OVERCOMING BARRIERS
CHALLENGES OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN EAST OF EUROPE

Presentation
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Legal basis and forms of transborder cooperation between Podlaskie Voivodeship and Lithuania and Belarus

The dynamics of ethnic relations presented on the example of Polish-Lithuanian relations in the North-Eastern borderland of Poland

Quelle dynamique économique a la frontière de la Pologne et de l'Ukraine occidentale?

Cooperation between Polish and Ukrainian "partner towns" in the Carpathian euroregion

Grand Duchy of Lithuania as source of cultural territorialisation

Economic and organisational conditions for creating transborder building cluster in Podlaskie

Belarusian ruling elite. The dynamism of changes in the nomenclature and their influence on the establishment of relations with the European Union

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ISIG JOURNAL is the quarterly journal of the Institute of International Sociology (ISIG)

The Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia was created on the initial project of its founder, Franco Demarchi, which aimed at joining together rigorous scientific activity and a proactive effort in the international cooperation filed, to promote sustainable development and the peaceful coexistence of peoples. Located in Gorizia, a town on the border between two countries of then-divided Europe, in 1968 ISIG became an international centre of excellence for research and an original laboratory elaborating solutions to the needs of local, national and international societies. Thus, ISIG contributed to the scientific development of new methodologies and theories. Today, the originality of ISIG stands out in the numerous research activities carried out by the institute and in its commitment within the international academic and cultural networks in which it operates, in its constant publishing and academic dissemination and training activities. ISIG is thus rooted in the regional context but is also dynamically turned towards the international context, within which it operates and is recognised as a centre of excellence in the fields of international relations and cross-border cooperation studies, of ethnic relations and minorities studies, of peace studies and conflict resolution, of society and social policy, of economics and local development, of democracy and civil society, of futures and forecasting techniques, of territorial and environmental risk management.

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The political and social history of Poland has always been very complex, and has always left as a result many boundaries: first, political and ethnic borders, but of course also cultural, social and economic borders. Poland itself is therefore dominated by spatially mobile boundaries, because they constantly changed entities and political natures. The Poland of the Piast was followed by the confederation with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the strong contrasts with the Teutonic Order; then Poland was divided into three parts with three borders between Czarist Russia, the Habsburg Empire, Prussia of the Hohenzollerns. Then the borders became with Soviet Russia, Lithuania and East Prussia, Germany, Czechoslovakia immediately after the war. It was later simplified in 1945 with a single border with the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Germany; and finally from 1991-93, there is a proliferation of new borders with Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Germany. And every new (or restoring) boundary produces the incorporation of ethno-cultural groups belonging to the new Poland.

This complexity deserves to be studied analytically, and this book is edited with, and especially by, my colleague Professor Tadeusz Popławski University of Białystok. The articles pay particular attention to the eastern borders of Poland. The book perspective is sociological, economic, historical, ethnic. The overall framework is very attractive, but this is explained later by Tadeusz Poplawski.

I am pleased to highlight that this book adds another brick to the long path that ISIG, since its foundation, has undertook in understanding how society lives in border regions, how ethnic groups characterize it, how it is culturally peculiar, how borders affect, challenge and stimulate modern societies and their organizations.

It is a long path indeed that ISIG had highlighted with theoretical and empirical research, designing specific actions, strategies and institutions (eg. Euroregion, EGCT, etc) to provide support to civil society and Local Authorities dealing with CBC.
INTRODUCTION

Tadeusz Popławski

Eastern Border of Europe becomes an important object of interests and researches from the point of view of sociology, philosophy, economy and political sciences. The articles presented in this volume of review *Isig Journal* introduced difficult, but interesting problems of transborder relations at Polish-Belarusian, Polish Lithuanian and Polish-Ukrainian border. Europe now so concerned with the global financial crisis, after its resolution will have to get involved in the deeper cooperation with its neighbours in the East. The future of Europe is dependent on solutions in the domain of transborder partnership relations and neighbourhood policy, which principal role plays Eastern Partnership as a tool of international influencing and encouraging partners to cooperate. However, as it is underlined by the authors, the meaning of democracy and liberty is quite different among partners. The eastern countries have to overcome different barriers, which were erected by their history, different economic development and various political arguments. Elimination of this disturbances constitutes a precondition for their better cooperation and as a consequence better collaboration of them with the European Union.

The Eastern Border of Poland is perceived in Europe as an instrument of enlarging European Union to the East, relatively good “equipped” in instruments of border policy-making (euroregions, border infrastructure e.g. checkpoints, cooperation programs and projects, policy tools of regional authorities, tourist projects, petty commerce, labour market), as well as a place of informal contacts of people, contacts without which a daily life at the border would be more difficult. In these texts, therefore, the authors tried to concentrate on social descriptions, political diagnosis, economic analysis, historical essays and studies of institutional practice.

In the book are presented topics concerning minorities, transborder cooperation of towns, clusters, euroregions, political projects and plans for future. European Union’s policies dealing with this problem such as offers of association and future membership can bring ambivalent results. They can be attractive and motivating to act (the case of Ukraine and Polish-Ukrainian projects eg. EURO 2012), but also completely ineffective (as in the case of Belarus and cooptation of Belarusian political elites). The shadow of “Putin’s Russia” due to current political conjuncture after collapse of the Orange Revolution, restoration of old elites in Ukraine, anti-democratic hard policy of Lukashenko regime and weak eastern EU politics create danger of dependency, not only in the domain of energy supplies. In the book there are also texts focusing on situation of Lithuania. The Polish-Lithuanian relations are recently complicated (minorities questions, heritage of Great Duchy of Lithuania), but they can also be encouraging as they create new quality of neighbourhood relations based at common history, freedom, European values and UE regulations. The future form of border relations in the East will be shaped by, on the one hand, harmonious Polish-Lithuanian cooperation and, on the other hand, the Polish-Belarusian model, based on conflict.
LEGAL BASIS AND FORMS
OF TRANSBORDER COOPERATION BETWEEN
PODLASKIE VOIVODESHIP AND LITHUANIA AND BELARUS

Joanna Gawędzka-Olszewska
Tadeusz Poptawski
University of Białystok

Abstract: The article tackles legal foundations and selected forms of cross border cooperation between Podlaskie Voivodeship and Lithuania and Belarus. The definition of cross border cooperation assumed in this document relates to the definition included in the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, also called Madrid Convention. The final part of the article describes cross border functions versus own research of the author. In February-October 2009 interviews were conducted with persons who have influence on public opinion such as representatives of politics, science, culture and Białystok authorities.

Introduction

Very important phenomena occurring nowadays are integration processes and transfrontier cooperation. The latter brings the possibility of mutual aid and activity about to regions separated with a border from each other. The cooperation manifests itself in concerted assistance between territorial and local authorities as well as different institutions representing border areas. The article tackles legal foundations and selected forms of cross border cooperation between Podlaskie Voivodeship and Lithuania and Belarus.

1. Definition of transfrontier cooperation

The definition of transfrontier cooperation assumed in this document relates to the definition included in the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, also called Madrid Convention 1. According to the art. 2 of the Convention, the transfrontier cooperation means “any concerted action designed to reinforce and foster neighbourly relations between territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of two or more Contracting Parties and the conclusion of any agreement and arrangement necessary for this purpose”. The cross border cooperation relates to territories placed on both sides of a frontier – uniform districts of common features, which residents manifest similar culture, tradition and articulate the wish for collaboration in order to encourage cultural and economic development 2. Obviously there are a number of different types of districts, e.g. administrative, economic, historical, geographical, physical. But taking into account only district location, the following areas are settled: close border regions (or border), transfrontier regions and euroregions. A

1. European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, Dz.U. 1993, Nr. 61, poz. 287.
border region is a territory placed on one side of a frontier. A transfrontier region is a territory which is
contained in one or more countries located on both sides of a frontier. Finally an euroregion is the highest
and formalised structure of cooperation between territorial or local authorities and with a participation of
trade and industry or social partners.

When two concepts are compared – transfrontier cooperation and euroregion – the conclusion is derived
that transfrontier cooperation is much more expanded idea. The concept contains functional elements,
emphasises objects and aims. Transfrontier collaboration starts to feature euroregion characteristics when
institutional stable forms of collaboration become in place, encouraging extended and legally constituted
participation of parties, through institutions and powers mutually settled. The concept of euroregion
introduces the structural elements, emphasizing the issue of institutional and legal frames of collaboration 3.

Transfrontier collaboration should support soothing negative effects of a frontier existence through utilising
shared potentials on both sides of a frontier. The most important aims of transfrontier collaboration are 4:
- overcoming mutual animosities and biases among region residents, which can come from shared
history;
- expansion of democracy;
- overcoming negative effects of outlying location and isolation;
- encouraging development and economic growth;
- raising a standard of life of border areas residents.

Transfrontier collaboration enables to change the role of a frontier into the role aiming at activation of
contacts between neighbouring communities in all aspects of everyday life. Collaboration forms are dep-
endent on local situation and the manner in which concerted initiatives are achieved.

2. Legal foundations of transfrontier collaboration

A legal act corresponding to transfrontier collaboration and having priority meaning is the treaty – the
European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Author-
ities, which was adopted by the Council of Europe on the 21st May 1980 during a conference in Madrid
(ratified by Poland on the 19th June 1993). “Transfrontier cooperation shall take place in the framework of
territorial communities’ or authorities’ powers as defined in domestic law” 5. Here the primacy of domest-
ic laws prevail over agreements concluded by particular collaboration parties. According to the Conven-
tion member states of the Council of Europe should encourage closer relations, collaborate and support
each other. It is supposed to assure cooperation between communities and authorities of border areas.
Cooperation between local and regional authorities shapes better conditions and growth of border areas,
affecting economic and social development, as well as reinforcing relations between member states. The
art. 1 of the Convention obliges contracting parties to ease and support cross border cooperation between
communities and territorial authorities. In the second part of the Convention there is an appendix
containing model and outline agreements, statutes and contracts on transfrontier cooperation between ter-
ritorial communities or authorities.

In 1995 the Additional Protocol supplemented the Convention because the Convention had not
contained clear provisions enabling local and regional authorities to settle a collaboration. The Protocol
includes articles giving powers to local authorities to settle transfrontier collaboration 6.

3. Toczyski W., J. Zaucha, Samorząd terytorialny w polityce regionalnej UE, in www.ikz.edu.pl/-
unia/glowna/samorzad/samorzad.htm, [za:] M. Juchnicka, E. Skibicka-Sokołowska (2002), Podstawy
prawne i uwarunkowania współpracy transgranicznej, in W. Bieńkowski, J. Grabowiecki, H. Wnorowski
warmińsko-mazurskiego z Obwodem Kaliningradzkim, in H. Podedworny, J. Grabowiecki, H. Wnorow-
ski (eds), Współpraca gospodarcza Polska–Wschód – Uwarunkowania i perspektywy rozwoju, Uniwersy-
tet w Białymstoku, Białystok, p. 316.
5. Herein, art. 2, ust. 1.
6. Additional Protocol to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between
Territorial Communities or Authorities of 9 November 1995, Strasbourg.
Cooperation between communities and territorial authorities representing border areas, according to the Madrid Convention relates to the domains such as:
- region, cities and villages development;
- public health care;
- culture, recreation and sports;
- transport and communication;
- environmental protection;
- mutual help in case of emergency and disasters.

Another European legal act, which eases international cooperation between regions is the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ECLS). The international agreement was concluded in Strasburg on the 15th October 1985. Poland ratified the treaty on the 26th of April 1993. The Charter assigns territorial units the general competence for transfrontier collaboration. It defines formal and legal frames and enables local communities to co-operate within international relations.

According to the ECLS «Local authorities shall be entitled, in exercising their powers, to co-operate and, within the framework of the law, to form consortia with other local authorities in order to carry out tasks of common interest».

Another important document related to transfrontier cooperation is the European Charter of Regional Self-Government (ECRS). On the 5th June 1997 in Strasburg during the IV session of the Congress of the European Local and Regional Authorities the Charter was adopted. The Charter assigns regions the competence of transfrontier cooperation, similar to those included in the European Charter of Local Self-Government. According to its provisions, regions should be subjected to their own policies and conduct their own international collaboration. According to the article 8 (Interregional and trans-frontier relations) of the document:

«1. In the spheres falling within their competence, regions shall be entitled to undertake activities of interregional or transfrontier cooperation, in accordance with any procedures laid down by domestic law. These activities shall be carried out with due regard to domestic law and to the international obligations of the State. 2. Regions forming part of a transfrontier area may, with due regard to the law of all national legal systems concerned as well as to international law, provide themselves with joint deliberative and/or executive bodies. The acts of these bodies shall be subject to the procedures of the competent courts to the same extent as if they had been performed by a regional body, in accordance with the principles set forth in the existing treaties on the subject. 3. The interregional or transfrontier relations of regions shall be governed by the relevant international agreements, in so far as these are applicable».

Poland has not ratified the document yet.

On the 20th of November 1981 in EUREGIO, the borderland between Germany and Netherlands, another important document related to transfrontier cooperation was created – the European Charter of Border and Cross-Border Regions. Till 1995 the document was named the European Charter of Border Regions. On the 1st of December 1995 during the meeting of the Association of European Border Regions in Szczecin in the Pomerania Euroregion the name was changed and also its provisions were altered with respect to changes in Central and Eastern Europe. Poland adopted the document in 1995. The following amendment to the document was done on the 7th October 2004. The Charter defines goals which should be included in border and cross-border regions development. According to the Charter, the transfrontier collaboration should soothe negative effects of a frontier existence. Special attention was paid to issues related to economic growth, regional policies, cultural collaboration, land development

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7. Herein, art. 6, ust. 1.
planning, environmental protection, as well as cross-border commuting. The charter is not an international legal treaty and doesn’t have binding power. This is only a declaration of collaboration and as such – code of conduct of cross-border cooperation. It stipulates how foundations of mutual trust and partnership should be settled for neighbours.

Formal frames of transfrontier collaboration are determined by international treaties, based on which agreements and contracts are concluded. Trans-border cooperation frames between Poland Lithuania and Belarus were determined by 12:


Based on those agreements bilateral commissions and international councils were settled like:
- Polish – Lithuanian Intergovernmental Commission for Transfrontier Cooperation;
- Polish – Belarus Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission for Transfrontier Cooperation.

3. Common grounds of transfrontier cooperation of Podlaskie Voivodeship

Development of foreign cooperation in interregional dimension, including transfrontier, Podlaskie Voivodeship can acquire a new attractive aspects and stimulus for growth. Podlaskie Voivodeship borders on Mariampolska Region, Altitusky and Taurosky (Lithuania) on Grodno District (Belarus). The trans-border cooperation the voivodeship conducts also with the Russian District of Kaliningrad.

In December 1999 Podlaskie Voivodeship council adopted the resolution regarding priorities of the voivodeship foreign cooperation. In the document, goals and directions of foreign cooperation were settled as well as obligation to participate in works of international and interregional institutions and associations.

Currently the Podlaskie Voivodeship manages multi-dimension cross-border cooperation with foreign partners, included 13:

* regions of Lithuania, Belarus and Russia, neighbouring with Podlaskie Voivodeship;
* member regions of the Euroregion “Niemen” and “Bialowieska Forest”.

Through participation in international bilateral commissions, which are responsible for transfrontier cooperation, the voivodeship fulfils its tasks related to collaboration with neighbour regions. Because of close border location, the voivodeship participates in the Polish-Lithuanian Commission and Polish-Belarus Commission. The Chairman of the Voivodeship co-chairs Subcommission for Interregional Cooperation on the Polish-Belarusian borderland as well as working group for interregional cooperation on the Polish-Lithuanian borderland.

Euroregions are another kind of transfrontier cooperation. Two out of sixteen euroregions in Poland are located in Podlaskie Voivodeship 14:

Transfrontier Association of Euroregion Niemen, on the 6th June 1997 the agreement about setting up a trilateral cross-border association of Euroregion Niemen was concluded. Euroregion includes currently: from the Polish side – Podlaskie Voivodeship (except for the former Łomżyńskie voivodeship) and part of the Warmińsko-mazurskie voivodeship (municipalities which were included in the former Suwalskie Voivodeship); from the Lithuanian side – districts Alytus and Mariampol and region Wilno; from Russian side – representatives of the Russian regions of the Kaliningradzki District: Czerniachowsk, Gusiew, Oziersk, Krasnoznamiensk and Niestierow. The main purpose of the Euroregion is aiming at transfrontier cooperation, organising and coordinating economic, cultural, sports and scientific events as well as environmental protection and tourism.

Euroregion Bialowieska Forest – agreement about setting up the Euroregion was concluded on the 25th May 2002. This is the international association of local communities from Polish and Belarusian side of the border. The Euroregion – from the Polish side includes: the Hajnowski district, the urban borough Hajnówka, the rural boroughs: Hajnówka, Białowieża, Dubicze Cerkiewne, Czyżew, Narewka, Narowka, Czeremcha, Bielsk Podlaski and Orla and the urban-rural borough Kleszczele; from the Belarusian side – regions: Pružański, Kamieniecki and Swisłocki. The Euroregion includes a unique for Europe and the World, wood complex of Bialowieska Forest. The purpose of the Euroregion Bialowieska Forest is aiming at development of open, mutual and beneficial transfrontier cooperation between neighbouring regions of the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Belarus. Local communities become closer through undertaking concerted activities in the field of business, culture and social development, relations between different institutions – e.g. self-governments, educational, cultural or sports establishments. Another very important purpose – for geographical reason – is nature protection and coordination of prevention from elemental disasters and threats 15.

A superior goal of the transfrontier cooperation should be demonstrated in activities towards multidimensional economic progress, with respect to sustainable growth principles, including multifunctional development of tourism. Very important cooperation elements are activities towards tightening social and cultural relations between inhabitants of the neighbouring regions on both sides of the border.

4. Selected forms of cooperation between Podlaskie Voivodeship and Lithuania

Institutions are a very important element of cross-border relations, which purpose is promotion of their region’s potentials, matching prospective partners, trading, giving information about rules related to economic activity in the border states, as well as organizing trade missions which are supposed to support trading relations.

Transport and nature connection as well as functional correlations between settlements located on the borderlands of Poland and Lithuania became the basis for works on principles of land use planning. Within the works run by Polish-Lithuanian Commission for Land Management the following document was created: Study of Polish-Lithuanian borderland use planning. State of the borderland use and possibilities of its development. part. I (1998). The Polish-Lithuanian border region consists of more than 8 thousand square kilometres of valuable nature areas, including the protected areas: Augustowsko-Drużbienicki (Alytus) and Suwalsko-Wisłockie. Exceptional rest and health values are the region’s potential development features. In the document the attention is paid on international transit between Baltic states and western Europe, demographic aspects, infrastructure and natural resources. Favourable geopolitical location in the Green Lungs of Europe and convenient connections with the European tourist system as well as the water route Augustowski Channel reactivation conduces development of tourist and health care functions. There are also promising conditions for farming along with agrarian and food production on both sides: Polish and Lithuanian. Construction of the arterial road Via Baltica, which is supposed to connect Scandinavia with Lithuania, Poland and western Europe, will be an important event. Detailed goals and directions of the Polish-Lithuanian borderland development are described in the II part: “Study of borderland use alongside the Polish-Lithuanian border”. As years pass, Polish-Lithuanian cooperation becomes more of arranged activity. There are growing number of agreements concluded on the local and regional level referred to the border areas. These agreements refer to e.g. setting up business and trade chambers, agencies for business entities, cooperation in the field of power supply, land use, construction of petrol stations, motels, hotels 16.

In 1992, on Poles and Lithuanians initiative, the Polish-Lithuanian Economic Chamber of East Markets (PLEC) was set up. It associates 392 members on both sides of the border. As a self-government economic organisation, it prepares companies for starting and running trade contacts with countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The offered service includes e.g.: trainings and seminars, database.

legal aid, information, market research, sector reports, advertising campaigns. Conferences, trade missions and exhibitions are organised, including also those of Polish and Lithuanian Presidents’ patronage. PLEC is a partner of business and trade chambers in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The chamber created the Multiple Programme of Polish Export Promotion in East POLEXPORT. The programme concerned multiple promotion and introduction of Polish companies and products into eastern markets. Within the programme, the Chamber suggests Polish companies e.g.: consulting, training, business meetings, business missions, taking part in fairs, promotion campaigns, translating into Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, etc.

Activities of the Board of Podlaskie Voivodeship, related to the cross-border cooperation, are focused on the continuity of relations with regions, which bring measurable effects and achievements. In Białystok there are meetings of the working group responsible for interregional cooperation. The group exists within the Polish-Lithuanian Intergovernmental Commission for Transfrontier Cooperation. During these meetings the following issues are discussed: environmental protection, tourism, education and culture, social matters and economic cooperation. Mutual projects regarding cooperation are set up, like constructing cross-border routes, participating in tourist fairs as well as releasing brochures which promote the Polish-Lithuanian borderland.

On the 16th October 2003 contacts with Solecznicki District authorities were initiated. They regarded cooperation between hospitals of Podlaskie Voivodeship with the hospital in the Solecznicki District which is owned by Polish community. Because of difficult financial situation of the Solecznicki hospital, the voivodeship committed itself to help in the field of equipment and to support training.

In 2004, within the transfrontier association Euroregion Niemen, the Podlaskie voivodeship Board run the collaboration with the regions: Mariampolski, Alituskim and Wileń (Lithuania). Two projects of Lithuanian beneficiaries were realised: Programme of culture development in the Polish-Lithuanian borderland and Study of the Polish-Lithuanian land use alongside the border. Also cooperation in the field of culture, education, health care, tourism, business and labour market was continued.

In October 2006 in Alitus (Lithuania) there was a meeting of Polish-Lithuanian working group responsible for interregional cooperation (the group is chaired by a Podlaskie Voivodeship Chairman). A schedule for the following year was settled and it assumed construction of cross-border routes and promotion of tourism, use of land for communication and engineering infrastructure as well as preparation of a project list for the programme Interreg for 2007-2013.

In 2006 within the Programme of Culture Development, the Archaeology Section of the Podlaskie Museum started combined archaeological research in the borderland between east and west Slavic areas (archaeological excavations in the town Trzcianka, Janów county) and the research programme AD FONTES – mutual cultural inheritance of Podlaskie, Lithuania and Belarus of XVIII-XX century.

Within the promotion activities of the Podlaskie Voivodeship, a cycle of events is organised. They are prepared by the Voivodeship itself or in cooperation with other entities. During those events a potential and values of the voivodeship is presented. For example in 2006 in Vilnius there was a presentation of rural municipalities co-organised with Association of Rural Municipalities Podlaskie Voivodeship. Apart from stands with folk handcraft and traditional specialties, there were also concerts of Podlaskie folk groups.

On the 6th June 2007 in Mariampol there was a conference which summarised the project of technical and transport infrastructure development in the borderland of Poland and Lithuania. The conference was organised together with Podlaskie Voivodeship.

The project Image Improvement and Information Spread in Euroregion Niemen is realised together with the Bureau of Euroregion Niemen in Mariampol. Within the project there was the course of publicity presenting Euroregion (including Podlaskie Voivodeship), and current information in the field of tourism, economy, culture, etc.

Poland and Lithuania participated in the project Transfrontier Education and Civil Information Centre in Białymstok (TECIC). The project was realised within the Programme neighbourhood between Lithuania, Poland and Kaliningradzki District of the Russian Federation, Interreg III A. During the II meeting of the research group, which took place in September 2007, materials were collected which were supposed to be used for preparation of a guide about culture heritage objects. The guide is planned to be

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edited at the end of the project in Bialystok.

Opening the border after Poland and Lithuania accessed the Schengen area on the 21st December 2007 was a very important event. There are two road frontier crossings in: Ogrodniki and Budzisk, and also railway in Trakiszki. Opening the border influenced positively and activated transfrontier cooperation between Mariampol, Alitusem and Podlaskie Voivodeship.

5. Selected forms of cooperation between Podlaskie Voivodeship and Belarus

In 1995 within works of Polish-Belarusian Commission for Spatial Management (Sub commission for Spatial Management), the document Foundations of the spatial management in the Polish and Belarusian borderland, part I Report on the status of the borderland spatial management. In 1998 (updated in 2000) the document Direction Study of spatial management alongside the Polish-Belarusian border, part II Goals and directions was created. Polish-Belarusian border region determined in the Study occupying the area of 20 thousand km² in the Belarusian side and 45 thousand km² in the Polish side (western part of the groszienki and brzeski districts as well as areas of Podlaskie Voivodeship and partially – Lubelskie Voivodeship). There are four functional sub-regions, i.e. the area of augustowsko-groszienki forests, the area of Białystok-Grodno-Wołówsk, the area of Białowieska Forest and the area of Brześć-Biała Podlaska-Włodawy. The region’s rich nature plays a significant role in the central and eastern Europe nature and settlement systems – the idea of Green Lungs of Europe. The Polish-Belarusian concept of the transfrontier region development assumes strategic goals realisation in order to assure stable economic, social, ecological and spatial structural growth of Polish and Belarusian areas. The strategic goals should be realised through activities in the field of 18:

- development of transport and engineering infrastructure (e.g. new transport arteries, border crossings);
- nature protection (mutual systems of Białowieska Forest, the project realisation “Green Lungs of Europe”, water protection from wastes);
- utilisation of tourist and recreation potential (e.g. setting up Transfrontier Tourists Regions, reconstruction of Augustowski Channel);
- technical infrastructure development (e.g. power supply, natural gas transportation);
- development of the settlement system.

A very important for the region are: existence of institutions which promote the region and borderland business as well as agencies responsible for matching business and trade partners. Mainly, activities manifest themselves in organising fair and exhibition events, which promote local business. These institutions enable to set up business contacts mainly for companies having no experience in cooperation with Belarusian entities. The most important organisers of the fair and exhibition events are e.g.: International Trade Office ITO, Centre of Fairs and Promotion of Eastern Market in Białystok, BIALEXPO International Fairs in Białystok.

The oldest, biggest and most active self–government institution of the region is the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Białystok. It takes an active part in organising fair and exhibition events in Białystok as well as supports business contacts between firms of the Podlaskie Voivodeship and Belarus. In 1994 the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Białystok concluded a cooperation agreement with Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Grodno. The purpose of the cooperation was concerted organisation of trade and exhibition events e.g. the Polish goods exhibition was organised in Grodno. Also systematic business missions take place in Belarus.

In 1994, on initiative of the Centre of Fairs and Promotion, the Eastern Market in Białystok was set up. It is one of the practical ways to expand exchange channels with the eastern markets. The market supported mainly turnover of: farming produce, machines and goods for farming production.

In Białystok the Eastern Business Association was set up in order to streamline promotion of Polish firms’ offer in the Belarusian market as well as support contacts between Polish and eastern companies and concerted distribution of goods.

In 2003 in Białystok there was the VI meeting of the Polish-Belarusian Inter-governmental Coordination Commission for Transfrontier Cooperation, during which the following directions were regarded as necessary and reasoned: supporting initiatives in the field of culture cooperation and business activation in the border regions, as well as tourist utilisation of the Augustowski Channel.

Within the agreement with Grodzieński District, as an example, mutual projects were pointed out, for which proper applications for European funds were supposed to be processed through the Euroregion Niemen. In 2003 eight projects were agreed, like Culinary Festival and Sports Games.

In 2005 as an effect of cooperation with Grodzieński District, the list of mutual projects was created, for which applications for European funds were supposed to be processed through the programme INTERREG IIIA and Phare within the Euroregion Niemen. The most important projects are: construction of tourist infrastructure based on Augustowski Channel and Białowieska Forest, tourism promotion in the Polish-Belarusian borderland connected with the regional cuisine specialities. Also, cooperation in the field of road safety and medical life-saving is continued. As a result of the latter, rescue teams of the Belarusian emergency service participated in the Podlaski Rally of Medical Rescue Service organised every year by Voivodeship Station of Emergency Service in Białystok. Also Voivodeship Centre of Road Traffic in Białystok set contacts with Road Traffic Inspection in Grodno in order to start cooperation in the field of training drivers.

Cooperation within Euroregional Medical Centre for Research and Education is continued. One of the signatories of the Centre is the Voivodeship Chairman. In 2005 there was a scientific and training conference under the name *Building information society in health care*. 44 participants from Belarus took part in the event. At the end of the event, lectures were broadcasted to Medical University in Grodno.

A very important event was organised in 2005 on the initiative of the Centre of Civil Education Poland-Belarus. In the Voivodeship Chairman Office there was a visit of journalists and activists of independent non-governmental organisations from Grodzieńskszczyzna. They got familiar with rules applicable to voivodeship self-government and experience of Poland within the field of democracy creation.

