EU border dilemmas: European (de)bordering practices from internal and external regional Cross-Border Cooperation perspectives

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Preface

As I started out my time as a border student, my first ideas were to write a thesis on the position of Ukraine in the European Integration process. Then I wanted to involve the Dutch referendum on the EU-Ukraine association agreement in the research process. I wanted to compare two different perspectives on European integration and European enlargement; that of the Ukrainian people asking for membership and that of the Dutch popular rejection of it. The debate around the Ukraine referendum remained superficial and arguments provided by politicians and media lack depth and are easily summarized. Through my internship at ITEM (Institute for Transnational and Euregional cross border cooperation and Mobility) I learned more about Cross-Border Cooperation structures that exist in the EU, the so-called Euroregions. This helped me to develop a new research plan. Doing more research into CBCs, I found out that there are similar structures that transgress the external boundaries of the EU. There are multiple CBCs of which Ukrainian regions are a part. Those cooperation projects proved to be an interesting subject to apply my interest in the relationship between Ukraine and the EU to. My topic has changed from the original idea; however I was still able to dig deeper into the double-natured border policies of the EU, a subject which held my fascination for a long time. I would like to thank my supervisor Olivier Kramsch for his guidance and advice, which has helped in creating this end product that for me is a satisfactory ending of my time as a border student.

Summary

This thesis found its inspiration in the observation that the concept of a regional Cross Border Cooperation structure (CBC), which in the case of the EU are mostly named 'Euroregions,' is nowadays not only a matter of internal EU border areas, but as well an instrument of the EU's foreign policy towards its direct neighbors. As this exportation of the concept has remained a relatively unattended matter in border studies, this thesis has been centered around a comparison between the internal Euregion Meuse-Rhine (EMR) and the external CBC Poland-Belarus-Ukraine (PBU). The goal has been to identify bordering practices in these policy programmes, and thereby placing them in the wider context of European integration.

In the theoretical basis, especially the discipline of critical border studies is kept in mind; this entails that borders are multi-interpretable phenomena and that a shift of attention takes place from *borders* to *bordering practices*. Relevant academic literature came on the one hand from those authors who are preoccupied with the functioning and usefulness of Euroregions, which have been prone to overoptimistic thinking. Another category of used academic literature has its roots in the disciplines of International Relations and (critical) geopolitics. This literature is mainly about the double nature of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which balances between an including cooperation discourse and an excluding security discourse. Both critical authors and members of Ukrainian civil society have observed that the latter stands in the way of a proper integration process.

In order to make the comparison, the main policy documents of both programmes were subject of a Critical Discourse Analysis, applying the same policy analysis frame on them. The research has showed that several important similarities and differences exist between the compared regional policy documents. It can be said that in to a certain extent the policies are from a similar nature. An identification of specifically bordering practices however has shown that there are essential differences in the programmes. In the EMR, a strong progressive philosophy of complete debordering is reflected, whereas the PBU programme reflects the earlier mentioned double nature of the ENP. These findings illustrate a dilemma concerning the border policies of the European Union, and more widely the nature of European integration. As the EMR shows in its policy discourse to be a remainder of a time where debordering was strongly encouraged, the PBU turns out to be an geopolitical instrument with a strong border security component, containing a tightly controlled border. Critical border scholars have argued for a rethinking of the internal Euroregions. If such a rethinking can be applied to the external CBCs as well, they might be able to avoid the double-natured trap of the ENP and truly be an instrument of debordering in the future, albeit small in scope.

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1. Introduction

On September the 8th of 2018, Dutch regional newspaper *De Limburger* published an article about cross-border cooperation, or rather the lack thereof (Peeters, 2018). According to research conducted by the foundation *Geen Grens* (No Border), it turns out that most municipalities in Limburg do not pay attention to cross-border cooperation in their plans for the upcoming governing term. In Limburg the border is never far away; that means that the region holds a strong developmental potential. This potential is said to be far from realized, meaning that there should be more emphasis on matters such as German and French language courses, educational exchanges and the attraction of foreign shopping visitors.

On 20 October of the same year an article appeared in the Irish Times on the Polish-Ukrainian border, in the light of the Irish question of the Brexit (Scally, 2018). The daily situation was illustrated by long truck queues, taken care of by the deployment of many Polish police and border security resources. Crossing the border is not easy here; waiting time can take up to three hours and border security must pull off hard work to keep up. Nevertheless, the Polish officers seem proud of the work they do. According to one of them, this border must be so harshly closed so that other borders in the EU can remain open.

Both of these stories show, although on a whole different level, that borders are today very much present across the EU in spite of debordering ideals that the EU is often associated with. Where the eastern edge of the EU has to deal with 'old-fashioned' border patrols that remind us of a pre-Schengen Europe, the inner border regions of the EU are confronted with more latent issues. While the actual 'hard' borders including passport controls are (largely) of a past time in the Schengen Zone, national borders apparently still prevail in the minds of local policymakers. Border regions still face many challenges today, more so than others, as is acknowledged by the European Commission (2017a). Border regions are still seen as peripheral, resulting in relatively bad economic performance. Cross-border (labour) mobility is hindered by factors such as language issues, degree recognition and differences in social systems. This stands far from the issues that are dealt with on the Ukrainian-Polish border on a daily basis, where a simple daytrip to the other side can be a time-consuming adventure. Apart from that, there is a discriminatory nature: EU citizens can travel easily into Ukraine, while there are many restrictions for the opposite journey.

The mentioned news stories reflect the two border-related challenges that the EU faces; one of internal and one of external borders. For both, the EU has developed policies that are aiming at cross-border cooperation (CBCs) on regional and local scales. What can such initiatives achieve? What is the potential for them to take away border obstacles in daily life? In this thesis I will focus on the Euregion Meuse-Rhine (EMR) and the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine (PBU) Cross Border Cooperation

programmes. Both are meant as a stimulation for regional and local governments to cooperate along the borders of three European countries. Both are part of wider EU programs: EMR is funded by INTERREG and PBU by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). Such CBCs are recognized by the EU to have the potential to eliminate existing problems in border regions where higher-level policies were not able to do this. At first sight, the goals and ideas behind both of them might generally come across as the same: local policymakers should have a better sight on their regions regardless of national borders, and therefore be more capable to make good policies as a coherent region (European Union, n.d. -a, n.d. -b). Furthermore, national governments generally do not provide such CBC opportunities. However, between the two different kinds of CBCs are fundamentally different logics at work, which will be elaborated on later.

In the context of the EU, CBCs often take the shape of Euregions or Euroregions. A Euroregion is defined by the institute MOT as:

''a cross-border territorial entity that brings together partners from two or more cross-border regions in different European countries. Their purpose is to create a coherent space that is developed collectively to ensure that the border is no longer an obstacle but becomes a resource and an opportunity for development. To do this, it creates a framework for cooperation that makes it possible to bring together the different players and to put in place common policies and projects in areas such as regional development, transport, the local economy, cultural activities, the environment and so on, always in accordance with the specific features of each border area.'' (MOT, n.d).

