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THE EUROREGION AS AN INSTITUTIONAL TECHNOLOGY FOR PLANNING AND MANAGING THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

Abstract. *The article is based on a new definition of Euroregion, considered in three sub-organizations. Each of them meets an objective. Therefore we have the Euroregion of the cross-border co-operation, the Euroregion of functional networks, the Euroregion of the macro-infrastructures. For every Euroregion the article discusses the definition, where and when it is applicable, the area, the demographic density, the internal and external networks, the institutions, the objectives and the role of the élites, the functions, the implementation times, the domain of the environment, and finally the combination of these issues in a kind of algorithm.*
Keywords: *Euroregion, cross-border co-operation, functional networks, strategies, technology*

The Euroregion as an administrative technology for managing the cross-border cooperation

Talking about Euroregion as a technology implies a definition of the concept technology, applied a variation of the context in one state or another. Moreover many macro theories of society conceptualise technology as a *prime mover* in the evolution of the society itself (Goldschmidt 1959; Lenski 1970; White 1959; Frisbie, Clarke 1979: 591–613; Ciciotti 1984; Ellul 1964; Scott 1985: 35; Pacey 1986: 10ss)[1]. We can define the technology (Gasparini 2000b: 199) as an integrated set of techniques, composed of apparatus, labour organizations, technical behaviour and related sub-layer given by the cultural context, having the capacity to reorganize life (or at least the central segments) of one system. Following this definition, the input in a context of a port, an industrial system (large or atomized), a new city, a free zone, and even of an administrative structure called Euroregion, represents an innovation that brings a new way of interpretation of the relations and to

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[1]   *The author has extensively used the concept of "technology" to define the souls of the city, to define the past and the future of Trieste and other cities to individualise the obtrusiveness and the control of technology, transforming it into innovation; for exploring the possibility of developing of the border cities through an university and Euroregion, etc. (Gasparini 1995).*

manage the capacities in realizing the local development, to select new cultural, political, economic and social "species", and in definitive to proceed with new objectives for transforming the community.

Interpreted in this sense the Euroregion represents an administration that contributes in forming, and in disseminating, new objectives, new culture, new professionals, new *élite* and social classes, new micro and macro organizations, new structures, new objectives and new functions (Gasparini 2008b:167–214).

To that we have to add, however, that the Euroregion is not a panacea of unilinear effects and valid for everything, but on the contrary there are many types of Euroregion, with different structures adapted for periods, places and very different situations.

We analyse this complexity of Euroregion in the following sections.

The many definitions of Euroregion

The Euroregion may be defined as the cross-border areas' thrust towards institutional autonomy to improve co-operation and foster development in those areas that would, otherwise, be destined to remain in a marginalised condition and be hindered in their possibility of ensuring a good quality of life for their inhabitants. This co-operation process has begun in areas on the margins (borders) of rich countries (such as Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy), hence, they were marginalised in relation to the centre of these nations (von Malchus, 1973: 179; Ferrara 1998; Ferrara Pasi 2000; Gabbe 2005; Del Bianco, Jackson 2012). Through co-operation also, these peripheral areas gained their own centrality, in the first place of economic nature, by establishing connections and collaborating with the cross-border regions of neighbouring countries (Gubert 1972; Gasparini 2011). Under these conditions, the process may be extended to all border areas, and even more so to the Balkan-Danube areas (Gasparini, Del Bianco 2011), where development can guarantee political stability, a break from the temptations to base social relations on excessive ethnicity and the strengthening of national loyalties at local level. However, if the Euroregion expands, it takes on different characteristics *in time and space*. In *time*, because Euroregions can be the starting point of a cross-border co-operation previously set in motion by private actors, in which case, the process was relatively linear and developed over time, aiming at the institutionalisation of co-operation; but Euroregions may also come into being under conditions of *non*-pre-existing co-operation, and instead, be the very driving force behind it; in this case, then, the Euroregion will fulfil more complex functions than the previous one. In *space*, because Euroregions are more (interregional) or less extended (up to 25 km on both sides of the border) depending on

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the major or minor functions they have to fulfil. Let us consider, then, these differences in terms of three functional types, hence, of three spheres of action: each of them will be either more or less relevant in the eighteen border areas analysed depending on the weakness of one of the functional spheres. The advantage of taking into consideration simultaneously the three types of Euroregions within the whole of a specific cross-border area is that the functions relative to each type of Euroregion require the specific local support of a specific institutional and political apparatus. Therefore, the advantage is in combining the diversity of the many border areas and the different ways to conceive borders (Gasparini 1999–2000b: 12; Langer 1999; Cella 2006; Crevatin 2009; Donnan, Wilson 1999; Kurczewska 2006; Mlinar 1995; Mlinar 1996; Lunden 2006; Anderson, Bort 1999; Gasparini 2008b) into a single mode! including the different answers to be provided, if necessary, at different times.

First type of Euroregion

It is a Euroregion intending to provide the area with *macro-structures* or political agreements for cross-border co-operation, designed to link the area with international hinterlands. The goal of this type of Euroregion is to provide the area of road and ports macro-infrastructures (harbours, motorways, airports), structures that may favour co-operation in the border regions, mutually compatible national legislation and cross-border agreements between countries and/or regions. These objectives may be pursued by Euroregional bodies (Presidents' Conferences, for example), taking the initiative in matters of legislation through conventions and decisions on operational interventions.