6. Transfrontier functions of Białystok based on own research

In February-October 2009 interviews with persons who have influence on public opinion took place (authorities and experts) representatives of politics, science, culture and Białystok authorities. The research was run in the form of face to face discussion with a respondent. 20 interviews took place. Among respondents there were experts coming from Białystok or performing in Białystok or Podlaskie Voivodeship important administrative, political or business functions. The research is part of the PhD thesis of the article’s author, titled *Influence of functional and spatial changes on creation of metropolitan character of Białystok*. The research goal was to find answers on the following questions: 1) How is Białystok perceived by ruling elites, persons from politics, science, culture and how does it influence perspective of metropolitan function development? 2) Is development pace of Białystok sufficient to recognise Białystok in the future as a metropolis of European importance? 3) What functional and spatial changes influence creation of metropolitan functions of Białystok?

Interviews were carried out based on a questionnaire, which was divided into 3 parts. The first part was related to particular metropolitan functions of Białystok. The questions in this part aimed at finding the answer on whether Białystok was the centre of broader than domestic meaning in years 1989-2009. The second part concentrated on questions about the future development of metropolitan functions in 2010-2025. Those questions referred to whether Białystok can get, sustain or lose metropolitan functions. The following functions were hinted: communication, transfrontier, education, culture, tourism, finance, social, business, administration and politics. The purpose of this part was to answer the question what the development tendency of Białystok is, as a city of metropolitan character. The third part was about factors supporting or obstructing metropolitan functions development in 1989-2009. The question was put in order to highlight internal and external factors which determine getting, sustaining or losing metropolitan functions of Białystok and how those factors influence creation of metropolitan functions.
The interview questionnaire consists of eight metropolitan roles which Białystok plays. In this article research results regarding transfrontier functions are presented. The following questions relate to that matter:
- Did Białystok take advantage of its border location during transformation period in 1989-2009?
- How has the situation of Białystok as a border city of European Union changed?
- Generally, does the fact of European Union border existence give an opportunity to develop Białystok?
- Does Białystok have a chance to take a lead among eastern border cities in the field of transfrontier cooperation in 2010-2025, reaching the following goal included in the strategy of the city: “Exchange Centre between East and West”?

Most of the experts maintained that, during the transformation period of 1989-2009, Białystok could have taken advantage of its border location in a more effective way. In some sense it benefited from a transfrontier cooperation but in many cases the possibility to get profits from the cooperation was dependant on external factors, which Białystok was not able to influence. Almost all experts, except for three, stated that the situation of Białystok as a border city of European Union had caused the cross-border traffic to deteriorate. As accessing Schengen area, the co-operation between Białystok and Belarus got worse. It is worthwhile to mention that in many cases this is Belarus which cuts off itself from the world and seals up its borders.

In order to stimulate the cooperation on the EU borders, as of the 19 January 2007 the European Parliament and its Council regulation came into force (EC no. 1931/2006 of 20 December 2006). The regulation laid down rules on local border traffic at the external land borders of the Member States and amended the provisions of the Schengen Convention. The document guaranties that borders with neighbouring countries do not become a barrier for trade, culture and social relations, neither for regional cooperation.

On the 12 of February 2010 the agreement between Poland and Belarus 19 about local traffic was signed. The agreement will stimulate contacts between the Podlaskie Voivodeship and Belarus. The EU rules state that the lane which the regulation about local traffic is applied is 30 km of width (Białystok is out of the limit) but in exceptional cases the lane can be extended up to 50 km (in that case Białystok would be found within). From the agreement inhabitants of 1265 towns and villages situated 30 km from the Polish–Belarusian border could benefit. Unfortunately the agreement does not refer to Białystok. The city’s authorities inform that further attempts will be undertaken in order to include Białystok into the agreement.

Four of the experts emphasized the meaning of the agreement with Belarus about the local transfrontier traffic. The agreement should encourage a mutual contacts and stimulate the cultural and economic cooperation. The benefits would touch not only individuals but also local entrepreneurs. The agreement brings many opportunities to communities within the borderlands.

Answering the question: How has the situation of Białystok changed as a border city of European Union changed, half of the respondents maintained that the situation got not so well. Trade turnover as well as cross-border commuting has got down. Five experts said that the situation of Białystok as a border city has changed for better in the aspect of development of institutions related to border guarding, proficiency and equipment of border guards.

Regarding the question whether EU border gives opportunities for Białystok development most of the respondents maintained that it does. The city can become a bridge which joins the East with the West but under condition that proper efforts will be put in place. Agreements between Poland and Belarus are required, which will ease commuting and goods flow. Opening border crossings with Lithuania created a development chances in the field of business and culture. Two experts maintained that the border limits chances of development because of visa fees.

Experts in general agreed that Białystok has a chance to take a lead among eastern border cities in 2010–2025 with regard to transfrontier cooperation, at the same time reaching the strategic goal: “Exchange Centre between East and West”, since it has significant potential and possibilities. Three experts maintained that Białystok is capable of becoming a leading eastern city under condition that it will utilise its geographical structure better than other border cities will (e.g. Lublin), which have similar potential.

The research highlights that Białystok has difficult foreign partners, like Belarus, which is not European Union member. When Poland accessed European Union, it got new opportunities but on the hand, a border traffic barrier was raised. At the same time the agreement about local traffic can wipe the barrier off.

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19. Until now the agreement about local traffic with Belarus has not been ratified.
The Strategy of the City stands that Białystok can hold the role of a contact agent between the East and the West. The idea will come true under condition that both parties will make proper attempts. Currently we can observe a meaningful development of cross-border relations with Belarus.

Summary

Poland becomes a very important integration link in the European space, owing to its geopolitical location. The transfrontier cooperation should be recognised as a significant factor of regional and local development. Transfrontier cooperation must be based on partnership and concerted benefits. Cooperation effects will depend on potential and competence of the parties of cooperation agreements. Quality and intensity of cooperation between east partners will depend on ability to overcome existing barriers through placing further legal, infrastructure, financial and language solutions.

For many years benefits of transfrontier cooperation has been proved. Among those benefits can be found: construction of communication structures, transport network, setting up culture centres, mutual promotion and tourism, innovation and technology centres, setting up mutual projects in the field of environmental protection as well as creation of joint concepts of borderland use.

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Additional Protocol to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, (9 November 1995), Strasbourg.


«Borderland is an area of half-shadow, the space of filtering in and intermingling different human communities and their cultures»

Abstract: The aim of this article is a reflection on the ethnic relationship on borderland of Poland after 1998. Ethnic relations are reflected in various spheres of social life: political, social, economic, cultural ones or these concerning everyday life. The changes in ethnic relations are affected by the number of factors, among which the growth in importance of ethnic minorities and adjusting Poland to European standards concerning majority-minority relations seem to be vital. Another important factor is increasing awareness of ethnic minorities’ interests. It results from the fact that the more is done within the minority, the bigger awareness arises among the people identifying with minority groups, which defines new interests for them. This paper focuses on the condition of Lithuanian minority in north-eastern borderland area of Poland. This area – referred to as Suwalszczyzna – being a part of Podlaskie province, is inhabited by Lithuanian minority. Lithuanian minority is relatively small but it is the second minority, considering the size of population, in Podlaskie province.

Introduction

Not only is borderland a certain territory, it is mainly a symbolic space, where contacts with “another” are constant. An unceasing focusing on the ethnic identity is characteristic to this area. Individuals continuously interact with others who are defined by their ethnicity. However, the peculiarity of ethnic relations on the particular borderland needs to be taken into consideration. Different ethnic groups co-exist with each other on the borderland and the relations between these groups can be complex. It seems unavoidable in borderland areas that – both in a public and a private sphere – the people identify each other using “fellow” or “other” categories, focusing on nationality or religion.

Ethnic relations are reflected in various spheres of social life: political, social, economic, cultural ones or these concerning everyday life. They hold both micro and macro structure dimensions. Co-existence of different cultures is possible in various dimensions, it takes different courses, it is perceived in a positive or negative way by the residents, belonging both to the majority or minority group.

This paper focuses on the condition of Lithuanian minority in north-eastern borderland area of Poland. This area – referred to as Suwalszczyzna – being a part of Podlaskie province, is inhabited by Lithuanian minority. Lithuanian minority is relatively small but it is the second minority, considering the size of population, in Podlaskie province. In the Second Polish Republic there were 83.000 people of Lithuanian ancestry, whereas after the Second World War this number was reduced to 9000 (Chalupczak, Browarek 1998: 22). This significant difference in size of this ethnic minority was not a result of displacement actions but of significant change of the Polish Republic borders in the area where this community resided.

It is estimated that there are 20-25.000 representatives of Lithuanian minority residing in Poland. There are 5800 Lithuanians residing in Podlaskie province, in the communes of Sejny, Puńsk, Szypliszki,
Krasnopol. There are 17 institutions teaching Lithuanian language, or other subjects in Lithuanian, in this area. The commune of Puńsk is particularly specific, as the Lithuanians account for 74.4% population. They are active in political life of the commune and the commune head is Lithuanian.

1. Lithuanian minority organizations in Podlaskie province

The first national Lithuanian organization was the Social and Cultural Association of Lithuanians established in Puńsk on 30th-31st March 1957. The Lithuanians residing in the Suwałki Region and in other parts of Poland were the initiators of the Association and the organizers of the founding convention. The Social and Cultural Association of Lithuanians organized its clubs and libraries at the initial stage. There were Lithuanian clubs in Warsaw, Wrocław, Słupsk and Szczecin. This organization functioned until 1989 when it was taken over by the Ministry of Culture and Art of Poland. Soon, another convention of the Social and Cultural Association of Lithuanians delegates took place, during which the statute and the name of the organization was changed – the Social and Cultural Association of Lithuanians was transformed into the Association of Lithuanians in Poland.

The Association of Lithuanians in Poland – the oldest Lithuanian organization. It was founded on the basis of the Social and Cultural Association of Lithuanians in 1992. It focuses on the actions related to education, culture, national monuments conservation, publications. It is the editor of Ausr – a Lithuanian periodic since 1960.

The Lithuanian Community in Poland (LLB) – founded in 1993. It integrates Lithuanian organizations, educational and cultural institutions.

Association of Ethnic Culture of Lithuanians – based in Puńsk. The association aims to enliven and foster Lithuanian national culture in Poland and promote the national culture at school, in family and in society as a uniform whole of the world and customs. The Association gives lectures concerning Lithuanian folk art, customs and mythology; it prepares publications related to national culture in Polish and Lithuanian press; organizes annual folk festivals and competitions and, depending on the needs and the possibilities, it organizes ethnographic teams, folklore clubs and scientific conferences.

Associations of Lithuanian Youth in Poland (SML) – it was established in 1994 as an initiative of socially active part of Lithuanian youth residing in Suwałki province. Their aim is to support other Lithuanian organizations in Poland. This organization activates people at the age of 16-35. They aim to preserve Lithuanian identity, to co-operate with other ethnic minority associations in Poland, to establish patterns of peaceful cooperation of different cultures by promoting the attitudes of tolerance and mutual respect. SML want to be in touch with youth organizations in Lithuania. They are against any manifestations of nationalism, chauvinism and racism. SML achieve their goals by organizing regular cultural events, such as Lithuanian Marathon, the Festival of Children’s and Youth Dance Groups, meetings of Lithuanian youth from Poland, the meeting of children’s and youth groups.

The Lithuanian Society of St. Kazimierz [sv. Draugija Kazimiero] – based in Sejny, founded on 25th May 1990. The aim of this organization is to preserve and continue the tradition of the Society of St. Kazimierz that worked in Poland before the Second World War – educating young people. There are 458 members of the society working within 11 groups.

Baranauskas Foundation “Lithuanian House” in Sejny – is one of the youngest Lithuanian institutions in Poland. It began its work in February 2002. The Foundation contributes to preserving and developing Lithuanian cultural life in the Lithuanian Cultural Center in Sejny. It organizes concerts, competitions, international conferences in cooperation with other Lithuanian organizations. The Foundation pays a lot of attention to children, particularly considering education.

Associations of Lithuanian Teachers in Poland – based in Pusk, operating in Podlaskie province.

The Society of the Lithuanians’ Ethnic Culture “Seina” based in Sejny, established by the Lithuanian Community in Poland, focuses on actions in Sejny area. The “SEINA” Foundation supports Lithuanian music bands and it focuses on working with school children and youth (art competitions, folk dance courses, cultivating regional traditions, , providing folk costumes, etc.).

Lithuanian Culture Centre in Punska – an institution dealing with cultural events, organizing numerous exhibitions, concerts, working with folklore groups.

2. Lithuanian educational institutions in Poland, Lithuanian language

The Friendship Treaty signed in February 1994 between the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Lithuania explicitly defines the rights of the minorities. In art. 14 of this Treaty it is stated that ethnic minorities have the right to learn their native language and be educated in this language as well as to establish and maintain their own institutions or associations, particularly cultural, religious and educational, including schools of all levels.

As a result of this agreement, as well as previously existing traditions, Lithuanian education in Punska is very strong. It can be noticed that organizing and developing Lithuanian schools in Poland is one of the priorities for citizens of Lithuanian origin. Not only do they use Lithuanian as a teaching language, they also shape the national identity by teaching children love for their native language and culture.

The biggest educational institution is the Darius and Girenas High School in Punska with Polish and Lithuanian as teaching languages, which also includes a primary school and gymnasium. There is also a pre-school with Lithuanian language run by self-government and the branch of Suwałki School of Music here. In Punska there is the liceum with Polish and Lithuanian as teaching languages; it is the only school of this type in Poland. It was established on 20th August 1956. There are thousands of graduates from this school, including prominent scientists, artists, doctors, social activists, workers for local institutions. In Poland it is possible for people of Lithuanian origin to take matura exam in Lithuanian.

There are several other schools on a primary level with Polish and Lithuanian as teaching languages in Punska Commune, in Nowinki, Przystawance and Widugiery.

Lithuanian language has been used in Gmina Punska as a subsidiary language since 2006; while walking along the streets in Punska one has an impression of being in Lithuania, as Lithuanian language is heard everywhere, there are Lithuanian shop signboards and advertisements. In 2009 bilingual street name plates were introduced in Gmina Punska. It is really significant when we perceive ethnicity as a specific kind of a symbolic capital that can be assessed in different ways by individuals. Language is a specific element of this capital, related to the identity. Not only is the language in borderland a symbolic system allowing verbal communication, it also allows manifesting ethnic identity and demonstrating ethnic stratification. Lithuanian ethnic minority in Poland never entirely accepted Polish language despite strong assimilation policy of communist Polish governments. The Lithuanians are able to speak Polish language, which is a result of school education, but they tend to use their native language in all situations, which their Polish neighbours believe to be a manifestation of national pride, distinctness or, even, disrespect to Polish natives.

3. Ethnic relations in Polish-Lithuanian borderland

The research demonstrates that co-existence of various national and cultural groups is approved both by people of Polish and non-Polish origin. They support the policy of multiculturalism on a local level emphasizing the fact that cultural diversity is an asset in Podlaskie province and it should be cultivated. However, it is noticeable that this opinion is expressed rather by the minority members than by the Polish. This phenomenon is rather optimistic as it shows that the residents of the region are aware of cultural diversity and their attitude to this diversity is positive, being seen as advantageous to the region that is perceived as economically or industrially backward. It is in Polish-Lithuanian borderland where it is particularly stressed that national diversity is a factor enriching local culture, which could be stimulating for tourist industry development, being perceived as an alternative development form. However, along

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2. Issues concern the relations between language and identity on borderland are described in “Język a tożsamość na pograniczu kultur” ed. E. Smulkowa and A. Engelking.

3. Here I refer to my own research done in 2000-2001 and the research conducted by the Institute of Sociology at the University of Białystok.
with the optimistic statements concerning the need for the policy of multiculturalism there are also the opinions proving an existing need for intervention-oriented ethnic policy that would prevent this region from certain kinds of ethnic antagonisms or conflicts. This need is more frequently expressed by the Polish than by people of Lithuanian origin that proves a strong cultural dominance and the need to keep it.

4. Local national conflicts

The risk of national conflicts appearing in Polish-Lithuanian borderland is slightly bigger than in other parts of Podlaskie province. In this area potential conflicts are mentioned more often as well as the conflicts from the past, such as the Sejny Uprising of 1919 and the recent events such as the Sejny basilica conflict concerning worshipping in Lithuanian language, establishing border guard station in Puns k or the monument for Baranauskas in Sejny. In Sejny it is said that “everybody has their monument”. Poles have their monument commemorating the victims of the Sejny Uprising; it was meant to commemorate all the victims but the Lithuanians do not feel it is real. On the monument there is an obelisk with the eagle with a crown and Polish Lady of Ostra Brama, which, according to the Lithuanians, strongly demonstrates Polish dominance. There were a lot of problems related to the localization of Baranauskas monument; finally it was located near the Sejny Basilica and is perceived as “Lithuanian monument” in spite of bilingual inscriptions. In 2008 there was a conflict between the mayor of Sejny and local Lithuanian community accounting for 8% of whole population. The Lithuanian Society of St. Kazimierz put forward an initiative to change the name of the 22nd July Street for Ananas Baranauskas Street. There are many Lithuanian institutions in this street: Lithuanian Pre-school, Lithuanian High School, Lithuanian Consulate, the Lithuanian House. Yet, the mayor opposed the initiative, claiming that Lithuanian minority was favoured in Sejny. One of the most important conflicts was the one related to locating the border guard station in Puns k. The Puns k residents recognized this institution to guard the state border as well as to supervise the Lithuanian community residing in Poland. There were fears that border guards will affect the assimilation of Lithuanian minority; however, these arguments seem to be too radical, particularly in the situation when Lithuanian context is clearly visible in Puns k. There were numerous protest actions organized, including the intervention of the then Marshal of the Lithuanian Parliament. The Border Guard Station was present in Puns k until 2004, when the borders between Poland and Lithuania were open and it was not needed any more.

Another source of conflict was the cross in a cemetery in Bierźniki. In 1988 local Lithuanian residents asked the local parish priest to consecrate the tombs of the Sejny Uprising victims that had no inscriptions. In 1989 the Poles expressed their doubts that these are Lithuanians buried in the cemetery. In 1997 a wooden cross was erected to commemorate the soldiers perished for their country. It was a certain regard toward the Poles. In 2001 a granite monument commemorating both Lithuanian and Polish victims was erected. However, the celebration to unveil the monument was not attended by the Lithuanians who regarded it to be a certain provocation.

Polish activists representing different organizations tend to express their worries concerning certain “lithuanization” of the Sejny region, focusing on the fact that Lithuanian education is supported financially better, stressing that Lithuanian Cultural Center is bigger than the Polish institution of this kind, etc.

It proves the fact that both sides are attentively observing their actions competing for a place in a symbolic space (monuments, street names). At the same time there are attempts to make the peaceful cooperation of two nations possible.

4. The border guard station was operating in Puns k from 1999 until 2004 when Poland accessed the European Union. According to Lithuanian minority, its location in the place where there Lithuanian residents are the majority was the intentional act performed by the Polish government.


5. Local multiculturalism

Different attitudes towards assimilation are observed within Belarusian and Lithuanian minorities. It used to be occasionally mentioned that all residents of Podlaskie region should be integrated on the basis of Polish values that were supposed to be universal for them. The assimilation is rarely perceived as necessary by the Lithuanians, while the Belarusians tend to accept it. It could be the reflection of the fact that during the communist period these were people of Belarusian origin who assimilated more easily whereas the Lithuanians did not accept that process. Lithuanian life was more autonomous; respondents often stressed it, talking about the fact the Lithuanians had their own daily life. According to Jerzy Nikitorowicz, the identity on borderland was defined by protection, preserving and focusing on precious values of the national culture and community, protecting them from unification. Protecting and cultivating national autonomy was a natural form of separation from the values being imposed. That is why the sense of identity is seen as an act of conscious identification (1997: 73).

Since 1989 ethnic minorities have had a range of rights, particularly the right to cultivate and preserve their own cultural autonomy. However, the perception of this fact is different. Ethnic minorities insist that these rights are not sufficient whereas the Poles are satisfied with them, regarding them to be sufficient for the minorities. Representatives of ethnic minorities believe their rights should be more extended than they are at present. The respondents frequently admitted that the rights existed only in theory but they were not respected in practice. On the level of institutional relations one can notice that ethnic minorities hold a more positive attitude towards cultural diversity of the region. They indicate the need to introduce the policy promoting multiculturalism and they are open to it. The Poles, on the other hand, are more optimistic as far as legal matters ensuring equal chances for everybody regardless their national identification are concerned. It is with no doubts connected with the Polish dominant position – the Poles are rarely treated in a different way due to their nationality. It seems to be obvious that for the dominant group the situation of ethnic minorities is positive; in this way the dominant group keeps its strong position. It appears to be one of the barriers on the way towards multicultural society.

At the micro level ethnic relations can achieve a different dimension. In case of Lithuanian ethnic minority residing in Poland it must be said they are an indigenous people living in this region for centuries, which affects strong local relations. Despite the division into “ours” and “others” everybody, both the Lithuanians and the Polish, is at their home. They have been living in the same towns and villages for years. Even if people have negative feelings concerning ethnic relations themselves they are still friendly towards their neighbors, regardless their nationality. It does not change the fact that there are deep-seated stereotypes within both groups. At the same time, each group is aware of things they could learn from the other one. Positive and negative opinions spread equally in each group.7

The research concerning discrimination proves that a part of the Poles and the Lithuanians believe there is national discrimination but only few can present the evidence for it being the result of their own experience. It is characteristic that both national groups mention competition for jobs, discrimination at school, verbal discrimination, refusing to offer the job if the boss is different nationality from the applicant. It could be said that most of everyday problems in borderland are being considered from the perspective of ethnicity. The fact of someone being the other nationality can be abused as an easy and convenient excuse for or explanation of a difficult situation.

While doing research concerning trans-ethnic relations at the private and personal level I was interested in the fact that people were open to cultural diversity in their private environment, which is demonstrated in the attitude to mixed marriages. Mixed marriages can be seen as a certain manifestation of mutual acceptance at the micro structure level. It proves that particular national groups are open to their mutual contacts. According to Posern-Zieliński «an increasing number of mixed marriages is a constant and inevitable phenomenon. It results in significant social and cultural effects, such as disintegration of community ethnic density and weakening the ties with the country of one’s ancestry within the generation brought up in families of heterogeneous traditions» (1982: 215). Mixed marriages can be carriers of progressing assimilation if Polish cultural standards or language are dominant in them. They can also be seen

7. It is worth mentioning that Podlaskie province governor appointed Maciej Tefelski, a sociologist, as a plenipotentiary For Ethnic Minorities Matters in January 2002.
as a manifestation of cultural pluralism if the minority culture is not diminished in a family and if it intermingles with Polish culture in a daily life – the children use both languages. However, this model seems to be slightly idealistic, considering the fact they will function within Polish culture at the institutional level (school) unless they attend Lithuanian schools. In the research conducted, mixed marriages were perceived positively, concluding that if people love each other they can get married, although it was also mentioned that these married couples might experience certain problems being the result of national or religious differences between each other. When asked if they would oppose such marriage for their children the most of the respondents declared they would not be against, as it is the fact of being a good human that is important. Part of respondents stressed that it was different religion, not the nationality, that could be a problem. It proves there is a certain openness to one another at the private and personal levels in all the towns and villages. More attention is paid to personal features of other people than to their nationality or religion.

The changes in ethnic relations are affected by the number of factors, among which the growth in importance of ethnic minorities and adjusting Poland to European standards concerning majority-minority relations seem to be vital. Another important factor is increasing awareness of ethnic minorities’ interests. It results from the fact that the more is done within the minority, the bigger awareness arises among the people identifying with minority groups, which defines new interests for them.

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8. This problem does not occur in Polish-Lithuanian borderland where most of people are the same religion.
Abstract: The idea of this article is to present new territorial dynamics on the new eastern borders of EU, taking into consideration the emergence of localized productive systems. The study of localized productive systems must be thorough and multidisciplinary and carried out through fieldwork. The aim is to understand how work, relationships and culture as well as material and immaterial infrastructures that give a place its original identity within the international division of labour regenerate in locally coherent forms. Regional production systems grouped together on spatial level and integrated company networks at the regional level could serve to create local hubs of competition in Central and Eastern Europe. Poland, Slovakia and Hungary are squeezed between the richest and poorest countries of Europe and suffer from considerable gravitational asymmetries which produce substantial distortions of regional tissue. The emergence of small and medium-sized companies acting as a motor for growth and job creation was spatially determined: near western borders of those countries, especially in the beginning of transition. Now, the situation is changing with appearance of regional metropolis in the Eastern part of those countries, and emergence of new form of cross border cooperation, like “Neisse” and “Carpathian” Euroregions.

Introduction

«Le redécoupage des anciens territoires nationaux ne serait plus produit de la diplomatie, et surtout, des guerres: il obéirait désormais à une logique d’économie industrielle” (Michalet 1999).

Les sources des difficultés rencontrées à la frontière orientale de la Pologne, qui est devenue la nouvelle frontière orientale de l’Union Européenne, sont nombreuses et de nature diverse. Cet article montrera comment ces difficultés sont largement dues aux facteurs géopolitiques qui détiennent la clé de leurs solutions. Il montrera également la différence dans les trajectoires suivies par les pays en transition. En effet, le poids de l’histoire est fondamental dans l’étude de ces territoires, phénomène perceptible au travers de trajectoires différents que suivent les pays issus de l’éclatement de l’Urss. La question reste de savoir si “la culture industrielle locale”, élément clé de l’édifice institutionnel d’un système productif local, fondé sur les traditions industrielles locales, n’a pas été détruite par les déplacements des frontières suite aux accords d’Yalta et la coupure de quarante cinq ans d’économie planifiée. Et dans quelle mesure l’héritage socialiste pèse sur la structure de ces espaces frontaliers, et sur la réorganisation des relations entre les organisations qu’y sont localisées. La partie polonaise est présentée comme ayant un fort potentiel de croissance, c’est qui est confirmé par plusieurs études.

L’histoire économique des ce pays et la culture capitaliste inscrite dans la mémoire nationale ont permis l’enracinement dans les régions qui jouxtent l’Allemagne, d’un esprit commercial et entrepreneuriel qui favorise aujourd’hui l’initiative individuelle. Et qu’en est – il à la nouvelle frontière orientale de l’Union? Nous présentons dans cet article, nos premières réflexions sur les nouveaux modes de gestion
des espaces frontaliers est-européens, comme laboratoires de la bonne gestion démocratique et des nouvelles gouvernances à inventer tant au niveau international qu’au plan local. L’exemple nous est fourni par l’Euroregion “Neisse” située à la frontière polono-tchéco-allemande. Tout en poursuivant l’étude de la frontière occidentale de la Pologne (frontière orientale de l’Union européenne jusqu’au 1er mai 2004) nous nous penchons actuellement sur sa nouvelle frontière à Est 1. Les euro régions nous servent comme perspectives communes au gestion des régions frontalières. Une grande question restera à approfondir: le croisement des deux grandes notions de frontière, politique et identitaire avec un angle d’attaque particulier qui est celui des droits de propriété et de leurs origines historiques.

1. Poles de croissance a l’est a l’horizon 2015


Quelle dynamique économique à la frontière de la Pologne et de l’Ukraine occidentale?

développement régional constituent un processus de longue haleine que les impératifs de l’élargissement risquent de bousculer.

La transition a pour conséquence la pétrification de la division séculaire du pays en deux parties. Quinze ans après la transition, la Pologne reste toujours coupée en deux: la “Pologne A” et la Pologne “B” 2. La privatisation dite “par capitalisation” (vente d’actifs à des propriétaires privés de capitaux) a eu lieu, pratiquement sans exception, dans la partie occidentale du pays qui bénéficie des meilleures infrastructures. Cette coupure est avant tout l’héritage de l’histoire longue, provenant du partage du pays entre trois pays limitrophes (Prusse, Russie et Empire austro-hongrois) à la fin du XVIIIème siècle, héritage renforcé par le changement des frontières en 1945. La partie occidentale, soumise pendant plus d’un siècle au règne prussien, appelée “Pologne A”, présente les caractéristiques d’une région industriellement développée alors que les régions orientales, autrefois sous occupation russe, appelées “Pologne B”, portent les stigmates d’un certain sous-développement (peu d’industries et d’infrastructures, agriculture morcelée et peu rentable).