I will not argue that the Euroregions have been an undivided success story so far; they have existed for decades and their impact and familiarity with the public remain limited, as turns out from the relevant literature. For the CBCs operating under the ENI, it might be even too early to judge its effects. However, the background of those initiatives could help in answering some very relevant questions for the EU today. The EU faces a ''crisis of vision'' (Kramsch, 2011); EU expansion has come to a preliminary halt and countries bordering the EU find themselves in an uncertain position. There are no clear answers if and when these states ever could become EU members. The ambiguous situation these states find themselves has brought critical thinkers to a rethinking of borders; as turns out from the literature the so-called 'security discourse,' associated with 'hard' borders prevails at the external edges of the EU. Meanwhile the 'cooperation discourse,' associated with more inclusivity permeable borders is pushed to the background. CBCs have a potential to reinforce this discourse of cooperation.

This thesis draws its inspiration from a range of authors, whose ideas could be placed under the umbrella disciplines of critical border studies or critical geopolitics. These disciplines are preoccupied with *bordering practices* rather than borders. This entails that much more than lines on a map, borders are seen as parts of processes which are in constant flux. Borders are also expressions of power relations. If we expect something of the EU-initiated CBCs, from a critical geopolitical perspective we therefore have to look at the ideas constructed by the policymakers behind it. I will argue that a comparative study between the two sorts of CBC programmes could lead to a refreshed and fundamental discussion about the potential of these regional structures.

With these thoughts in mind, I will work from the following research question:
How do bordering practices from both internal and external EU-wide regional Cross-Border Cooperation structures, as identified in their policy documents, correspond to the project of European integration?

Relevance

Borders and bordering practices pose essential questions when it comes to the European integration process. The establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community, The Treaties of Rome and Maastricht, the Schengen agreement and continuing expansion with new states have all changed the border landscape of Europe fundamentally. Questions on how to deal with borders are therefore necessary to give meaning to the European project. Many dimensions of the border have been taken away, whereas at the external edge many new border dimensions have shown up. However, the EU has always expressed that it aims at *de*bordering for its citizens, for example in its official communication on challenges for internal border regions (European Commission, 2017a). Border policies have strong consequences for citizens living in border regions. It is observed by the EU that those citizens have to cope with many challenges which are unique to their regions. The potential weakness of the border region often prevails over its potential strengths. Meanwhile, citizens who just fall outside of EU territory have to deal with their very own challenges, which are often related to the exclusionary nature of EU border policy. Cross-border cooperation structures are not only an attempt to deal with specific challenges for border region citizens, but can also provide an insight into the bordering dilemma of the EU.

Debates of the usefulness and the future of INTERREG-funded Euroregions are very much going on in academic literature. Many different approaches are taken by different authors, however it can be argued that the Euroregions do have a useful potential despite not having become what was once expected. In geopolitical studies, a growing body of literature is evolving on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and its eastern partner countries. It has been clearly argued that the ENP is an ambiguous instrument with a problematic nature (Celata & Colletti, 2016; Christou, 2010;

Kostadinova, 2009; Scott, 2007; Walters, 2010). INTERREG and ENI are different programmes with different goals which operate independent from each other. However, the logic of INTERREG is in a sense exported to the ENI programme. INTERREG has apparently been an inspiration for ENI, since cross-border cooperation structures stretching across EU external borders were created. They often bear the name 'Euroregion' after their INTERREG counterparts. To my knowledge there have not been specific comparative studies between the INTERREG and ENI cross-border programmes. I argue that both the differences and similarities in the studied CBC programmes are exemplary for the dilemma the EU faces. On the one hand it attempts to be an inclusive entity where borders are as less an obstacle as possible. On the other hand there are geopolitical concerns which can obstruct these ideals. The statements made on borders in INTERREG communication is reminiscent of an anti-border rhetoric, which was central to earlier times of European integration. Official ENI communication is partly filled with the same sort of language, yet on the other hand is full of what geopolitics scholars identify as the 'security discourse,' viewing the border as a protection mechanism. Working from the idea that the EU indeed faces a crisis of vision and that it must somehow come to terms with its own contradictory ideas on borders, research such as this can contribute to border thinking from both an academic and policymaking point of view.

An argument might be made that Euroregions are no longer a relevant interest matter for academic research, since it has turned out that such structures were unable to make a serious societal impact. I argue that this is not the case. Firstly, the number of Euroregions is becoming higher rather than lower. It remains to be a destination for generous EU-funding, meaning that they still hold relevance from a policymaking point of view. Secondly, the Euroregions are still in development, reflected in the new legal structure of European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) that is now applied to them. For researchers concerned with the subject, this transformation does hold promises for the future (Cressati 2010; Engl 2016; Evrard 2016). Thirdly, if a critical discursive approach is taken, which I will be doing in this thesis, any communication by policymakers is relevant. It provides us with insights on how policies are shaped by the worldview of policymakers, and how the policy can influence the knowledge of society. If there is one alley of policymaking where policymakers are challenged to think about borders, it is the one of regional cross-border cooperation structures.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis will start with the theoretical framework. In this the basic ideas of the relevant schools of thought will be elaborated on. The basic collection of ideas which can be gathered under the umbrella of critical border studies will be explained. This is followed by an overview of different scientific approaches towards CBC structures theory, and the geopolitical literature related to the outer borders of the EU. The applied methodology will then be elaborated on in the third chapter. The main method will be a Critical Discourse Analysis. A justification of the chosen regions, documents and methodology will be given. Chapter four will give some context on the subject matter by providing some more general background of the INTERREG and ENI programmes based on available information on their official website. This is to get a general idea of the relevant concepts and ideas behind them. Academic literature evaluating the programmes will as well be shortly summarized. Then, thoughts and conclusions from a general reading of the relevant programme documents will be provided. This is a usual first step of a discourse analysis, and serves also to make the reader familiar with the structure and concepts of the documents. Next, a framework for Critical Discourse Analysis by Hyatt (2013) will be applied to the programme documents related to both the EMR and the PBU regions. This will provide for a deeper reading of the texts which will shed more light on the present bordering practices. The thesis will then continue with an overview of the obtained results and possible perspectives for the EU CBC policies in the future, to conclude with a sort reflection on the used theory, methodology and empirical base.

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework will start with the most important ideas and concepts of the discipline of critical border studies. This is a school of thought without clear demarcations or definitions, yet some basic ideas can be identified which holds critical border studies together under one umbrella. This is followed by theoretical ideas on Cross-Border Cooperation structures and those geopolitical ideas related to the external borders of the EU. The critical border perspective is kept in mind as much as possible throughout the chapter.

