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**THE CONCEPT OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION
AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE
AT THE EU'S EASTERN BORDERS**

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The European model and its institutionalization by creating the European Union was both Europe's answer to the material and moral disaster caused by the Second World War and the project meant to promote freedom, prosperity and justice, including social justice too.

Having in view these objectives which have never been subsequently amended or abandoned, European Union has built a set of functional values, among which freedom has taken the role of polarizing all normative and institutional approaches of the European Union.

European Union and integration in the European Community developed itself on three basic ways, creation of a common market, development of common institutions and several common policies. Market integration has progressed a long way, although it stops and restarts again. The institutional integration is left behind, but the most difficult of all is represented by the common policies, especially where they have required founding.

With the reform of the Structural Funds, regions have gained a key role in the design and implementation of regional policy. Yet some of the weakest regions were not equipped with appropriate institutional structures and have struggled to benefit.

While the reform may have given regions an entitlement to participate, we argue that some have lacked the capacity to do so effectively. In this context, enlargement raises questions over the future of the Funds, and how far a commitment to cohesion and convergence can be maintained.

As the EU takes on new members and its external boundaries gradually shift, socio-economic and political transformations are taking place at the borders that not only adumbrate new regional development opportunities but also many potential problems and tensions. In an enlarged Europe there are

necessary long-term commitments to support local and regional initiatives of cross-border cooperation [Athanasiu, 7-8, 2013].

All this can be achieved through comprehensive cooperation that transcend political, economic and cultural dividing lines and that address socio-economic disparities, political tensions and potential conflicts of interest. The new research perspectives have contributed to the fact that borders are now largely understood to be multifaceted social institutions, rather than simple markers of state sovereignty.

Analyzed through the economic lens, the “national state” in its classic sense is perceived both by the local investor, as well as the foreign investor as an obstacle to the smooth exchange of goods and consequently, a source of diminishing of profit. “Europe without borders” could provide the ideal space in which inputs could freely cooperate, in real conditions of competitiveness, and trade might move towards a market free from customs duties, excise or another protectionist means [Weber, 58, 2001].

National economies have proved incapable of responding within parameters of maximum efficiency to world market demands, to global exchange and to capital movement, therefore the latest solutions recommend the adoption of “borderless world” concept, developed by Kenichi Ohmae in 1995.

Regional economic policies offered for a while solution to microeconomic problems, but not to the macroeconomic ones. However, they were the first form of cross-border cooperation and brought coherence and synergy to different economic and equity instruments [Iancu, 6, 2005].

However, the procedure for accession to the European Union is extremely difficult today because it is conditioned by a long line of institutional and economic parameters which optant states must meet in advance; there are also subjective reasons that go beyond the statutory framework of the European Union.

Along with states targeting their entry into the Union, there are countries on the continent that fall within the institutional and economic standards claimed by the Union but which are not interested in joining the organization, such as Switzerland or Norway. This does not mean that they would fall outside the circuit of cultural and economic values. It is obvious that we are dealing with two kinds of community aspirations.

It is also obvious that migration is not a modern-era phenomenon, it is the 21st Century’s globalization that has rendered it a truly global topical issue. On a relatively small scale, one of the priorities of the European Union is to remove barriers to professional mobility issuing from its on-integration processes, as long as workers mobility is essential for the proper operation of the internal market itself. The EU aims to raise public awareness of this right

and to support jobseekers in their search at regional level through the European employment service network, the vast job database and the EURES portal are in the forefront of the EU's efforts to promote work mobility. Facilitating mobility also helps out the labor markets and therefore the workers who choose mobility should not be penalized as a consequence [Costea, 13-16, 2013].

Starting from the observation that apparent abolishing of borders has not led to the expected cross-border interaction and that borders are not only tangible barriers and other concepts and factors like cultural differences, previous historic happenings and lack of infrastructure, can be a trigger or a stop button for the border the cross-border cooperation phenomenon.

Cross-border marketing, evolution of economies, better understanding markets have limited a lot the unacceptable, the unfamiliarity and contributed to transform unfamiliarity as an acceptable barrier, therefore creating and supporting the border movements [Polgar, 117-131, 2021].

In order to get the people mobile, especially across borders, there should be a reason to do so, in other words, some kind of attracting force is needed. Efforts for stimulating and enhancing European integration have had not reached their set bar.

Cross-border programs and development are relevant to the extent that they do not consider the borders as almost exclusively barriers that have to be overcome. What has to be done is to make the inhabitants of the border-regions aware of these differences along the border, and consequently of each other. The other side should stay and/or be made relevant and attractive. In that case people should be encouraged to change their mental disposition towards the border, or to be more precise, towards the other side. To consider the other side, including its differences and unfamiliarity, is as relevant as it is a necessary, albeit insufficient, precondition for interaction.

Freedom in all its forms, freedom of movement of persons, goods, capital, services, in time has integrated a double function, on one hand, a fundamental value that has established all other organizational principles of the European Union and, on the other hand, an essential premise in improving the normative framework of the European Union. Of course, freedom is neither at community nor at individual level a value by itself, not even a negation of national identity or any other human needs [Athanasiu, 7-8, 2013].

The European Union must not be built as a model of social and political organization upon the ruin of the nation states. On the contrary, the European model founded on the basic value of freedom is enhanced by rejoining freedom with social solidarity and human rights [Giddens, 13, 2006].

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**ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND ENERGY DEPENDENCE:
INFLUENCE ON SANCTIONS POLICY AGAINST RUSSIA**

**ЕКОНОМІЧНІ ІНТЕРЕСИ ТА ЕНЕРГЕТИЧНА ЗАЛЕЖНІСТЬ:
ВПЛИВ НА САНКЦІЙНУ ПОЛІТИКУ ПРОТИ РОСІЇ**

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Зовнішня політика Європейського Союзу (ЄС) традиційно ґрунтується на балансуванні інтересів між наднаціональними