Tableau 1: Les PIB régionaux en prix courants (en zlotys): 1995-2004

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<td>11.500</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15.780</td>
<td>20.800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petite Pologne</td>
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<td>8.400</td>
<td>10.300</td>
<td>nd</td>
<td>16.788</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basses Carpathes</td>
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<td>7.100</td>
<td>8.600</td>
<td>11.700</td>
<td>13.870</td>
<td>16.900</td>
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1 euro = environ 4 zlotys.


aujourd’hui des asymétries gravitationnelles considérables qui produisent une distorsion importante du tissu régional et la pétirification de la division séculaire du pays en deux parties. La nouvelle croissance économique polonaise est le fait du processus de création et de diffusion des petites et moyennes entreprises, avant tout dans les zones proches de la frontière allemande, y compris en termes d’innovation. La majorité d’investissements étrangers directs s’y est placée, tenant compte du fait que la “Pologne A” regroupe les sept métropoles et les infrastructures les plus développées du pays (Despiney-Zochowska 1997). L’ancienne tradition industrielle de la partie occidentale du pays a ainsi permis à cette région de se placer en meilleure position par rapport à d’autres régions du pays ; on peut même parler d’un certain renouveau de “la culture d’entreprise”5. Parmi les nouveaux membres de l’Union, c’est la Pologne qui possède la frontière la plus longue à l’Est. Son intégration depuis le 1 mai 2004 à l’Union, a déplacé la frontière orientale de l’Oder-Neisse aux fleuves Bug et l’Uzh.

2. Élargissement de l’union a l’est

Seuls dix en transition, issus de l’éclatement du COMECON, ont adhéré à l’Union Européenne. La Croatie et la Turquie viennent d’ouvrir les négociations d’adhésion. L’Ukraine a demandé officiellement l’ouverture de négociation en vue d’une adhésion future. Il reste que, jusqu’à présent, les liens avec les pays comme l’Ukraine, Moldavie et Belarus étaient toujours replacés dans le contexte de la relation de l’Union avec l’ancienne Union soviétique, qui les considérait comme son étranger proche. Si, dans le débat sur les futurs élargissements il et difficile d’envisager l’adhésion de la Russie à l’Union, on parle ouvertement de la candidature turque6. Dans cette situation comment na pas parler de celle de l’Ukraine, de la Moldavie, et même de la Belarus?

“Deux Ukraines”


7. A l’époque, la Pologne essai de reconstruire la Fédération, mais la Lituanie s’y oppose fermement. S’en suit l’annexion par Zeligowski de Vilnius et des régions environnantes.
Quelle dynamique économique à la frontière de la Pologne et de l’Ukraine occidentale?

Après une brève période d’appartenance à la Pologne indépendante d’entre – deux – guerres, et beaucoup moins forcée à se poloniser (influence polonaise s’est exercé surtout au travers de l’église uniate) 8, le pays tombe sous la coupe soviétique à partir de 1945.

La partie ouest du pays (autrefois polonaise et austro-hongroise) est une région restée très pauvre, sauf dans la zone frontalière, qui prospère grâce au commerce avec les Polonais, qui toutefois a beaucoup baissé après l’introduction des visa en 1998. À l’autre bout du pays, à l’est, les Soviétiques, misant sur le charbon, avaient décidé de faire de la région un pôle industriel de l’Urss. Des usines géantes ont été construites à Dnipropetrovsk, à Kharkiv, à Louhansk, à Donetsk. Après la chute de l’empire soviétique, la modernisation de ces géants sidérurgiques a coûté très cher et la privatisation des mines de charbon s’est surtout profité à la mafia. Pourtant, l’est de l’Ukraine fournit toujours 81% du produit national brut et ne demande qu’à en profiter. Les revendications des élus de cette région, qui ne veulent pas “payer pour ces vauriens des provinces occidentales”, font un peu penser à l’Ukraine occidentale se voit imposer le régime communiste après 1939. La russification du pays s’est faite systématiquement et sans trop de résistance, la polonisation avait un caractère celles des “riches” de l’Italie du Nord, qui, autour de la Ligue du Nord d’Umberto Bossi, tiennent ce genre de discours. Peut-être devrait-elle déboucher un jour sur l’instauration d’un système fédéral.

La question reste de savoir, comment l’héritage historique commun a pu influencer le développement socio-économique et politique d’Ukraine d’aujourd’hui. Tout le monde se posait la question lors de “la révolution orange”: l’Ukraine peut-elle éviter l’échec? L’enjeu de cette division, qui continue à soulever les passions, est capital. Depuis son indépendance en 1991, l’Ukraine a perdu plus de 60% de son produit national brut (PNB). Conséquence de cet appauvrissement: près de la moitié de la population vit au-dessous du seuil de pauvreté. La situation est d’autant plus grave que, pendant les dix années de sa présidence, Leonid Koutchma, dirigeant népotique, n’a rien fait pour améliorer le sort des déshérités.

Vers un espace paneuropéen?

Les événements de l’Ukraine ont bouleversé le statu quo à la nouvelle frontière orientale de l’Union. Il y a dix ans encore, il aurait été possible de traiter l’ex-Union soviétique comme une seule entité, mais plus aujourd’hui. Cette perception subit de profonds changements au sein de l’Union, depuis des événements en Ukraine. En effet, les récents événements dans l’étranger proche de la Russie apportent un éclairement nouveau à cette question. Avec la transition et la mondialisation, l’ancienne appartenance au Comecon crée des trajectoires différentes dans les restructurations économiques. Ces trajectoires s’expliquent à la fois par l’histoire récente (celle du communisme), et par l’histoire longue de tous ces pays limitrophes de l’Union. L’histoire influence également les choix politiques récents de ces pays. Pour comprendre ce qui s’est passé en Ukraine il faut faire un retour historique plus longue que celui du communisme. Le poids de l’héritage historique est fondamental pour les nations de la région, où le passé est un instrument politique qui “fonctionne” aujourd’hui, dans des sociétés où l’histoire récente n’a que rarement fait l’objet d’une relecture et d’un débat critique. Elle rappelle aussi la réalité centre-européenne d’autrefois dans le “passé qui ne passe pas” 9.


8. Union de Brzesc 1569?
Après la révolution “orange” l’Ukraine cherche un rapprochement avec l’Union européenne et a signé un plan d’action sur trois ans qui s’inscrit dans le cadre de la politique de voisinage de l’UE. Elle a annoncé lors du dernier Sommet de la CEI à Kazan sa volonté de quitter l’Espace Économique Commun composée de la Russie, la Belarus, l’Ukraine et le Kazakhstan, dont la création a été ratifiée par le Parlement ukrainien le 20 avril 2004 (à la veille de l’élargissement de l’Union à l’Est).

La dépendance ukrainienne de la Russie est d’ordre structurel. La Russie reste le premier partenaire avec 19% des exportations ukrainiennes et 38% des importations en 2003 (70% des importations de Russie sont des combustibles). Par exemple, la dette “énergétique” ukrainienne était évaluée à 1,4 milliard de dollars en 2001. En général, et en particulier à l’Est du pays, de nombreux géants industriels ukrainiens restent fortement dépendants des matières premières russes et ont leur principal débouché sur le marché russe. L’Ukraine est le 3ème fournisseur de la Russie avec moins de 9% du marché russe, alors qu’elle le 5ème client de la Russie. Sans la coopération économique étroite avec l’Ukraine, la Russie perdrait 2 à 3 points de sa croissance, mais le pays présente toujours les caractéristiques d’une économie périphérique. La Russie est officiellement le cinquième investisseur en Ukraine, ses investissements représentant 6% des capitaux étrangers. Cela peut sembler modeste, mais il faut savoir que ne sont pas comptabilisés comme russes les apports en provenance des paradis fiscaux, qui cachent de manière quasi certaine des capitaux russes, (mais aussi ukrainiens), pour la plupart en “fuite”. Certaines sources allant jusqu’à faire passer la part russe dans les investissements ukrainiens à 20% une fois prises en compte les grandes holdings offshore.


**Vers une nouvelle forme de gouvernance européenne**

Si, au début de la transition le credo du libéralisme conduisait à un net effacement du rôle économique de l’Etat au profit d’acteurs privés, aujourd’hui il s’agit de rendre les institutions publiques capables d’impulser et de planifier un développement régional équilibré, garantissant la cohésion économique et sociale. Ces politiques régionales ont été, dans une large mesure, encouragées par les instances européennes. La formulation de leur contenu et les modalités de leur mise en œuvre sont inscrits aujourd’hui à ordre du jour des Parlements de la majorité des pays candidats à l’adhésion. Les réformes entreprises par la majorité de ces pays en matière d’aménagement du territoire visent tout d’abord à faciliter la mise en place d’une administration régionale capable de gérer les fonds structurels dont ils devraient bénéficier après l’adhésion (Lhomel 1998). Des dispositions juridiques, notamment en matière de découpage territorial, ont d’ores et déjà été votées, et certaines structures régionales mises en place. La décentralisation, qui est au centre de toutes ces réformes. Le degré de décentralisation dépendra du mode de désignation des responsables placés à la tête des nouvelles entités régionales et des prérogatives attribuées aux assemblées ou conseils régionaux. Pour le moment, ces États – nations, fraîchement libérés de la domination soviétique, peuvent manifester des craintes vis-à-vis des nouveaux centres de pouvoir régionaux que les réformes en cours devraient créer. La cohésion nationale ne se trouve pas compromise par l’émersion de particularismes régionaux trop accentués.

Avec la transition, les PECO ont introduit un certain nombre de réformes territoriales et les trois pays limitrophes possèdent à présent des structures administratives semblables, ce qui facilite la gouvernance locale. Il faut donc se demander en quoi et comment l’élément territorial peut contribuer à orienter l’évolution dans le sens d’une meilleure organisation productive. De la décentralisation territoriale, dépendent l’autonomie, les pouvoirs et les capacités dont les régions ont besoin pour mener des politiques d’externalités. La décentralisation administrative stimule t-elle les dynamiques territoriales? Dans l’ana-

lyse des districts industriels mis en place en Italie on voit apparaître les premiers éléments d’une gouvernance locale sur ces territoires au travers de l’engagement des autorités publiques locales, du secteur privé et de la société civile (Requier-Desjardin, 2001). Est-ce que les deux processus, la décentralisation en cours à l’Est et le renouveau possible des SPL dans cette partie de l’Europe vont s’auto renforcer ou vont répondre plutôt à des dynamiques différentes? Une chose est sûre : la territorialisation conjointe du système d’entreprise et du système public, est susceptible d’assurer, par la coopération de leurs institutions, les conditions de stabilité qui permettront de faire progresser de façon cumulative le savoir-faire jusqu’à développer des capacités locales de création de nouvelles technologies. Aujourd’hui, de réelles politiques régionales visant à augmenter l’attractivité des régions orientales de l’Union apparaissent comme la seule réponse naturelle au risque de renforcement des divergences régionales entre l’est et l’ouest de l’Europe12.

Depuis la transition économique, l’apparition du secteur privé, ainsi que la construction d’un environnement favorable à l’entreprise privée sont fondamentales. Ce dernier est important en raison de l’impact qu’il peut avoir sur l’introduction de changements constructifs menant à l’établissement de relations durables de bon voisinage. Les défis européens liés au fonctionnement de la frontière orientale pourront seulement être relevés si on arrive à garantir les conditions de développement de l’esprit d’entreprendre dans les régions frontalières. L’histoire prouve que cela peut être un outil très efficace pour déraciner les préjugés car il permet l’apparition relativement rapide de nouveaux liens économiques venant d’intérêts partagés, et favorise généralement l’ouverture. Les études empiriques sur le fonctionnement tant à la frontière occidentale, que la frontière orientale de la Pologne ont confirmé ce point de vue (Ciechocinska 2001; Despiney 1997). En Pologne, la crise du système économique est survenue plus tôt, l’entreprise privée fut facilitée, quoiqu’à petite échelle, par la série des réformes durant les années 80 (Rogulska 1988; Despiney 1988). À l’inverse, dans les anciennes républiques soviétiques les gens étaient tenus isolés et privés de la liberté de voyager, les frontières étant subordonnées à des buts militaires. Du côté polonais, la population locale chérissait la conviction de sa supériorité léguée par le passé, tandis que de l’autre côté de la frontière, les gens se montraient hostile ou aliénés, ou au mieux, curieux ou jaloux, en dépit de la propagande de l’amitié fraternelle entre les pays socialistes. Les mythes et l’ignorance du passé couplés à la manipulation administrative ont formé les personnalités de ces régions. L’apparition de ces nouveaux États indépendants, favorables à l’économie de marché, a rendu possible l’émergence d’un climat favorisant la formation d’élites politiques, d’une classe dirigeante et d’institutions politiques démocratiques, souvent encore en âge embryonnaire 13. Crainte du changement couplée à la résistance ouverte ont été responsables de la frilosité des réformes en Ukraine et Belarus.

La désintégration de l’Union Soviétique a rétabli les vieilles divisions, sur lesquelles de nouvelles se sont superposées. Les sociétés des anciennes républiques sont devenues polarisée par des orientations opposées. Dans les sociétés des nouveaux États frontaliens comme la Belarus et l’Ukraine, ces proportions sont variables et changeantes. Plus on se rapproche de la frontière de l’Ouest, plus le nombre de défenseurs des changements démocratiques et du marché libre est grand. Ceci a été influencé par les avantages personnels reçus par les défenseurs de l’ouverture de la frontière. Cependant, les coûts des transformations ont accru la proportion de personnes préconisant la reconstitution de l’Union Soviétique. La proportion des personnes en faveur de la réforme et de la libéralisation du marché tend à être inférieure parmi les personnes âgées au niveau d’instruction et de revenus peu élevés. Les gens craignent d’avoir à faire plus de sacrifices, d’engager plus de responsabilité dans le futur et de prendre en compte l’inévitable élément de risque.

Défis économiques d’élargissement

Le principal défi économique est celui d’éviter de perpétuer l’Europe à deux vitesses, compte tenu des très grandes disparités régionales entre les vieux et nouveaux membres.

13. La situation semble meilleure à la frontière Oder-Neisse, où les infrastructures publiques sont mieux développées.
La chute du Rideau de Fer produisit des avantages économiques et politiques réels pour toute l’Europe dans les années 1990, mais l’adhésion des nouveaux membres à l’Union demande des efforts, que les fonds structuels devraient aider à réaliser. Cependant, la frilosité de la part des six États fondateurs de l’Union laisse présager mal l’avenir. Il semblerait que les nouveaux membres devraient revoir à la baisse leurs prévisions quant aux afflux sensibles de capitaux européens, censés dynamiser la croissance. En effet, les principaux donateurs (6 pays) ne veulent plus contribuer à l’auteur de 1.27% du PIB au budget de l’Union, et exigent le plafonnement à 1.04 %. On observe un syndrome de forteresse assiégée de la part des anciens membres, qui s’explique par l’énorme fossé entre leurs niveaux de vie et celui des nouveaux membres. Néanmoins, le fonctionnement de la nouvelle frontière externe de l’UE doit rester un sujet de discussion pour éviter la reconstruction d’une frontière “coupure” semblable à celle qui existait à l’époque de la guerre froide.

Disparités régionales.


de toutes les régions bulgares et baltes, ainsi que la moitié des régions polonaises et roumaines (pour comparaison ajoutez que le PIB par tête le plus bas jusqu’à l’adhésion était celui d’Ipeiros en Grèce avec 44% de la moyenne européenne). Toutes ces régions représentent donc un PIB plus bas que celui de la région la moins riche de l’Union. L’accès au capital est essentiel dans le processus de développement de ces régions. L’avenir de ces régions déprimées dépendra plus qu’ailleurs, d’une action rigoureuse, volontariste et selective des pouvoirs publics ainsi que de l’indispensable solidarité des régions plus riches.

3. Cours accéléré d’économie de marché pour les entrepreneurs de l’Est

La libéralisation politique et économique initia quatre types de processus: 1) la croissance dynamique de l’esprit d’entreprise, 2) le développement du secteur privé, 3) la création d’un environnement local et régional favorisant l’esprit d’entreprise, 4) l’établissement des premières d’institutions démocratiques et un nouvel ordre social.

La libéralisation politique incita les habitants situés tout au long de la frontière orientale à partir en masse aux Usa, apparemment comme touristes ou pour rendre visite à des parents, mais en réalité pour travailler dans l’économie grise. La transformation du système a profité dans une grande mesure de la richesse des connaissances sur l’économie de marché et ses institutions, qu’ils accumulèrent ainsi de cette façon discrète. Aujourd’hui, les anciens émigrants, capables d’évaluer les nouveaux débouchés d’une manière professionnelle, commencèrent à revenir.

L’accélération accompagnant la première phase de transformation dans les régions orientales de la Pologne a été dicté par les facteurs exogènes produit par une libéralisation politique de courte durée et un manque de critères géopolitiques clairs. La première percée fut l’expansion du commerce frontalier, voire international vu la proclamation d’indépendance par les nouveaux Etats. Cependant, la société polonaise a été relativement lente à apprendre à distinguer les citoyens de différents Etats, les prenant indistinctement pour des Russes. Par la suite, de telles distinctions sont devenues importantes parce que chaque pays montrait des différences au sujet des passeports, des douanes, des règlements concernant l’échange de devises étrangères, des règles régissant le tourisme, des systèmes fiscaux, etc... Les hommes d’affaires polonais ont dû alors très vite apprendre non seulement les règles de économie de marché mais également les relations internationales et le droit international. Si on se rappelle que bon nombre d’entre eux vivaient précédemment de l’agriculture, le choc ne pouvait pas être plus grand et la flexibilité impressionnante des entreprises économiques encouragées par le marché et l’ouverture de la frontière. La différence des prix entre les anciennes républiques de l’Urss rendit les achats en Pologne rentables même pour les habitants des républiques asiatiques lointaines qui établirent des contacts commerciaux de la Turquie à l’Inde et à la Chine à la recherche des meilleurs débouchés. Les voyageurs arrivant de l’Est commencèrent d’abord par vendre des marchandises à très bas prix d’abord sur le marché local, ensuite, de plus en plus loin en Pologne. Ce fut à ce moment là, que le plus grand stade de Varsovie, se transforma en centre commercial (ce qu’il est encore le cas aujourd’hui). Au début des années 1990, une scène typique dans un train de cette région était de voir des gens avec d’énormes baluchons demandant la direction du stade. La hausse des coûts de transport tarit ce flot des commerçants. L’apparition des premières restrictions dans le passage de la frontière coïncida avec le changement des formes de commerce. En proie aux racket menés par les citoyens de la CEI, beaucoup de visiteurs de l’est commencèrent à venir seulement les poches pleines des billets des dollars à dépenser pour l’achat de marchandises. Celles-ci étaient alors transportées au delà la frontière, souvent sans payer de droits de douane, par des Polonais dont ils louaient les services pour l’occasion. Les nouveaux entrepreneurs s’étaient rapidement adaptés aux demandes croissantes des clients de l’est, en dépit d’une forte compétition internationale. Le manque d’infrastructures publiques et du capital explique la prédominance du troc dans les échanges, les services financiers étant laissés aux banques occidentales. L’essor exceptionnel et l’immensité du marché de l’Est firent surgir de très grandes sociétés, excédant les capacités des régions frontaliers. Les régions limitrophes orientales de la Pologne s’épaulèrent principalement grâce à une économie de marché à une échelle locale. En l’espace de trois ans, des associations de gens d’affaires se formèrent en Pologne, comme celle des négociants des différents centres commerciaux de Podlasie. Le secteur privé naissant produisit des formes durables de coopération, avec l’apparition de réseaux des producteurs, de fournisseurs, de distributeurs, etc. C’est essor eut lieu
également de l’autre côté de la frontière, où un grand nombre de sociétés eurent les moyens d’investir et d’installer des filiales travaillant à des niveaux divers pour le compte d’une clientèle spécifique, souvent seulement pour des marchés étrangers.

En Pologne et dans les anciennes républiques soviétiques, les anciens employés des secteurs de l’économie d’État, se trouvèrent en position d’exploiter les entreprises à des fins privées et monteront leurs propres sociétés commerciales. C’était l’un des mécanismes à la base du nouvel ordre social et de ses institutions. En effet, le processus d’apparition d’une classe d’entrepreneurs a été en grande partie détourné par les personnes de l’ancien régime. Il s’avéra bientôt que les possibilités de saisir les occasions offertes par le changement, devinrent sévèrement restreintes, en Belarus, où la liberté économique fut presque totalement éliminée et remplacée par des règlements administratifs. Les avantages de la transition ont été en grande partie limitées à une élite restreinte. Les analyses comparatives effectuées par la chaire d’Etudes Régionales de l’université de Podlaskie dans des régions voisines situées des deux côtés de la frontière justifient ces conclusions (Ciechocinska 2001).

Les pays limitrophes de l’Union à l’Est.

En dépit du nombre de dispositifs communs hérités du système soviétique, le processus d’apparition des nouvelles structures dans les années 1990 a produit des résultats différents dans chacun des trois nouveaux pays qui se sont formés à l’Est de la Pologne. Les États dans la zone d’influence soviétique et que Moscou a divisé dans son langage diplomatique en étranger proche montrent un degré d’intérêt divers pour la continuité des liens anciens. Avec la mondialisation croissante, l’ancienne appartenance au Comecon crée des problèmes particuliers en ce qui concerne les restructurations économiques. Les normes soviétiques arbitrairement imposées, les structures organisationnelles et les institutions ont garanti la position dominante des autorités centrales (Despiney-Zochowska 1982). Moscou détient en fait la clef de beaucoup de défis européens liés au fonctionnement de la frontière orientale, indépendamment du fait que ces États partagent leur frontière avec la Russie ou non. Ici nous sommes en face de cet héritage complexe de l’Europe du Centre Est, dont les événements récents en Ukraine sont un exemple le plus spectaculaire. Les relations bilatérales entre les différents pays de la zone sont affectées par leurs liens historiques avec la Pologne et la Russie.

Dans le cas de certains pays, il y avait eu une coexistence pacifique avec les Russes dans l’empire Tsariste ou avec le système économique et politique centralisés de l’Union Soviétique tandis que pour d’autres il s’agissait de leur adhésion au camp socialiste, dans la foulée de la conférence de Yalta, ce qui dans la pratique a signifié leur subordination politique, économique et militaire à l’Urss. L’attitude envers ces développements historiques et économiques continue également à influencer les Russes eux-mêmes, qui ont du mal à réévaluer leur passé. L’importante communauté russe dans plusieurs des nouveaux États où la langue russe est largement répandue forme une source potentielle de conflits dans les nouveaux États. L’exemple de la Lettonie et de la Moldavie les prouvent amplement. À l’inverse de la Pologne, de l’autre côté de la frontière, la situation est plus compliquée. On peut seulement parler de similitude dans le cas de la Lituanie (en dépit des difficultés mises sur sa route par la Russie), qui comme la Pologne est devenu membre de l’Union. Quant au Belarus, le pays reste très proche de la Russie grâce à l’option prise par son président. Le manque de consensus a provoqué des discussions prolongées sur l’applicabilité des modèles occidentaux de démocratie parlementaire et l’extension des relations avec l’ouest. C’est pourquoi la ligne conservatrice prorusse a pris le pouvoir en Belarus, tandis que l’Ukraine continue à renouveler ses efforts pour créer les bases d’un État indépendant, surtout après “la révolution orange”.

Mais le problème russe lui-même est plus complexe parce que le public russe recourt de plus en plus à la tradition de la Grande Russie. Dans l’ensemble, avec beaucoup de simplification, l’opinion publique russe reste ancrée dans les ambitions de toute-puissance russe du 19ème siècle, qui voit la vieille tradition russe de conquête comme une source de grandeur. Au seuil du 21ème siècle, les Russes ressentent la perte d’influence et la perte du territoire des anciennes républiques autrefois fédérées comme une menace pour leur propre État. Le processus des réévaluations de leur propre histoire et celle de leurs voisins ne semble pas encore commencé. Le public n’a pas renoncé aux vieux stéréotypes. Les Russes participent encore difficilement à la discussion sur les points de vues et les normes acceptées dans une Europe élargie et sur un monde qui se globalise. Le nationalisme militant et l’approche instrumentale des préjugés ethniques concernant les Tchétchènes, qui a conduit à la seconde guerre de 1999, semblent appuyer ce diagnostic.
La Pologne B et C.


Barbara Despiney Zochowska

travail. La minorité polonaise considérable de Lituanie et la plus petite minorité lituanienne en Pologne, ont leurs propres écoles et institutions et jouissent de leurs pleins droits. La Pologne a soutenu les efforts de la Lituanie pour faire partie de l’OTAN et de l’EU. Cependant, d’importants problèmes continuent à survenir au niveau local. Des forces en Lituanie semblent avoir intérêt à maintenir une friction continue dans les relations bilatérales. Cependant, les gouvernements lituaniens et polonais travaillent dur pour s’assurer que la coopération se développe avec succès, indépendamment des traumatismes et des ressentiments du passé.

La situation stratégique de la région de la Podlaskie du Sud

En raison de la situation stratégique de Podlaskie du Sud située dans le couloir trans-Européen de transport, des financements furent sollicités auprès de l’EU. Ainsi, dès le début de la transition, cette région se trouva dans une bien meilleure situation que d’autres régions du pays.

L’importance des facteurs géopolitiques dans ce texte rappelle un bref aperçu des principaux aspects stratégiques de cette région. Le premier a trait aux déficits en infrastructure de transport et au fonctionnement des couloirs de transport trans-européens, où les postes-frontières continuent à poser problème (certains ont déjà pu être surmontés depuis le 1er mai 2004). Ces difficultés pourraient être considérées comme typiques de celles qui se produisent quand il faut traduire des normes européennes en réalités de la communauté européenne. Mais elles sont le plus souvent interprétées comme le symptôme d’un désaccord entre différentes procédures, différents systèmes de douane, et différentes manières d’opération pour les gardes-frontière etc... En d’autres termes, le seul effort est celui de l’élimination des différences techniques et organisationnelles existantes. Une telle uniformisation a cependant pris du temps et a exigé beaucoup d’investissements, mais pour des raisons purement pratiques, elle était nécessaire en ce qui concerne les procédures ou les solutions. Quand l’utilisation du couloir de passage par l’intermédiaire du Bélarus devint trop problématique, les expéditeurs choisirent des itinéraires plus longs pour aller à Moscou, passant par l’Ukraine, la Lituanie ou la Slovaquie. La situation s’améliora alors pendant un moment. Mais, les conditions d’infrastructure et de trafic routier étant difficiles – trop de monde sur des routes étroites et dangereuses – même des changements d’organisation mineurs causent des perturbations épouvantables pour tous les utilisateurs.


References:

19. Vytautas Landsbergis, chef du Parlement lituanien et premier président du nouvel état lituanien, conseilla “la prudence dans l’évaluation de certains aspects des relations bilatérales” et a appelé l’attention sur la présence de nombreuses publications imprimées en dehors des deux pays, qui pourraient compromettre leurs bonnes relations. Aujourd’hui la situation semble meilleure, et une coopération a deux se fait remarquer lors de la crise ukrainienne.

20. Il s’agit de la partie sud de la voïvodie de Podlaskie, une des size voïvodies introduites par la réforme de 1999 (Despiney-Zozowska 1999).


23. Ce couloir d’importance vitale pour ces régions, n’a pas d’axe de transport Nord-Sud.
Quelle dynamique économique à la frontière de la Pologne et de l’Ukraine occidentale?

hydrologiques et de navigation prévues, a récemment transformés ces voies d’eau en attraction touristique et écologique par la préservation de la biodiversité qui s’y trouve (Daszkiewicz 2001). Cette voïvodie un taux de population active dans les services allant de 40 à 50%. Cette part élevée s’explique par le caractère touristique de cette région grâce à la forêt de Bialowieza, qui fait partie du patrimoine mondial de l’Unesco.

La région récolte les bénéfices à moyen et long terme de ce rôle du transit. Les fortes fluctuations dans l’intensité du trafic de passage et de l’activité économique dépendent généralement des changements de la situation géopolitique et des relations politiques entre les États mentionnés ci-dessus. Les tensions politiques occasionnelles ou les restrictions administratives sont reflétées dans les variations de l’utilisation du réseau d’infrastructure de transport; quelques lignes deviennent presque déserts pendant certaines périodes tandis que d’autres font l’expérience d’une forte expansion dans le trafic de passager et de fret.

4. Coopération transfrontalière

Nous sommes aujourd’hui en présence d’un phénomène d’émergence de territoires infra-nationaux dont beaucoup sont transfrontaliers. Le pari institutionnel transfrontalier ne se conçoit, que dans la perspective des communautés régionales et transfrontalières, qui seules permettront la naissance de nouvelles solidarités. Une coopération transfrontalière institutionnalisée peut constituer un test du degré plus ou moins poussé de l’esprit et de la volonté d’intégration des ces nouveaux voisins. L’UE va-t-elle être capable de “civiliser” sa nouvelle frontière orientale et comment va-t-elle améliorer ses relations avec d’autres pays, y compris avec ceux qui n’ont pas de frontière directe avec elle?

