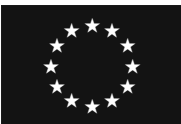


# EUROPOS PARLAMENTAS

2004



2009

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*Regioninės plėtros komitetas*

**NEGALUTINIS  
2004/2257(INI)**

22.6.2005

## **PRANEŠIMO PROJEKTAS**

dėl euroregionų vaidmens regioninės politikos plėtros sferoje  
(2004/2257(INI))

Regioninės plėtros komitetas

Pranešėjas: Kyriacos Triantaphyllides

**TURINYS**

**Puslapis**

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## PASIŪLYMAS DĖL EUROPOS PARLAMENTO REZOLIUCIJOS

### dėl euroregionų vaidmens regioninės politikos plėtros sferoje (2004/2257(INI))

*Europos Parlamentas,*

- atsižvelgdamas į EB Sutarties 87 straipsnio 3 dalį,
  - atsižvelgdamas į EB Sutarties 158 straipsnį,
  - atsižvelgdamas į Darbo tvarkos taisyklių 45 straipsnį,
  - atsižvelgdamas į Europos Komisijos pasiūlymą dėl Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos reglamento, įtvirtinančio pagrindines nuostatas dėl Europos kaimynystės ir partnerystės instrumento (KOM(2004)0628),
  - atsižvelgdamas į Europos Komisijos pasiūlymą dėl Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos reglamento dėl Europos regioninės plėtros fondo (KOM(2004)0495),
  - atsižvelgdamas į pasiūlymą dėl Tarybos reglamento, įtvirtinančio bendrąsias Europos regioninės plėtros fondo, Europos socialinio fondo ir Sanglaudos fondo nuostatas (KOM(2004)0492 – 2004/0163(AVC)),
  - atsižvelgdamas į pasiūlymą dėl Tarybos reglamento, kuriuo įsteigiamas Sanglaudos fondas (COM(2004)0494 - 2004/0166(AVC)),
- A. kadangi 2004 m. gegužės 1 d. Europos Sąjungos narių skaičiui padidėjus iki 25 narių atsirado didesnių skirtumų tarp Europos regionų;
- B. kadangi su šiais skirtumais reikia kovoti vykdant veiksmingą sanglaudos politiką, kuri skatintų vienodą, perspektyvią ir darnią visos ES teritorijos raidą;
- C. kadangi veiksmingos sanglaudos politikos dalis yra siekis užtikrinti tarpvalstybinio bendradarbiavimo raidą;
- D. kadangi euroregionai yra svarbi, tačiau per menkai išvystyta tarpvalstybinio bendradarbiavimo priemonė, nes šių regionų padėtis Europos Sąjungoje neapibrėžta, daugeliu atveju jie neturi juridinio statuso ir yra palyginti nedideli;
- E. kadangi pagrindinis euroregionų tikslas yra skatinti tarpvalstybinį bendradarbiavimą kultūros, turizmo ir ekonomiais klausimais tarp pasienio regionų arba keleto šalių, nebūtinai Europos Sąjungos valstybių narių, kitų vietos subjektų;
- F. kadangi Europos pasienio regionų asociacija nustato specifinius euroregionų apibūdinimo kriterijus;
1. mano, kad tarpvalstybinis bendradarbiavimas yra nepaprastai svarbus Europos Sąjungos regioniniam planavimui ir raidai, ir todėl turi būti tvirtai remiamas;
  2. ragina valstybes nares skatinti naudoti euroregionus kaip tarpvalstybinio

- bendradarbiavimo priemonę;
3. pažymi, kad euroregionai skatina artimesnius ryšius keičiantis geriausios patirties pavyzdžiais;
  4. ragina Komisiją pateikti pasiūlymą dėl teisinio euroregionų pagrindo Europos Sąjungoje siekiant palengvinti jų veiklą, racionalizuoti procedūras ir sumažinti veiklos sąnaudas;
  5. ragina išspręsti euroregionų padėties teisinio neapibrėžtumo problemą ir primygtinai prašo valstybių narių laikytis tarptautinio bendradarbiavimo principų;
  6. pabrėžia, kad pirmenybę reikia teikti siekiui panaikinti skirtumus tarp naujųjų valstybių narių ir senųjų valstybių narių regionų;
  7. pabrėžia, kad reikia išplėsti *euroregionų* sąvoką siekiant įtraukti įvairiašalius bendradarbiavimo aspektus, pvz., susijusius su kova su organizuotu nusikalstamumu, prekyba narkotikais ir sukčiavimu;
  8. džiaugiasi Komisijos pastangomis supaprastinti tarpvalstybinio bendradarbiavimo priemones ir taip sukurti pagrindą euroregionams vystytis;
  9. kaip numatyta teisinių pagrindų Europos Sąjungoje pasiūlyme ir jei tinkama, ragina pripažinti euroregionus idealia struktūra Europos partnerystės ir kaimynystės instrumentui įgyvendinti ir valdyti;
  10. pabrėžia tarptautinio bendradarbiavimo ir euroregionų svarbą valstybėms narėms, turinčioms gamtinių išskirtinumą, pvz. Maltai ir Kiprui;
  11. taip pat pabrėžia, kad svarbu skirti Maltai ir Kiprui atitinkamai lėšų siekiant stiprinti tarpvalstybinį bendradarbiavimą ir taip sumažinti dabartinius regionų skirtumus;
  12. ragina Komisiją sukurti priemonę, kuri leistų patikrinti euroregionų poveikį sanglaudos politikai ir objektyviai įvertinti jos įgyvendinimo kliūtis;
  13. paveda Pirmininkui perduoti šią rezoliuciją Tarybai ir Komisijai.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### DEFINITION OF EUROREGIONS - A concept developed by the Council of Europe