Second type of Euroregion

The second type of Euroregion's objective is to implement *co-operation by means of functional networks*. Its basis are the institutions favouring the establishment and stabilisation of ties, companies, firms, administrative institutions, cultural institutions, associations, mass media, etc. From these ties, triggered by this Euroregion's institutions, stem the networks of relations qualitatively influenced by what is exchanged: money, information, culture, support and so on.

Third type of Euroregion

The goal of the third type of Euroregion is that of *contiguous co-operation*. This is closely linked with the community, the creation of a cross-border

area specialised in some economic function (for example, winter tourism, universities, "minor tourism", etc.) and the intense involvement of the population.

To imagine a cross-border co-operation managed by any one of these three types of Euroregion it is to think that, in each of these cross-border areas, there can always be at least one of these types, if not all three of them.

This depends on the environmental conditions of the Euroregion; let us take into consideration, for example, the two extreme cases. On one hand, in those areas where the cross-border region is integrated in a consolidated system of road and communication infrastructures and where the functional advantages of co-operation between institutions and organisations in the cross-border area are also integrated, it is useful to exploit the full potential of the Euroregion of the third type and overlook the institutional aspects of the first and second type because, given their functional irrelevance, there would be the disadvantage of the institutional bureaucratisation of these two types of Euroregion, which could trigger sterile competition (indeed due to this very lack of an original function). On the other hand, in those areas where the cross-border region is far from infrastructures and where the inhabitants have long lived without the functional need for those on the other side of the border, all three types of Euroregion become a necessity, to include "strong" and indispensable functions for the development and welfare of the cross-border area. In this case there are multiple Euroregional institutions acting autonomously, but according to models of complementarity and coordination (as identified by Pegoraro and Rinella in the *principle of subsidiarity*) (Pegoraro, Rinella 1998; Pegoraro, Rinella, Gasparini 2000), according to which, secondary institutional actors must be enabled to carry on with their initiatives in line with the *dimension* of the pursued objectives and the *effectiveness* of the actions taken (Gasparini 2000a: 258).

The Euroregion: where?

International conventions, signed protocols, literature on the subject and experience indicate that Euroregions are usually established mainly in those border areas economically and socially marginal in relation to the state system. This stems from the idea of *indicative planning*, elaborated alter the World War II and often comprising local "development poles": these are triggered by the public sector (central or local) through incentives (lower interest rates, tax exemptions, facilitations of various kinds, recognition of depressed area status, etc.). The "development poles" policy was promoted to establish centralities in marginal locations.

The Euroregion following this logic aims to avoid labour force migration by promoting, through employment policies, a quality of life which it

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would otherwise be anti-economic to foster. In this context, cities that are not very large in terms of inhabitants, have a great degree of social and functional heterogeneity in relation to their low demographic density. The ISIG research, carried out in 1995 (Gasparini 1999–2000a: 4), shows that in Europe the average population in the border cities goes from 76,656 inhabitants in the German cities, to 12,357 in the Norwegian cities. Euroregions do not usually comprise large cities or state capitals (except for the case of Copenhagen or Bratislava), and if they do, then the Euroregion is mainly involved in the management of large infrastructures (airports, harbours or other) and, therefore aims to exploit the advantages coming from the shared use of highly expensive infrastructures.

Many elements, then, concur in justifying the "where" of a Euroregion:

1. to increase the advantages that local development (cross-border) may draw by attracting and combining resources on both sides of the border, versus the advantages offered by the state alone. This happens as the border loses its fixed characteristic (stemming from reluctance to co-operate, need for control, strict selection) and becomes a "virtual" barrier with ever decreasing economic relevance;
2. to avoid that the loosening of the political border be followed by the strengthening of the internal border between the areas included in the Euroregion and the strong areas of the country itself, thus preventing the concept of Euroregion from entering into conflict with the concept of nation;
3. to achieve harmonisation with the European principles, in order to enjoy their protection and exploit the advantages to be drawn from EU programmes;
4. to enjoy cultural, historical and social similarities with the communities and populations on both sides of the border.

These principles are valid in general terms, because in the Balkan-Danube area this is true especially in the case of long-established borders (drawn no later than the end of World War I). On the contrary, along more recent borders, established alter the fail of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, there is a lack of border awareness, the boundary is used to emphasise state identity and therefore there is less propensity towards cross-border co-operation (Gasparini, Del Bianco 2005; Gasparini, Del Bianco 2011; Gasparini 2011).

However, in the cross-border area there is bound to be at least one of the three types of Euroregion, and this happens on the basis of pre-existing conditions. The adoption of the first type of Euroregion is fundamental for the establishment of the other two types, however the first type itself may be a further element of support for the other two.

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The Euroregion: when?

Another point in the Euroregion indicates the moment in which, i.e. "when", it is possible to establish.

From the history of Euroregions it is possible to notice that the Euroregion is the last step in a three-phase process.

The *first* phase is characterised by cross-border co-operation between private citizens and private bodies, aiming to create the conditions to develop their activities, that is, to create micro-centralities in the area to serve as context for enterprises.