Hanson, qui travaille sur l’intégration américano-mexicaine, considère que les économies frontalières sont des laboratoires naturels, dans lesquels il est possible d’identifier les effets de relocation dus à l’intégration, et que les villes frontalières apparaissent comme les meilleures unités d’analyse (Hanson 1996).

En ce qui concerne les nouveaux membres de l’Union, tout un programme de coopération transfrontalière est en train d’être appliqué, via la création des euro régions, de zones économiques franches, de parcs touristiques internationaux. Les euro régions constituent une opportunité considérable à la fois pour favoriser le local et pour arrimer les régions concernées à l’Europe. Les euro régions contribuent à l’intensification des échanges mutuels entre les provinces de pays différents par l’intermédiaire de deux processus: a) le troc inter-entreprise où il s’agit de contrats à très court terme entre entreprises et où la monnaie n’intervient pas; b) le commerce transfrontalier, qui est un type de commerce spontané et florissant entre les gens originaires des régions concernées.

Commerce frontalier

L’esprit d’entreprise s’est révélé surtout dans le développement du commerce frontalier informel qui jouait un rôle moteur dans le développement des régions frontalières (cf. Tableau 1). La première guerre de Tchétchénie de 1994 entraîna la première baisse d’effectifs de visiteurs de l’Est. Le Bélarus imposa des contrôles de frontière plus stricts. Le flot des commerçants de Podlaskie du sud se réorienta vers l’Ukraine et la Roumanie. S’ensuivit une chute vertigineuse des ventes de marchandises et de services, dans les rues et les magasins vides etc... Ces développements politiques coïncident avec la croissance de la concurrence et l’apparition de nouvelles politiques fiscales dans les nouveaux États encourageant l’établissement de fabricants près des marchés. Certaines compagnies de Podlaskie suivirent ce mouvement pour bénéficier des allégements fiscaux. L’application plus stricte des règlements concernant les visas, les invitations, la nécessité d’acheter des bons avec lesquels on pouvait payer les services touristiques, et la spécification des montants d’argent à changer en devises convertibles aggravèrent la situation. Ce dernier obstacle était particulièrement difficile à surmonter parce que les salaires dans l’Est étaient restés à un très bas niveau. Les taux de montants de devises furent périodiquement abaissés, selon le niveau des protestations des organismes marchands. De même, les changements des droits de douane modifient l’intensité du trafic au passage des frontières et influencent le développement de la coopération transfrontière.

Préparant son entrée dans l’Union, le gouvernement polonais, s’est engagé à ce que la frontière orientale soit progressivement fermée à partir de 1 janvier 1998. De pareils règlements avaient déjà été mis en place plus tôt par l’Ukraine et le Bélarus pour augmenter les revenus de trésor. Les entrepreneurs parvinrent
à obtenir l’annulation de ces décisions ou selon le cas, modifièrent les activités de leurs sociétés. Si en Pologne, l’“européanisation” de l’opération du passage des frontières fut ressentie comme un empêchement croissant à l’activité des petites et moyennes sociétés, au Bélarus cela fut l’occasion de mettre fin à l’économie parallèle et d’officialiser le refus du développement du secteur privé. En introduisant des visas sur sa frontière orientale, la Pologne a vu son commerce frontalier baisser de 50% entre 1997 et 1998. En effet, en voulant donner un gage à l’Union européenne à travers la politique restrictive de visa, la Pologne a compromis le développement de certaines régions frontalières et aggravé le déficit commercial polonais. C’est la ville de Bialystok, chef-lieu de la Podlasie, qui en 1999 présente un certain dynamisme (Datar 1996), qui a le plus souffert de cette décision avec une baisse de 60% des chiffres du commerce frontalier entre 1997 et 1998. Cette date signifie le déclin du commerce frontalier informel et sa disparition progressive, suite à l’instauration de la nouvelle frontière européenne le 1er mai 2004 (Powerska 2002).

Les chiffres relatifs aux plus grands marchés locaux frontaliens sont présentés dans le tableau 2 ci-dessous:

Tableau 2: Commerce frontalier en Pologne entre 1995-1998 (en millions des $)

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<tr>
<td>Tuszn</td>
<td>1 600</td>
<td>1 800</td>
<td>1 600</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>–40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gluchow</td>
<td>1 000</td>
<td>1 400</td>
<td>1 100</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>–39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rzgow</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1 150</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>–27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osinow Dolny</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bialystok</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>–60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leknica</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>–26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cedyenia</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>–32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kostrzyn</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>–23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slubice</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>–33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Przemysl</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>–32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gubin</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>–31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zgorzelec</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>–49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cieszyn</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>–20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Przewoz</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>–22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stieniawka</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>–21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Rapport o stanie sektora malych i srednich przedsiebiorstw w Polsce, PHARE/UNSAID, Varsovie, 1998

Ces décisions prises pour “civiliser” quelque peu la frontière, détruisirent une certaine stabilité durement acquise dans les régions frontalières, et cela dans une situation de concurrence féroce de la part des entreprises de l’UE, qui s’assuraient avec succès le contrôle progressif des marchés de l’Est. Les capitaux polonais étaient trop faibles pour être concurrentiels. Le fait que les Polonais avaient une meilleure connaissance de l’Est ne changea rien. Les politiques du gouvernement suscitèrent polémique et protestations, dans les régions orientales, sans échos dans la capitale. La croissance économique de ces régions accusa le coup six mois avant l’arrivée de la crise russe, le troisième coup dur pour l’économie régionale. En effet, la crise financière russe du mois d'août et la dévaluation du rouble frappèrent les régions orientales polonaises de façon très dure, elle changea surtout dramatiquement la situation des exportateurs polonais des produits agroalimentaires sur le marché russe. La société russe s’appauvrit en raison de la dévaluation du rouble. Les produits alimentaires polonais devinrent soudain des produits de luxe. La crise compromit les économies de tous les nouveaux Etats, tandis que les sociétés occidentales apparaissaient sur le marché russe avec leurs produits alimentaires subventionnés, contrairement à des sociétés polonaises qui furent obligées d’abandonner ce marché. La crise russe a démontré la grande dépendance du Bélarus et de l’Ukraine vis à vis de l’économie russe: on peut en dire autant des régions limitrophes de la Pologne. En conclusion: un grand nombre de nouvelles sociétés privées ont été enregistrées au cours de la dernière décennie mais leur prospérité a été de très courte durée. Elles furent vite remplacées par de
nouvelles sociétés spécialisées dans une autre activité économique ou dans des marché différents. Il a eu cependant un impact important sur les mentalités de gens. En effet, le développement spontané du commerce transfrontalier dans la première phase de transformation a facilité l’élimination des stéréotypes et des préjugés du passé, pour la plupart délibérément entretenus dans l’esprit des gens, par le régime précédent.

**Eurorégions: vers de nouvelles formes de gouvernance?**


L’adhésion de la Pologne à l’Union va certainement accélérer le processus de coopérations transfrontalières, qui auparavant relevait plutôt de l’”économie grise “; comme ce fut le cas du commerce transfrontalier. En effet, c’est une généralisation des institutions transfrontalières à travers l’Europe, y compris vers ses nouveaux voisins de l’est: Bélarus, Ukraine et Moldavie qui permettra d’arrimer ces pays à l’Union. Les premiers résultats de études monographiques à la frontière Oder-Neisse, montrent clairement qu’il s’agit d’une phase initiale du processus de développement d’une coopération transfrontalière durable, durant laquelle les partenaires explorent les caractéristiques de la région frontalière, se familiarisant avec les structures institutionnelles propres aux pays partenaires. Le meilleur exemple est celui d’euroregion “Neisse” (Despiney-Zochowska 1997, 2005). L’Euroregion “Neisse” est une de quatre eurorégions situées à la frontière de la Pologne avec l’Allemagne et la République Tchèque. Elle est considérée comme un laboratoire pour les autres initiatives de ce genre, par exemple, dans le domaine des statistiques, très peu fiables en période de la transition. Ici, une initiative locale prise par les autorités locales de trois pays limitrophes constitue déjà l’amorce d’une coopération plus avancée et à long terme.

Dans le cas de notre étude sur l’euroregion “Neisse”, les meilleurs résultats économiques de la Haute Lusace il faut replacer dans une perspective plus large du débat sur la dépendance de sentier. Cette partie de la Saxe semble moins touchée par cinquante ans de communisme que la partie ethniquement allemande. Du fait de la restructuration économique, s’effondrent aussi bien le cadre idéologique rigide que la solidarité collective, ce qui ne semble pas être le cas de la minorité serbo-lusatienne. En général, l’espace entre Kamentz (Kamienc) et Bautzen (Budziszyn) enregistre un meilleur bilan économique que l’ensemble de la Saxe oriental, ce qui est imputable à la part de la population slave (serbo-lusatienne) et à ses origines chrétiennes (protestante et catholique voir dans Europa regional, 1/96, p. 21). Cette population compte aujourd’hui environ cent mille personnes dont 20% sont catholiques et 80% protestants. Elle semble moins touchée par le syndrome Wessi et Ossi. Les divisions et les
solidarités partagées restent complexes, comme le montrent les premiers travaux sur la culture d’entreprise dans une Allemagne unifiée (Müller 1997). Mais, c’est du côté polonais d’Oder-Neisse que l’esprit d’entreprise se manifeste le plus (Duchene&Rusin 2002; Despiney-Zochowska 2005). La partie polonaise est présentée comme ayant un fort potentiel de croissance, c’est ce qui est confirmé par plusieurs études. En effet, l’esprit d’entreprendre semble plus développé en Pologne, surtout dans sa partie occidentale. La persistance de ce l’on appelle communément la Pologne “A”, y compris dans les esprits est évidente. Cependant, l’exemple de la Podlaskie du Sud apporte une preuve flagrante d’une émergence d’esprit d’entreprendre également à l’Est du pays, phénomène jusqu’à présent peu connu.

Conclusion

Beaucoup d’illusions et de frustrations émergent dans des nouvelles circonstances d’élargissement à l’Est, et prennent sens dans le contexte du fonctionnement de la nouvelle frontière externe de l’UE. Elles devraient être prises en considération dans les scénarios de développement, dans le futur proche ou lointain, selon leur importance. La situation interne instable de ces nouveaux pays (membres et non-membres) est loin de satisfaire les espérances de la communauté internationale, dont l’intérêt est de voir un ordre institutionnel s’établir. Pour le moment, les aspects négatifs se traduisent dans des pratiques frontalières: défaut de paiements des salaire des douaniers ou des gardes-frontières, changements fréquents de procédures et les changements législatifs et institutionnels. Le facteur risque des activités économiques, combiné à des règles du jeu peu transparentes et une recherche interminable de boucs émissaires sur lesquels on fait retomber les échecs, ont ralenti le développement de l’économie de marché dans ces pays. Les vieux démons, la méfiance et la jalouse reprennent vie et prospèrent. Dans un climat d’impuissance globale, seules les restrictions et les interdictions se multiplient et demeurent lisibles. Le manque de règlements universellement admis favorise le développement du crime organisé qui prospère dans le secteur transfrontalier, et détériore les relations de bon voisinage.


Par ailleurs, la Pologne a été obligée depuis 2004 de mettre en application le système commun des visas de l’UE auquel elle s’était préparée depuis 1998, quand un contrôle plus strict de la frontière a été introduit. Afin de respecter les règlements de l’UE, la Pologne dut mettre fin aux accords bilatéraux avec 15 anciens pays du bloc de l’Est sur l’abolition des visas et réintroduire les visas pour ces différents ressortissants. Il faut espérer que cette introduction conforme aux règlements de l’UE, ne devienne pas
une répétition de la triste expérience d’août 1998. Rendre la frontière orientale ouverte et amicale à tous ceux qui s’engagent dans le commerce légal et dans des relations de bon voisinage, comme cela se fait déjà à la frontière entre la Pologne et l’Allemagne, reste un idéal à atteindre pour que la frontière externe de l’EU ne devienne pas celle du ressentiment du passé et ne produise à son tour des effets négatifs aux dimensions géopolitiques.

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COOPERATION BETWEEN POLISH AND UKRAINIAN
“PARTNER TOWNS” IN THE CARPATHIAN EUROREGION

Wacław Wierzbieniec
Ireneusz E. Thomas
The University of Rzeszów

Abstract: The paper contains an abstract of interdisciplinary research with a focus on ideas for principle of subsidiarity at local social structure exemplified by twin-towns at Carpathian Euroregion. As we can observe, European Union aid programmes actively promote the idea of a common Europe by financing it regionally effectively. The policy of retaining cultural distinctness of towns and regions while at the same time emphasizing the community of the entire continent is a chance to build a lasting socio-political “organism”. Financing self-governmental policy which aims at tightening international cooperation between towns and regions is an opportunity for ambitious and enterprising citizens. The “Partner Towns” programme was recognized as one of few which fulfilled the recommendations of the European Commission so well. A wide, almost unlimited array of directions of cooperation between towns in different regions of Europe is guaranteed by the implementation of cross-border projects. One of such countries is Ukraine. International cooperation of residents of Ukrainian towns and cities with their friends from Poland. Numbers of towns have developed joint projects subsides from EU funds. Members of local governments form particular towns rose up to the challenge of establishing international contacts, thus enabling their fellow countrymen to cooperate with foreign partners. Individual citizens’ or associations’ initiatives decide about the directions of present activity.

Introduction

In the past, a common source of conflicts were tensions in border areas which frequently transformed into international conflicts, or even led to long-lasting wars. Such a situation arose for instance in the areas of Central-Eastern Europe, where in the area of an after all fairly fluid ethnic border between two nations: Polish and Ukrainian, numerous armed conflicts took place.

These events largely contributed to reinforcing and deepening the existing stereotypes, as well as to the creation of new ones pertaining to the impossibility of agreeable coexistence. From a historical perspective, interdependencies and mutual influences can be clearly observed in the Polish-Ukrainian relations, especially those of cultural nature. Periods of both cooperation and confrontation have appeared in our mutual relations. Therefore, despite the existent prejudices, there is a possibility of developing partner cooperation 1.

Uniting Europe had to find ways to neutralise these potential border hot spots. In some European states areas of borderland characteristics cover a considerable part of their territory, therefore the topic of integration in border areas is ascribed such significance 2. United Europe, whose regions are to bring people together and obliterate borders rather than deepen them, cross-border cooperation, for instance within the “Partner Towns” programme, aim at creating a model of reconciling nations which have been feuded for centuries, so that recurrence of conflict situations can be prevented. Initiatives of local communities

1. Wierzbieniec W. (13-14 listopada 2006), How to strive after the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation within the realities of historical experiences and mutual stereotypes?, referat wygłoszony podczas konferencji międzynarodowej na Uniwersytecie Paris X Nanterre, Paryż.
exert a big influence on the development of cooperation in border areas. This is a good way to overcome historical divisions and hostilities which have existed between neighbouring nations. Such initiatives lead to a long-lasting and difficult, but a surely necessary process of reconciliation, and consequently to common cross-border bonds in the social and economic realms. The initial, natural border cooperation started to transform into cross-border cooperation covering larger areas. Structures formed as a result of this process came to be called “euroregions”; they are agreements of a local character which were formed in order to solve specific problems which affect municipalities – cities on both sides of the border 3.

The Carpathian Euroregion has existed for over 15 years already. 14th February 1993 is assumed to be the date of its creation, it is when representatives of local authorities of border areas of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Ukraine signed an agreement in Dubrovnik to create the Carpathian Euroregion Interregional Association. At that time, the cooperation within the Euroregion, which had been brought into existence precisely to initiate and develop it, proceeded at different speeds and produced various effects. This phenomenon was accompanied by political, economic, administrative, awareness and personal changes. However, the fact that despite many problems the Euroregion still functions and creates yet new planes of mutual understanding is testimony to the willingness of all the national sides comprised in the Carpathian Euroregion (i.e. Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Hungary, Romania) to cooperate. Presently, the area of the Euroregion is about 154,000 km² and is inhabited by over 15 million people. A part of the Euroregion lies on the eastern border of Poland, which is the external border of the European Union. Bearing in mind the role which the Euroregion plays, it can therefore be said that it will be more significant in the near future, and that since Poland’s accession to the European Union we have become a bridge for the countries which will remain outside its borders 4.

As many as sixteen Polish towns and cities from the Carpathian Euroregion have so far signed cooperation agreements with Ukrainian towns and cities within the partner towns programme, namely: Rzeszów, Przemyśl, Tarnów, Łańcut, Jarosław, Przeworsk, Lubaczów, Krosno, Sanok, Jasło, Mielec, Tarnobrzeg, Stalowa Wola, Głogów Małopolski. Such a large number of partner agreements with Ukrainian cities results from the cross-border character of the Podkarpackie Province and has its historical conditioning.

Town and city partnerships are formed for specific reasons, the reasons being cooperation between self-government institutions, businesses, and especially the citizens of these towns, beyond national borders. Very often the beginnings of such partnerships arise from private contacts between individual people or social groups (e.g. Polish communities abroad, emigrants). But not only. Relations between schools or youth organisations, artistic groups in individual towns are the first step equally often. Hardly ever are the first steps made by representatives of local self-governments. When “the ice is broken” and the criteria of a partnership are fulfilled, then an official visit of the town’s authorities and a return visit follow. A partnership is entered into by signing a suitable document of partnership by both sides. Next, regular visits of administrative officers take place, these are often semi-official visits where e.g. the president of a town receives a delegation in his own house, which has an even stronger influence on the towns representatives’ getting to know each other. Although of course there are no rules in this respect, sometimes these contacts remain very official 5.

The aim of town partnerships is to support cooperation between two towns in the spheres of economy, administration, art, culture, science, issues of the youth and education in order to achieve mutual benefits and to create opportunities for citizens to get to know the culture and lifestyle of another town. The aims

3. The European Chart of Order and Cross-Border Regions – Amendment – Gronau – 07.10.2004. – In accordance with this document, political borders turn out to be the consequence of the emergence of modern national states which initially were motivated to separate themselves effectively from the neighbouring states. It was supposed to enable exercising sovereignty in a given area. Hence the traditional notion of a state border originated from its protective and defensive function. Borders were perceived as potential front lines. The so called “difficulty of crossing” was a characteristic of a good border. The tightening of borders was often accompanied by actions of planned destructions of borderland settlements.

4. Orlof E. (1999), Związek Międzyregionalny Euroregion Karpacki i jego znaczenie, Rzeszów, s. 68.

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may be specified by the town boards (acting individually or with other partners), for example during official visits, common economic undertakings, workshops, exchange of experiences, training courses, etc. Moreover, the involvement of town dwellers in partnerships, including associations and non-governmental organisations, usually comprises pupil, youth and student exchange, as well as senior citizens’ meetings. Currently, what is especially significant is using town partnerships to establish economic contacts between businesses from partner towns.

A thesis may be advanced that Lubaczów demonstrates the largest and most comprehensive activity among Polish towns and cities form the Carpathian Euroregion within the partner towns programmes.

1. Lubaczów – The most active Polish “Partner Town” in the cooperation with Ukraine

The thesis of Lubaczów cooperating most comprehensively and actively with Ukraine within the “Partner Towns” Programmes may be supported by the fact that in comparison with other cities which started such cooperation, Lubaczów is in the leading position in respect of the number and diversity of individual undertakings.

An agreement on the directions of interregional cooperation between the town of Lubaczów and the town of Jaworów in Ukraine was signed in Lubaczów during a ceremonial session of the Town Council on 8th February 1997. The agreement was signed by mayor Jerzy Zajączk on behalf of Lubaczów and by mayor Wasyl Baczałło on behalf of Jaworów. The subject of the agreement is cooperation in the spheres of culture, education and sport, environmental protection, health, and in other spheres. It also provides for the tightening of relations between social and youth organisations, as well as for economic cooperation. A similar agreement was signed in 2000 by the Poviat Starosta in Lubaczów and the Administration of the Jaworów Region (AJR). Initially, the partner cooperation between the two towns did not have any impressive achievements, however it intensified in the course of time. Both towns are most intent on youth, cultural and sports exchange as well as cooperation between businesspeople.

On 23rd May 2000, Stowarzyszenie Rozwoju Ziemi Lubaczowskiej (SRZL, English: Association for the Development of the Land of Lubaczów) entered into a cooperation agreement with AJR. Only in the last few years have contacts between Lubaczów and Jaworów intensified considerably. Official delegations meet on national holidays, we often host Jaworów artists in Lubaczów, Lubaczów musicians and sports people go to Ukraine. Apart from official events, there are many working contacts, exchanges of experiences and joint sittings of consulting groups. On 29th December 2000, at the border crossing in Korczowa-Krakowiec, a cooperation agreement was signed by the Association for the Development of the Land of Lubaczów and the Foundation for the Development of the Jaworów Region (Ukraine). At the ceremony there were also representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Polish-Ukrainian Committee, institutions of higher education from Lublin and Jarosław, the Independent Forum of Private Business, representatives of self-governments, social organisations, and the press. The agreement is a fulfillment of previous arrangements between SRZL and the Jaworów Administration. It provides for cooperation in the areas of enterprise, agriculture, new technologies, education and schooling and self-government.

This very month – on 29th May 2000, a group of diplomats arrived in Lubaczów at the invitation of SRZL. Among them were: the Consul General of the Russian Federation – minister plenipotentiary Iwan F. Tkaczenko, the Consul General of the Republic of Ukraine – minister Zinowij Kurawskij, the Consul of the Czech Republic – Rudolf Opatrizl, the Consul of the Republic of Poland in Lviv – Michał Uziemblo, the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Romania – Władysław Zenon Mirot. Consul General of the Republic of Hungary – Istvan Kovacs, PhD presided over the meeting of the guests. The meeting was initiated by the National Cooperation Council of the Independent Forum of Private Business, at which exists the Consuls Club. The President of the Club, Mr I. Kovacs, promised to interest a wider group of diplomats with the issues of the region. The guests were welcomed in front of the Museum by the brass band of the Music Society, and then official greetings were extended in the historic room by Starost Józef Michalik and Mayor Jerzy Zając. The meeting was also attended by guests from Jaworów: I Deputy Starost of the Jaworów Region – Stefan Nowosiadło, Deputy President of Jaworów Council –

Stefan Makowiecki, Director of the Jaworów Special Economic Zone – Oleksiy Hordiyenko. At the request of the Association, members of the self-government of the Lubaczów region, bosses of companies and institutions, school principals and a group of businessmen and presidents of associations arrived too.

Next year, from 18th to 19th May 2001, on the premises of KRUS sanatorium in Horyniec (Lubaczów poviatt) an international conference “Protection of the Environment and Cultural Heritage in the Border Zone of Poland and Ukraine – the Roztocze Region” was held. The conference was organised by the Association for the Development of the Land of Lubaczów, Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa (State Vocational College) from Jarosław, Lubaczowskie and Jarosławskie Starosties. Over twenty scientists presented their papers. The papers mostly concerned analyses of the state of the cultural heritage in the area of lubaczowski and jaworowski poviatts, the state of the natural environment, and tourist development opportunities for that region. A complete set of the papers came out in a post-conference publication. The conference was attended by a delegation from the Jaworów region headed by starost Stepan Łukaszyk, PhD.

On 5th and 6th July 2001 the Association for the Development of the Land of Lubaczów organised an international seminar “Self-governments in Europe – a Self-governmental Round Table”. Self-governments of lubaczowski poviat, the Jaworów region (Ukraine), the town of Tostedt (Germany), the town of Erd (Hungary) and the municipality of Velké Losiny (the Czech Republic) participated in the deliberations. Guests of honour were consuls from: the USA – Siria Lopez and Douglas J. Apostol, Hungary – Istvan Kovacs, Ukraine – Oleksandr Medownikow, Poland – Michal Uziemblo from Lviv, and head of Ukraine’s trade mission – minister Miron Jankiw. The seminar was to serve the purpose of exchanging experiences of the self-governments and developing methods for continuous cooperation. At the end, the “Self-governments Together” declaration was signed, which included an appeal to European self-governments to tighten cooperation. The delegation from Jaworów was headed by Wołodymir Postawytiuk – mayor of the town of Jaworów and Stepan Makowieckij – deputy president of the poviat council.

Successive meetings took place from 28th February to 1st March 2002 in Lviv and Jaworów, where an International Conference titled “Presentation of the Jaworów Special Economic Zone” was held. Businesspeople from Poland could watch selected firms operating in the Jaworów economic zone, learn the principles of economic zones in Ukraine and the basic rules of conducting business activity. The conference was organised by the Association for the Development of the Land of Lubaczów with the Regional Foundation for the Development of the Jaworów Region under the fund from the PAUCI programme. It was the last meeting of this type because the following one taking place in Lubaczów on 22nd and 23rd April 2002 was a conference closing the realisation of a programme called “Sustainable Development of the Lands of Lubaczów and Jaworów Within Cross-border Cooperation”. Its aim was to provide an opportunity to meet, exchange thoughts and experiences in respect of present and future Polish – Ukrainian cooperation, to learn about the economic potential of the Podkarpackie Province with special regard to lubaczowski poviat, Lviv district and the Jaworów region, to create conditions for establishing direct economic contacts. Over 150 people participated, including: experts in economic cooperation between Poland and Ukraine, representatives of diplomatic posts, financial and insurance institutions, politicians, representatives of the government and self-government administration of both countries as well as entrepreneurs and businesspeople interested in the Ukrainian market.

During the visit of the delegation from Lubaczów on 16th September 2003 in Jaworów, directions of cooperation for the nearest period were discussed, an agreement concerning the release of a common informative-promotional publication was signed, and details of the realisation of a language project subsidies from EU funds were established. The guests were acquainted with the interesting history of Jaworów by the Mayor of Jaworów – Wołodymir Postawytiuk himself who showed the delegation members around the most interesting places connected with the older as well as the more recent history. The Mayor of Jaworów received from the hands of the Mayor of Lubaczów a statue commemorating the anniversary of 10–year cooperation between the partner towns, even though only 6 years have gone by since the official agreements were signed. The meeting brought fruit as early as at the beginning of November 2003 when a group of young people from the partner town of Jaworów was visiting Lubaczów. The visit was connected with the implementation of a programme called “The Languages of the

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European Union as a Common Ground for Communication Between the Polish and Ukrainian Youth. Edition I – German”. The first workshops took place in the Municipal Public Library. At the same time, the Mayor of Lubaczów met with the principal of the Junior High School and the Mayor of the Town of Jaworów who came with a group of young people from Ukraine. Subsequent meetings took place over the following months and their effect was a joint performance of young people from Poland and Ukraine in the 9th Provincial Contest of German Language Poetry and Prose titled “Von Lessing bis Durrenmatt” 8.

The year 2003 was exceptional for cross-border cooperation between the towns. Owing to joint efforts, eighteen companies from Podkarpacie invested in the Special Economic Zone in Jaworów in Ukraine. Every third company which operates there has Polish or Polish-Ukrainian capital. Representatives of Polish and Ukrainian business and experts met with the voivod in Rzeszów. According to the participants in the meeting, currently the biggest problem are high duties on Polish goods, too long waiting time at the border and the uncertainty of obtaining money for goods sold. After overcoming these difficulties, the following year is supposed to be record-breaking in terms of both investments and trade turnover. Good and fruitful cooperation of businesspeople from Lubaczów and Jarosław with the Jaworów SEZ was highlighted during the meeting.

Another meeting took place on 26th May 2004 when the Youth Town Council of Lubaczów hosted representatives of the Youth Town Council of Jaworów. The Ukrainian guests were headed by vice-mayor Wołodymir Bukarin. The young councillors from the partner towns discussed joint undertakings in the year 2004.

A delegation of Jaworów authorities took part in the ceremonies on 3rd May 2004 held to celebrate the 213th anniversary of the enactment of the May Constitution, also known as the "Government Act". Delegations of Lubaczów offices and institutions placed bouquets of flowers under the "To the Soldiers of Independence" obelisk. Later a Holy Mass for the Homeland was said.

From 1st to 6th June 2004 took place some of the most important meetings within the cross-border cooperation between Lubaczów and Jaworów. This is when the European Union programme “Städtepartnerschaften” – the Town Partnerships was debated. This is a programme which promotes an active European society. The aim of the partnership of towns is their getting to know and understanding each other better. Such a partnership helps to learn about the everyday life of other befriended European towns, offers a chance for joint talks, exchanging experiences and work on joint projects. Within the European programme Städtepartnerschaften, Lubaczów authorities wrote a project titled “The International Youth Round Table – Education, Environment, Culture” and sent it to the European Commission for Education and Culture seated in Brussels. After the approval of the project by the EU, from 1st to 5th June 2004 young people from Tostedt (Germany), Jaworów (Ukraine) and Erd (Hungary) met in Lubaczów with young people from Lubaczów. In the meetings, the participants discussed educational methods in the European Union, they could exchange experiences with respect to environmental protection in their towns and talk about cultural diversity of our partner towns 9.