2.1 Critical border studies

This thesis takes a stance from the rather broad discipline of critical border studies. This school of thought brings together border ideas from multiple disciplines and it does not let itself define easily. Border literature from the past twenty years has not provided a clear terminology and its terms are elastic (Haselsberger, 2014). Parker & Vaughan-Williams (2012) however, attempt to formalize the discipline by identifying some shared central concepts and ideas. The most important observation is that borders are a more complex phenomenon than previously conceived and certainly are more than simple 'lines in the sand.' It is more useful to view borders as part of processes and to never take existing borders for granted. A consequence of this is that borders are more worth of investigation than was previously regarded upon. In other words: borders are never finished, but always ''in a state of becoming'' (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012, p.728). For a long time, borders have been studied as being nothing more than dividers of nation state territories, causing any study on borders to be caught in what critical border scholars call the 'territorial trap.' Viewing borders in such a one-dimensional way is for the critical border scholar insufficient to come to grasps with the many facets and functions that borders contain. Borders are multilayered and are to be seen as an outcome of bordering processes (Haselsberger, 2014). In other words: there is more to borders than the sole geopolitical dimension. Borders are complex social constructions with many different meanings attached. In a globalized world, some have argued that borders have lost their relevance. However, critical work on the rethinking of borders shows us that there is much more to borders than previously anticipated on. What critical border scholars call for are 'alternative border imaginaries' (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012).

This contains, for one part, a shift from *borders* to *bordering practices* (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012; Haselsberger, 2014). Questions to ask here is how borders are perceived and lived by different actors, and who benefits from bordering processes. Borders can therefore be regarded as results of power relations (Haselsberger, 2014). Bordering practices are ''the activities which have

the effect … of constituting, sustaining, or modifying borders.'' (Parker & Adler-Nissen as cited in Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012, p.728). Bordering practices are not necessarily intentional and can be carried out by a wide range of societal actors, from state to non-state.

For Parker & Vaughan-Williams, *performance* is a second important concept. Borders are performed by such acts as showing passports at the airport or security checks. This illustrates how borders are present in more places than just at the line that we see on a geopolitical map. Borders are also performed by processes such as identity-building of nation states, be it in a more abstract sense or more concrete, such as in the act of giving out passports. Border management can also be 'out-sourced,' for example reflected in the EU making deals with other states to take in refugees. Critical border scholars are often critical of bordering practices, yet this does not always have to be the case. Borders can also be sites of positive encounters and cultural exchange.

Haselsberger (2014) further illustrates the complex nature of borders by shedding some light on different related terms: boundaries, borders and frontiers, which are all are different concepts. The former two usually refer to lines. Whereas the term 'borders' is often used in a geopolitical sense, boundaries can be, (next to geopolitical) sociocultural, economic or biophysical. The frontier on the other hand usually refers to a (cross)-border region. It is a more fluid concept, without clear demarcations of the beginning and the end. Haselsberger as well makes a distinction between thick and thin borders. Thicker borders consist of more boundaries that have been imposed on it over the years. Thick borders are difficult to cross in the physical and mental sense. On the other hand thick borders can also fail to coincide with boundaries, for instance when a national border separates an ethnic group. Thin borders are selectively permeable for certain flows. The external border of the EU can be seen as thick, whereas it can be debated upon under which category to put the internal Schengen borders. There is no current physical barrier to cross those borders, however it can be argued that mental barriers are still very much present.

To further illustrate the great subtlety on differences in possible dimensions to a border, Sohn (2013) gives an overview of several of them. Borders exist firstly to delimit the territorial sovereignty of a state, defining which area is included and which not. Secondly, there is the function of separation, controlling, filtering and protecting. This function regulates who and what can enter the territory defined by the first function. The third function is one of an interface or entry point. This function can be expressed in contact and exchange, but also in confrontation. The fourth function is differentiation: ''This property, which is essential in the ordering of the world, manages differences (variations in substance) and differentials (variations in intensity), which can be suffered as well as desired by authorities and people on either side of a border'' (Sohn, 2013, p.1703). The last function is affirmation. This means that borders, with their high symbolic value, are influencers of identities,

values and preferences. In this sense, borders can play an important role in such processes as nation-building.

2.2 Cross Border Cooperation theory

Debates on Cross-Border Cooperation have seen multiple perspectives and philosophies behind them. Several dichotomies as how to view Cross Border Cooperation structures can be identified in the literature. These contradictory views stem from the question whether CBCs should be viewed from a more traditional geopolitical way or if renewing points of view are more suitable.

Community or institution?

Borders are by definition creating a mental distance, so CBCs are about ''reimagining the other'' (Van Houtum & Struver as cited in Boman & Berg, 2007, p.197). A central question to CBCs is which is more important: cultural-historical or institutional identity?
Trillo-Santamaria (2014) asks the question: are CBCs best understood as functional or democratic projects? Important to note here are the differences between community building (related to cultural identity) and institutional building (related to functional-strategic identity). Paasi (see Trillo-Santamaria 2014, p.260) explains this differences by making a distinction between the Identity of the region (used in discourses) and regional identity (what people identify with). It is often argued that CBCs in Europe have achieved institutional rather than community building. Engl (2016) chooses the institutional approach and explains how CBCs can become successful examples of integration by institution-building. Integration is seen as ''an increasing connection between border territories by the creation of common cross-border institutions that include different public and private actors from the whole cross-border territory'' (Engl, 2016, p.147). ''The key assumption of this approach is that certain institutional designs are likely to trigger a deeper integration'' (Engl, 2016, p.147). To be an institutional success, CBCs need involvement from a broad range of actors. Those can be political, administrative and civil society representatives.

Harguindeguy & Sanchez-Sanchez (2016) note that in a 'traditional' Political economy view, CBCs are seen as a side effect of globalization. Consequences of this are the weakening of state power and an increase in border-crossing capital. The same authors also pose that CBCs might be seen from the so-called New-regionalist viewpoint. In this case, the multilevel governance model is used. According to this model, a CBC region could be one of many layers of government in a complex EU, existing in a myriad of interactions. CBC regions can in this approach be seen as independent actors making independent decisions, hence influencing policy fields.

Boman & Berg (2007) see the multi-level governance model as not sufficient to explain CBC development. They would rather make a case for the view of New Institutionalism. This contains that

the building of CBC institutions is path-dependent rather than a matter of strategic development. CBCs are less seen as rational actors and more as products of their environment.

However, Harguindeguy & Sanchez-Sanchez (2016) argue that CBCs do not necessarily undermine state authority. CBCs can also be seen as elite projects to attain funds, leading to a democratic deficit.

Evrard (2016) conceptualizes the 'supranational institution.' CBCs are limited in the sense that they can only operate in the fields they both have authority in (or the 'lowest common denominator'). Because of vagueness and ambiguity regarding their competences, sub-state actors create their own set of rules. This creates a 'mini foreign policy.' This sets a precedent for a 'supraregional institution.' This is a step further than an 'interregional institution.' A supraregional institution includes legal obligations of involved regions, unlike an interregional one which is just a political agreement. Supraregional institutions also includes an independent staff. In the case of an interregional institution, each region acts for its own interest. The supraregional institution is an independent entity which acts for its own interest.