The *second* phase sees the introduction of cross-border co-operation among local institutions, to create centrality in the marginal locations to support private firms' networks. At this level, one notices already the importance and need for loose relations between local institutions at the micro-level, and for dose relations in the single tasks, actions and interventions.

The *third* phase entails a cross-border co-operation that is clearly steered by the Euroregion's institutions. In other words, the Euroregion, at this stage, has its own institutions diversified according to functions and structured in organisational systems with different training times and operating times.

Actually, the establishment of the Euroregion does not have to necessarily take place in the third phase, but also immediately, because the three-phase process would involve long implementation times, especially if co-operation along a border is difficult due to ethnic or political reasons.

The difference between third phase Euroregional institutions of countries with a history of co-operation and first phase Euroregional institutions of countries where collaboration is recent lies in the functions that they will fulfil. In the latter case, when the beginning of co-operation coincides with the establishment of the Euroregion, the *when* begins with the Euroregion of the first type (*macro-structures* and political agreements), the prerequisites for the Euroregion based on *co-operation by means of functional network* develop later, and only afterwards the Euroregion based on *contiguous co-operation* may be established.

Activation times differ from cross-border area to cross-border area. This means, among other things, that the establishment of a Euroregion may also begin directly with the second type if not the third.

The area of the Euroregion

Another item of the "good" Euroregion is the area of the Euroregion itself. How extended should it be? An initial answer would be that it depends on the functions one expects it to fulfil: at least three functions were identified already in the planning phases of the *Euradria* (between Friuli-Venezia

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Giulia/Italy, Slovenia and Carinthia/Austria) (Gasparini 2008a: 53–86). The *first* is that of contiguous co-operation (contiguity Euroregion – third type), the *second* is that of precise relations between organisations and institutions (functional networks Euroregion – second type), the *third* is that of macro-infrastructures (macro-Euroregion – first type).

The definition of the area of the cross-border Euroregion by *contiguity* takes on several meanings:
1. of the people who in this contiguous area develop strong relations (high emotional intensity) and weak relations (low intensity but widespread);
2. of the communities next to one another (villages, small towns, towns, small cities) enabling the development of networks (roads, cultural activities, combined institutional actions, etc.);
3. of the economic activities, whose dynamism make the area attractive and therefore foster tourism (along with structures for tourism and environmental improvement, for example).

To fulfil the contiguity function (Euroregion of the third type), the planned Euroregion has to be small, i.e. the small area comprising both sides of the border. Functional networks (Euroregion of the second type) are independent from the area, therefore this type may also be greater in size. The Euroregion of macro-structures or cross-border agreements (first type), on the contrary, requires very large areas, so that the agreements and the macro-structures may ensure concrete advantages for the population and the economies within this area. Then, it is possible to deduce that a Euroregion of the first type contains a smaller Euroregion of the second type and several Euroregions of the third type.

Lastly, the extension of the area is linked to a further factor, i.e. to the time of establishment of the Euroregion; if it was recently established, the tendency will be to have it develop fast, the main function being that to emphasise the shared cross-border context, while if the Euroregion is an old one, then the tangible functions translating into direct actions prevail and therefore its area of the Euroregion is relatively contiguous and not too big.

Demographic density

To ensure the type of relations required by contiguity (Euroregion of the third type) and therefore to ensure the community-effect to the system of strong and weak ties, the demographic density must not be very high. This means that if the communities are not demographically big and relations between the people from contiguous communities are sufficiently intense; people in a community know what happens in those nearby, certain

portions of the population know each other at least by sight, and with some they even hold relations.

The demographic density in the other types of Euroregions has a lesser impact on the success of the Euroregion itself. This hold true especially for the Euroregion of structures and infrastructures (first type), which may have a very low demographic density since it encloses scarcely populated lake and mountain areas.

Internal and external networks

The networks of relations differ in each type of Euroregion analysed, especially at the level of intensity.

In the Euroregion of structures and macro-structures (first type), the networks connect communities, villages, small towns and cities rather than institutions, private citizens and associations; furthermore, they link the internal elements of the Euroregion's system with one another, but in particular, they link these elements with the outside, producing, within the Euroregion and its hinterland, different degrees of centrality (regional, national, international, global) with the outside.

In the Euroregion of functional networks (second type), the networks connect points (enterprises and institutions) thus giving origin to systems differing in resources, services and exchanged information. These networks are mainly inside the Euroregion and are such as to create co-operation between operational organisations.

Lastly, as to Euroregions of contiguous co-operation (third type), the concentration of mainly economic activities in a small area leads to the specialisation of the area and of network systems (network of relations) integrated enough to highlight the contiguity of the businesses and of the infrastructures connecting them. Consequently, this amplifies the area's capability to attract "clients" from ever-wider circles.

This may be further clarified, going back to the economic functions foreseen for such Euroregions as the one planned between Italy, Slovenia and Austria (Gasparini 2000a). Alpine tourism (Tarvisio-Kranjska Gora-Arnoldstein), along with specific professional training, tourism-related handy crafts and industry and the organisation of free-time cultural events, lead to the establishment of an integrated network among the actors involved, making the area attrattive to the outside and many *hinterlands* such as Europe of the planes, central-eastern Europe, and the Mediterranean.