Existing Euroregions are initiatives of border regions or other local entities of several countries (not necessarily Member States of the E U) and have no defined status in the EU context. In most cases, Euroregions have no legal personality and are rather small. The label "Euroregion" is not protected. Euroregions concentrate on cross-border co-operation, where cultural aspects as well as attracting tourism and other forms of economic activity are central.

The legal status of Euroregions varies. It may involve a community of interest without legal personality, a European Economic Interest Grouping, a non-profit-making association, a working community without a legal personality or a public body. Euroregions and other forms of cross-border co-operation structures do not create a new type of government at cross-border level. They do not have political powers and their work is limited to the competencies of the local and regional authorities that constitute them. Within the limits of the geographical scope of co-operation the cross-border structures are arrangements for co-operation between units of local or regional government across the border in order to promote common interests and enhance the living standards of the border populations.

The Association of European Border Regions sets the following criteria for the identification of Euroregions:

- An association of local and regional authorities on either side of the national border, sometimes with a parliamentary assembly;
- A transfrontier association with a permanent secretariat and a technical and administrative team with own resources;
- Of private law nature, based on non-profit-making associations or foundations on either side of the border in accordance with the respective national law in force;
- Of public law nature, based on inter-state agreements, dealing among other things, with the participation of territorial authorities.

There are more than seventy cross-border regions in Europe today, operating under names such as Euroregions, euroregios or Working communities. Although some of these initiatives date back to the 1950s, the 1990s saw a large increase in cross-border regions all over Europe. In fact, today there are virtually no local or regional authorities in border areas that are not somehow involved in cross- border co-operation.

Legally, the idea of an administrative body in charge of a sub-national cross- border area is difficult to implement. The first cross- border regions were based on agreements with varying degrees of formality and most relied on good will.

In 1980, on the initiative of the Council of Europe, a set of European countries concluded an international treaty, called the Madrid Convention, as a first step towards cross-border co-operation structures based on public law. The convention has been signed by 20 countries and

was recently updated with two Additional Protocols. It provides a legal framework for completing bi- and multinational agreements for public law cross-border co-operation among NCGs. An example of such agreements is the German-Dutch cross-border treaty of 1991; which has been a cross-national public body since 1993. However, the decisions put forward by such agencies are binding only on the public authorities within the cross-border area concerned.

## **EU CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION: up to 2006**

The outstanding characteristic of the cross-border related activities of the EU is that they are primarily financial. Many cross-border initiatives are eligible for support under the Interreg Community Initiative launched by the European Commission in 1990, as Interreg III in 1999. For the period 2000-2006, it has a budget of 4.875b Euro, or approximately 2.3 per cent of the Cohesion budget. The programme relevant to cross-border co-operation is Interreg IIIA, it lays down that all local areas located on external and internal land borders, and some maritime areas, are eligible for support.

*Through the Community Initiative INTERREG IIIA, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) finances cross-border co-operation activities in NUTS III regions that are defined at the Community level. Whole countries, which are NUTS I level entities, are not included in Euroregions and would never be eligible for ERDF co-financing under A strand of INTERREG III. In their proposals for programmes to be co-financed under INTERREG, the EU member states will suggest to what extent Euroregions should participate in the implementation of INTERREG IIIA programmes. For example, some of them act as managing authorities of a programme or project owners for specific projects; othersr the services of a contact point for INTERREG.*

It is symptomatic for the pathway of European Integration in the post-war period, that the more legalistic approach favoured by the Council of Europe- proposing cross-border regions as formal politico-administrative entities- was later abandoned in favour of a more pragmatic and economically oriented approach within the context of EU regional policy.

One can discuss whether the European Union should be considered as a driving force behind the emergence and proliferation of cross-border co-operation across Europe. At first sight, the EU could be regarded as an important causal factor here, notably through the diminishing importance of borders, the growing regional representation at the supranational level and the Interreg programme. However, the EU's impact is often overestimated as it disregards the fact that cross-border co-operation is bottom-up driven. The early initiatives involved countries, such as Switzerland, that are not members of the EU. In the German part of the Upper Rhine, 80% of FDI is of Swiss provenance, and a cross-border labour market has emerged. Similar patterns occur in the Geneva area.