On 27th February 2005 a 30-member group of Lubaczów youth visited the partner town of Jaworów. The aim of the visit was to establish further contacts and conduct workshops within a project called “Meetings of Cultures and Nations” implemented by the Carpathian Euroregion, within the PHARE Cross Border Cooperation programme – a Programme for the Polish Eastern Border. Members of the Youth Town Council of Lubaczów went on this trip too. In a meeting with young councillors of the town of Jaworów, they discussed details of further cooperation. As a result of this meeting, young people from Jaworów came to the “7th Festival of Words” in Lubaczów. That year it was an integral part of the “Meetings of Cultures and Nations” Project financed by the PHARE Programme, Polish Eastern Border, the Small Projects Fund. This event comprised three recitation contests:

* 15th National Polish Recitation Tournament – Literature Created in Exile “From Mickiewicz to Miłosz”
* 11th National Polish Tournament of One Poet’s Poems – Ewa Lipska
* 4th National Polish Recitation Tournament – Literature for Children.

In 2005 two more meetings took place within cross-border cooperation. At the end of May and the

beginning of June, meetings took place in the Municipal Cultural Centre in Lubaczów, where the first workshops within the project “Music in the Borderlands” and music workshops “Let’s Get to Know Each Other” based on country and folk music were held. Young people from Jaworów and Lubaczów had a chance to get to know one another better to the sound of familiar rhythms, and apart from music activities, to exchange opinions on music closer to their generation – music from the top of hit lists in both countries. On 10th September 2005, youth from Lubaczów and Jaworów met again on a joint trip to Lviv. The trip crowned the cooperation of the young people who participated in the projects co-financed by the European Union – “The Languages of the European Union as a Common Ground for Communication Between the Polish and Ukrainian Youth. Edition II – English” and “Music in the Borderlands” 10.

2. The other Polish “Partner Towns” from the Carpathian Euroregion cooperating with Ukraine

When analyzing the entire international contacts of the towns and cities of Podkarpacie, we need to highlight the specific dimension of contacts with partners from the Ukrainian towns and cities. When it comes to their number, it is the highest, and their character is clearly varied.

Taking Rzeszów into account, we will notice that partner contacts with Ukrainian cities have not been developing widely in recent years. They are mainly visits of the cities’ authorities on the occasion of the “City Festival”, or special wishes sent on particular occasions. Despite this situation, the cities are open to cultural contacts and joint organisation of their participation in cultural and sports meetings and events. The financial aspect is easy to read here, and probably also the fact that these cities have a few agreements signed with cities in Poland.

The official cooperation between the municipal authorities is also supported by active cooperation between the Rzeszów University of Technology and Lviv Polytechnic, manifesting itself in numerous projects, e.g. in the sphere of architecture, as well as cooperation in the area of medicine between the Rzeszów Paediatric Association and its Lviv counterpart and between the University of Rzeszów and Lviv Medical University. Artists from partner towns in Ukraine, just like artists from all European partner towns of Rzeszów, are invited every year to participate in a music festival “Carpathia Festival”, which has been organised in Rzeszów for two years now 11.

However, the cooperation between Przemyśl and Lviv presents itself entirely differently. The historical aspect of their mutual relations has had an influence on its nature.

The agreement between the civil defence services of Przemyśl and Lviv, which has been in force for many years, and which concerns the prevention of emergency situations and disasters, the introduction of a regular coach line connecting Przemyśl and Lviv and other Ukrainian cities or the opening of a new border crossing at the Polish – Ukrainian border in Korczowa, are all examples of activities facilitating and tightening mutual contacts 12.

What needs to be mentioned is that cross-border undertakings with cities of the Carpathian Euroregion are actively pursued in Ukraine, especially those with Lviv, and cooperation with the self-governments lying over the San River in Ukraine is developing within the water cleanliness programme “The Blue San”.

Apart from economic, cultural and entertainment benefits, town partnerships have an immeasurable value too: mutual learning about different nationalities and cultures, elimination of mutual prejudices, contribution into common security in the uniting Europe.

Between 1998 and 2001 an International Fair the “Przemyśl Gate” under the patronage of the president of the City of Przemyśl and the Forum of Independent Business was held in Przemyśl. Exhibitors from Ukraine were regular participants in this Fair. Another one of the significant initiatives was a cultural undertaking “PRZEMYŚL-LVIV 2000”, supported from the fund of the Carpathian Euroregion. It included presentations of photography exhibitions, music groups, mainly jazz and rock ones, and literary songs 13.

11. Piecuch E. (2003), Współpraca z miastami partnerskimi, Rzeszów, s. 5.
13. Ibidem, s. 4.
The South-Eastern Research Institute from Przemyśl stands out among the cooperating independent bodies. It maintains contacts with Ukrainian institutions which have similar interests. The institute has had big contributions in publications concerning Polish-Ukrainian contacts throughout history.

The Ukrainian direction of cooperation is therefore a vital element of cross-border cooperation of cities in the Podkarpackie Province. The people potential that has the possibility of participating in the programme is huge. The multidimensional nature of contacts, their long duration despite periods of stagnation, the natural ability to feel the common history of the inhabitants of this region is a reason to focus special attention on future activities undertaken with Ukrainian partners. It is also a chance for those cities which have not initiated cooperation at all or those which have not found a sister city in Ukraine. Presentation of the entire cooperation with Ukraine, due to its abundance and specific character, could be the subject of a separate elaboration.

Partner cooperation between Łańcut and Uman has assumed a unique character too. Because of the important cultural role of Łańcut in Podkarpacie, numerous musicians, stage artists, painters and visual artists from Lviv and Kijów performed here, nonetheless the town signed a partnership agreement with Uman. This could be because of the fact that both towns are connected by the aristocratic Potocki family eminent in the Republic of Poland. The agreement concluded, apart from the cultural and youth exchange, stipulated dissemination of information about the towns among their residents.

Concluding remarks

The project “The Bridges of Experiences Poland – Ukraine”, whose beneficiary was the Rzeszów Regional Development Agency, became a vital element in the development of cross-border cooperation between partner towns in the area of the Carpathian Euroregion.

The project was realised within the Neighbourhood Programme INTERREG III A/Tacis CBC “Poland-Belarus-Ukraine” and was aimed at the participants of the cross-border projects realised by the Rzeszów Regional Development Agency in the years 2002–2006 and other bodies taking part in the review of the project and promotional meetings (non-governmental organisations, self-governments, businesspeople and individuals). The project aimed at strengthening the previously established contacts and updating the developed principles of cooperation in the face of Ukraine joining in joint activities connected with using available EU funds. Through the implementation of project activities, the cooperation between the Applicant – the Rzeszów Regional Development Agency – and the Ukrainian partners – the “European Dialogue” NGO from Lviv and the Small Business and Innovation Development Association “Uzhgorod–XXI-st Century” from Uzhgorod was “refreshed” and verified.

The implementation of this programme contributed to:

- the strengthening and support of the existing Polish-Ukrainian network of local and regional organisations and the newly established trade contacts,
- the equalization of access to information with regard to the preparation and implementation of projects and ready solutions regarding cross-border cooperation,
- the identification of problems which may be encountered at the stages of developing a concept, its implementation and at the final stage of reviewing the effects of the project,
- the intensification of contacts between the residents, organisations and companies in the border areas,
- the activation of cross-border trade in the border areas,
- the generation of ideas for long-term cooperation between the beneficiaries of the project.

This project was the starting point for creating a wide platform of cooperation between organisations, institutions, businesspeople and individuals interested in cooperation and joint project activities. The project was largely aimed at the intensification of the previously established contacts, and indirectly, it...
also aimed at creating a wide platform of cooperation for future projects and exchange of information about good and proven practices. Discussion panels as well as the presence of speakers representing various institutions helped future implementors of similar projects identify key aspects and problems, thus allowing for reaching for financial means from the European Union and other granting institutions and organisations more efficiently.

As we can observe, European Union aid programmes actively promote the idea of a common Europe by financing it effectively. The policy of retaining cultural distinctness of towns and regions while at the same time emphasizing the community of the entire continent is a chance to build a lasting socio-political “organism”. Financing self-governmental policy which aims at tightening international cooperation between towns and regions is an opportunity for ambitious and enterprising citizens. The “Partner Towns” programme was recognized as one of few which fulfilled the recommendations of the European Commission so well. A wide, almost unlimited array of directions of cooperation between towns in different regions of Europe is guaranteed by the implementation of cross-border projects.

One of such countries is Ukraine. International cooperation of residents of Ukrainian towns and cities with friends from Poland, as well as the remaining countries from the Carpathian Euroregion, is an expression of this country’s willingness to access European structures and of understanding the need for cooperation for the purpose of the development of the Carpathian Euroregion.

The cooperation of partner towns in the area of the Carpathian Euroregion with Ukraine has left a mark in the international cooperation of this Euroregion. Many towns have developed joint projects subsidies from EU funds. Members of local governments form particular towns rose up to the challenge of establishing international contacts, thus enabling their fellow countrymen to cooperate with foreign partners. However, not only their decisions influence the form of cooperation. Individual citizens’ or associations’ initiatives decide the directions of activity. By following recommendations of the European Commission, these groups can count on financial support for the projects which they implement.

GRAND DUCHE OF LITHUANIA
AS SOURCE OF CULTURAL TERRITORIALIZATION

Tomas Kačerauskas
Vilnius University

Abstract: The article deals with the dialectics of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization in the context of cultural regionalistics. The author shows how changing the roles between these modes of terra dynamics influences the becoming of culture interpreted as existential creation. Great Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) has been used as the case for the development of these ideas in the paper. According to the author, we deal with the polyphonic process of territorialization while the physical aspect serves as a background for cultural deterritorialization and vice versa. The perspective of cultural regionalistics presupposes an existential approach (culture as existential creation), as well as border discourse, while border has been interpreted as cultural phenomenon to be cultivated by both an individual and the nation. The major thesis is the following: the very dynamism of life-world’s borders follows from human existential creativity, the source of which is being towards death. The minor thesis: a nation is alive as a terra for individual (re)birth while he (she) creates the future community by his (her) activity. The author presents two kinds of communication during territorialization: horizontal, which deals with realization of a utopia, and vertical, which deals with the myths of the nation’s past. The change of roles between different aspects of human terra signifies not linear multi-layered development of culture as a fight for creative space or existential territory. According to the author, reterritorialization presupposes a temporal aspect, which regards all three modes because of dialectics between them. Historical images have been used in our political terra and, vice versa, historical terrae have been understood in political perspective.

Introduction

The border discourse deals with different modes of territorialization. The border between the territories is a dynamic phenomenon playing role in our public life-world. As such, the life-world being social is also the historical one. Imagined history of a nation as social body with its borders is playing crucial role in formatting a certain territory as a living space for a community that searches for its identity. Physical territory possessed by a nation with certain sovereignty is only an outcome of this cultural dynamism. That is why I shall concentrate my attention on cultural territorialization including social, political and historical one. In order to avoid only physical connotations of territorialization I shall use the Latin term terra. On the other hand, every movement towards the imagined identity has been accompanied by certain deterritorialization as a loss of some cultural terrae. Additionally, physical territorialization could be accompanied by cultural deterritorialization and vice versa. As a result, we deal with the polyphonic process of (de)territorialization while phonics of physical territorialization serves as a background for cultural deterritorialization and vice versa. What is more, we have role changes between both these two sources of terra’s dynamism and different planes of terra’s semantic fields.

Great Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) being an empire with all phases of rise and collapse is not only a case of (de)territorialization. On the one hand, we have a kind of deterritorialization while several contemporary nations claim to the heritage of GDL. On the other hand, GDL has been until now a source of a common social body divided by new political borders. As such GDL has been a vector for identity beyond the territory of Central Europe as a part of EU with fixed space. In this way, the imagined GDL is playing a role of Promised Land, i.e. of future reterritorialization. Every re-activity is possible only as a
co-activity in common historical life-world and presupposes creativity instead of repetition. Re-establishment of *terra* means creation of new kind of co-existence despite public relationship inside a political territory. What is more, a new terra to be re-established claims as well the established territory and presupposes a phonetics of a-scholia or disquiet in our public life as inspired background for our existence.

Therefore, there are at least three modes of terra dynamics: territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization. The very dynamism of life-world’s borders follows from human existential creativity, the source of which is being towards death. The latter includes not only coexistence but also analogy between being of an individual and being of the nation. We can speak about mortality of a nation from the perspective of (de)(re)territorialization. Every nation exists thanks to borders’ dynamism, which could be secured not only by extending them but also by the change of the role between their different planes. The most significant periods of nation’s existence are namely those of cultural (re)territorialisation, usually accompanied by physical deterritorialization. Existential discourse presupposes, as well, the change of role between an individual and his (her) nation. On the one hand, an individual exists only as participant of the nation created by him. His activity inspired by his being towards death is possible only in national terra as existential environment to be extended. On the other hand, every nation exists while only being imagined as a community for co-existence of its individuals. A nation is alive as a terra for individual (re)birth while he (she) creates by his (her) activity the future community.

GDL is not only a case for developing the mentioned ideas. This multicultural historical community plays important role in regional studies, which should be developed first of all as cultural regionalistics including both existential analytics and cultural phenomenology. The phenomena are individual only when being regional and culture is creative only when existential. In this way I shall interpret GDL as paradigm of (re)(de)territorialization. However, this perspective needs firstly to analyse GDL as an empire with its phases of borders’ increase and decrease (*GDL as empire*). The question of reterritorialization will be analysed in the chapter *Past and future of GDL*.

### 1. GDL as empire

GDL emerged in 13th century as a counter-power to Teutonic Order established recently in the region and as an expansive power towards the territory weakened after invasion of Mongols-Tatars. The constant tension in the West searching for the alternative resources in the East has been a successful formula for the increase of this empire. Rephrasing A. Toynbee (Toynbee 1991), who had used the case of GDL to support his challenge-response theory, all rising empire needs is war, i.e. the threat of being destroyed. The perspective of death is one of the sources of analogy between an individual and the nation. Within an empire we deal with a specific nation, which is both more imagined and more real than any homogeneous nation. An empire nation is more imagined being directed by a ruler despite the cultural differences between the communities inside a state. On the other hand, it is more real because of territory occupied by this nation. The territorialization covered its other modes does play here the role of realization. We shall see how territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization, by changing their roles in different cultural planes, make certain life-world, which has been created together with our existential project, real.

In two hundred years after the establishment of the state of “land-Vikings” the territory of GDL has increased from 100 thousand sq. km. to 1 million sq. km., i.e. 4.5 thousand sq. km. every year on the average. It is so-called explosive expansion of an empire that has its prize. Z. Norkus shows that explosive expansion of an empire overloads the centre with information that enables to be worked out, as well as presupposes communicative disturbance that leads finally to decentralization (2007: 37). Territorialization means rather assimilation than occupation in the perspective of *terra* concept while deterritorialization refers to cultural loss instead of decentralization of power. On the other hand, we deal with certain centralization during reterritorialization as an attempt to re-establish a political body under the influence of nostalgia for empire.

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1. According to Lithuanian histori­cist E. Gudavičius, the Lithuanians were the jackals that followed after Mongol tiger.
2. More about it see (Kačerauskas 2008a).
3. The term used by A. Bumbla­uskas (2005).
In this way we have a case of a territorialization accompanied with a process of deterritorialization not only in physical plane. On the one hand, we have to do with a formation of historical nation, called Lithuanian nation (litvin ⁴), which included Ruthenian, i.e. East-Slavic sub-nations (contemporary Belarussian, Ukrainian and partly Russian) ⁵. GDL became a very serious competitor to Moscow in the consolidation of Russian terrae. This consolidation had been declared as political aim by both Great Duke of Lithuania Algirdas (1344-1377) and Vytautas the Great (1392-1430). On the other hand, the consequence of this territorialization has become deterritorialization of the very Lithuanian terra with its own culture including (Baltic) language and (pagan) religion. During the pick of GDL’s increasing the ethnical Lithuanian territory covered only 10% of the whole empire, while Lithuanian speakers covered only 20% of the whole population. As a result, we have a case of deterritorialization, i.e. laundering or assimilation of Lithuanian ethnos with the Slavic one. Thus, we have a case of Francs in Gallia. The great dukes from the very beginning having been bilingual became one-lingual to the prejudice of the Lithuanian language.

There are typical stages of empire’s development during more than 500 years of GDL’s existing: explosive rise (up to the death of Vytautas the Great 1430), stabilization (1430-1492), decline (1492-1506), renaissance of rise (joining of Livonia 1559), repeated decline (2nd half of 17th cent.), temporal stabilization (1674-1772), irreversible collapse (1772-1795). This development of the empire had been not linear: the period of decline had been accompanied by cultural rise, temporal stabilization had continued for almost one hundred years and irreversible collapse followed the innovative reforms in social, political and cultural life. The Commission of Education (1773) and Constitution of 3rd May (1791) are to be mentioned. Additionally, resistance to collapse ⁶ has become a heroic paradigm that inspired the coming resistances both in inherited (spirit of empire) and new (national) communities for ages. Heroic paradigm to be formatted in certain life-world with public expectations refers to reterritorialization that is no way reconstruction of previous empire. Firstly, such reconstruction is impossible after losing terra of empire as a cultural whole in a new existential situation. Secondly, reterritorialization has to do rather with cultural revival that is possible in a new political situs. As such, it is neither reconstruction nor repetition.

I would rather use the concept “change of roles”, developed by M. Bakhtin (2000) in the interconnection between author and hero, instead of the concept “clash of civilizations” (Huntington 1996) for the analysis of territorialization including the mentioned modes. Firstly, historical discourse, inseparable from border’s discourse, presupposes certain heroes. Secondly, the all modes of territorialization have to do with the heroes who emerge in certain narration following from our life-world. Last but not least, the analogy between the individual and the nation allows speaking even about a nation as a tragic hero to be narrated by an individual. In this way the interconnection between the author and the hero is a source of analogy that should be interpreted as a mutual participation in transferring our life borders instead of only functional similarity. The different modes of territorialization having the vertical and horizontal dimensions on the cultural map presuppose space for changing their roles. This cultural dynamism corresponds to our existential activity while creating life story.

The perspective of the death, having in mind both an individual and his (her) nation, does not close our cultural space; on the contrary, it inspires our creativeness, the seeds of which take part in other narrations even after our death ⁷. That is why the culture to be interpreted as existential creation and cultural map has to do with life borders including their historical and social aspects. The individual life borders convergent with life borders of his (her) nation acquiring existential space while communicating with the heroes of historical communities. In this way, coexistence covers both horizontal communication in territorialization of a utopia and vertical communication in reterritorialization of the myths. The deterritorialization would play here the role of epočė using phenomenological terms, i.e. a kind of transferring from territorialization to reterritorialization and, vice versa, after suspending both of them. Later I shall analyse the dialectics of territorialization, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization in contemporary cultural space of the region. Now we should come back to our historical case because of moving without any support of empirical material (as a kind of infantry) in risky way too far in unknown terra.

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⁴. Not by accident, the alternative name of the new nation has been used in the Ruthenian language.
⁵. It should be noticed that the Lithuanian language is not Slavic.
⁶. Rising of T. Kościuszko.
⁷. More about it see (Kačerauskas 2009a).
The history of GDL is very illustrative: the periods of territorial declines in a physical sense are significant with the rise of cultural terra. That is the case of Alexander’s period (1492-1506) to be connected not only with the extension of writing culture (Lithuanian Metrica) and development of magnificent architecture (Saint Anna’s church, reconstruction of Rulers’ palace, the wall of Vilnius city) but also with the beginning of professional philosophy in Lithuania 8. Writing, building and philosophising are three cultural dimensions that intersect all three modes of territorialization. On the one hand, we can speak about certain terrae in arts (technai) of such human activities as writing, building and philosophising. These arts are developed as ability to transfer the existential borders keeping the ethical limits. Creative breaking of borders keeping certain limits characterizes the very art of life as an ability to move to unknown land, i.e. a kind of cultural territorialization. Using our metaphors of building we can interpret Saint Anna’s church as vertical dimension of novelty in city’s narrative while the wall corresponds to horizontal limits of tradition. The city wall serves as guaranty of safety (defending from enemies) and order (defending from free migration of people, commodities and finances). The Rulers’ palace being a fort and a source of national development inseparable from historical memory includes both mentioned functions. Building is a kind of writing on urban terra, which has been territorialized, deterritorialized and reterritorialized by every generation. Philosophy as an art of life (technē ton bion) 9 has to do with every art including building and writing while they being analogical take part in existential creation. In existential space the arts intersect each other creating new cultural territories to be fortificated.

As it was mentioned, we can notice a similar change of the territorialization’s modes in the last period of GDL’s “irreversible collapse”. Thus, the explosive rise of physical terra could be accompanied with the loss of the cultural one and, vice versa, the collapse of physical terra could initiate a revival and extent of the cultural one. The change of roles between different aspects of human terra signifies not linear multilayered development of culture as a fight for creative space or existential territory. Commission of Education opened a new ethical terra connected with enlightened, i.e. cultivated, being. Similarly, Constitution of 3rd May opened a new public coexistence to be fortified as legal order 10. In paradoxical way the latter territorialization provoked disorder (confederations of Vilnius and Targovica) and finally the loss of national terra (deterritorialization). However, reterritorialization allows interpreting Constitution of 3rd May as a source of our public terra during the coming ages.

Despite public integration in historical GDL, the concept of nation opens different perspectives and consequently different reterritorializations of this promised terra for such “imagined communities” as nations emerged at least two hundred years after the collapse of this empire. The mentioned processes of territorialization within GDL could be traced as well as a source for the becoming of such nations as the Belarusian and Ukrainian ones. What is more, we can notice some kind of nostalgia for former empire, nostalgia connected with aspirations of these nations to enter European terra imagined as a kind of paradise.

2. Past and future of GDL

Reterritorialization presupposes a temporal aspect, which regards all three modes because of dialectics between them. Firstly, evolution of an empire treated as the competition between territorialisation’s modes for the domination needs historical (temporal) approach. Secondly, the concept of the role change includes the terms of space and time in a double sense: every change needs some space and time, beside this space and time could also change their role. Thirdly, analogy between a mortal individual and the nation opens a death’s perspective that could be a source for creative aspirations inseparable from existence as development of life’s art. Finally, the other side of every dynamic, creative and innovative process emerged as phenomenon of coexistence, is temporality.

8. According to R. Plečkačaitis (2009), the professional philosophy in Lithuania started in 1507, after establishing Dominican particular school founded by Alexander.

9. More about philosophy as art of life see (Kačerauskas 2008b).

10. Change of the roles in the context of territorialization presupposes some paradoxes. One of them is the following: such hero of one public event (Commission of Education) as I.J. Masalskis (Masalski) emerges as antihero of another one (Kościanusko’s rising followed from Constitution of 3rd May).
As a subject of reterritorialization, GDL is both a gold past and imagined future for new national societies. Let us consider Belarus as one of such societies. On the one hand, GDL is a factor of Belarusian nation’s formation searching for different from Russia historical sources. Every historical discourse is a part of cultural territorialization inseparable from certain relationship between centre and periphery: historical imagination both follows and forms gravitation to national community, which is always historical. After inherited GDL as research subject Belarusian historicists defined their discourse as very different from Russian because of historical hostility between Lithuanian and Russian empires as competitors in the historical fight for territories. In other words, Belarusian historicists have defined a different cultural terra separated from the Russian one. The border of this terra, on the other hand, is not so clear because of belonging of Belarusian society to both GDL and Central Europe, a part of which GDL had been for ages. This ambivalent territorialization mirrors the change of role between centre and periphery: a new nation needs new centre for terra’s defining but it needs also belonging to the other centre for its coexistence. As a result, a theory of Slavic element being essential during GDL’s time emerged in Belarusian historiography (Haukoš 2007). The writing culture of GDL in Ruthenian as old Belarusian (Lithuanian chronicles, Lithuanian Metrica, Lithuanian Statut) purportedly is crucial. This theory emerged in the context of deficit of Belarusian language in public space of contemporary Belarus and could be interpreted as a kind of reterritorialization in order to support national feelings. The biggest danger for the development of this theory comes not from Lithuanian (as direct inheritors) side, but from the side of another new nation, i.e. Ukrainian as another GDL’s inheritor who claims this heritage for similar reason.

Writing as a kind of art of coexistence to be developed by every nation is inseparable from dialectics of territorialization’s modes. Writing in Old Russian (Ruthenian) in order to establish Lithuanian cultural terra had been ambivalent from the very beginning. After entering the space of Christian life-world in 1387 Lithuanian culture has assumed new features including the traditions of writing. Because of imperial politics the tradition of writing (and monks-writers) came from Russian terra while the first written records (Lithuanian chronicles) had been used for inscription of Lithuanian ruler’s dynasty into the community of European rulers (Palemonas myth). The Ruthenian language, serving Lithuanian ideology, has been a source of cultural territorialization: on the one hand, “Lithuanian” writings needed translation into Russian for publishing in Russia; on the other hand, it played the role of Lithuanian separatism after Lublin union at least for 130 years. In this way writing in Ruthenian had been an important art that signified both territorialization and detrerritorialization of Lithuanian life.

GDL is a source of belonging to Central Europe open to Western cultural terra, which has specific historical development. In this way GDL is not only a historical heritage of former empire to be shared between modern nations. GDL has become also a territory of a common future in a region imagined as Central Europe. In other words, historical memory that is inseparable from public imagination nurtures a kind of cultural terra open to all three modes of territorialization. Additionally, Central Europe as an imagined region and an “anti-Europe” (Delanty 2002) is possible thanks to historical images taking part in our political aspirations. GDL as a rim of Central Europe had been the very centre of fight for Euro-

11. I mean Belarus and in a smaller extent Ukraine. What concerns modern Lithuania, reterritorialization of GDL had been important here in the second half of 19th century. The modern and postmodern society could be defined following this criterion if postmodernity did not cover all modes of territorialization. As a result, we can treat the dialectics of territorialization’s mode as postmodern approach.

12. The historical discourse has been developed usually in Belarusian not only because of the role of history in national becoming but also because of cultural borders (territorialization) to be established between Belarusian and Russian cultures.

13. There is a number of lithuaniats in this one of the writing languages of GDL (beside Latin).

14. See (Bumblauskas 2008).

15. Beside the new written tradition, oral culture has been developed for hundred years.

16. This inscription as a kind of claim was very successful: in one hundred years the same Lithuanian dynasty ruled not only Lithuania (including Belarus and Ukraine), but also Poland, Hungary and Czech.

17. For instance, Belarus had laid claim to GDL’s (Jogaila’s) blazon.

18. More about Central Europe from the perspective of cultural regionalistics see (Sadowski 2009).
pean spiritual *terra* to be cultivated. In this way, we have a culture inseparable from communication between the generations. We deal with a kind of communication, which is not only historical. *Historical images have been used in our political terra and vice versa historical terrae have been understood in political perspective.* During every communication as a public action, our spiritual *terra* loses some borders to be understood, i.e. covered by one’s hermeneutic circle that is inevitably political and historical. This hermeneutic deteritorialization follows our searching for own *terra* as a background for identity being cultivated, i.e. from the very territorialization that could be considered as existential. It could be said about both individual and social identity, whereas an individual and his community interact changing their roles. A *terra* of a national community, which includes the imagined historical heroes, appears as environment for individual existence while cultivating this *terra* in a certain way of (de)(re)territorialization.

3. Instead of conclusion: new *situs* of territorialization

Nowadays we have another situation of (de)(re)territorialization. *Situs* corresponds to a certain living environment that covers both historical imagination and future aspirations. On the one hand, there are no more borders between Lithuanian and Polish *terrae*. However, this deteritorialization follows historical precedent of a deteritorialization inside *Rzeczpospolita* as Republic of Both Nations, i.e. historical precedent of political Union. On the other hand, we have a kind of territorialization between such new political body as European Union and such “anti-European” country as Belarus. Once again, we can question validity of this territorialization, while there had been no border inside integrative society of GDL, image of which has been alive as an integrative factor in the different sides of the border until now (reterritorialization). In this way GDL is both a precedent of (de)(re)territorialization and a source for cultural *terra* on both sides of the border to be transferred for the sake of our existential creation. We deal with reterritorialization while empire is as a source for nation’s formatting.

I shall finish with the following questions: What role does nostalgia of an empire in formatting of a nation play? In what way could a historical image become a political factor of a nation’s future? What role does historical imagination in our existential creation play? Whether and how territorialization, deteritorialization and reterritorialization changing their roles influence our identity? What aspects of transferring the borders there are in culture as cultivating a spiritual *terra*? What is the connection between the dynamism of territorialization’s modes and our life-world to be created by every generation? Could we speak about the change of roles between different territorialization’s modes as a source for changing our historical *situs*? What borders does this change have? What are the borders of such political body as Central Europe? What is border of border’s discourse?