At the same time, in the southern part of this Euroregion (Natisone-Torre-Tolminotto), the functions become specific of quality-based agricultural enterprises, local tourism for the improvement of small towns and road links, actions for the appreciation of the agricultural and local cultures

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(museums), natural parks, railway itineraries, etc. All these functions lead to a network of widespread and congruent relations, forming a hinterland comprising the areas of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Slovenia and Austria. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the two areas considered (Tarvisiano-Kranjska Gora-Arnoldstein – north – and Natisone-TorreTolminotto – south) fulfil complementary tourist functions combining the respective *hinterlands*, so that the first area enjoys the nearby *hinterland* of the second area and vice versa.

Necessary institutions for the Euroregion

Institutions differ for each type of planned Euroregion.

The *Euroregion* of *infrastructures* and political agreements (first type) operates through the following three institutions:

1. *Permanent conference* of the Presidents of the regions, convening periodically and in any case, either when decisions must be taken or to assess the status of co-operation;
2. *Work group*, consisting of regional officials who confer, prepare documents and identify problems;
3. *Pre-existing private structures or new structures established ad hoc*. These are established in order to plan and carry out the major projects identified by the permanent Conference at political level.

The implied strengths of this institutional framework are:

1. brief implementation times of the decisions;
2. high probability of success because the actors are few and guided by macro-political operative choices linked to real interests;
3. low need for new administrative structures, thus avoiding the introduction of further rules in the implementation process, with the consequent savings on unnecessary additional expenses.

The *Euroregion of functional networks co-operation* (second type) consists of the following institutions:

1. *Conference of the presidents of trade associations and of public institutions operating in the regions within the Euroregion*. These presidents are the networks' actors including the president of the regional council (or specific councillors of the regional government), the presidents of districts, chambers of commerce, trade associations, regional areas' mountain communities, the members of the Euroregion of functional networks and, first among them, the deans of universities. This body plans actions to support the networks, decides on concrete support, supervises the progress of the Euroregion, proposes corrective measures,

etc. The General Conference discusses general policy, while operatively it branches out unto Conference by functional sectors.

2. *Permanent coordination office*. This coordination is referred to the networks' nodes. The office has its own personnel and it may be linked to one of the Euroregion's institutional bodies.

3. *Private companies*. They plan and carry out actions of intervention specific to the field of the Euroregion's networks.
The implied strengths are:

4. brief implementation times of the decisions;

5. the high probability of success because the range of competencies is very wide: spanning from the awareness of reciprocal needs and necessity of intervention to the possible activation of instruments to foster a network of relations between businesses/institution and between these and outside enterprises;

6. the possibility, as well as clear necessity, of organising conferences for productive, cultural, administrative sectors aimed at the creation and promotion of functional networks;

7. the limited need to establish permanent administrative structures (Permanent office of coordination), that act as a link between the decisions of the Conference and the actions of the private companies;

8. the individual companies' competence to manage relations within networks and to favour their establishment. Funding of these companies may come from the single actors within the Conference and/or users of this informative/formative service of intervention.

The *Euroregion of contiguous co-operation* (third type) develops very complex functions, because it is directly linked to civil society and to the activation processes of resources through each other's knowledge and participation. A more in depth analysis of the nature of the foreseen institutions, namely, the *Assembly* and the *operative secretariat*, is therefore necessary.

Indeed, the institutions typical of consolidated Euroregions are the Assembly, the Secretariat and the work groups. The Assembly is both a "chamber" and an "executive body".

As a "chamber" it may consist of a representative from each municipality of the Euroregion and representatives of volunteer associations and enterprises. Thus defined, the Assembly takes the shape of a federation of municipalities, civil society and citizens. The fact that the Assembly is so numerous is justified by several reasons:

a. the involvement of civil society as a whole and of local agencies to establish and maintain reciprocal know-ledge and cross-border co-operation;

b. the identification of the necessary steps to achieve this knowledge and co-operation;

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c. the identification of the priorities to satisfy these needs;
d. the optimisation of the combination of needs to be met, observing the above mentioned priorities;
e. the identification of the organisational instruments (especially organisations);
f. conferring to these organisational instruments legitimacy, a domain and eventually the resources;
g. the control of the effectiveness and efficiency of these instruments. In short, then, the Assembly as "Chamber" aims to foster a sense of belonging to the area and of indispensability of cross-border co-operation as well as indications on how to achieve it.

The Assembly, as generator of the "Executive body", obviously may take the shape of a "council" or that of an opedsrative structure acting by means of "work groups" (in different sectors) in dose contact with the Assembly.

In short, this Assembly and the related "operational secretariats" do not necessarily imply a complex and stable administrative structure, on the contrary, they may be supported by pre-existing structures with a minimal increment of roles and personnel.

The Assembly (comprising "chamber" and "executive body") and the secretariat must be structures that promote and control activities, projects and organisations of civil society (i.e. associations, cooperatives, enterprises and services). The "Assembly" and the "executive body" should especially promote, directly or indirectly, organisations ensuring that the needs of the Euroregions' communities are met. Effective control of the fulfilment of this function is necessary, to ensure that the principles of equity and efficiency of intervention are at the basis of all actions.