The other side of the coin, that of a community building, can be argued to have failed so far. Knippenberg (2004) has provided an analysis on why this is the case, with EMR serving as a case study. Knippenberg observes that the EMR presents itself as a 'natural' historical unity with artificial boundaries. There is political, economic and cultural cooperation, but not at all political, economic and cultural integration. The physical border has been removed, but the mental border is still present. This is caused and further reinforced by nationally oriented infrastructure, differing legal systems, nationally oriented media and more generally the different national cultures and identities. Citizens are generally unaware about the existence of Euroregions and crossing national borders is still experienced as going into foreign territory. Using the definition of regions developed by Paasi, Knippenberg compares the EMR development with nation-building processes. Nation states in Europe are a product of centuries long of nation-building, resulting in strong political authorities that are legitimized by their population. It is not argued that Euroregions must replace the nation states or work according to the same logic. Yet, it can be useful to take a look at the elements of education, language policy and mass media, important features in nation-building. These elements so far fail to make an impact from the European scale and remain mainly national matters. ''Participating productively in European collective decision making requires a basic cognitive capacity and emotional commitment. And the key to that capacity and commitment lies mainly in education, language policy and the mass media'' (Knippenberg, p.623). An interesting thought sparking from these observations is that integration goes faster than identity-building can possibly go.

The network approach

In many studies, CBCs are studied by means of a network approach. This view attempts to move away from the territorial lens. Gonzalez-Gomez & Gualda (2017) view Borders through social capital and social network analysis. CBCs are from this point of view mainly about networks and the flow of resources. Important are the role of both formal and in informal relations and the role of certain institutions against others. Integration occurs from flows of people and organizations, when there are motivations to cross the border. Governance is flexible, and leading towards de-territorialization. CBCs are seen as ''a laboratory for top-level governance through networks between governmental levels, citizenship and institutions'' (Gonzalez-Gomez & Gualda, 2017, p.4).

It is also possible to take a relational approach to CBCs (Svensson, 2015). In this case, the contacts between different local governments are the main feature of a CBC. It is a combined approach, as CBCs are both seen as networks of actors and as actors themselves. The idea of CBC is in this case that they are no traditional policymakers, but have the opportunity to take part in each stage of the policy process.

Critical literature on CBCs

Many of the literature that originated in times of so-called 'EUphoria' looks at the Euroregions from a perspective in which a CBC will eventually take over certain functions of the nation state. The critical school of thought, sometimes Marxist-influenced, argues however that this ''jumping of scales'' perspective misses out on some important issues. From the perspective of capital accumulation, this does not make an essential difference however. If the Marxist rule that capitalism always has to expand is to be followed, then capitalism has to find new routes, since it already expanded worldwide. It has to find ''interstices'' to survive, and one of these could be euroregions. Kramsch (2002, p.171) therefore argues that we have to forget scale, since it is a dangerous container. Furthermore, ''we lack the conceptual tools to think of a politics which escapes the logics of the state'' and ''new forms of outside are produced by discourses of cross-border mobility.''

Varro (2016) holds a similar criticism towards what could be possibly called the cosmopolitan school of thought, albeit less directly Marxist-inspired. Academic thinking of borders, however pretending it does, was never able to cut itself loose from traditional national border ideas: ''practice of border-crossing happen mainly if we can exploit national differences'' (Varro, 2016, p.174). CBCs have the potential to be a means to overcome this, by creating non-nationally oriented networks and social capital. CBCs can be ''transformative practices'' enabled by the border. A concept that can help with the development of border studies is 'borderwork.' Borderwork, introduced by Chris Rumford, is according to Yndigegn ''an analytic tool in order to identify processes of border constructions in

individuals' daily interaction'' (Yndigegn, 2013, p.58). It is a bottom-up concept and stands for the ''reproduction of borders through geographically diffused everyday practices'' (Varro, 2016, p.172). The basic argument by Varro is that border studies should move away from the national, and move towards the transnational aspect. The bulk of scholarship however has remained tied to assumptions of the nation state. However, more attention should be given to the fact that different generations and nationalities experience the border differently.

Varro (2014, p. 2235) states that ''Cross Border Regions have not undermined nation states, but added to their complexity.'' Studies are often one dimensionally executed, with either territory, scale, or network in mind. These dimensions are however interlocked, and therefore the author calls for development of a multidimensional perspective. Jacobs & Varro (2011) as well go deeper into the concept of 'reterritorialization.' CBCs do not have to undermine the nation state, but can be a ''niche'' existing parallel to it: ''we should move away from the commonly applied perspective of reterritorialization as the redrawing (or omitting) of boundaries and, instead, we should examine reterritorialization in the Deleuze-Guattarian sense of the emergence of new and the readjustment of existing governance assemblages'' (Jacobs & Varro, 2011, p.5). Jacobs & Varro (2014) furthermore note a paradoxical nature of Euregions, namely that on the one hand they appear to be an instrument of reterritorialization, but on the other hand fail to challenge the Westphalian state system. They apply systems theory to the Euroregion and view it as a self-organizing system: ''Self-organisation entails the process in which self-referential communication, rather than a set of actors, employs spatial concepts, such as the region, to enable system-specific entanglements with physical space, either short-lived or enduring, and possibly – but not necessarily – involving governance.'' (Jacobs & Varro, 2014, p.1). The definition of the Euroregion is not necessarily territorial here; the message of Euroregion is that borders should be broken down, which hardly fits in a territorial straitjacket.

Some things become clear from this short overview of academic work on Cross-Border Cooperation structures. Firstly, it is clear that the idea of Euroregions as a challenge to the Westphalian state system is of a limited scope. The initial EUphoria that surrounded the Euroregions has been proven to be overoptimistic. Rather, as critical literature teaches us, there must be less one-dimensional thinking about concepts such as territory, network and scale. If we keep the Euroregion in mind as only one of many concepts in a complex reality, its usefulness does not have to get lost. They still might hold a certain debordering potential, if they are not regarded upon as some new territorial scale, but rather as a tool for borderlanders to give substance to their own border-crossing activities and experiences.

2.3 The EU's geopolitics of borders

The vagueness of the outer EU borders have put question marks by the 'traditional' geopolitical thought of borders as markers of sovereign territorial entities. Geopolitical thinkers have responded by identifying different views on the logic of the external borders of the EU. Three important schools of thought can be identified:

Firstly, there is the state-centric or westphalian view, rooted in traditional geopolitics. The EU is in this perspective viewed as a sovereign state. This is however undermined by its intergovernmental character (Browning & Joenniemi ,2008). Dimitrovova (2008) as well observes a state-centric strategy which is under pressure. At the same time, a 'desire to mark the final border of the EU' is observed by Dimitrovova, signifying that the Westphalian worldview has all but disappeared.

Secondly, the imperial view on the EU is a matter of interest for many scholars. In this case the EU is regarded as a modern empire. Many scholars preoccupied with the subject choose to use the term 'normative empire.' For Browning & Joenniemi (2008) EU governance ''consists of a series of concentric circles,'' including some areas more than other without defining a border in the Westphalian sense. The imperial analogy holds that the EU is a fluid and double-natured entity. It keeps its neighbours close by doing many promises, yet at the same time it protects itself from flows coming in through that same neighbours. Walters (2004), speaking about a 'colonial frontier,' argues that borders could be explained as definers of an identity, helping to determine which norms are appropriate in the EU and which are not.

