problem which affects both countries. In the eligible area the roads are in poor condition and the transport network is inadequate for cities and villages' development. The railways and roadways' development on the border area is below national average. Water supply system on Romania's border has improved, especially in urban area, but in the eligible zone there is a poor development of sewerage system and water treatment. For Ukraine the situation is even worse. The water supply systems are old and the country need a lot of investments in this field. The total length of Romania and Ukraine's border is of 649.4 km, out of which 273.8 land, 343.9 km river and 31.7 km sea. There are only 9 roads, 5 railways and 4 cross-border points on this border.

Taking into consideration all these aspects we feel the need of a regional cooperation between these two countries and a SWOT analysis for this neighbourhood programme was created, the data used was provided by both authorities involved in cross-border cooperation.

Conclusions

The regional development policies have different promoting features. In the EU countries the policies are oriented toward creating the necessary conditions which would allow the regions to make the best of their area and in this way would be more powerful in the national economies. For the countries on the way to become EU members, the regional development is oriented toward the proper development of economic relationships, minimizing the differences between the regions from the point of view of unemployment and existent infrastructure.

The extention of the European Union favoured the development of regional programmes designed to stimulate cross-border cooperation between Romania and Ukraine. The implementation of common policies established by the constitutive agreements of the Euroregions, and operational development of cross-border cooperation have led to the increase of contacts between Romanian and Ukrainian institutions.

The wide range of epistemological concepts on the European Union external border can continue by analysing other typed of approaches. Beyond the great conceptual diversity, there is a clear-cut difference between the official border with different degrees of openness for non-community citizens and borders actually separating people despite the fact that they are not physical. Even if it has a political, economic, social, cultural, mental, religious, or ethnical support, the border is a space separating people and territories. From another perspective, "the border is identified to a contact area where social, economic, and cultural particularities of two countries intertwine" (Ilieş, 2003:29).

The main conclusion of an investigation on concepts of external border is that the European Union has an external border that can be both stiff and flexible depending on the realities and challenges of the moment, on tensions or social and economic, political and legal openness, as well as on the complex internal reality of the European Union Member States.

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