

**THE INFLUENCE OF CONVERGENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-BORDER COLLABORATION**

The integration processes in Ukraine today are characterized by the proclamation of the general political strategy and rapprochement with the EU countries. In this case, the main instrument of rapprochement is the cross-border cooperation. This task is a priority measure to strengthen the international relations and to solve regional problems. The complex process of EU integration of Ukraine promotes the attention of Ukrainian scientists and politicians to the study of development of border areas. These areas have a specific complex of unsolved problems connected with their remoteness from the center. Particularly it concerns the travel industry because the border areas are the most attractive for tourism development and they have the greatest amount of tourists (sometimes in transit).

The attention of scholars to cross-border processes on the territory of Ukraine is caused by the specificity of geographic location of the country and its history. Ukraine is situated between the pro-European and pro-Russian integrations. This stimulates the development of tourism on its territory. In this case the cross-border cooperation can make the tourism development much easier. It should be noted that the main feature of Ukrainian border areas is that they can develop relations not only with the states of the EU, but also with post-Soviet states that is historically more reasonable. The development of relations in this direction doesn't allow using the European experience in the development of border regions. So the problem that Ukrainian scholars face is the necessity of developing their own approaches to the understanding of cross-border cooperation and its implementation. In this issue special attention is paid to the analysis of possibilities for the establishment of alliances (Euro-regions) in order to achieve mutually beneficial synergistic effect from the cooperation of border regions in different countries. In this case, the assessment of uniformity of development of border areas is important.

Considerable attention of scholars to the cross-border cooperation started to show in the 90's. First who examined this field were European scholars Klojcnik J. (Slovenia) [9], Radaev, V. (Russia) [3], Raines, P., Scott, J.W., Storper, M. and Scott, A. (USA) [8,6,10], Traistaru, I., Iara, A. (Germany) [7] and others. Among Ukrainian scientists to this research were involved Mikula N. [4], Raevneva E., Geiman, O., Bobkova A. [1], Korolchuk L. [2].

Such attention to the cross-border collaboration on the territory of Ukraine is caused by the specificity of geographic location of the state, and its historical conditions. Ukraine is situated on the border of east and west, on the border of the industrial and postindustrial countries, divided between pro-European and pro-Russian towards integration.

The primary task for the formation of an effective basis of the cross-border cooperation is to analyze the influence of the inequality of the development of border regions, in connection with the neighboring countries in order to identify the possibility of establishing Euro-regions and economic clusters.

The modern concept of regional development policy which dominates in the countries of the EU is based on the fact that border regions are provided with conditions for the mobilization of internal potential and resources in order to enhance their competitiveness. This becomes quite topical for Ukraine as the country's border regions are remote from the large administrative, financial, business, scientific, and cultural centers.

In Ukraine, the cross-border cooperation is now analysed in two different planes: first as a tool for the development of border areas and second as a factor in the realization of its Euro-Atlantic tendencies. Cross-border cooperation of border regions of Ukraine and neighboring countries can be divided into three areas [5]:

1. Euro regions created on the territory of Ukraine with the EU nations;
2. Euro region created on the Ukrainian borders with the CIS countries;
3. Marine euro regions.

At the moment Ukraine is divided into 8 Euro-regions: "Bug", "Carpathian Euro region", "Lower Danube", "Upper Prut", "Dnipro", "Slobzhanschina", "Yaroslavna" and "Black Sea" (fig 1).

However, these formations have regulatory nature and do not function in practice.

It's necessary to point out that special attention should be paid to the administrative division of Ukraine. The border regions occupy 76% of the territory of the State (18 regions and the Autonomous Republic of the Crimea). Only six of them formed the outer boundaries before 1991.

The most vital problem of the new union on the territory of the former Soviet Union arises on some regions in Ukraine and in the Russian Federation.



Fig. 1. Distribution of Euro-regions on the territory of Ukraine

It is quite reasonable to analyze it on the example of the Euro region Slobzhanschina. Foundation of Euro-regions "Dnipro" and "Slobzhanschina" during 2003 established a precedent of joining their border areas. They belong to adjacent countries (members of the CIS) and require the examination of a new experience in the formation of the border regions in Ukraine. [5].

The situation is complicated by the fact that the border area is developing unevenly due to the fact that some regions were able to use the full range of its socio-economic benefits, while others had insufficient facilities and resources to prevent crises.

Unevenness of the regional development creates several problems for the states:

the delay of national economic growth;

the necessity to direct some resources to the regional leveling, but not to promote the development and integration with other areas;

heightening of social tension in the country, increasing disintegration processes, etc.

Thus, the unification into Euro regions is possible in case of increasing the extension of border areas. In this meaning, a convergence is meant as the process of closeness in time of the development levels of countries and regions. The opposite process is called divergence.

The researches of Raevneva E. [1] indicate that the current policy of regional redistribution of investment funds is aimed at strengthening the center of the state and it ignores the need to support the other regions. In Ukraine we may see the process of divergence, i.e. stratification of regions in terms of socio-economic development, that is a result to inefficient state policy regarding the investment of financial resources. There is an increase of regional asymmetry. The growth of asymmetry occurs in such a way that regions in the process of development tend to change their socio-economic situation for the worse. This leads to the increase of their homogeneity, but provokes a decrease in overall economic development of the state and leads to disinterest of the neighboring states in cooperation with Ukraine.

Also I would like to point out that the convergence of the cross-border territories of two states wishing to join to the European region is also very important, because a large backlog of cross-border region from one state to another will worsen the economic situation of the country that is more developed. The greater the level of the convergence between the border territories of two states, the greater the synergistic effect can be obtained by creating Euro-regions.

The importance and relevance of the establishment and functioning of euro regions in the last decade appear quite acute. This is due to a number of stimulating cooperation moments that produce a positive effect on member countries, particularly Ukraine.

Opportunities that open up to Ukraine due to the creation of Euro-regions are:

distribution of powers in the sphere of ensuring the economic security of the border regions - the members of cross-border cooperation, between central and local authorities;

establishment of a positive image in the international arena;  
strengthening the external economic relations;  
optimization of spatial (international, interregional) division of labor;  
reducing the divergence of the territories;  
acceleration of the leveling the quality of life in border areas, bringing them to the average level;  
facilitating the free movement of goods, capital and people across the border;  
the mobilization of local resources and improving the efficiency of their usage;  
mobilizing the efforts to solve common problems in the transboundary region;  
cross-border cooperation plays an important role as a "training ground" for testing and adaptation of European legislation;  
effectiveness in solving problems specific to any of the border region;  
promoting transparency of borders for legal relations between the citizens of the neighboring states and strengthening in terms of preventing "cross-border" crimes or acts that threaten the interests of states and their citizens;  
opportunity to exchange experiences in various sectors of economy;  
access to new technology and acquisition of skills in their introduction to production;  
borrowing the latest techniques, forms and tools of administration, etc.  
On the eastern border of Ukraine creation of euro regions has additional priorities:  
effective use of the historical system of co-operative and productive relations between the regions;  
creation globally competitive production the basis of this system of high-tech manufacturing;  
development of sphere of services

Thus, it was found that for the Kharkiv region, the cross-border cooperation and the creation of the Euro region "Slobozhanschina" is relevant and timely task. Its solution can bring the Kharkiv region to a new level of development, including tourism. However, before we base any problems on joint projects, it is necessary to calculate the level of convergence of border territory for planning and forecasting. If the area converged the possibility of project success is much higher.

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