Thirdly, the external EU border can also be explained in terms of networks. Browning & Joenniemi (2008) speak of the EU as a neomedieval entity. The power is not be seen as concentrated in Brussels but regionalized ''corresponding to logics of transnationalism and network governance'' (Browning & Joenniemi, 2008, p.525). In theory non-EU actors are seen as equal partners here. Dimitrovova (2008) sees the network view as borders going beyond territorially fixed states. This is however hard to imagine for the author.

Constructivism, realism or something in between?

Roughly speaking, in the geopolitics literature which focuses on EU external policies two stances dominate. On the one hand there is the view that the EU is a normative power with an idealistic nature of spreading certain values, related to the imperial view. The other approach views the EU solely as an actor which acts in its own interests. The former can be called the constructivist stance, the latter the realist stance. Both of these perspectives have sparked an interesting debate in

regard to EU external border policy. Some authors draw from both of these perspectives and come up with new stances.

A main assumption that many authors take is that we live in a time of post-national geopolitics (Scott, 2009). Scott (2011) names geopolitics as 'chaotic' in the post-national era. Geopolitics consists of ''Ideologically motivated politics of self-interest'' (Scott, 2011, p.150). It can be argued that both perspectives go hand in hand. Even if the EU is seen as a normative empire, in itself this can be seen as a utility-maximizing strategy, using its normative character for its own best interests (Del Sarto, 2015). For example, norms can be an instrument for creating such a thing as an EU identity, thereby serving as a matter of interest for the EU itself (Fanoulis, 2018). As Joenniemi puts it: ''Security is reconfigured and provided with a different, more value-oriented and externally-oriented meaning'' (2008, p.91). Haukkala (2008) points out that the EU faces a dilemma in being a normative power towards its eastern neighbours. On the one hand it cannot meet the demands of the partnership countries with regards to membership prospects, on the other hand by fully cancelling those prospects the EU loses its normative power.

These perspectives can be very well applied to the EU's border policies. What is visible in the critical geopolitics literature are basically two perspectives on the EU border policies in relation to neighbouring countries that go hand in hand but can at the same time not coexist. On the one hand there is the view on European Neighbourhood Policy as a tool for border softening. It is then considered as a means for cooperation and inclusion. This could progressively be interpreted as an indication that we are moving into times beyond the nation-state and that fixed territories are not the main frame of reference anymore. On the other hand, and this side is strongly represented in critical geopolitical literature, it is often argued that the EU chooses a security discourse, the main motivation being protection of its own territory. According to this view the EU is creating a buffer zone in its vicinity as a means to halt undesired cross-border flows.

This has led scholars to think of the ENP as a project of *reterritorializing* rather than *deterritorializing* (Walters, 2010). The applied strategy here is ''cooperation for security.'' Reading the European project in this sense means that the EU stands for a certain fixed territory and that the ENP falls outside of this territorial area. If cooperation is only a means to reach security, then it seems that the ENP countries are in an inferior position, only tools to reach maximum security for those who fall inside the Schengen territory. Kostadinova (2009) argues that in the case of the eastern ENP hard borders prevail over soft ones, caused by ''insufficient transformation of the assumptions and routinised practices that guide policy-making'' (Kostadinova 2009, p.235).

The two perspectives can according to some very well exist together. Celata & Coletti (2016) point to the multidimensionality of the ENP. They argue that the ENP is more than old-fashioned territoriality and bordering, and that conflicting meanings behind the ENP can exist side by side ''in

an attempt to construct a selective, fragmented and mobile EU external frontier.'' (Celata & Coletti, 2016, p.15). As Scott (2009, p.232) summarizes this contradicting nature: ''A project of re-territorialisation that combines traditional geopolitical concerns (security) and a post-national focus on mutual interdependence and partnership.''

The observed contradiction is widely criticized. Christou (2010) sees on the one hand the normative narrative about decent European values and standards, and that the obligation for the EU to involve the ENP countries in the European project. On the other hand there is the narrative of a calculation of threats and risks, and the ENP as an instrument of maximizing security. This contradiction is considered by Christou impossible to uphold, and a danger for a secure and stable neighbourhood. Another critical argument is the existence of an asymmetrical and unequal relationship between the EU and the ENP countries (Scott, 2007). Cooperation happens on conditions formulated by the EU and create a dependency of the ENP countries on the EU.

Some more critical authors even use the words 'imperialism' and 'colonialism' to describe the ENP. The normative nature of the EU is in this sense an important aspect to pay attention to The ENP partners are encouraged to adopt standards that are the norm in the EU, in this light the EU might be seen as enforcing positive changes. However, if the goal of this is to create security and regional stability, then the EU puts its own interests ahead of that of the ENP countries and the ENP might rather be seen as a kind of imperialism (Beauguitte, 2015). Dimitrovova (2011) argues that the ENP is better seen as an imperial tool, by coining the term ''soft imperialism.'' This means that no traditional imperial methods are used, but rather that imperialism is practiced through cooperation and negotiations. Van Houtum & Boedeltje (2011) go as far as posing the question whether the ENP can be regarded as a mechanism of colonization. The meaning behind the ENP is a 'Europeanization' of the periphery of the continent and ENP is helping this process by being a means of ordering, bordering and othering.

There might be even a deeper connection to the colonial past of the former imperial powers of Europe. The problem at stake with the ENP is as Kramsch (2011) puts it the ''envisioning of the world beyond Europe.'' In colonial times European imperial powers exported their own ideal of the nation-state with its clearly demarcated boundaries to the rest of the world, conflicting with the notion of world empires, which the colonial powers aspired to be. A ''crisis of vision'' was born (Kramsch 2011). With the current ENP and its double nature, it can be argued that we are witnessing such a crisis of vision again. In eastward enlargement a territorial logic was initially followed; once a nation-state lived up to certain standards, it could be fully incorporated into the EU. With the ENP and its double nature, the story is different. The territorial logic is gone; Ukraine and other ENP countries are partners of which certain requirements are expected, but full membership is not clearly out on the table. European expansion is not simply a matter of adding new nation-states to the

territory, instead there is talk of a ''ring of friends'' and a ''buffer zone'' to safeguard geopolitical interests.

3. Research and methodology

The main research method of this thesis will be a critical discourse analysis. The discourse analysis will be applied on the programme documents from both the EMR and the PBU regions for the period of 2014-2020. A discourse analysis is a means of finding deeper meanings of a text by deconstructing it. First and foremost it is essential to know that a discourse is not an absolute concept with a clear-cut definition; in academic literature there is a wide range of interpretations of the term discourse, which is accompanied by as many ways of executing a discourse analysis. In order to bring some clarity, it is useful two look at two general approaches of the concept as defined by Richardson (2007). Firstly, in a formalist or structuralist approach, discourse can be seen as a unit of language. The second approach (the functionalist approach) takes into account the broader structures of society. In this definition, it should be taken into account how social ideas influence language use and interpretation. One important aspect here is reciprocity: language and society are in a dialogue with each other. Discourse is a representation of reality, but is as well produced by that same reality. In the methodology of critical discourse analysis, the functionalist approach is generally in place.