REFERENCES


19. More about it see (Kačerauskas 2009).
Grand Duchy of Lithuania as source of cultural territorialization

Abstract: This text presents economic-organizational premises for creating a construction cluster of transborder range in Podlaskie region. The evaluation of general economic situation in Polish construction field and the degree of construction companies’ concentration in Podlaskie region are the focus of attention. Organizational conditions for creating the transborder cluster in construction business are identified. The results of questionnaire surveys are broadly discussed. They were aimed at defining the construction companies of Podlaskie region readiness to cooperate in the frames of a cluster initiative.

Introduction

At the time of economic transformation in Poland the vital changes took place not only in the size and real structure of the assembly-construction production, implementation of new material and technological solutions, economic situation of the construction companies or the production means ownership. These factors had also a direct impact onto the state and structure of employment in the building trade, the investment process organization and the cooperation and competition of companies.

Further adaptation of Polish building trade to the evolving trends in global market and the changes in Polish economy have come quite quickly. Nowadays, the building trade has become one of the most important sectors of national economy in creating the economical growth and workplaces. The contribution of this sector in the GDP in Poland accounts for 6%, and the annual average employment comes to 450 thousand people and is the source of about 10% of all newly created workplaces in the country’s economy.

The crash in the building trade, after a three – year – investment boom, imposes a search for new and effective means leading to the improvement of the companies’ competitiveness and at the same time to securing their development. Can creating a transborder building cluster in Podlaskie become a ‘remedy’ for the hard times? The analysis of the conditions and rationale for creating such a cluster is the topic of this work.

Evaluating the level of building companies concentration in Podlaskie province.

The location index LQ (Bergman, Feser 1999; O’Donoghue, Gleave 2004 419-427) was used to evaluate the trade concentration of companies in Podlaskie province. This index is a good starting point to identify the concentration of certain industries and to analyse the potential clusters, which should be extended by e.g. an expert-based research method.
The location coefficient was calculated according to the formula:

\[
LQ = \frac{\frac{E_{ij}}{E_j}}{\frac{E_{in}}{E_n}}
\]

where:

- \(E_{ij}\) – variable in section \(i\) in the region \(j\) (province);
- \(E_j\) – variable in all sections in the region \(j\);
- \(E_{in}\) – variable in section \(i\) in the reference region \(n\) (Poland);
- \(E_n\) – variable in all sections in the reference region \(n\).

The calculation of the index is based on the data from CSO (Central Statistical Office) dealing with the subjects of, according to the PKD (Polish Classification of Business Activities) 2004, section E (building trade). The analysed variable was the number of building companies at the end of December 2008 and 2009.

The analysis of the location index calculated for the building trade (2008), in general, shows that there is higher concentration of building companies in Podlaskie province than on average in the country and reaches 1.01 (Chart 1). The same index value was noticed in Dolnośląskie province and Warmińsko-Mazurskie province, whereas the highest in Wielkopolskie province – 1.13. The specialization of Podlaskie province \(^1\) is noticeable in plastering companies – 1.93 (the highest index of all the provinces), floor topping, putting wallpaper and facing walls (1.40), glassing (1.32), painting (1.30) and building roads and railway tracks – 1.28 (the highest index of all the provinces) \(^2\). For other building sectors, mentioned in Chart 1, the location index LQ proves higher than average concentration.

For further analyses the sub-classes were placed at the development matrix (Picture 1).

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1. The index value LQ>1.25
2. High value of the index LQ for the sea port building companies is a result of the fact that out of 15 companies in Poland only one is based in Podlaskie province. Therefore it is hard to talk about specialization in this branch.
### Chart 1 - LQ index for chosen classes of section E – building trade (PKD 2004) the state of 31.12.2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>PKD 2004</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General building work in</td>
<td>General building work in buildings construction – 4521A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buildings construction – 4521A</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof constructions and</td>
<td>Roof constructions and covering – 4522Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>covering – 4522Z</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building roads and railway</td>
<td>Building roads and railway tracks – 4523A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tracks – 4523A</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building sea ports – 4524A</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation work – 4525B</td>
<td>Foundation work – 4525B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiring of buildings and</td>
<td>Wiring of buildings and constructions – 4531A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constructions – 4531A</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulation work – 4532Z</td>
<td>Insulation work – 4532Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central heating and</td>
<td>Central heating and ventilation systems installation – 4533A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ventilation systems</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastering – 4541Z</td>
<td>Plastering – 4541Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction woodwork –</td>
<td>Construction woodwork – 4542Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4542Z</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor topping, putting</td>
<td>Floor topping, putting wallpaper and facing walls – 4543A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wallpaper and facing walls – 4543A</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting – 4544A</td>
<td>Painting – 4544A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glassing – 4544B</td>
<td>Glassing – 4544B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction and demolition</td>
<td>Construction and demolition equipment and service hiring – 4550Z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment and service hiring – 4550Z</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index LQ – Total in building</td>
<td>Index LQ – Total in building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Own study based on CSO data
The development matrix of building trade sub-classes in which \( \text{LQ} \geq 1 \)

**Source:** own work based on GUS data.

**Table 2 - Building companies acc. to sub-classes in which indicator of \( \text{LQ} > 1 \)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-classes PKD 2004</th>
<th>Number of subjects 2009</th>
<th>( \Delta ) number of subjects 2004–2009</th>
<th>Share in total building trade in Podlaskie province</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General building work in buildings construction – 45.21.A</td>
<td>3378</td>
<td>-5.14%</td>
<td>33.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof constructions and covering – 45.22.Z</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>32.08%</td>
<td>5.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building roads and railway tracks – 45.23.A</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>30.27%</td>
<td>2.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building sea ports – 45.24.A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation work – 45.25.B</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.70%</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiring of buildings and constructions – 45.31.A</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>2.11%</td>
<td>7.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulation work – 45.32.Z</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>158.49%</td>
<td>1.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central heating and ventilation systems installation – 45.33.A</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>1.97%</td>
<td>4.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastering – 45.41.Z</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>130.07%</td>
<td>7.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction woodwork – 45.42.Z</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>15.94%</td>
<td>4.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor topping, putting wallpaper and facing walls – 45.43.A</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>23.75%</td>
<td>9.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting – 45.44.A</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>19.01%</td>
<td>4.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glassing – 45.44.B</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-15.15%</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction and demolition equipment and service hiring – 45.50.Z</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>-20.91%</td>
<td>0.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total in building trade</strong></td>
<td>9984</td>
<td>10.15%</td>
<td>82.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** own study based on CSO data
The biggest chances of development have the sub-classes that appeared in Area I in which \( \Delta LQ > 0 \) and \( LQ > 1.25 \). They can be called peculiar driving forces of regional economy. The area was filled by the companies classified in sub-classes 45.32.Z – building insulation works and 45.44.A – painting. There were almost 550 subjects in total. Area II, in which \( \Delta LQ > 0 \) and \( 1.25 \geq LQ \geq 1 \) was composed with companies that can hardly be described as specialization but their density of appearance in Podlaskie province was higher than the average in Poland and the dynamics of concentration indicator was positive. This area included more than 520 companies working in roof constructions and covering. The III area of the matrix was composed by companies that can be described as regional specialization, but the LQ indicator dynamics in 2009-2004 was negative. There were foundation work companies (45.25.B), plastering (45.41.Z), glassing (45.44.B) and floor topping, putting wallpaper and facing walls (45.43.A). 1723 companies were registered in those 4 sub-classes in total and half of them in sub-class 45.43.A. The IV area of the matrix included sub-classes in which \( 1.25 \geq LQ \geq 1 \) and LQ dynamics was negative. In the whole analyzed group there were the least promising increase areas. They included companies in general building work in building construction (45.21.A), wiring of buildings and constructions (45.31.A) and central heating and ventilation system installation (45.33.A), construction woodwork (45.42.Z) and construction and demolition equipment and service hiring (45.50.Z). This was the most numerous group of companies including 5204 subjects in total which was over a half of all the companies in the building trade (Table 2).

In the sectors where the index \( LQ > 1 \), over 82% of all building companies operate in Podlaskie province (Chart 2). It is worth mentioning that, although the location index is high, the presence of companies from the sea ports building, foundation work, glassing, building and demolition equipment and service hiring, in the building structure in Podlaskie province is quite small – below 1%.

1. **Determinants of the general economic situation in Polish building trade**

The analysis of the market show that, in the last couple of years, the building trade has been one of the most dynamic branches of Polish economy. It is attested by very high indexes of the basic economic parameters’ dynamics in building trade in comparison to other sectors of economy.

Moreover, our building trade achieves the results which place it among the leaders, especially in the sold production dynamics, employment or the factual effects. After the recession in 2000-2004, since 2005 there has been a strong trend of development in Polish building trade, which was stopped by the world economic crisis in 2009. A considerable increase of the investment activities in the latest years (annual average of the investment expenditure dynamics in 2006-2008 was 17.8%) created good conditions for the building sector development.

The annual average for this period was 13.3% and was nearly six times higher then the average development level of other European Union countries.

Picture 2 shows the Polish building trade increase pace from 2005 until the first quarter of 2009.
Output of building-assembly production increase pace from 2005 until the first quarter of 2009


The building trade growth was accompanied by the increase in employment – 7.2% annual average and 12.3% annual increase in an average wage in the building trade positively sets it apart from other sectors of Polish economy. The significant improvement of economic relations came as an effect of good market conditions. The sales profitability index for 2007 and 2008 reached correspondingly 5.3% and 6.8% and stabilized at 4.1% in the period from January to April 2009. The results for a group of companies from the building sector, achieved from 2006 till April 2009 are presented in Chart 3.

Chart 3 - Chosen measures of evaluation of the situation in building trade in 2006 – April 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Building-assembly production dynamics</td>
<td>115.9</td>
<td>113.0</td>
<td>110.9</td>
<td>99.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Investment expenditure dynamics</td>
<td>116.6</td>
<td>120.4</td>
<td>116.4</td>
<td>b.d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Average employment increase</td>
<td>104.8</td>
<td>111.5</td>
<td>105.5</td>
<td>105.0³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Average salary gross increase</td>
<td>109.6</td>
<td>114.4</td>
<td>113.0</td>
<td>107.0⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Prices in building production dynamics</td>
<td>103.2</td>
<td>107.4</td>
<td>104.8</td>
<td>100.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sales profitability index [%]</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study based on the CSO data – Statistics Bulletin No 4/2009

Satisfactory economic results obtained by the building companies from 2006 to 2008 mean that the economic condition of the building companies is improving, which creates a good base to survive the crisis and preserve the abilities for further development, mainly by conducting research and implementing organizational and technical innovations.

4. Ditto
In April 2009 the evaluations of the general market conditions in building trade are less pessimistic than at the beginning of the year. However, they show the lowest index for the comparative period during the previous nine years. They are created by negative evaluation of the present and future order book, resulting from a lowered demand, building-assembly production level, big competition, financial situation of the companies and changing barriers in business. The biggest problems, declared by the companies, are connected with the competition of other companies (59% studied companies in April, 55% in March and 47% in April 2008). Compared with April of the previous year, the barriers connected with insufficient demand (from 21% to 51%, 50% in March this year), difficulties with obtaining credits (from 7% to 16% in April and March this year) and competition of companies increased, whereas the importance of barriers connected with the lack of qualified staff (from 51% to 21%, and 21% in March this year), cost of materials (from 36% to 25% in April and March this year) and workforce costs (from 58% to 50%, 49% in March this year), decreased. The distribution difficulties in heading up a building company, that were changing in the last period, is presented in Chart 4.

Chart 4 - Barriers of building-assembly enterprise declared by the companies (in %) in a period of 12.2004–04.2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Competition of companies</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Workforce costs</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lack of qualified staff</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cost of materials</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Financial cost of business</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Insufficient demand</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Difficulties with obtaining credits</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Insufficient supply of equipment, and raw materials</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Weather conditions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** own study based on CSO data

On the basis of the economic trends research conducted by CSO in 2004-2009 it can be noticed that during this period:
- the importance of the lack of qualified staff, which was rapidly increasing at the time of a dynamic investments growth, goes down., especially at big companies;
- there is a significant lack of demand for building services, which became a vital barrier for functioning of small and middle-sized companies;
- the competition on the investment-building market, which at the beginning of 2009 may become an important impediment for nearly 60% of companies, mainly small ones, increases;
- the importance of obstacles in obtaining credits for current business both by the investors and the building companies, increases;
- a decline of capacity absorption index, which in 2007 was 88%.

The noticeable direct foreign investments inflow and significant absorption of European Union funds, despite the investment demand decline, create real rationale for a stable growth in building trade in Poland. Taking advantage of the chance for a significant progress in building trade will depend on both
the management of the building companies as the economic centre, creating favourable conditions of legal and financial regulations.

2. Organizational conditions for creating an inter-boundary building cluster

The characteristic feature of the executive potential in building trade is its fragmented structure, resulting mainly from the technological specifics of the building process. Over 95% of employees in building trade work in small businesses, with the employment rate up to 10 persons. In small and middle-sized businesses there is only 4.1 of the workforce potential, and only 0.05% is employed in big companies (more than 249 persons) \(^5\).

The analysed investment market reactions show that, while limiting the investment level and intensifying competition, the price becomes the decisive competitive instrument. Only the companies which possess resources that allow them to reach the position of a leader in production prime costs can afford to offer the lowest prices and therefore gain the competitive predominance on the market.

The present participation of the global competitors in our building market, the repeated concentration of the production capital in the sector and increasing demand of the investors will force the companies to create supplementary competitive resources. They would make it possible to apply new competitive instruments based on the efficient use of the arising opportunities, modern technologies, high level of organization of the investment process and company management.

The trend towards improving the competitiveness compels the companies to concentrate on the key processes, highly mastered and difficult to be imitated by others. On the other hand, the spheres which do not bring any value and generate costs, lower the quality or impede quick reactions to the market demands can be assigned to other subjects.

The subject literature proves that the concentration of the building trade output potential, as a reaction to the expected increase of the investment expenditure, the lack of specialized staff and cheap subcontractors, the change of a real structure of investments can be achieved by:

- fusion of contractor companies;
- overtaking the local businesses;
- creating consortiums;
- creating clusters.

The building trade in Podlaskie is situated on an average level in comparison to the whole country as far as the basic economic measures are taken into consideration. There are 10,259 building companies which employ more than 9 persons, which makes 11.85% share of the economic subjects structure in Podlaskie province and 2.49% of the national building trade \(^6\). In 2008 there was 18% increase of the building-assembly production, alongside with a 2% increase of an average employment, which proves a big developmental potential of this sector. Between January and April 2009 the economic relations were less favourable both in the building trade in Podlaskie and in the whole building sector.

The characteristic feature of the building trade in Podlaskie is diversification of the market they operate on. Traditional building companies which have their head office in Podlaskie province operate in the markets of Mazowieckie, Lubelskie, Warmińsko – Mazurskie provinces and were contractors or are now operating in the East markets (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine).

Close neighbourhood and relations of building companies from Podlaskie with the ones in Belarus show one more aspect of the Polish building cluster entering the border-cooperation. Belarus can become a promising market for the building service exporters from Poland. The building production growth pace in Belarus has been recently similar to our building dynamics and reached 16.7% annual average between 2005 and 2007. The building trade share in creating the national income was also high – in 2008 – 11.4%,


\(^6\) The statement on the social-economical situation of Podlaskie province, Statistic Office Białystok no. 3/2009.
in creating workplaces – 9.8%, with a high profitability – 12.4% (2007) at the same time. The Belarus Republic is carrying out The National Programme of a Complex Building Trade Development for 2006-2010. It assumes increasing the building trade potential so that in 2011 it will be able to build 1m2 of housing for one citizen. Unfortunately, due to the economic crisis, in 2009 the growth tendency is weaker also in Belarusian building trade.

Analysing the possibilities of development and cooperation between the bordering countries in the building business it worth noticing that the element of an advantage of Polish contractors is their ability to function in a situation of quite complicated red-tape conditions, as well as the knowledge of their culture, specific way of thinking and mentality of our Eastern neighbours. Solving similar economic problems which both Polish and Belarusian building sector face can be done together by e.g. cluster connections.

3. The analysis of the questionnaire study of the companies’ willingness to start the cooperation within a building cluster

The study on the location index LQ confirm a big concentration of building companies in Podlaskie province, which means a big potential to create a building cluster. As the index itself does not provide any information on the connections between individual sectors and subjects there were questionnaire study conducted in order to define the level of the building companies’ willingness to tighten their cooperation within a cluster structure.

The research was conducted at the beginning of 2009 among a group of chosen building companies (section F PKD – Polish classification of Business Activities 2004) with their head offices in Podlaskie province. The questionnaire was addressed to the owners or the management of the companies. Most companies are middle-sized, operating on the market for more than 16 years, and their owners or management graduated of higher schools (Chart 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment (persons)</th>
<th>The age of the company (years)</th>
<th>The level of education of the owner or management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 49</td>
<td>Up to 5</td>
<td>technical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.51%</td>
<td>2.44%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 249</td>
<td>6 – 9</td>
<td>secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.73%</td>
<td>4.88%</td>
<td>4.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 250</td>
<td>10 – 15</td>
<td>Higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.76%</td>
<td>17.07%</td>
<td>95.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.44%</td>
<td>41.46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.88%</td>
<td>34.15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 20</td>
<td>34.15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.07%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20</td>
<td>4.88%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95.12%</td>
<td>95.12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study

The respondents were asked to evaluate the general situation of the building companies in Podlaskie province. Most of them (75.61%) stated that there were some leading companies in the sector. Only about 2.5% believe that there was one leading company. The rest of subjects (22%) believed that there was no evident leader. In most cases the cooperation was evaluated as weak or none at all. Less that 37% reckon that the cooperation was satisfying. A bit more than 12% of the respondents stated that there was a deep trust among the competitors. A decided majority – over 73% thought that it was weak, and nearly 15% that the companies did not trust each other.

In spite of a low estimation of cooperation among the companies operating in the building sector as well as the trust among the competitors, the defined majority (about 54%) believed that it was possible to tighten the mutual cooperation among the building companies in Podlaskie province in order to increase their competitiveness. Small companies, very shortly operating in the market, were the most sceptical (Chart 6).

8. The study could not have been conducted among all the subjects because of the refusal from some of the subjects’ management.
Chart 6 - The respondents’ opinion on tightening the cooperation among the companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the building sector of Podlaskie province</th>
<th>Tightening the mutual cooperation is possible</th>
<th>Tightening of mutual cooperation is not possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>58.62%</td>
<td>41.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age of companies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5 years</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 9</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 15</td>
<td>57.14%</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 – 19</td>
<td>47.06%</td>
<td>52.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 and more</td>
<td>64.29%</td>
<td>35.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education of the owner, management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secondary</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>53.85%</td>
<td>46.15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study based on own research

If there was an idea of creating a building companies’ cluster, 75.5% of the respondents would like to participate in it, because:
- they are not afraid of cooperation with their competitors – 67.74%;
- they would benefit from participating in such an initiative (better access to laboratories, training, contract strength, etc.) – 58.06%;
- they would hope for the profit increase due to a joint actions, e.g. promotion – 61.29%.

The companies which declared the unwillingness to accede the cluster on the day of the study gave the following reasons:
- reluctance to cooperate closely with the competitors – 80%;
- no conviction for such an idea, because the clusters work only on paper or in theoretical divagations of scientists – 70%;
- lack of trust in the competitors – 40%;
- no benefits for the company – 20%.

If the cluster was really created, its development, according to the respondents, would depend on the activity of its members. Various programmes co–financed by Poland and the European Union would also be helpful. The smallest role was attributed to universities, schools and other educational organizations (Picture 3).

Both my own research on behavior of companies in Podlaskie province and numerous publications referring to Polish business indicate the presence of so called “lonely wolf” syndrome that is so to say cultural inability of entering into alliances and local cooperation between institutions. According to some authors (Kuc, Żemigala 2010: 94) this resulted in the failure of consolidation initiatives for some important trades such as building, meat processing, and shipbuilding, banking based on Polish capital and not always advantageous for Polish economy taking some, very often most valuable, companies over by foreign investors. The ground of such behavior is a low level of mutual trust that applies not only to Polish society but also particularly business circles. Therefore it seems that the presence of a leader who would initiate and coordinate cooperation both inside and outside the net is a necessary element of a cluster creation and development. Checking the expectations of building trade companies in Podlaskie province towards characteristics of a person who would eventually play the role of a leader (Picture 4) seemed therefore interesting.
Picture 3 - The respondents opinion on the influence of various factors on the development

Source: Own study based on own research

Majority of the respondents indicated as very important characteristics of the leader: experience (70.7%) and success in running a business(53.7%), organizational skills (68.3%) and common respect among businessmen (53.7%). 48.8% of the respondents mentioned non-combativeness and ability of moderating conflicts. Whether the person was a representative of authority (e.g. Regional Authority Office, Marshal’s Office, Local Authority Office) was defined a factor of very limited importance. Almost 44% of the research group regarded this factor as of no importance at all and 34.1% that its importance was small. Over 34% of the respondents assigned little importance to both education and degrees and “informal” contacts that might help the person in informal actions.

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Picture 4 - Required characteristic of a cluster leader in opinion of the researched companies

Source: based on own research results
Summary

The Development Strategy for Podlaskie Province till 2020 states three key spheres of cluster development: food industry, wood (including furniture) industry and machine industry. Moreover, due to a high, although not fully exploited, potential of the region, which may influence the economic development of the province, tourist industry was also included in the cluster spheres of support. Innovations and investment in these four sectors will be treated in a specific way, which means that they will get additional points when evaluating projects for European Union grants.

It may seem thus, that with such a big support in the mentioned above sectors, the development of cluster initiatives will be especially dynamic. However, the study conducted in 2008\(^\text{10}\) show that the picture is less optimistic, we should not really be talking about cluster, but rather about seeds of clusters. In spite of a big engagement and support from the local authorities and other organizations, the creation of a cluster initiative in the wood industry sector in Podlaskie province was not successful. There is only a seed in Suwałki region. Some companies, pointed out as the leading ones in other key sectors, treat the action aiming at creating clusters as a research projects, but not as the ones which have a real chance to succeed. On the other hand, it should be noticed that there are some positive actions, such as the initiative of Podlaskie Cluster of Linen, which started without any help from the administration or other organizations and institutions. This Cluster associates the companies which are the producers and distributors of linen in Poland. Such a situation may result from the fact that the key spheres of clusters development in Podlaskie were chosen without any deepened analysis of situation in those sectors and defining the real chances for their creation and development.

The presented analysis suggests that in Podlaskie there is a big potential for creating inter-boundary building trade cluster. The initiative should start on the Polish side, which does not seem to be a problem, as the companies in Podlaskie are ready to start the cooperation within the limits of such a structure. Thanks to a many years’ contacts and cooperation they possess the skills necessary to operate in complicated legal regulations and Belarusian red-tape reality. What is more, the knowledge of the culture, specific way of thinking and mentality of our Eastern neighbours should make the tightening of the cooperation at some levels much easier, not forgetting about keeping the competitiveness at other levels. It should be remembered, that every cluster has its own unique character, because it operates in specific for each location conditions. The organizational structures and leadership formalization solutions vary a lot. Especially important are the cultural conditions, the cooperation between the competitors history and mutual rancour and emotional aspects, which may influence the form of cooperation. The decision making should be preceded by deepened study among the building trade companies, both in Poland and Belarus.

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10. The study (questionnaires and interview) included the companies which belong to a, so called, food industry cluster map and the ones from the Podlaskie Cluster of metalworking industry. More in: A. Wasiluk (2008).
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BELARUSIAN RULING ELITE.
THE DYNAMISM OF CHANGES IN THE NOMENCLATURE
AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

Kamil Kłysiński
Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan

Abstract: Viktar Sheiman’s silovik clan, which previously dominated the Belarusian nomenklatura system, was replaced in 2007-2008 by a group led by President Lukashenka’s oldest son Viktar. The result was the emergence of a system based on an unwritten agreement of dividing up the zones of influence between the clan of Lukashenka’s son and a group of technocrats led by PM Siarhei Sidorsky. This new nomenklatura arrangement seems to be much more stable than the previous ones. During the period in question, the nomenklatura also gained the possibility to acquire property and generate revenues legally. Members of the current elite have a pragmatic attitude towards reality and are aware of the need to modernise Belarus’ political and economic system. However, this does not imply that democratisation is beginning in Belarus – the nomenklatura’s main objective is to retain its current grasp on power, which will restrain political change in Belarus.

1. General characteristics of the Belarusian nomenclature system

The classical oligarchy system, in which there are a few strong influential groups, capable – basing on the property owned and the capital – of taking independent actions in various realms of political life, and in extreme cases even of establishing the internal and external country policy, for many years has been non-existent in Belarus. Belarusian nomenclature groups were under strict control of the president Aleksander Lukaszenka, who defined their areas of action, the limits of competence and influence. He was also the main arbiter in cases of an influence competition between the nomenclature groups (clans).

The main rule Lukaszenka followed more or less till the end of 2006 was not allowing any of the groups to become too strong at the expense of any other groups, which helped maintain a safe for him stability in the nomenclature system. Therefore, from time to time there were single demissions or wider staff rotations at the highest national level, often justified officially as being actions taken against corruption. Moreover, Lukaszenka often agreed to situations, in which the competence and the responsibilities of the authorities overlapped and collided, which even more stimulated each of the bodies to compete and fight for power.

The president’s control was additionally strengthened by the fact that the nomenclature had no wider access to property, and the country remained the dominant owner – each of the groups controlled first of all the flow of capital in the most profitable branches of economy.

In 2007-2009 a new nomenclature system, based on slightly different rules, was established. The president is still the main decision-making body and continues to control the machinery of state. However, the basis of the present system is not a temporary arrangement of the influence groups being the result of yet another staff rotation, but a relatively permanent alliance of the two dominant clans, the essence of which is a non-written division of competence and influence areas. Moreover, an important person stabilizing the new nomenclature system is the leader of one of the clans – the older of the president’s sons, Viktar. Despite strong position, none of the clans is capable of taking actions in the field of internal and external politics independently of the president; they can only try to convince the head of the state as to certain solutions.
An important feature of the new set-up is the inclusion of the president to the non-written contract together with the nomenclature of the two key issues: the agreement to buying property on a wider scale and the legalization of income. As a result, we can already talk about the initial prerequisites – the so far restricted housing sector and the trade and service sector – the enfranchisement process of part of the machinery of state.

Despite the contract with nomenclature Łukaszenka, fearing its excessive consolidation, has been consistently blocking the clerical apparatus’s efforts to institutionalize his own position in the country through establishing a party of power. A proof of this can be the failure of the realization of the project of establishing the first after 1991 Belarusian party of power called “Bielaja Rus”. After a few years of the nomenclature’s efforts in 2007 Aleksander Łukaszenka finally agreed to the establishment and registration of a social movement under the above name, however, he strongly disagreed to the conversion of this structure into a political party, which slowed the organizational process down. As a result, the first gathering of the social association “Bielaja Rus” took place on 25th October 2008. Till then the organization did not show too much activity. Thereby, the regime’s political base still has a non-party character, and is composed mainly of the army, power structures, management staff in economy sectors and a number of social associations (e.g. war veterans and invalids, women organizations, etc.). It is an important element of the concept of exercising power by Aleksander Łukaszenka, who has for years been consistently creating his image as a national leader, coming into direct contact with the nation, without complex party structures.

2. The reorganization of the Belarusian nomenclature system in 2007-2009. The rise of importance of Wiktar Łukaszenka’s clan and the strengthening of the technocrats’ position

Till the beginning of 2007 the ‘siłowik’ clan was dominant in the Belorussian nomenclature system. The group consisted mainly of the officers of the Belarusian departments of power (order and security bodies), including those of the Secretariat of the Security Council, KGB, and MSW. The leader of this formation was the Secretary of the Security Council, Wiktar Szejman (Wiktor Szejman) 1 – one of the most trusted co-workers of A. Łukaszenka, involved in all the actions of the regime condemned by the international community – including disappearances of politicians, businessmen and journalists at the turn of 1999 and 2000. Because of his actual and formal position, he carried out the function of a controller and a coordinator of the work of the Belarusian security structures. Moreover, the president used to provisionally assign him the task of disciplining the nomenclature groups, or their individual representatives. Szejman supported repression policy towards the democratic forces, non-governmental organizations and independent media. As far as the external action is concerned, he emphasized the development of contacts with non-European countries – for example with Venezuela and Colombia, which he dealt with himself – with a strong attitude towards the UE and the USA. Among other main representatives of this group were gen. Hienadź Niewyhłas (Giennadij Niewygłaz) – chief of the Presidential Administration of the RB, currently not holding any position, Dmitry Dąmaszkiewicz (Dymitrij Domaszkiewicz) – the governor of Minsk district, currently the Chief of Presidential Affairs, Petr Miklaszewicz (Piotr Miklaszewicz) – the Attorney General, currently chief of the Constitutional Court, Sucharenka (Stiepan Sucharenko) – chief of KGB, currently an ambassador of the RB in Armenia.