The *Euroregion of co-operation by contiguity* is present in every cross-border area and it is also the most complex of the three, both because it encompasses many aspects of everyday life (economy, culture, politics, belonging, etc.) and also because it must foster the activation and transformation of the many segments and many relational networks of civil society. That is why it is useful to recap, even briefly, and also take a look at the processes this Euroregion is actively involved in.

Similar organisations, through interaction, form stable networks within these relations (inter-organisational context). Relations, however, will differ if an organisation exercises a monopoly of the function in the Euroregion (this happens, for example, when there is a single agency or service: transport or professional training, for example) in which case it forms a *unified* inter-organisational context, or if this organisation is in a network of relations with similar organisations. In the latter case, the organisations can fulfil their functions, by acting singularly (*social choice*), or by delegating the

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fulfilment of part of one's function to a new organisation (*federation*, as is often the case with the promotional or planning aspect of the product or offered service), or by forming a coalition with others to achieve immediate and specific goals (*coalition*).

Clearly, each of these procedures designed to fulfil the functions and to meet the needs of the Euroregion is matched by a type of network of different relations among the organisations themselves. It is evident as well that the Assembly-Executive body may be instrumental in favouring one or the other type of network of relations.

Furthermore, the most adequate answers for the establishment of a Euroregion come from volunteer associations, cooperatives, enterprises and cultural institutions, and since they express (or can express) new needs in new ways, they must be held in serious account and with particular favour. However, they may be in competition, because depending on the different actors involved, there may be contrast concerning the objectives, the testing or researching methods of these objectives, etc. Yet, all of this is still useful to foster the establishment of these organisations.

These organisations, though, are too weak, because they are small and in their early stages, and all too often this weakness hinders and diverts their uniqueness. This happens mainly within the inter-organisational networks (consisting of all the organisations operating in the same sector), which they must enter into and come to terms with, while emerging and asserting themselves. These inter-organisational networks are a resource for the new organisations that share similar characteristics with the organisations already enclosed (Wiewel, Hunter 1985). Indeed, in the environment (in this case the Euroregion area) there are resources in terms of personnel and resources from agencies willing to provide funds; in the environment, the domain of the organisation is as well defined (what to do, for whom, where and why), therefore, the institutions of the Euroregion confer legitimacy to this type of activity.

The actual intervention of the Euroregion's institutions may place these associations in the condition to overcome the relational barriers hindering their formation, mobilisation and transformation in relation to the needs not yet met or newly arisen.

The three processes (formation, mobilisation, transformation) are relative to both old and new organisations as well as to inter-organisational networks of relations.

The problems related to the *formation* involve, in the first place, the creation of a network of relations which new organisations may easily access, enabling predictions on the effects of their activity. The function of the Assembly-executive body may be to allocate resources, in the form of funds, advice and information. Furthermore, the Assembly-executive body may

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acknowledge the *domain* (what to do, for whom, where and why) of the organisation, thus providing *legitimacy* to it and its actions.

In the *mobilisation* processes of organisations and networks the Assembly-executive body may point out the strategic value of certain solutions proposed for the Euroregion by the organisations, thus favouring its establishment or enlargement; but it may also intervene in cases of negative or "reluctant" behaviour, threatening them with sanctions.

The intervention of the Assembly-executive body is more difficult or not as visible in the processes of *transformation* of organisations and networks, because it takes place during the decision process and its implementation. This intervention is linked with the indirect results produced by the abovementioned incentives and by others that will be discussed later; intervention is, instead, irrelevant as to the "technical" aspects of formation of the decision and its implementation.

Furthermore, the decision's formation undergoes deep horizontal influences from the environment of volunteer associations; these influences stem from the unclear boundary between associations, due to the fact that the director (and other actors) belongs simultaneously to many associations, economic enterprises and institutions. This is the complex way, through which a new organisation, as well as those already existing, may enter the network of inter-organisational relations, which, in turn, become more predictable as organisations steer more efficiently towards achieving the goal. This stimulating intervention of the Assembly-executive body reaches the goal to favour the actions of organisations, including those emerging, resolving the *opaque environment* made up of not consolidated and rather unpredictable relations – because the others' plans are unknown) into an environment in which the reciprocal actions of each of these organisations, aimed at the fulfilment of the functions of the Euroregion, are clear to everyone.

In other words, the Assembly-executive body can favour the substitution of a basically competitive context, which Banfield (1961) calls *social choice* (according to which, each organisation acts to maximise its own interest), for one based on *complementarity* and *co-operation* with other organisations. To this end, resources, legitimacy and definition of domain, to which the Euroregional institutions contribute, enable the creation of a *transparent environment* by means of data banks, shared data systems and information on budgets and projects and their possible changes in the pursuit of the organisations' individual objectives.

Such complementarity, then, takes on functional connotations (the activity of an organisation begins where that of another ended), or geographical connotations (different organisations cover different areas). However, it would be a mistake to believe that this context of complementary relations pervades the environment as a whole, and it would not even be desirable.

Indeed, perfect complementarity may easily lead some organisations to hold a monopoly or an oligopoly of functions, defeating the intent to evaluate and plan multiple answers for the different needs of the many social groups in the Euroregion. What, at first sight, may appear to be competition, on the contrary, is simply the search for the most adequate answers to many different needs.