When it comes to the execution of a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) it is essential to look at the ideas developed by Norman Fairclough. He is regarded as one of the founders of this research method, and an important scholar in further developing the concept of discourse. Fairclough (1995) observes that discourse is widely used in poststructuralist social theory by thinkers such as Foucault, where discourse is seen as a social construction of reality. Taking into account the many different academic thoughts on discourse, Fairclough comes to the following insight: "I see discourses as ways of representing aspects of the world – the processes, relations and structures of the material world, the 'mental world' of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and so forth, and the social world" (Fairclough, 2003, p.124).

Richardson (2007) identifies a number of main principles for a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Important is the strong relation between CDA and societal issues. Like the concept of bordering practices, CDA is about power relations. Furthermore a discourse is to be seen as being in a dialogue with society. Discourses can be ideological and can only be understood in relation to the wider historical context. Finally, CDA implies a systematic methodology and a relation between the text and social context.

Hyatt (2013), responding to the lack of practical approaches to policy discourse analysis, attempts to develop an analytical framework to cope with this issue. By approaching policy as a discourse, the point of view has shifted from policy as a product towards policy as a process. ''This involves the textualisation of ideological positions in the making of policy and the detextualisation of

these positions in their implementation in practice'' (Hyatt, 2013, p.836). This implies a focus not so much on the intention of policymakers, but on effects and meaning of the linguistic element of the policy. CDA can according to Fairclough provide a transdisciplinary manner between linguistic analysts and those aiming to research social processes and change. Policies are drivers of social transformation and change, and the production and representation of those policies can be seen as discursive practices. Those practices are influencing society, causing certain perspectives and ideas to be viewed as normal or abnormal. Like in the ideas of Fairclough, approaching policy as a discourse exposes its dialectical relation with society. By applying CDA, it can be uncovered how producers of texts view the social world and how these views are ''characterised ideologically through relations of power'' (Hyatt, p.837). In this case , ''policymaking is seen as an arena of struggle over meaning, and policies are seen as the outcomes of struggles between contenders of competing objectives, where language - or more specifically discourse - is used tactically'' (Hyatt, p. 837).

Hyatt (2013), using the ideas of Fairclough, attempts to create a general framework to apply specifically on policy documents. It is important to note that this is not meant as some kind of universal tool. Rather, the researcher is encouraged to select those aspects of the frame that is useful to the context of his or her particular research, and possibly combine them with other frames.

The first element of the frame is that of contextualizing policy. A way to start this off is to identify drivers or expressions of intended aims of the policy. They can be identified from for example the researched policy documents. Secondly, warrants can be identified. Warrants refer to ''the justification, authority, or ''reasonable grounds'' . . .established for some act, course of action, statement or belief'' (Hyatt p.839). These warrants are divided into three subcategories. The first one is the evidentiary warrant. This refers to the justification of policy by presenting empirical evidence, often based on positivistic and quantitative science. This kind of evidence is usually presented as undisputed. A CDA can potentially uncover inaccuracy or incredibility in such pieces of evidence. Secondly, there is the accountability warrant. This is a way of justifying policies by referring to results or outcomes from policies of the past. Thirdly, policies can be justified by the political warrant. In this case, justification is claimed on the basis of a certain service to the public interest. These warrants often go together with 'grand' ideological terms such as freedom, equality, justice etcetera.
Next to the contextualization of policy, there is a second element to the framework which is the deconstruction of policy. This draws heavily on the CDA ideas of Norman Fairclough, keeping in mind that language should never be seen apart from its social relations: ''language constructs and is constructed by society'' (Hyatt, p.839). Language creates knowledge, and therefore creates and changes positions of power. Fairclough comes up with the concept ''naturalisation,'' meaning that society members are conditioned to accept certain conventions that might not even be in their own interest. The aim of a CDA would be to uncover processes of naturalization.

Essential here are four modes of legitimation as identified by van Leeuwen (1999) in Fairclough (2003):

- Authorization: Legitimation by reference to the authority of tradition, custom, law, and of persons in whom some kind of institutional authority is vested.
- Rationalization: Legitimization by reference to the utility of institutionalized action, and to the knowledges society has constructed to endow them with cognitive validity.
- Moral evaluation: Legitimation by reference to value systems.
- Mythopoesis: Legitimation conveyed through narrative.

To identify these modes of legitimation requires a thorough reading of the material, since they are present more often implicitly than explicitly. It is also well possible that multiple of these strategies are combined to achieve legitimation (Hyatt, 2013, p.840).

Often, texts from all sorts claim legitimation by referring to other sources. This is where the concepts of interdiscursivity and intertextuality come into play. ''Interdiscursivity refers to the diverse ways in which genres and discourses interpenetrate each other'' (Hyatt, p.840). Intertextuality refers to the presence of texts in other text, often serving to support the point of view of the writer, be it very obvious through a literal quotation or more invisible.

Another aspect is that of evaluation. This refers to the attitude that a writer can take on towards entities that are discussed. Evaluation can be divided into inscribed and evoked evaluation. The former refers to judgement carried out by a specific lexical item and is relatively easy to identify. Evoked evaluation uses, if superficially read, neutral terms, but can potentially provoke judgement by the reader. This is a mechanism which can often be at play in policy documents.

When dealing with this particular analysis framework, it is important to note that contextualization and deconstruction are not always clearly distinguishable; warrants and modes of legitimation often overlap each other. This is as well the case in this particular research. As it is made clear by Hyatt that this frame is not intended to be followed literally step by step, both the warrants and modes of legitimation are used wherever they are relevant, without keeping to a strict distinction or order.

Relation to bordering practices

As this thesis takes a stance from the discipline of critical border studies, it is important to note that the focus is on *bordering practices* and not so much on borders in the sense of 'lines in the sand.' The documents make many statements on borders in the literal sense. Of course, these deserve special attention and will be scrutinized critically. However, since the documents are written

in a cross-border cooperation context, any statement made or policy laid out holds a certain meaning towards borders and bordering practices. Therefore, an analysis frame not specifically designed for border studies can in this case be applied. As bordering practices are a result of power relations, this analysis can tell something about bordering practices coming from a policymaking level.

Limitations of the methodology

As any methodology, a (critical) discourse analysis holds certain disadvantages and limitations. What can be seen as an important limitation is the absence of a coherent methodology or set of rules to work by. This issue is as much as possible dealt with by working with the framework provided by Hyatt. However, this framework is not intended to be literally taken over, but rather to choose elements from that suit the particular research. This is also what was done in this thesis. In a discourse analysis, there is always a strong presence of the personal interpretation of the researcher. This is however not to be seen apart from the definition of discourse itself, since this holds that meaning is fixed for every individual. This goes as well for the researcher. An own interpretation of the researcher is therefore inherent in the method. Another researcher, analyzing the same documents with the same research would not come out with exactly the same results. It also holds the consequence that obtained results are not generalizable. However, this is not the aim of a discourse analysis. In spite of these limitations, it is my belief that a useful contribution can be made to critical border studies by my research. This particular discipline generally consists of less quantitative-based methods and more qualitative-based methods such as a discourse analysis.