The two remaining nomenclature groups – the szklowsko-mohylewski clan and the technocrats clan – had a less important role to play in the country. The first group consisted of the local elite representatives from the Mohylewski district, especially from the Szklowski area (county), from which the president comes. They were often his acquaintances and colleagues from the period of his career in the local structures of the BSRR communist party and his political activity at the beginning of the 1990s. The leader of this group was for many years Uladzimir Kanaplot (Władimir Konoplew) – the chairman of the Chamber of Representatives, i.e. the lower house of the Parliament, currently not holding any office, and the main

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1. For months the information as to the whereabouts of colonel Szejman was missing. Only in January 2009 the spokesman of the Security Council Wikientij Kliueznik revealed that he is currently working in the Presidential Administration as an advisor of the head of the state.
area of influence of its representatives were the management positions in the Circuit Executive Committees in the whole country. The second formation, on the other hand, was composed mainly of the management staff of national corporations and concerns. Siarhiej Sidorski (Siergiej Sidorski), the prime minister of the RB and Uladzimir Siemaszka (Wladimira Siemaszka), the first vice-prime minister, were considered to be its leaders.

At the beginning of 2007 the first voices for a serious change in the Belarusian nomenclature system appeared. On January 10th on the strength of a presidential decree Aleksander Łukaszenka’s oldest son, Wiktar, who previously held the position of one of the head’s of the state advisors for national security affairs, was co-opted to the members of the Security Council of the RB. It was a signal proving the fact that the president had decided to increase his son’s role in the country, and at the same time at his career in the structures of power. As a result, gradually a new and the youngest group started to form around him – called the youth clan or (less often) the family. In Wiktar’s proximity there were mainly young and dynamic national officials, often not directly connected to any of the existing groups, and at the same time interested in forming a new influential nomenclature formation. Among them there were, for example, Natalia Pietkiewicz – vice chief of the Presidential Administration, Aleh Proleskouski (Oleg Proleskowski) – vice chief of the Presidential Administration for ideology Affairs, currently the Minister of Information, Wasylij Matuszeuski (Wasilij Matuszewskij) – vice chief of the Central Bank, Usiewolod Janczewski (Wsiewołod Janczewskij) – vice chief of the Ideology Department, gen. Ihar Raczkowski (Igor Raczkowski) – currently the chief of the National Frontier Committee and Uladzimir Makiej (Władimir Makiej) – presidential advisor for foreign affairs, currently the chief of the Presidential Administration, who due to his extraordinarily good contact with the president and his big influence on the president’s son is considered to be the gray eminence in the clan.

The rise of Wiktar’s importance in the national hierarchy led to a wave of speculation as to the beginning of the realization of the “successor” project, i.e. his gradual preparation to take the highest office in the country in the next presidential elections in 2011 (or at the end of 2010). However, the following months showed that Wiktar Łukaszenka’s main role is taking over the control over the national order and security bodies and the financial benefits resulting from it. The first step was the subordination of the National Committee of the Frontier Army of the RB (currently the National Frontier Committee) – on 10th April colonel Ihar Raczkouski, Wiktar’s protégé (a few months later promoted to the general’s rank), became its chairman. Further activity aimed at widening the influence area meant an inevitable conflict with W. Szejman’s group, responsible for this sphere. A confrontation rose in the spring/summer 2007, when the officers of KGB and the Secretary of the Security Council – who were at that time controlled by the silowik group – made an attempt to stop the expansion of the youth clan in controlling the lucrative sectors of economy. As a result, in July it led to, inter alia, a battery of – acting on behalf of Wiktar’s group – chief of the National Control Committee, Zianon Lomać (Zenon Łomatij), which was the direct cause of the demission of the chief of KGB, gen. Sziapan Sucharenka, and of most of his alternates on 19th July. His office was taken by the chief of the Presidential Security Service, Jurij Żadobin (Juriy Zadobin).

In this way Szejman lost his control over one of the force bodies. It was the beginning of a gradual degradation both of his own position, as well as the whole group. With his father’s support Wiktar Łukaszenka was becoming more and more prominent participant of the influence game, which brought to his side the two important for the control of the situation in the country chiefs of the national bodies – the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the National Control Committee. The events that followed were a continuation of the process of diminishing of formal and actual importance of the silowik group. In November 2007 Szejman was removed from the position of the presidential advisor for national security affairs, and as a result Wiktar became the only person holding this post. During the same month, the officers of KGB

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2. Alaksander Łukaszenka in his official speeches on numerous occasions strongly denied the rumors that he was planning to nominate his son for his successor. On 12th April 2007 he stated that “in the foreseeable perspective Alaksander Łukaszenka is going to be the president of Belarus”, adding also that “neither the first son, nor the second one will become the president, and if any of them then the third one – the youngest”. At the same time, using the occasion, he publicly mentioned his illegitimate, a few-year-old son. Apart from this, the rumors as to appointing Wiktar the leader of the “Bielaja Rus’” association, which could become the party of power, and at the same time a way to promote the new president were not confirmed.
and the Security Council, having been accused of a battery of Zianon Łomac, were convicted to confinement or imprisonment. It was supposed to be a signal that Szejman was no longer capable of protecting his people, which is one of the main conditions for any nomenclature group to last. Together with a gradual loss of formal competence of the silovik group leader, there was a reduction of the financial base of this clan.

A series of demissions in July 2008 marked the symbolic end of the silovik group. President Aleksander Łukaszenka at a special consultation devoted to the examination of the causes of an explosion on 3rd July in Minsk at a concert organized to celebrate the Independence Day, blamed the Secretary of the Security Council of the RB Wiktar Szejman and connected to him chief of the Presidential Administration Hienadz Niewyňhas for the failure to take proper security measures during a national holiday. As a result, they were both removed from office, and their place was taken by Wiktar’s clan representatives – Jurij Żadobin 3 became the new leader of the Security Council, while the function of the chief of the Presidential Administration was taken by Uladzimir Makiej. Additionally, the post of the chief of KGB, from which Zabodin resigned, was taken by gen. Wadzim Zajceu (Wadim Zajcew) 4, transferred from the command of the frontier army.

It seems that the explosion in Minsk served as an excuse to finally remove Wiktar Szejman and people connected to him from the highest national posts. A completion of the process was the October demission of the – seen as a member of the silovik group – commander of the Special Purpose Brigade MSW colonel Dmitr Pawliczenka (Dmitrij Pawliczenka), know for brutal pacification actions against the opposition. Within the following months the wave of demissions affected the officials at the circuit level, which meant a total disappearance of Szejman’s groups in country structures. Thereby, the period of his dominance in Belorussian nomenclature, which lasted a few years, was over. One the degree of the MSW submission was unclear. Even though the chief of the department, Uladzimir Naumau (Wladimir Naumow), de facto conformed to the youth group, he did not join it directly. Therefore, to ensure full loyalty of his department, Wiktar initiated staff purge in his management. During a consultation as to corruption abatement on 13th November 2008 president Aleksander Łukaszenka accused a number of high country officials of illegal financial transactions, and on this basis he made the decision about their demission. The accusations were aimed at mainly the strict management of the MSW, which rose speculations as to the removal also of Uladzimir Naumau himself, which took place on 6th April 2009. Even though his demission was officially justified by health reasons, it was first of all the final stage of the process of taking the control over the department of force by Wiktar Łukaszenka’s group. Uladzimir Naumau was the last representative of the older generation of silovik group holding a high national post. As a result of this staff rotation Wiktar Łukaszenka practically overtook the control over the sector of force. At the same time, the rumours as to the establishment of a special ministry, which would have a managing-controlling power over the whole security apparatus did not prove to be true. However, the Centre for Operation and Analysis under the president of the RB – established in spring 2008 – managed by coming from the frontier army colonel Walerij Wakulczik becomes an informal equivalent of such a structure. On the strength of presidential decrees from the beginning of 2010 the Centre gained wide entitlement as to the control and regulation of mobile phone networks and the Internet.

Together with the dynamic expansion of the president’s son clan, the position of the technocrats clan was gradually becoming stronger too. There were not attacked by Wiktar’s group, therefore, the number of their possessions did not change. The group’s leaders, Siarhiej Sidorski and Uladzimir Siamaszka 5 kept not only their posts in the country structure, but also their political and financial influence. What is more, it seems that they made an unwritten agreement with the youth group as to the division of the

3. At the beginning of December 2009, as a result of a typical for the system staff rotation Jurij Żadobin took the post of the Minister of Defense of the RB, and his place was taken by Leanid Malcew, till that time the chief of the resort. The above change had no effect on the shape of the nomenclature system described.

4. In this way, the importance of KGB in the national security structures diminished in favour of the management of the National Frontier Committee.

5. Siarhiej Sidorski has held the post of the chief of the government since July 2003 and he is the prime minister holding the office longest in the history of the independent Republic of Belarus. On the other hand, Uladzimir Siamaszka has been for several years the first vice-prime minister, responsible, among others, for energy issues and industry.
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control spheres, and mutual respect for each other’s businesses. It is nowadays the main factor of their power and position in the country. The most important consequence of the group’s rise in importance is the beginning of the nomenclature enfranchisement process on a wider scale in 2007.

Even though the above nomenclature groups have a strong position, the postulates and ideas coming from Wiktar’s clan or the technocrats group are not always accepted by Aleksander Łukaszenka, who has a tendency to behave emotionally and not always rationally. Independently of this, the representatives of the two above groups are in the president’s nearest surroundings, and it seems that many of his decisions are taken under their influence, and in some cases, less important from the president’s point of view, they decide on their own.

On the other hand, the third group from the old nomenclature system, i.e. the szklowko-mohylewski clan has lost their importance. In May 2007, the chairman of the key for Belarussian economy Bielnieftiechim concern, Alaksandr Borouski, 6, was arrested, having been charged with corruption; he was connected (also by family bonds) to the leader of the clan, Uladzimir Kanaplou. In this way the financial sources of this group were greatly reduced. At the same time, Kanaplou was gradually moved away from the central decision-making processes, and as a consequence, in September 2007, he gave up the post of the chairman of the Representatives Chamber (lower house of the Parliament). Till this day he has not received any new national post, and he is practically invisible on Belarussian political scene. As a consequence of the above events the szklowko-mohylewski group – contrary to the sliwok group – did not suffer a total degradation, but it has moved to the margin of the nomenclature system, and does not play any important role in it.

3. The causes of forming and the nature of the new system of the nomenclature influence groups

The basis for the new nomenclature system is the unwritten alliance between the two most influential clans – the youth clan and the technocrats clan. The nature of this alliance is a division of the influence areas, both those formal, resulting from having their representatives in national departments, as well as the informal ones, connected to controlling certain concerns or even whole sectors. According to the unwritten agreement, the technocrats group is responsible for managing the economy, while national security and the Presidential Administration management are the responsibilities of Wiktar’s clan. It means that the technocrats expect the departments of force not to interfere too much with their competence – i.e. economy management – and the functioning of the institutions subjected to them. In practise it means, first of all, decreasing the degree of the – typical for Belarussian economy – complex system of control of economic activity and a gradual increase of the independence of concern directors. On the other hand, the youth group keeps the exclusivity for managing the security structures and the Presidential Administration, additionally controlling chosen economic subjects. Such form of activity makes the two groups – usually without any conflict – complement each other, and at the same time they constantly need each other.

The establishment of such a system would not be possible without the acceptance of the main decision-maker – president Aleksander Łukaszenka. It seems that his decision to gradually remove the influential sliwik group from power, and at the same time to broaden the influence of his older son and to strengthen the technocrats’ position was influenced by the following factors:

At the turn of 2006 and 2007 Russian authorities forced Belarus to sign three agreements, regulating the conditions of gas and oil delivery, as well as mutual exchange of goods on conditions much less preferential than in previous years. For Aleksander Łukaszenka it was a clear signal that Kremlin’s politics was becoming more decisive and more aggressive, which could be a serious threat for both the country’s sovereignty as well as his own position in the future. At the same time Łukaszenka started to realize that certain economic reforms, industry modernization and obtaining some serious foreign investors is necessary and inevitable. It raised the importance of the managing staff in economic departments, as it was them that the difficult negotiations with Moscow 7 depended on, as well as carrying out the

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6. In March 2008 he was convicted to 5 years imprisonment for an abuse of his authority, being the cause of serious damage to national finances.

7. Because of their economic views and a tough way of leading the discussions with Russia Siarhiej
necessary changes in the economic system, and attracting foreign funds. In this situation, technocrats were becoming much more needed than the silowik group which perceived economy management to be a quasi criminal activity.

At the same time, the treat of the pressure from Russia caused a gradual decrease of the president’s trust towards the people in his surrounding, especially to Szejman’s clan and to the szkłowsko-mohylewski group. It seems that Łukaszenka was no longer sure as to the loyalty of the structures ruled by the silowik group. The issue of the unofficial contacts of the representatives of the Belarusian national apparatus with Russian business and authorities came to the foreground. Even a shadow of suspicion as to fostering Russian business ventures entailed a brutal reaction and wide-ranging legal sanctions. Therefore, it was really important for Łukaszenka to transfer the control over the key for national security structures of force to a reliable person whom he could trust – his older son.

The more and more frequent crises in the relations with Moscow and gradual reduction in the Russian economy preferences forced Belarusian authorities to open, more than in previous years, to other foreign directions, including mainly the second (apart from Russia) key trade partner – the European Union. Establishing cooperation with the EU required at least a few political good will gestures. In this context, the disunity of Szejman’s clan and staff demissions connected to it can be interpreted as atmosphere clearance for the dialogue with Brussels – all the representatives of the regime, accused in the West of organization at the end of the 1990s of kidnappings and assassinations of the politicians, journalists, and traders who were in conflict with Aleksander Łukaszenka, were pushed to the background. This step is even more important because of the fact that the same representatives of the authorities were also responsible for the repression of Belorussian opposition lasting for many years.

It must also be taken into consideration that the staff exchange which took place in the last years might result from the Belarusian president’s psychological condition. Both Wiktar Szejman and Uladzimir Kanaplou were representatives of the part of Belarusian nomenclature which had built its position parallel to Aleksander Łukaszenka’s political career. As a consequence, they have broad knowledge of the president’s various – often very controversial – actions, including his financial operations. It creates some kind of dependence on them, which for oversensitive Łukaszenka was both uncomfortable, and to some extent also dangerous. This is why he decided to replace them with the nomenclature of younger generation, whose representatives have achieved their position only thanks to him, and as a result it is them who are under some obligation to him.

The reasons of changes in the Belarusian power camp indicated above let us assume that the new nomenclature system is not an effect of another, typical for the regime, staff rotation. The alliance of Wiktar’s clan and the technocrats seems to be a new idea for the system consolidation, and at the same time for adapting it to the economical and political challenges, to which Szejman’s silowik clan was completely unprepared. Such an interpretation allows us to forecast a much greater durability of the present system than it was in the case of the previous ones. Undoubtedly, the main stabilizing factor is the persona of Wiktar Łukaszenka (Wiktor Łukaszenka), acting currently de facto as the second most important person in the country, which can in the future make the transfer of the power easier. Additionally, the unique character of the present nomenclature system is also highlighted by the unprecedented in Belarusian specifics increasing activity of the leading figures in the media, especially of the prime minister Siarhiej Sidorski and (for several months now) the chief of the Presidential Administration, Uladzimir Makiej.

4. The process conditions for the nomenclature enfranchisement

The crisis in the Russian – Belarusian relations at the turn of 2006 and 2007 made the Belarusian nomenclature worry about their safety. The more and more realistic expansion of Russian businesses could for many officials and company directors mean a loss of their privileged positions that they had

Sidorski and Uladzimir Siasanzka are referred to as economic nationalists.

8. The accusation concerns generals Jurij Siwakou (Jurij Siwakow) and Uladzimir Naumau, and colonels Dmitr Pauliczenka and Wiktar Szejman. All of them were removed from important national posts and are presently on the margin of the political life in Belarus.
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worked for years for, and the financial benefits resulting from them. Therefore, more and more often individual groups in the power camp send the president signals as to the need of modification of the standing rules of action. As a result, two issues were included into the informal contract with the forming at that time new nomenclature system: consent to income legalization and property purchase. In this way, in 2007 a gradual process of nomenclature enfranchisement began, the main purpose of which was the transfer from the control of financial funds flow to buying property. The enfranchisement process has so far not affected big and medium companies, but has concentrated on the real estate sector and the construction of housing and trade-service purpose buildings. This type of investment is much easier in realization and does not involve so much risk, and at the same time it is a source of reliable income.

Because of president Łukaszenka’s fear that the influence groups might become too independent, the limitations of their funds, and the nomenclature’s reluctance to take responsibility for the restructuring of subjects which are difficult to manage, the process of buying company shares by the nomenclature is much slower. As a result of the above factors, the presidential decree of 14th April 20089 opening the way to widespread privatization, and the executive acts accompanying it include numerous limitations. One of them is setting the limit on the Treasury shares sale at 20–25% level, which still leaves the majority in the hands of the state.

Simultaneously to the nomenclature enfranchisement process, the authorities take action on the improvement of the investment conditions. Their aim is to attract – on a much greater than presently scale – foreign funds (for political reasons investors from outside Russia are preferred), and modern technology. It seems that in most cases the influx of foreign investors will not collide with the business plans of the Belarusian nomenclature and in most cases cooperation will be established. It must also be remembered that Belarusian authorities so far have selected foreign investors confidentially and without a contest. It is very probable that because of the above restrictions the participation of the nomenclature representatives in the privatization process of industrial companies will go along two schemes. In the first case, basing on the political influence the representative of a power camp, or even one of the influence groups could act as an intermediary and re-sell previously bought shares to a foreign company at a much higher price 10. In the second case, on the other hand, the nomenclature will aim at obtaining permanent shares in a given subject, and at the same time, to attract the necessary funds and technology, will make an attempt to attract an investor in exchange for (rather) a minority of shares.

5. Consequences of changes in the power apparatus for the relations of Belarus and the European Union

Making an attempt to estimate the consequences of the nomenclature changes for the foreign politics of the Republic of Belarus, first of all, it should be made clear to what extent in an authoritarian country Belarusian senior officers are capable – if not of creating politics independently – of having a real influence on the decisions taken. The processes indicated in the previous parts of the text significantly widened the subjectivity of Belarusian nomenclature. A gradual and informal delegation of powers in some matters to the most influential representatives of power apparatus can be observed. The increasing importance of the president’s environment is not, however, a threat to the position of the head of the state – he is still the key figure in the country, carrying out the function of an arbiter among the individual clans. The change is merely in the fact that Łukaszenka must increasingly take into account the interests of the nomenclature groups. Paradoxically, it leads to the empowerment of the Belarusian president, who stabilizes the existing system of forces, and who is the only person to guarantee its continuance, without undue prejudice to any of the influence groups. Therefore, Aleksander Łukaszenka’s immediate environment is no longer just a gray clerical mass, passing the received orders automatically to lower levels of

9. The decree presupposes a gradual removal of the limitations concerning the circulation of the Belarusian Treasury shares. By 2011 the circulation freedom is to apply to all subjects. Moreover, over 500 state companies are to be converted into partnership enterprises during this period.

10. Such a scheme was used when the shares of the second biggest Belarusian mobile network company Velcom (MCS) were sold to the Austrian concern Austria Telcom in 2007.
the administrative hierarchy. Increasingly, it is in fact a group of people who participate in defining objectives, and in the implementation of state policies, also in the sphere of relations with the West. Therefore, for a better understanding of Belarusian policy towards the EU it is worth having a closer look at the current nomenclature.

At the moment the Belarusian ruling elite is characterized by a low degree of ideologies and a pragmatic approach to the reality. This makes them, contrary to the older generation siłowik group, ready to cooperate with any environment in the field of domestic politics, and with any country (or a group of countries) in the field of foreign politics. The rejuvenation of staff in more and more visible: the conservative supporters of the old system are gradually exchanged by younger people, much better educated and having more knowledge of the realities of the modern world.

The clans dominating in the new system are aware of the need of the regime modernization, both economically, as well as politically. We must remember, however, that this awareness does not result from the acceptance of democratic values, but rather from the fear of a breakdown of the increasingly ineffective economy model. The reforms made by them are intended not to dismantle, but to strengthen and improve the system of power. As a result, the changes will come slowly, gradually, and not in all life spheres simultaneously. Moreover, it should be stressed that the process of staff rejuvenation and professionalization is also gradual – a high number of managerial positions, for example in economic departments, is still occupied by officials shaped in the conditions of the command-and-distribution system. Thus, it often happens that the conviction of the need of changes in the economy is not accompanied by specific knowledge and relevant skills. In other words, the medium and low administration levels are often still at the stage of Soviet school of planning and management, therefore, they cannot meet the demands of the management, thinking in a more modern way.\footnote{An example of this discrepancy can be the meeting of the Council of Ministers of 26th November 2008, when the prime minister Siergiej Sidorski criticised his subordinates from economic departments for lack of effectiveness in attracting foreign funds. In harsh words he said that “most of the officials do not show any initiative, pleased with a reliable salary, while without new investments and technologies the economy might not survive”. He added that during an Investment Forum in London many western companies complained to him about the Belarusian administration’s lack of interest in the implementation of joint projects, or even blocking them. Similar criticism came also from president Łukaszenka himself – its last example can be found in his annual address to the nation of 20th April 2010.}

However, processes, which can already be considered irreversible, have been launched. Among them is, for instance, the transformation of the nomenclature groups into a group of owners and the progressive income legalization accompanying it. Therefore, within the next few years, we will be able to talk about the formation of the middle class in Belarus. As a result, it is possible that over time those groups will expect a real respect for their property rights and will want a more liberal and transparent rules of running business to be introduced. Also, their actions in the political sphere will become more pragmatic.

Even though under the influence of the technocrats and the youth clan the domestic policy is becoming more flexible, to maintain the internal stability of the regime the political opposition will still suffer from repressions and various administrative limitations. On the other hand, the pragmatic approach to politics makes both sides interested in the dialogue and the cooperation with the West (above all with the UE), and they are aware of the necessity of certain political compromises – however, only those, which will not weaken the system and their own position.

At the same time, Belarusian ruling elite is aware of the fact that they will have such a privileged position only in a sovereign country, therefore, they will strongly oppose Kremlin’s political pressure and the expansion of Russian capital.

The views described above – of the currently dominant in Aleksander Łukaszenka’s environment – influence groups are reflected in Minsk’s policy towards Brussels. Belarusian authorities were generally positive towards the EU’s proposal to resume the dialogue in autumn 2008 and made a few good will gestures, such as the registration of Aleksander Milinkiewicz’s “Movement for Freedom”, or the release of two independent newspapers to the national distribution network. However, the following months showed that Belarusian regime is interested in getting certain profits from this cooperation without the need of dismantling the authoritarian system. Therefore, in the relations with the UE, Minsk has been
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consistently emphasizing the realization of the projects not connected to the sensitive political issues, i.e. it has concentrated on such spheres as: energy, transport and logistics, industry, and ecology. Moreover, it has sought macroeconomic support from the EU and an inflow of direct investment from the member states. At the same time, the Belarusian side has been completely ignoring or diminishing the importance of the postulates for the democratization of the political system and respecting human rights. Thus, Minsk implies that it is interested in the dialogue with the UE, but only on its own conditions and in the areas designated by them. To stress their point of view, the representatives of Belarusian leadership more and more often express their dissatisfaction with the lack of tangible (financial) results of the cooperation so far – first of all of the Eastern Partnership program. Such policy results from the described above pragmatism of the Belarusian elites, who are already aware of the need of strengthening the cooperation with the West and the modernization of the country accompanying it, and at the same time – fearing the destabilization and loss of the influence – they avoid profound, system reforms. Aleksander Łukaszenka himself adopts a similar standpoint, which ultimately perpetuates this trend in the Belarusian thinking about the EU.

Therefore, we should not expect in the nearest perspective any quick political or economic changes in Belarus because of the dialogue with the EU. However, in chosen areas of cooperation (first of all economic ones) in favourable circumstances certain projects might be realized, which will – only fragmentarily – change Belarusian reality.

Belarusian ruling elites have proven to be open enough to engage into the dialogue with Brussels, however, they still remain too limited in their actions to begin a real transformation of the country. Thus, serious reforms will result not from the advancement of the nomenclature, but rather from objective factors – such as the deterioration economic situation and the lack of possibility of further maintenance the existing politico-economic system.
Abstract: This article focuses on the relationships between Poland and Belarus. Firstly, it concentrates on general description of socio-political background of bilateral relationships. The paper presents also a SWOT analysis of Polish-Belarusian borderland.

Introduction

Transborder relations between Poland and Belarus are very delicate and complicate, in the period of transformation. From one hand – these two countries had many similarities and common history, which create possible the cooperation, from the second hand – majority of Belarus were dependent 70 years on Soviet Russia and this domination functioning in many forms up today (e.g. military, economic, energetic and commercial). However from the third hand – there are minorities on both sides of the frontier, which population is numerous. Common history could help to these countries to constitute European trans-border space, despite of actual difficulties. The domination of Russia in Belarusian politics and economy is significant. Enlarging of spectrum of real national independency of this country will be most appreciated task for Belarus at present period of transformation in CEE Region. Bilateral relations to Poland and through Poland, also to European Community, will depend on political change. This turn was not real before, but constitution Belarusian political opposition and (what was more important yet) actual commercial and energetic conflict between Belarus and Russia create some new possibilities.

1. Legal regulations of cross-border cooperation during period of transformation

After seventy years of existence as one from 15 republics of Soviet Union and twenty years being also part of eastern Poland was constituted in 1991 Republic of Belarus as an independent state. It has retained closer political and economic ties to Russia, than with other former soviet republic, finished on 8 December 1999 by ratification of Treaty on a two-state union (SBiR), envisaged greater political and economic integration. Since election of in July 1994 president Alexander Lukashenka has steadily consolidated his power through authoritarian means. Government restrictions touched freedom of speech, press, demonstrations, activity of free unions and non-government organization, also churches and political opposition. Main internal enemies of Lukashenka’s authorities appeared Union of Poles in Belarus, catholic church and European Union. Polish aspirations, firstly – to OTAN and secondly – to EU, provoked non-friendly, sometimes aggressive reactions of Russia and Belarus. Poland has regulated neighbourhood relations with Belarus in few important documents and agreements. First of all, these relations base on European conventions and agreements – Madrid Convention of Council of Europe from 21st May of 1980 (signed by Poland in 1993, Dz.U. from 10.07.1993)) and European Chart of Territorial Self-government from 15.10. 1985(signed by Poland in 1994, Dz. U. from 25.11.1994). In this same period was signed “Treaty about good neighbourhood, friendly relations and cooperation” (Dz. U. from 09.12.1993, nr 118, poz. 527). Despite of many troubles commercial, cultural and scientific relations exists, particul-
early in the framework of transborder regions. Some elements of European program Interreg III–TACIS involve Belarus, particularly in the context Polish or Lithuanian neighbourhood or possible European future for Ukraine, also. Excellent and, in this same time, difficult geopolitical location is the biggest advantage of republic.

2. Problems and opportunities for development of cooperation

In this European border area is complex and sometimes difficult situation, because – from one hand – it is border area of European Union with non-EU partners, from the other – it is a borderland with an authoritarian regime. It creates new problems, but also specificity of bilateral relationships. The level of propensity to cooperation is low. Polish support for democratic movements in Belarus complicate this relationships, yet. We could underline, that this relations are in total crisis, because of huge political influence into daily life contacts of citizens, which are rather reach and very useful for people from both sides of border area. Existing minorities play important role, more than 1 million Poles in Belarus and 400000 Poles of orthodox confession (and 50000 Polish Belarusians among them) are important factors of bilateral relationships. The regime of Alexander Lukashenko is afraid of Polish influence into democratic movements in Belarus and establishment of political changes similar to theses, had introduced through “orange revolution” in Ukraine. State ownership of enterprises, cooperatives, kolkhozes disturbs normal, market cooperation between economic subjects onto both sides of border.

These types of troubles creates main weak points of cooperation between Poland and Belarus.