However, the extraordinary growth of cross-border co-operation from 1988 onwards must certainly be related to the launch of EU support schemes dedicated to cross-border initiatives in Western Europe, and, from the early 90s, increasingly in Eastern and Central Europe. From 26 initiatives in 1988, when the Directorate General launched its first pilot projects, their number almost tripled to over 70 in 1999. Qualitative evidence shows that the newly founded Euroregions, for example those on the Eastern and Southern German borders, tend to be

closely involved in Interreg implementation. There were no Euroregions on the Austrian-German border before Austria's accession to the EU, but, between 1994 and 1998 five new Euroregions were established. Similar evidence can be provided for many Eastern and Central European cross-border initiatives.

Since they have been established, many of the Working Communities have stagnated in terms of political importance and budget, but the smaller Euroregions continue to flourish in part because they are more closely involved in the Interreg programme that only applies to narrow border areas. It appears that the Euroregion, as an institutional form, is better suited to taking an active role in implementing EU policy measures than the larger Working.

## **EU-Cross border co-operation 2007 - 2013.**

### **1) An internal instrument**

Following the logic described in its Third cohesion report, the European Commission has limited its priorities to three objectives, namely: convergence, regional competitiveness and territorial co-operation. Within this context, the community initiatives have been mainstreamed.

To meet the needs of the enlarged European Union, The Commission has proposed the creation of a **European grouping of cross-border co-operation (EGCC)**, creating the framework for a cross-border authority to manage co-operation programmes. This proposal is part of the cohesion legislative package consisting of a general Regulation ; a Regulation for the European Social Fund (ESF); the Cohesion Fund and the European Regional development Fund (ERDF). The new proposals aim to rationalise procedures and simplify the implementation of cross-border and regional co-operation.

The EGCC has two facets. Firstly it is a tool concerning cross-border co-operation in, where only the governments can point out the entity able to dispose of funds. These can only be beneficiaries of the funds but not the ones administrating them. It also constitutes a new legislative instrument enabling communities to work together without structural funds intervention<sup>1</sup> (

The nature of territorial co-operation pre-supposes regional and local participation without Member States involvement. The members can set up an EGCC as a separate legal entity or assign its tasks to one of the members. It would be the subject of a convention prepared by its members, specifying its functions,, tasks, duration and the conditions for its dissolution, jurisdiction,. The convention would be notified to the relevant Member States and to the Committee of the Regions. Furthermore, the Member State with jurisdiction and under whose law the convention would be registered, would control the management of public funds-<sup>2</sup>. and supply information to other Member States concerned about the outcome of controls.

The EGCC would adopt its statues on the basis of the convention. The statute would contain the list of its members, definitions of its objective and tasks, its name and principal address, its constituent organs including the Member Assembly and Executive Board, by whom and

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<sup>1</sup> (Article 159 of the Treaty establishing the European Community).

<sup>2</sup> both National and Community funds

how the EGCC, would be represented, the decision making procedures, the establishment of the working language or languages, the modalities for its functioning, notably those concerning personnel management, recruitment procedures, the nature of personnel contracts, guaranteeing stability of co-operation actions, provisions governing members' financial contributions and the applicable accounting and budgetary rules, the designation of independent organisation of financial control and external audit authorities.

Existing bilateral agreements on cross-border co-operation between Member States and/or regional or local authorities, for example the Karlsruhe agreement, will remain in force.

23 Member States out of 25 have doubts concerning this instrument. These countries are wary of supranational structures being created in their countries. This fear is engendered by the fact that Regional and local authorities would not need central government approval to set up an EGCC.

However, given the sensitive nature of the EGCC and the proximity ties that it enhances, it is imperative that the instrument be developed, especially in view of the ongoing enlargement. Such instruments are of vital importance to new member states which can benefit from the exchange of best practices

The concept of Euroregions can be extended to multiple facets of cooperation. The signing of the "Maastricht resolution" by the Rhein-Maas Euroregion is a clear indicator of the extent of cross border cooperation on sensitive issues such as drugs, and organised crime. Thus, several Member States have an active role to play in enhancing cross-border cooperation. Cyprus, for instance, an island with direct links to the Middle East, could become a pillar of the European Partnership and Neighbourhood Instrument (ENPI), and an active actor in the fight against organised crime and drugs trafficking.

Another potential aspect of cross-border co-operation pertains to matters of education. Extending the former student exchanges between neighbouring regions, would greatly enhance the cultural compatibility of neighbouring regions.

## **2) An external relations instrument**

The new instrument **European Partnership and Neighbourhood Instrument (ENPI)** will replace existing geographical and thematic programmes covering the countries concerned. A specific feature of the ENPI is its cross-border co-operation component. Thus the ENPI will finance "joint programmes" bringing together regions of Member States and partner countries sharing a common border. It will use an approach largely modelled on Structural Funds principles such as multi-annual programming, partnership and co-financing adapted to take into account the specificities of external relations. The cross-border co-operation component of the ENPI will be co-financed by the E R D F. The partner countries covered by this instrument are those which do not currently have an accession perspective and to which the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is addressed.