Justification of the selected Euroregions and documents

I chose to involve a cross-border cooperation of which Ukraine is part in the research, since its role in the ENP was the original basis from which I developed my ideas further. Furthermore, the scope of this thesis is too limited to take into account all countries involved in the program. Furthermore, Ukraine because is a particularly interesting case considering the developments in recent years, the available literature and the strong desire of part of the Ukrainian population to be a part of the EU. Overall, it could be argued that Ukraine has become an exemplary example to project all the different perspectives on the ENP on. Ukraine borders 4 EU states directly. When it comes to a comparison with INTERREG CBCs, this makes it a more interesting case than the North African, Middle Eastern and Caucasus countries, which are separated from the EU territory by sea and other states. Belarus has not showed a significant interest in EU membership, whereas Moldova, although facing an interesting 'East vs. West dilemma' itself, is of less geopolitical interest and caused less turmoil on the continent. It is true that Ukraine is involved in more of such cross-border cooperation structures, however for the sake of brevity it was suitable to choose only one CBC. The selection of

the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine region was partially practical, since its programme document was easily available in English. However, another aspect that made this CBC particularly interesting was the involvement of three countries of a fully different nature when it comes to EU integration processes. Poland is a full member since 2004, Belarus is considered to be more 'eastward'-oriented and as is known the European integration attempts of Ukraine have led it to become a geopolitically torn country.

On the side of the internal Schengen borders my original idea was to focus on the Netherlands. Quantity-wise, and to make the comparison appropriate, again it is suitable to focus on one region only. INTERREG and its accompanying Euroregions can be found across Europe. To cover all the INTERREG programs would comprise too much for one thesis. Therefore the scope will be on one INTERREG programme that involves a Dutch region. The EMR was selected, since this is a region with a relatively high profile. Like the PBU region, it consists of three different countries. However, in this case all three have been founding members of the European project. The region is also densely populated, with three different official languages on a relatively small area. This has made it already one of the Euroregions with a strong research interest, also from critical perspectives. The region also holds a high symbolic value, being the birthplace of the treaty of Maastricht. Much of this symbolism is also visible in many of the EMRs communications. This makes The PBU and The EMR two cases on the other side of the spectrum of European integration. Today this is reflected in their Cross-Border Cooperation programmes.

For each region, the main programme document of the period 2014-2020 was selected for the Critical Discourse Analysis. These are elaborate documents and turn out to be of a comparable structure and scope, and are the sources out of which the most research results can be derived. They are the main means of communication about the contents of the respective programmes, and provide enough material for this thesis. In chapter 5, both documents will be elaborated on and it will be explained which particular chapters are closely scrutinized.

4.Policy Background and policy evaluations

In this section, the necessary background information will be provided to inform the reader about the framework in which the analyzed policies take place. Basic information gained from the official webpages of the discussed policy programmes will be summarized, to give a first impression of the intended aims and nature of the policies. Then, evaluations and analyses of the respective programmes, coming from academic literature will be summarized. From the ENP/ENI perspective, views coming from Ukrainian civil society have special attention. In official ENP communication, the role of civil society is often emphasized, signifying that this is a highly relevant actor. Furthermore those who live outside EU territory are most affected by the ENP. Therefore it is for thesis important to know what those voices have to say about the programme. The specific focus is on Ukrainian civil society. This is often considered the most interesting geopolitical case on the eastern EU border. A consequence of this is that most available research has a specific Ukrainian lens.

INTERREG

I will take INTERREG as a frame of reference for one half of the comparison (See European Union: n.d. -b). INTERREG, financed by the European Regional Development Fund, functions as an instrument to aid local and regional governments across EU territory with delivering better policy. It is currently in its fifth phase, (INTERREG V), running from 2014 to 2020. Besides actors from the public sector, organizations such as research institutes and NGOs can also collaborate with INTERREG. Interesting to note is that these organizations must be based in an EU member state or Switzerland or Norway, so the territorial demarcation is clearly fixed and excludes partnership countries.

It is demanded that whatever actions are taken with financial support from INTERREG, fall within one of the four following categories: research and innovation, Small and Medium Enterprise competitiveness, low-carbon economy or environment and resource efficiency. Furthermore, the philosophy of INTERREG is on its official website explained to be about the ''3cs:'' cooperation, collaboration and community engagement. It is about interaction of ideas and learning from each other's experiences. This is where the border (or rather attempts at debordering) come into play: INTERREG projects should always be executed by multiple regions in multiple countries. To give an idea about the scale of such projects: they are required to have a duration of 3-5 years and the average budget of a project is estimated between 1 and 2 million. Ideally, regions can benefit from INTERREG both by gaining financial support and gaining access to networks and experts across the EU. If a policy turns out to be successful, it can be used as an example for higher-level national and EU policies.

The INTERREG program (certainly in the cases where the Netherlands is involved) usually is intertwined with the Euroregions. Operating according to the example from the first Euroregion created along the Dutch-German border (the EUREGIO), many of such structures exist and operate across Europe today. Although they vary in scope and activity and there are no official standards required for a Cross Border Cooperation structure to call itself Euroregion, for this thesis we can assume that the Euroregions generally go along with INTERREG funding. This is the case anyway with all existing Dutch-involved Euroregions. Furthermore, they can have differing legal bases. A relatively new development is the legal formation of Euroregions into European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs). With this structure, it is no longer necessary to have an agreement on the national level to execute cross-border cooperation. This is by some scholars who specialize in the field seen as a significant step forward.

Euroregions: a failure?

The 1990s were a time of popularity of what could be called the cosmopolitan school of thought. Idealistic pictures of a borderless world were painted, and the INTERREG Euroregions were seen as instruments to achieve such an utopia. After the turn of the century those Cross-Border Cooperations were however more critically scrutinized. Even though the Euroregions have not ceased to exist (on the contrary, more have been created and EU-financing keeps flowing in) the initial enthusiasm (by some called EUphoria) came to a halt. Academics who have evaluated the Euroregions have generally concluded that the creation of a regional cross-border demos has so far failed (see Knippenberg, 2004).

From a territorial point of view, Euroregions have failed to become something which can be considered an autonomous region (Perkmann, 2007). While in some cases Euroregions are nothing more than ''paper tigers,'' in the best cases ''one can see the embryonic emergence of cross-border regional governance structures linked to a cross-border agency'' (Perkmann, p.877). It is for Perkmann however too premature to attribute the label of 'region' to those entities. They show ''pseudo-territorial features'' at best. Kooij & Jacobs (2013) point out that this perceived failure originates in the fact that policymakers' expectations have been unrealistic. They observe that the belief in INTERREG cross-border projects was based on a ''bridging discourse'' which neglected the fact that the discourses it would bring together originated in different political and legal contexts. This has eventually led to a growing disillusionment with cross-border cooperation in the INTERREG framework.