3. Poland-Belarus swot analysis

Strengths:
- intensive petty-traders and commercial exchange and contacts
- informal cooperation of minorities
- cooperation of small and medium business
- well developed scientific and cultural exchange
- investments of Polish companies in Belarus in Grodna Invest and Brest Invest free–zones for investors
- tourist cooperation in border area
- constitution of Bielowieza Forest and Niemen Euroregions
- existing road and railway corridor Berlin-Moscou

Weaknesses:
- central control of Belarusian economy
- traffic through the border as a main factor of exchange of mechanides
- weak infrastructure on the border
- anarchy, corruption and long duration of custom procedures at the border
- economic stagnation in Belarus
- lack of European orientation Republic of Belarus
- problems of Polish minority in this republic
- non-innovative agrarian and industrial sector in Belarus
- a gap in civilizational democratic institutions development

Opportunities:
- activity through Euroregions at the border
- more active, mutual east–border of EU regional policy and programs of financement
- development of border and road infrastructure from European founds
- protection and promotion of natural environment of Green Lungs of Europe area
- necessity of modernization of Belarusian economy and technology
• interchange of students and scientists, cultural, NGOs and minority staff
• introduction of bilateral projects of regional and local authorities
• protection toward Polish minority in Republic of Belarus
• possible radical political change or reorientation
• necessity of employment of new labour force from abroad in Poland
• cooperation of Polish and Belarusian minorities, organizations and orthodox churches
• possibility of tourist cooperation in border areas

Threats:
• possibility of confederation with Russia
• incertitude of political situation and real conflict of interests Polish and Belarusian political orientations
• economic instability of Belarus
• instable situation in a gas and petrol transmission through territory of Belarus
• non-effective and hardly bureaucratic order in Belarus
• autarchy, lack of participation of Belarus in global economy
• lack of possibility of functioning of self-governments and NGOs organizations, which excludes decentralized interregional border cooperation

Conclusion

In summary, we would underline that relationships between Poland and Belarus are complex and complicated. Non-existent or very weak reaction to cross-border cooperation proposals from Belarusian authorities, lack of market and institutional infrastructure, state owned enterprises domination, different politico-ideological orientation, labour market protection, customs problem, introduction of visas, low degree of trust, inadequate financial resources disturb of normal international transfrontier cooperation. Belarus may constitute potentially very interesting and prospective market for Poland and European Union.
Abstract: The author of the article highlights the need for a deeper reflection on the model that he created of cross-border institutions. A cross-border university in the north-eastern Poland, on the border between Poland, Russia, Lithuania and Belarus constitutes a civilizing mission for the Eastern Europe, just like University Viadrina on Polish-German border did in the past. A cross-border university that is based on such elements as: creativity, responsibility, academic freedom, university autonomy should also be characterized by striving for entrepreneurship based on self-employment and innovation. A university depicted as above would stand a common ground of scientific and research partnership between the EU and countries that aspire to have a close contact with the European Union.

Introduction

Together with the changes that have occurred in the Middle Eastern Europe there has been an increasing need of transborder cooperation. Two decades have passed since the fall of the communist totalitarian system in Middle Eastern Europe. The “walls” fell and a hope has revived for a new order and new conditions for building common relations between nations and countries from this part of Europe. Actions on different political and social levels have been taken. New relations have been established both within the countries, as well as between the countries and societies. Independent trade unions have come into being, protecting not only the workers, but also fighting for the democracy and freedom of all citizens. State institutions (such as the parliament, the police, the army, etc.) regained their sovereignty. The economy subjects are moving towards market economy. There has been a rapid development of higher education. There has been a huge success despite often complicated historical conditions and mutual prejudice.

An institutional protection of the new way of development was the admission of some of the Middle Eastern European countries to NATO and to the European Union. This new pact in Europe fulfilled the ambitions of many countries giving them new possibilities and new challenges. The political borders of Europe were shifted to the east border of Poland. Ukraine, Belorussia and the Circuit of city the Kaliningrad were left outside the European Union. Ukraine, Belorussia and the Circuit of city the Kaliningrad were left outside the European Union. Ukraine, as one of the biggest European countries clearly manifested its pro-European attitude during the “orange revolution”. Not getting into the current internal difficulties of Ukrainian politics, Ukraine’s aspiration at the cooperation with the European Union countries seems to be uncontested. More and more often we hear about the Belorussian opposition who would want more integration with the European Union through liberation from the socialist dictatorship. Even some of the actions of the Belorussian authorities confirm Belorussia’s willingness to change its position in Europe which can be proved by the invitation of the Pope Benedict XVI to Belorussia and heated talks of the official authorities with Russia as to the gas transit through Belorussia, which occur from time to time.

The essence of the economic changes is the change in common attitudes and cooperation. One of the most important areas of cooperation with Eastern neighbours is science and higher education. The real and truly effective example of cooperation between the two biggest European Middle Eastern countries – Poland and Ukraine, has become the European Council of Polish and Ukrainian Universities established in 2001. The European Council of Polish and Ukrainian Universities is a Polish-Ukraine educational
institution, constituted by Polish and Ukrainian universities, such as: Maria Curie-Sklodowska University in Lublin (Poland), John Paul’s II Catholic University of Lublin (Poland), T. Szewczenki National University in Kiev (Ukraine), I. Franki National University in Lvov (Ukraine) and the National University “Kiev-Mohylanska Academy” (Ukraine).

The Council of Polish and Ukrainian Universities is a prerequisite to appoint a similar institution between Poland, and Belorussia and the Russian Circuit of Kaliningrad which was indirectly stressed by the signatories of the Lublin Declaration in 2004 on the day before ten new countries entered the European Union. In the Lublin Declaration, which is a fruit of the session of the International Congress of Rectors of European Universities on the Lublin Castle, a still valid challenge was noted down:

“On our eyes the organizing in a new way Europe is moving towards the East, which co-built its cultural heritage throughout the centuries. The university environment is happy to acknowledge and reach out to the process. The European Higher Education Space includes now 40 countries and it would be difficult to imagine the united academic Europe without the universities in Moscow, Petersberg and Kaliningrad, in Kiev and Lviv, in Bucharest and Sofia. We will contribute to this Europe expanding process, ensuring that the political initiatives undertaken in this spirit are accompanied by appropriate university actions, addressed primarily to the scientists and students of the countries which are preparing to join the European Union” 1.

The European Higher Education Space needs solidarity and responsible cooperation in culturally and geographically seen Europe. This, in turn, brings the need of the transborder cooperation. To define the paradigm of the scientific and research cooperation in the north-eastern Poland basic elements, and the nature of the transborder entity should be established, and its legal applications should be shown.

1. The essence of the transborder cooperation

Most commonly the transborder cooperation means every action which is taken simultaneously by two or more sides and which aims at the strengthening and the development of the relationship between the neighbouring societies and its territorial authorities. An important reason for such cooperation is the abolition of the boundaries set by the existence of the country borders so that any problems can be dealt with together. In case political borders exist various forms of transborder cooperation should be undertaken to lessen the effects of political divisions.

It is worth to go back to the first forms of the development of the transborder cooperation in modern Europe. In the middle of the 20th century a forerunning agreement entitled “Euregio” was signed. It was concluded in 1958 by the neighbouring German and Dutch communes. The neighbouring territories of the two countries were dominated by agriculture. This common agreement was aimed at eliminating the agricultural crisis. To solve this problem a Council was called, who was the first transborder regional assembly in Europe 2. At present there are about 160 areas of transborder cooperation on our continent 3.

The transborder cooperation is a crucial element of the new international and interregional relations in Europe. The basis of the new legal infrastructure of the relations between the two sides are multilateral agreements, in other words international agreements, where it is important to establish and develop various forms of transborder cooperation. In relation to this it is worth mentioning, among others, such legal acts as 4:

European Framework Convention for the transborder cooperation between communities and territorial authorities, known also as the Madrid Convention, 21st May 1980. It is a document of the Council of Europe, which has been so far accepted by about 20 countries. Poland joined in 1993. In the preamble of the Convention the role of the cooperation of the frontier regions in establishing an entity connecting nations and regions is stressed.

European Charter of Local Self-Government made out in Strasbourg on 15th October 1985. A document of the Council of Europe, which is a collection of the decisions and guarantees concerning the status of the local community. The Charter is an international agreement obliging only those countries of the Council of Europe which signed, ratified, and endorsed it. It defines formal and legal agreements, as well as the ways in which local communities can participate in the international relations based on European standards. Poland ratified the Charter on 26th April 1993.

European Charter of Frontier and Transborder Regions enacted for the first time on 20th November 1981 in Euroregio, and amended on 1st December 1995 in Szczecin in Pomerania Euroregion. The Charter is an attempt to sum up the experience and knowledge gained through the transborder cooperation through the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).

European Charter of Regional Self-Government as of 5th June 1997. It is a document made out by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities who continues setting out European standards enhancing the transborder cooperation between regions.

European Union Treaty; article 198a-198c.

To enhance their role in the European cooperation in 1971 the regions established an international non-governmental organization – the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) with its seat in Gornau in Germany. The main duties of this organization are, among others:

- initialisation and strengthening, as well as the coordination of the cooperation between European frontier and transborder regions;
- representing common programs and projects, applying for and managing financial means;
- representing common business in front of national and international parliaments, authorities or institutions.

The main aim and scope of the transborder cooperation has been defined in the European Charter of Frontier and Transborder Regions. Each of the euroregions has its own goals of the cooperation, although some of them are universal, such as:

- economic development;
- common regional planning;
- enabling the inhabitants of the euroregion to cross the country borders freely;
- mutual regional education;
- protection of the natural environment.

2. Scientific cooperation

The European Charter of Frontier and Transborder Regions defines also the need of cooperation in the field of education. Scientific cooperation is developing in the Polish frontier areas. Scientific conferences and seminars concerning important social and economic problems of individual regions are often organised. More and more publications on such cooperation appear, for example “Bug Euroregion”, which is composed of as many as 13 volumes, “The factors and barriers of the regional transborder cooperation – a synthesis attempt”, “The transformation of the socio-economical structures of the frontier

areas” 9, “Regional structure transformation problems in the process of the economic and European integration changes” 10, and many others. The statistical offices within the regions have also taken part in the cooperation, releasing numerous publications, for instance “The Euroregions Panorama” 11, “Euroregions in the new Polish territorial division” 12, “The population of the Carpathian Euroregion” 13.

Schools and research institutions are being created, such as: College Research Centre in Liberec, International Colleges Institute with its seat in Zittau (“Nysa”); Collegium Pollonicum established by the partner universities of A. Mickiewicz in Poznan and the European Viadrina in Frankfurt on Oder (“Pro Europe Viadrina”), the European Collage of Polish and Ukrainian Universities. It also worth noticing the fact of the establishment of the Polish university branch in Vilnius (one and only so far). On 19th June 2007 the government of the Republic of Lithuania undertook resolution number 633, in which it agreed to set up a branch of the University of Bialystok in Vilnius, the Faculty of Economics and IT 14.

The main task of such educational initiatives is to support the scientific and cultural cooperation between Poland and its neighbours mainly by doing researches on frontier regions and broadening the knowledge of the Middle Eastern European countries. The creation of such forms of educational cooperation was possible mainly thanks to the existence of a common political and administrative level. Most of the initiatives exist within the countries that are the European Union members. However, in case of the Polish-Ukrainian College it is the level of common transborder cooperation outside the EU structures.

3. The creative role of the transborder university

One of the structures resulting from the scientific cooperation on a frontier area could be a university. The university, through its universal mission, has transborder characteristics. One of the characteristic features of the university is the “cultivation of universal cognition”. Each scientific discipline at the university is studied with the awareness that “each of them, although different, is so strongly connected to the others that it cannot be learned outside of the context – at least in the intentional sphere – of all the others” 15. Its situation in the proximity of all the people interested in it, coming from different neighbouring countries, stresses its transborder character even more. The mission of the transborder university remains an open question. The traditional role of a university is more and more often becoming the subject of discussions of not only academics but also other non-academic bodies. On one hand, the university as a conservative institution protects and passes the “verified in practise codes of customs, culture and technology” 16. On the other hand, however, the university is a dynamic place of discovering the truth. The concept of the truth one is faced with in today’s world is dynamic and disputable, because it

syntezy, Rozprawy i Monografie Wydziału Ekonomicznego No 15, Rzeszow.
The role of “the transborder university” in the cooperation of the European Union and Eastern Europe

comes from “a full of adventures effort of mind” 17.

The university makes it possible to form competence and skills essential in the process of community organization. The frames of a society are defined through its cultural system. At present, the universities are expected to listen carefully to the society’s opinion. The transborder university should understand the changing needs and expectations of the neighbours living in the frontier area. Universities, in its nature, are sensitive to the cultural diversity and scientific achievements of other scientists. This encourages the progress and scientific development. Achieving the unity within the diversity seems to be a very interesting formula of the functioning of the transborder university. The clash of the university universalism with the commercialism of the knowledge in the market economy becomes a challenge for every university, especially a transborder one. It is a challenge which is really difficult to solve constructively, as big corporations expect that a higher education graduate will be an expert possessing knowledge, which can be quickly and easily verified according to the employers’ needs. The graduate is expected to have such qualifications and knowledge which would enable them to adapt quickly to the changing needs of market economy. Under the influence of the society, colleges often transform from a societal institution into an economic institution (a corporation), which should be viable and profitable. In many cases the society’s welfare has been exchanged by the economic welfare. The higher level education is judged in terms of its ability to produce human capital able to compete even in international markets, and not in terms of educating “civilizational” and critically thinking individuals 18.

The transborder university should enable its students and graduates to move freely and to form their skills and knowledge in various cultural, economic and political fields, and it should resist intensive and ruthless “industrialisation”. In reality, educational standards are very often formed on the basis of the experience and competence of the committee members who are often the representatives of big corporations and businesses, and who claim that the aim of education is to prepare a work force. It does not mean, however, that the university’s sole goal should be the aspiration to treat the education instrumentally. In the transborder cooperation university we cannot allow to reduce the role of the teacher – master – to the position of the “transmitter” of the desired knowledge and competence 19. Despite the fact that the contact between the academic teacher and the student is becoming more and more fragmentary, and that the professor is expected to deliver the knowledge, just as goods, in an attractive packaging, in an easy and quick way, so that the student is not exposed to stress, no one has freed the university and its professors from the fundamental mission, which is discovering and pursuing the truth. An educational institution, and especially a transborder university, cannot become a MCUntiversity, which has to prove the effectiveness of its work and profit making 20.

4. The changes of the university’s function

Despite the solemn assumptions concerning the university’s functioning we can currently notice the changes of the university’s functions, which occur through various kinds of mechanisms, such as 21:

- Academic managerism
- Academic consumerism
- Academic re-stratification

The academic managerism concerns the changes in the university management style, which is manifested through the diminishing role of the professors/intellectualists, in favour of the managers who have little in common with education and teaching. The managers set the didactic staff certain goals and tasks, which should bring the policy makers rational profits. Their main concern is to monitor the

17. John Paul II, Kościół jest solidarny... op.cit., p. 135.
relations between the university and the outside world, to make sure that the “educational product” sells well and at the lowest price. The academic consumerism, on the other hand, manifests itself in the fact that the university diplomas, courses and credits no longer have value in themselves. They are sold just as any other product. The academic services at the level of education/teaching and gaining knowledge are perceived as demand and supply products, the students being the clients/consumers. Higher education is perceived as being useful, not intellectual. The university sees the demand as an “academic business transaction”. Academic traditions and ideas have lost their meaning, and it is an irreversible fact. The social functions of the university (the cultivation of educational traditions, preserving cultural heritage, etc.) are losing their importance too. The economic function of the university is supplanting its social function. The third mechanism is the academic re-stratification, which is shaping the new academic hierarchy, where the new criterion of evaluation of the subjects, courses, faculties, departments, as well as the individuals is the “utility value, and the market exchange value of particular forms of knowledge, which they are able to produce” 22. Professors are stratified through the financial benefits they can bring to the university decision makers. In such circumstances it is difficult to sustain the fundamental idea of the university, which is the openness to all types of knowledge, regardless of its application perspectives. Therefore, the university should make an attempt to revive the affirmation of the principle of searching for independent knowledge, and to augment the university’s openness, which in the key moments of the university’s openness (the education concept, the topic of scientific research, cultural monism) is shown as 23:

- The “inside” openness of the university, connected to the concept of knowledge, suggests going beyond its present model 24.
- The university’s openness to truth suggests greater autonomy of learning 25.
- The “outside” openness of the university demands the cultural pluralism, the freedom of research and publication, open dialogue.
- The openness of the university to possible threats, perceived and exercised in this way, can in the future protect universities from complete inflation of higher education and from a complete loss of the social function of the university. It is also a challenge for the transborder university, which would be a bridge between different education systems, political systems, cultural systems and different religions. It could perform not only the function of integration on a regional scale, but also on an intercontinental scale. Its location in the north-eastern Poland could unite the European Union with Eastern Europe, while through its neighbourhood with Russia it would be a joint between Europe and Asia. This type of a global perspective of the university’s functioning demands its specific responsibility.

5. The university’s responsibility

From the proposals and declarations which are the result of the discussions of the university representatives from both Europe as well as the whole world it can be inferred that the academic community is ready to accept the responsibility. At the same time, the society points out to the conditions which should enable the university to fulfill its mission effectively and efficiently – academic freedom, university autonomy and stable funds 26.

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24. Knowledge, seen both subjectively and objectively, needs to broaden its extent, and to stress its main aim, which is the humanization. It is vital to show interest in the human being as the subject of the academic life, in their sense of life, and not to treat them as an object/ a tool conformed to the consumer culture.
25. The autonomy of learning should not serve immediate economic purposes, but also the immanent educating purposes, human-personal.
Faced with the above, the university should be a place where in a dynamic interactive way one can learn that the truth can be found. It is a place where we can learn to talk to a stranger. It is not, however, the only place of discovering the truth. Other institutions which enable us to find the truth are, for instance, the family, an association, or a craft guild, but since the 13th century the university has been the central place in which “the drive to knowledge is fuelled” in order to discover the truth 27.

The university is responsible in front of the society for the protection and transfer of cultural, moral and ethical values, and also others which for various reasons the market does not demand. In globalised world this kind of responsibility is very important in shaping the societal and national identity. There is a threat that knowledge, a common value, could become a value accessible to those who are able to pay for it. However, it is a situation which cannot be a model one, as “the academic world (...) is a very fertile ground for developing people’s talents (...). Using them and stressing their value through studies and scientific research, people are able to undertake initiatives, thanks to which the world can truly progress” 28.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a need of greater sensibility and responsibility of the university for its actions in front of the society. It is the responsibility for the truth in the cultivation of the science, for research and research methods. The university is a “workshop” in which, after a thorough examination, it turns out that the scientific creative and research work is the basis of the didactic work 29. The university is also responsible for the peaceful co-existence of nations. The responsibility of the university entails the necessity to search for the application of knowledge in practice, which can be served by the new paradigms of university functioning. One of them is the third generation university.

6. The third generation university as a paradigm of the transborder university

There are various paradigms of present-day universities. The specific role of the transborder university is connected to the search of a specific university paradigm, which not only integrates the academic and intellectual environments, but also looks for effective practical ways of applying the gained knowledge. An interesting paradigm of such a university is the third generation university. It is connected to the topic of the entrepreneurship and innovation which has been in the centre of modern social science, above all of economics and management, since the times of Joseph Schumpeter.

In media we often hear complaints on the lack of individual entrepreneurship, lack of enterprising attitudes among the youth, on decreasing entrepreneurship levels in the European countries, on the bureaucratic difficulties and complications, on the weakening position of Poland in the ranking of enterprising countries, and on the fact, that the abilities and willingness do not go together with institutions aiming at the entrepreneurship creation. Risk-taking and the ability of effective risk management are very important. The ideas for business activity should be supported by institutions, especially those who serve continuous education and finding solutions to employment problems. Self-employment results from the high level of entrepreneurship in a given population and its institutional support, where the financial institutions and the education system (from primary to higher) have the most important role to play. The need of entrepreneurship in the present-day market societies is inborn, due to the competition, the role of the technique and technology, and also due to the demand of being innovative which is inseparable from the market existence. The education system has to pay more and more attention to the connection, briefly speaking, between the idea and the industry, so as not to educate graduates who will be unemployed. It becomes necessary to maintain the balance between the usefulness of certain faculties and the demand for


their graduates. The temporary shifting of this balance, which we have experienced over the last decades, is a fact, just as the decreasing tendency to enterprising and innovative activities. Giant international companies are way ahead of the individual countries in this respect, sucking out the best graduates from their markets, and at the same time defining the ranking of the universities which educate the elite, and the know-how and knowledge demand. The knowledge is more and more often related to the actions of those economic institutions, a typical example of which being the actions of the pharmaceutical concerns, which ask the medical universities and teams of scientists to examine new medicaments, or the activities of consulting companies, such as Amer-Nielsen, Deloitte & Touche or Artur Andersen, penetrating all student exchanges in search of those who are the best. Innovation, therefore, is fuelled by increasing amounts of money, which can be observed on the example of metropolitan cities and regions, where the infiltration of great capital is already high, and will be even higher in the 21st century.

A very interesting idea of the connection between the entrepreneurs and institutional systems which support and shape them was put forward by a Dutch engineer, a professor of the Technical University in Delft, Jan G. Wissema. He begins with the key form in the enterprising chain, i.e. the notion of technostarters, defined as the entrepreneurs taking the risk of being innovative, who, fascinated by technique and technology and passionate about inventing new things, accept the challenge of coming up with new inventions and bringing them into the production process. Such modern entrepreneurs come from universities, mostly technical ones and backgrounds related to them, usually from among students and the participants of open seminars. The entrepreneurs, however, as he sees them, are very traditional, as they are shaped by self-employment, persistence, drive to success, and, first of all, the desire of permanent education and personal development through self-employment. Self-employment can lead even to workaholism, because the entrepreneur works at the cost of the family and free time, sacrificing themselves to the company they have created. Technostarters are a specific type of the entrepreneurs, as it is them who are the pioneers of modernity and invention. Their decision of self-employment often results from the imperfection of the education system. Seeing the tardiness of the universities especially the technical ones, in introducing the innovation, often created in their own laboratories, they decide to set up their own businesses. The inventions and projects of such companies (referred to as spin off), created with the use of the university base and laboratories by the technostarters, are very valuable for the technical progress of the countries which are the leaders of innovation and invention. Wissema claims that the majority of the technostarters was latent entrepreneurs, i.e. manifesting attitudes, which in appropriate circumstances would lead them to establishing their own company, although usually they were not planning to do so. Only the political conditions after the World War II, when the governments noticed the problem and decided to support this kind of an entrepreneurship, led to the transfer from the latent entrepreneurship to the open form of self-employment. It brought significant changes in legal regulations, facilitating the establishment of such businesses and revealing the entrepreneurship. Universities should support the technostarters for many reasons, the most important of which being: self-fulfillment of the research workers, the desire to test oneself, the possibility to educate students and the welfare of the university and the region in which it operates, as well as the existence and development of educational markets, where many universities are forced to compete for the national and international programs, budget subsidising, grants, students, etc.

7. Functions and characteristics of transborder universities (third generation universities)

Modern entrepreneurship, according to J.G. Wissema, is based on the changes and impulses generated by the academic environments, especially the vocational and technical ones. The changes result from the new functions of the academic environment, the increasing connection between science and industry and services, and the demand for scientific research, often financed by the multinational concerns. There is an increasing awareness of the university staff as to the self-employment perspectives, and using the results of their work as the foundations for a future business. One can often come across scientific publications

under the names of the founders of well-known and renowned international companies, such as Dr. Oetker (and during the transition period also in Poland, for example Dr Irena Eris) or the scientists setting up their own businesses (for instance Comarch, founded by a professor of the AGH, or Asseco, basing on the achievements and cooperating with a university in Rzeszow). It proves that their founders had used the scientific knowledge to put entrepreneurship rules into practice. Previous inventors, such as Thomas A. Edison, Tesla or Baird, had often little in common with the scientific environment, and even a myth of garage firms, such as Bill Gates’s Microsoft or Steve Jobs’s Apple was spread out. However, it can be undoubtedly stated that there are more renowned companies belonging to professors and doctors than the garage ones. At present, in the field of pharmaceutics, cosmetology, or even information technology it is not possible to succeed, or even function on the market, without professional knowledge and research laboratories. Thus, in the academic environment one can recently notice the increase of the entrepreneurship awareness and the reluctance to stick firmly to the university walls and the post of the scientific and didactic worker. Unfortunately, in Poland there is still the superiority of the “paper” over the entrepreneurship, and often a publication of a poor book is worth more than a great invention, project, or expertise implemented in a company or a territorial self-government. Entrepreneurship is, therefore, not supported by the institutional system, and it does not give recognition or prestige in the academic environment. It is slowly changing, as it is not possible to develop economically with such low involvement of the state and the companies in the area of research and progress. The only aid in this situation is the individual entrepreneurship of the scientists, which can be developed thanks to the increase of the awareness and tendency to self-employment. J. Wissema clearly and firmly points it out in yet another statement: Technostarters are for the universities like litmus paper: tell me what your policy on technostarters is, and I will tell you if you become successful and the centre of the international know-how information exchange, or if you are bound to fail, gather mediocre talents, and be only a stop for gifted students and didactic staff on their way to scientific career 31.

The third generation university based on the know-how, entrepreneurship and experts succeeds the traditional, Humboldt university, educating people for its own needs, and the needs of the country. It is worth pointing out that, for example, companies established by the technostarters from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are worth about 240 billions of dollars, and brought to the world numerous useful things, not charging money for it, vide: the famous PDF files, used daily, and shared at no cost by Adobe, a technostarter from the MIT; besides, companies such as Adobe have funded the university’s laboratories for further billions of dollars. The university is becoming a specific institution, which can be characterised using the following statements. The university 32:

- is build on the basis of the exact, technical and applied science,
- is independent of the state, and is not financed directly by the state,
- uses English in communication,
- constitutes an international centre of the know-how exchange; is innovative,
- is financed from grants, donations, third party funds, agencies funding research work, and only to a small extent from government subvention, and student fees,
- educates in university colleges (high level of research and education) and in faculties (lower level of research and mass education),
- operates basing on the entrepreneurship culture, on the leadership within Specialised Technical Teams, which are groups of experts established to solve problems deputed to them by the business-industrial environment, state institutions, and others,
- aims at the commercialisation of research results; favours technology transfer to small and medium companies, entrepreneurship incubation, signing contracts.

8. The nature of the transborder university paradigm

The nature of the modern university encompasses for streams of entrepreneurship, which are directed at it, and which the university, as a public-private institution, manages. The first, and the most important one, is the stream of the entrepreneurs, which contains programs ensuring the increase of the enterprising awareness among the university staff, and students and broad education on the topic of entrepreneurship. It is worth adding, from the Polish point of view, that we are experiencing an unusual in times of capitalism situation of a real boost of the interest in market, and managerial and economic education, accompanied by the increase of the knowledge of market, and market behaviour, and a change of the mentality concerning setting up businesses and money. One of the elements of this entrepreneurship is the fact of establishing by the academics of over 300 private universities in Poland. The second stream contains activities based on the technology stream and ensures innovation and invention. The third one – very important – is the capital stream, risk and non-risk, acquired for various subjects and sources, and obtained from loans (with a postponed pay-off date). The stream of support is also important – the infrastructure, incubators, and consulting. The remaining one – the general stream – refers to donations, and entrepreneurship and information and information flow research 33.

Conclusion

A transborder university in the north-eastern Poland on the border between Poland, Russia, Lithuania and Belorussia is a need as important as the need of the establishment of Viadrina on the Polish-German border used to be in the past. At that time those were the outskirts of the European Union. Now that the borders of the European Union have been moved east, the new frontier has been set on the north-eastern extremities of Poland. Relating to this, the establishment of “Viadrina II”, just as Viadrina in Frankfurt on Oder would be a satisfaction of the need of transborder cooperation and the promotion of the European Union idea in the east – in Russia and Belorussia.

The need of a transborder university based on entrepreneurship and innovation is becoming a challenge not only for Poland, but also for the whole Europe. It is not just a challenge, but a civilisation mission of the integrated Europe. This type of a need is written into the new project of Eastern Partnership, which is the first Polish initiative introduced to the system of the outside relations of the European Union. It was accepted by the Council of Europe on 19-20th March 2009. It is a new initiative aimed at Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belorussia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, and in future also Russia.

The need of a transborder university leads to the necessity of a possibly quick implementation of the ideas of the third generation university. Not only is the functioning of the entrepreneur streams vital, but also the cooperation with the regional/local political and economic authorities. The transborder university at the service of a region can create various forms of connections with its region and forms of breaking the alienation of the university from environments it comes from and in which it functions. The third generation universities which exist in the USA, India or Singapore, according to Jan Wissema, show that it is worth following the way which in Europe was ushered in not only by Cambridge and Oxford, or French Grandes Écoles, but also by the Viadrina University established in eastern Germany to satisfy the needs of the new European Union countries.

33. Ibidem, p. 64.
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