In short, then, the Assembly-executive body fulfils the function to favour the formation, mobilisation and transformation of organisations and networks of relations in the Euroregion, establishing the conditions to diminish the "opacity" of the environment (institutions, volunteer associations and enterprises), thus laying the foundation of an environment based on complementarity and co-operation; co-operation may be positive or negative, the latter being between organisations which pursue different or contrasting answers but for different social categories.

The last aspect in the scenario involving the intervention of these Euroregional institutions is their capability to divert resources (funds, cultural heritage, abilities, information) from the outside to the community providing organised answers for the establishment and preservation of the Euroregion. This may be achieved by conveying and regulating into the Euroregional inter-organisational network the resources coming from region, state, central association and central institutions, but also from parts of internal or external organisations, like those present on the territory with their own branch offices. Clearly, "to convey" means, in this case, to confer these energies to the combination values/answers, and, therefore, to harmonise them with those actions already undertaken by pre-existing organisations on the Euroregional territory.

The Assembly-executive body, then, may undertake a series of actions to ensure interdependence between the organisations' types and organisational elements in charge of providing answers:
1. controlling the basic answers;
2. stimulating the inter-organisational networks of the environments, fostering transparency in the creation of answers for the local needs identified;
3. regulating the flow of external resources for the establishment of inter-organisational networks to provide the answers deemed indispensable by the Euroregional community.

The objectives followed by the Euroregions and governed by the élite

In several studies it appeared that the best conditions for connecting together the objectives of cross-border cooperation can be achieved by

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developing different types of Euroregions, which are differentiated by the objectives to be carried out and therefore each of them presents a government and a very simple *governance*. It is clear that the three types of Euroregion are not an alternative, they are complementary and placed in a sort of Russian (Matryoshka) doll, one inside the other (Gasparini 2008c; Amodeo 2005; Gasparini 2008a).

To accomplish these objectives, we consider them according to the types of Euroregions, that we have already defined, and on which we take the attitudes of the *élites* of economic, political and civil society in the border areas.

The main objective of this Euroregion is to cope with problems where the contiguity of social, economic and cultural spaces prevail. And in this contiguity activities aiming at creating conditions for people to take initiatives and actions are pursued, using the European Union calls, to cooperate for mutual understanding between the parts on the both sides of the border. Therefore, the *governance* does not organize and do not take the place of companies or associations, but proposes, assists, coordinates, develops ideas: the spirit that prevails is a kind of ideology of the collaboration/participation as source for a "new", "complete" and "perfect" society. Even in the economic field can be exploited with the continuity in tourism and in the labour market.

Among the *élites* of economic, political and civil society, the main interest comes from the élite of the local authorities of the civil society, both for services and for institutions. The economic and political *élites* are more tepid in front of cross-border Euroregion, first for the fear that it creates a new bureaucracy. For the rest the two *élites* affirm different concerns: the companies think in terms of market that goes well beyond the area of this Euroregion; the local political *élites* (municipal and provincial administrations, above all) fear for a collapse of their powers, while the regional administrative *élite* are more attracted by the news that this Euroregional machine can introduces in the management of the public affairs.

The Euroregion of the functional networks is understood as virtual place in which the actors and institutions elaborate and/or enter networks of reciprocity relations. In other terms, it is dominated by the relation networks that non adjoining institutions such as medium-sized enterprises, provinces, chambers of commerce, universities develop. Therefore, it is an Euroregion of civil society actors.

The advantages of this Euroregion are multiple, and are acceptable from the most of the *élite*. The first advantage is from the fact that its *governance* is very simple, less expensive, visible in its structure and therefore *produces transparency* over what is going on within the sectorial networks (universities, provinces, etc.) and between the inter-sectorial networks. This transparency naturally is very important in informing the network participants

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of the things that happen and of the actors' actions. It is made from a sort of *deliberative participation on organizational level*. All the *élites* are convinced by the goodness coming from the Euroregion of functional networks, in particularly the economic *élites* devoted to services (on first place the Chambers of Commerce), the regional and national political *élites*, and the regional and supra-regional civil society *élites*.

Finally the *Euroregion of strategies and macro-infrastructures* is the most vast one because includes many regions. The objective from that large dimension is justifiable from the fact that this regards the *major strategies*, different infrastructures (corridors, ports, airports, railways), hospitals, universities: all these strategies and macro-infrastructures have the scope of making the cross-border areas more central in the European context. It is a centrality that is acquired for the global interest rather than for the functions of the civil society.

These characteristics of globalism and simple *governance* favour the consensus of all economic and political *élites*, and instead they create, as well, certain disregard from the part of the civil society *élites* (services, cultural institutions and organizations, in first place). In reality, one difficulty can instead come from the central governments of these border regions, and this because the Euroregion, configured like this, is very extended (in kilometres and inhabitants), however in particular because it occupies with the objectives that are perceived as in conflict with the national sovereignties from the states where those regions take place.

At this point, it appears that the three complementary Euroregions, instead of only one, are due to the necessity to confront three types of *objectives* (*participation, transparency, strategy*). The motivation is simple: the three Euroregions (cross-border, functional networks and macro-infrastructures) are very efficient in achieving, individually, the three families of objectives, as it is not necessary to achieve all the three objectives. Their *governance* and organizational structure are very different for every objective and therefore putting them together can mean making the achievement of the objectives muddled and enormous, their cost in this sense can be very high for the community and the bureaucracy can be extremely complex. And besides the three goals (we repeat *participation, transparency, strategy*) have different periods of realisation, and also the individual Euroregions can be disabled (or exceeded) in the case where the objective of the different types of cooperation is achieved.

Functions of the Euroregion

The functions (Gasparini 2008c) the *Euroregion of infrastructures* and of the *Euroregion of co-operation by means of functional networks* are evident

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and have clear features. Indeed, the main function of the first Euroregion is to favour cooperation and coordination within the macro-economic sphere of strategic investments. However, it does not involve only the economic policies, but the management of joint interventions for new and renewed macro-infrastructures as well.

In the second Euroregion the main function is to link points (private enterprises, local bodies, public institutions) into networks of relations, with specific economic, cultural, administrative, etc. functions. These points are located in the border regions and therefore form, among themselves, "functional networks".

The *Euroregion of contiguous co-operation* is, without a doubt, the one with the most susceptible, delicate and complex functions.

Indeed, in this case, the cross-border Euroregion fulfils many functions:

1. to create and emphasise the *sense of belonging* to an area straddling a border, and *mutual knowledge* of the cultural, social and economic features;
2. to transform this knowledge into *cooperative action*;
3. to render this co-operation *indispensable*.

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Evidently, these functions position themselves at different stages of implementation and at different times, depending on the status of cross-border co-operation in the Euroregion. Obviously this status differs whether one considers the borders within the EU internal boundaries, the borders between Union and non-Union member-states, or borders between non-Union member-states. As to the countries, whose eighteen borders were analysed in this study, they are no member-states and their standing with the EU differs greatly as well. Indeed there are short-term candidates, long-term candidates but there are also countries who, to-date, are still not candidates. Clearly this status reflects itself on the attitudes and actions planned and/or developed in relation to the possibility for a "good" Euroregion.

In the case of the concrete area, the implementation times for the Euroregion of contiguous co-operation foresee a first function of (1) *fostering active mutual knowledge* aiming at (2) *emphasising the indispensability of cross-border co-operation*, especially at the economic level in order to (3) *achieve this co-operation* by coordinating actions in the sectors of tourism, agri-tourism and services. One may expect as a consequence the outset of a (4) *new sense of belonging* to the area and the residing society further supported by (5) *cultural actions* which had already been undertaken from the alternate route of the (6) *process of mutual knowledge*, previously promoted in the first function. It is evident in the time schedule of these functions that there is a divarication, a return and a multi-functionality of mutual knowledge.

Graph 01: FUNCTIONS OF THE EUROREGION
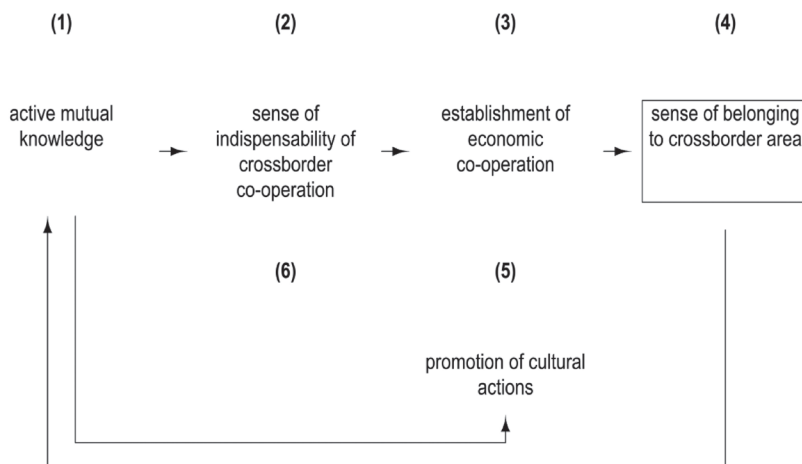
Implementation times of the functions and of the institutions

The implementation times of the functions and of the institutions also vary and are somewhat complex depending on the type of Euroregion.

For the *Euroregion of macro-structures* the relationship between implementation times and institutions traces the one between situation and necessity. Indeed, where connecting infrastructures of the border area already exist, the "Conference of presidents" will be able to operate easily, either because a decision has already been made or because the decisional process has been previously tested (as it is possible to observe in the Hungary-Croatia border area). Instead, in those areas where this co-operation of the structures is lacking, the establishment of the first type of Euroregion becomes a *necessity* (as indicated for the Bosnia&Herzegovina-Croatia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"-Serbia and Montenegro, Greece-"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" border areas) (see Gasparini, Del Bianco 2011; Gasparini, Del Bianco 2010a; Gasparini, Del Bianco 2010b).

In the *Euroregion of co-operation by functional networks* they can easily be improved if they already exist (this applies especially to Bulgaria and the countries it borders with); implementation times may, instead, be longer for the institutions in border areas where functional networks between enterprises and territorial institutions are lacking (like Albania-"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Croatia-Serbia and Montenegro, Romania-Serbia and Montenegro, Albania-Greece).

The functions are fulfilled at different times also in the *Euroregion of co-operation by contiguity*, and its institutions may be established at different time intervals as well, but the context is more complex than the previous ones, and deserves a few specific comments.

Organisational segments, public or private, formed, mobilised or transformed by the work groups of the Euroregional "government", may favour "active mutual knowledge". This knowledge is not mere transfer of what there is on one side and the other of the border, but above all of what there can be. Knowledge implies *imagination* and *creativity* for what may be achieved by transforming the present situation. This active knowledge involves mainly the economic sphere, but also the cultural, social and services spheres. The activities of the above-mentioned organisational instruments are carried out in *conferences*, *joint projects*, *evaluations of possible and probable scenarios*, *establishment of joint volunteer associations* and *advisory support in examining combined data and possible cross-border projects*.

The second function, relative to the *sense of indispensability of co-operation*, consists of:
1. the identification of institutional sectors planning or elaborating joint actions in terms of services and spatial planning to lend economic and tourist centrality to the area;
2. the identification of the sectors of indispensability;
3. the elaboration of indicators to prove, if not the indispensability, at least the usefulness, of co-operation. These segments of the function may be carried out by the "*secretariats*", supported by the work groups operating within the "government".

The third function involves *cross-border economic co-operation* and it is directly fulfilled by enterprises receiving professional, financial and practical advice to apply for EU funds or access professional training programmes.

The fifth function, as promotion of *cultural actions*, may be fulfilled by a coalition of municipalities or by single municipalities and volunteer associations.

Lastly the fourth function, relative to the *sense of belonging to the cross-border area*, though being a consequence of the preceding functions, must be supported by shared actions promoting single cultural-historical studies, common museums and shared elements. Furthermore, it needs the support of different administrative segments in each municipality, developing that exchange of information designed to render the activities and plans of other organisations "transparent" or, at any rate, to dissipate the stereotypes, which may only lead to a distorted perception of others.

The domain of the environment

Another element to be added for a "good" Euroregion is the capability of the Euroregion to dominate its environment, or if it poses obstacles, to transform it to meet the needs.

By domain, is to be intended the (environmental) context of legislation, of political-administrative, financial, socio-economic and cultural actions in which each type of Euroregion is placed.

However, it is important to point out the possibility for the Euroregion not to be a simple passive receiver of all the pressures coming from the environment; on the contrary, the Euroregion itself may react and exercise pressure on the state, regional and local environment to make it "yield" to the Euroregion, thus, enabling the fulfilment of its functions to the utmost.

Often, the three types of cross-border Euroregion must exercise pressure at:

1. *state level*, so that greater territorial competencies be transferred from the state to the Euroregion - bordering countries are either symmetrically federal or regionalised to a great extent - and local territorial authorities may have greater financial capability;
2. *international level*, with the signature of significant multilateral agreements among the countries;
3. *regional level* with policies designed to overcome prejudice on both sides of the border, and foster a cross-border "vision".

The "algorithm" for the "good" Euroregion

At this point, it would be tempting to maintain that, to ensure the establishment of a "good" cross-border Euroregion one should follow a Vademecum with the objectives, the rules, the institutional, organisational and individual actions which may be summed up in an "algorithm" with the following operative dimensions:

Graph 02: THE »ALGORITHM« FOR THE »GOOD« EUROREGION

The »good« Euroregion function of (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)		
1	=	type of Euroregion and/or combination of types of Euroregion
2	=	where
3	=	when
4	=	area
5	=	demographic density
6	=	internal and external networks
7	=	Euroregional institutions

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The »good« Euroregion function of (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)		
8	=	objectives and élites
9	=	functions
10	=	functions' times and institutions' times
11	=	domain of the environment

These eleven operative dimensions are the basic core of what should and can be done to create a Euroregion, which realistically and convincingly pursues its objectives and where cross-border co-operation may be seen in action: a co-operation stemming from the awareness that only (or mostly) advantages may be drawn from it.

Table 01: THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF CBC – SCHEME OF THE EUROREGION

Elements	Euroregions		
Type	Macro infrastructures	Functional networks	Cross-border cooperation
Where	Isolated areas	Absence of a greater network	Anywhere
When	ASAP when there are no existing infrastructures (immediate management of existing infrastructures)	Immediately when there are factors inhibiting the functioning or existence of networks	Improving the existing cooperation
Area	Large	Middle	Small
Demographic density	Low	Middle	High
Networks (prevailing)	External	Internal (but not too extended)	Internal
Institutions	Committee of Presidents of Regions and Political Institutions	Committee of Presidents of large Institutions and network stakeholders (economic, cultural, etc.)	Local Institutions and grass-root associations to activate mobilise and transform at the local political and civil society levels
Objectives	Strategies	Transparency	Participation
Functions	To favour cooperation and coordination within the macro-economic sphere of strategic investments	To link the network stakeholders (private enterprise, local bodies, public institutions) into networks of relations	a) To create and emphasise the sense of belonging and mutual knowledge; b) to transform this knowledge into co-operative actions; c) to render this co-operation indispensable
Timing for implementation	If the infrastructures do not exist, then this implementation is immediately necessary	Improvements if the networks already exists; establishment of networks when there are not.	Depending on local situation
Domain	International, national (and regional)	Regional (and international)	Regional

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