The possibilities of the Euroregions today

This criticism is possibly answered by the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs), a form of the Euroregions which legally is stronger than its predecessors and decreases the role of the national level. There is consensus among specialized authors that the tool is an important step forward, but still many challenges are to be overcome. Case studies into those newly formed EGTCs have sparked careful enthusiasm, but many challenges are to be dealt with. These include mismatches of the potential and the effective use of the tool (Evrard, 2016), differences in national legislations and limited awareness of the public (Cressati, 2010), and narrow design and low actor involvement (Engl, 2016). It can generally be concluded that there is today still a range of authors who identify a potentially important role for the euroregional structure, even though this contains less grand visions of a borderless world and can be said to hold some more moderate realism.

Fabbro (2010) argues that in the future the possibility of something like a euregional planning approach can be realistic. Moving away from traditional perspectives can provide for a Euroregion that can make a significant impact. A condition for this is that the Euroregion should no longer be regarded as a matter of scale or geopolitics, but should rather be viewed as a concept on its own, with its own peculiarities and complexities.

ENPI/ENI

The other type of Cross Border Cooperation structure will consist of the European Neighborhood Instrument, which is a financial instrument of the European Neighbourhood Policy. (see European Union- n.d. -a). The basic principles of the ENP are ''Cooperation, peace and security, mutual accountability and a shared commitment to the universal values of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights.'' It is noticeable that, assuming from these principles the focus is more on the political sphere where INTERREG seems to be an economic and socio-cultural programme. ENI is the financial instrument to support these developments.

It came into force in 2014, and is a replacement of the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI). The budget for the period 2014-2020 is 15 billion euros. It is divided in ENI South, consisting of a number of North African and Middle Eastern countries, and ENI east consisting of the Caucasus countries, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova. The change from ENPI to ENI should encompass being faster and more flexible among other improvements in the program.

The six ENI targets as listed on the official website:

- Fostering human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, equality, sustainable democracy, good governance and a thriving civil society;

- Achieving progressive integration into the EU internal market and enhanced co-operation including through legislative approximation and regulatory convergence, institution building and investments;
- Creating conditions for well managed mobility of people and promotion of people-to-people contacts;
- Encouraging development, poverty reduction, internal economic, social and territorial cohesion, rural development, climate action and disaster resilience;
- Promoting confidence building and other measures contributing to security and the prevention and settlement of conflicts;
- Enhancing sub-regional, regional and Neighbourhood wide collaboration as well as Cross-Border Cooperation.

There are three ways to give ENI support: there are bilateral programmes for one country and multi-country programmes which can be applied to two entire countries or more. What I will focus on in the thesis is however the third way: ''Cross-Border Cooperation programmes between Member States and partner countries taking place along their shared part of the external border of the EU (including Russia)'' (see European Union- n.d. -a).

An important aspect of the ENI is the strong emphasis on civil society. The capacity of civil society should be strengthened and they should play a ''full role in the democratization process.'' The role of civil society should be at least as important as those of the local and regional governments when it comes to the cross-border programmes. In case a country shows regression, governments might see a decrease of funds, while civil society can expect an increase.

The cross-border programmes at the external borders of the EU have a relatively short history; the need for cross-border programmes was first acknowledged in the budget period of 2007-2013. In order to qualify for ENI programs a country does not have to share a land border with the EU; this can as well be a sea border. According to the European Commission, those CBC programs are unique because of the equality between the EU member states and the neighboring countries. They have an equal say in the programme decisions. Further unique features are that the management is entrusted to local and regional governments and the common legal framework.

Its goals are:

- promoting economic and social development in border areas

- addressing common challenges (environment, public health, safety and security)

- putting in place better conditions for persons, goods and capital mobility

ENP evaluations from Ukrainian civil society perspective

In this section I will outline the general concerns that Ukrainian, pro-EU civil society actors hold towards the ENP. The perspective from civil society is chosen because it marks a departure from government-centred geopolitics and can provide for a refreshing bottom-up perspective on the ENP. Furthermore, as mentioned the ENI explicitly emphasizes the importance of the role of civil society. The specific Ukrainian perspective is chosen because towards this specific perspective has been most researched, and because it can be argued that the ENP's double nature is mostly felt in Ukraine. Research towards this subject is so far scarce. Nevertheless, some research has been conducted in recent years and the most important issues raised by civil society will be discussed here. According to Scott (2011) the theoretical role reserved for civil society in the cross-border cooperation component of the ENP marks a theoretical departure from state-centred traditional geopolitics. Civil society holds in theory an important role in European integration with the partner states. Civil society is as well regarded as an important player in the spread of values such as democracy, rule of law, market economy and good governance. The idea is that the European dimension to this regional cooperation can both transcend national borders and bring politics closer to citizens (Scott, 2011).

Civil society actors often find themselves affected by the double nature of the ENP. From specific research conducted to this so far, what comes forward is that the conflicting territorialities of the ENP are often troubling for the work of civil society. What is bothering civil society actors is the idea that the ENP theoretically is about constructing equal and inclusive relationships, but on the other hand they have to cope with the ''EU's desire for a state-like political authoritativeness'' (Scott, 2009). From the perspectives of EU-elites the emphasis is on security issues, with a focus on issues such as terrorism, illegal immigration and human trafficking. Measures taken in these areas only lead to a 'hardening' of borders and are not helpful to create productive cross-border cooperation. From civil society perspective, another downside of the ENP is formed by the limited prospects and rewards. There is in Ukrainian eyes no serious prospect for full membership. This asymmetrical relationship is damaging serious engagement with European integration (Scott, 2016). While the promise of joint ownership of policy agendas had initially motivated partner countries to take part in the ENP, this promise seems to have been overtaken by a language of ''mutual commitments'' in which the EU's security interests prevail (Scott, 2016).

The fuzzy notion of 'European values' can also become a source of misunderstanding between ENP policymakers and Ukrainian civil society. While there is agreement that there is a need for a set of common principles, the idea that democracy and human rights are somehow exclusive to the EU is largely rejected by civil society in Ukraine. The idea that the EU has such a ''moral hegemony'' is not accepted. They consider these to be general values that are not specific for a European identity (Scott, 2011).

This paternalistic behaviour is considered to contribute to a negative image that is as well made use of by anti-EU forces in the country. However, civil society does consider it important that there is some sort of shared ideology that legitimizes the whole ENP and the cooperation with their organizations. Orientation towards the EU is by some even seen as a tool for promoting a sense of national identity, since the EU can give Ukraine the perspective for a new future and direction for the country (Scott, 2016). Europe is also perceived as a success story when it comes to social development and welfare. However, some feel excluded by the fact that the EU creates several categories of ''Europeanness,'' based on the extent of local convergence towards EU-standards. Some feel offended by the notion of being citizens of a ''second class country'' (Scott, 2016) However, they do see organizations such as the EU as fundamental to their democratization, and do talk about certain European values that they want to adopt, and some of them emphasize that it is inevitable to choose for either these values or those of the Russian-oriented orthodox church values.

Another complaint voiced by Ukrainian civil society is the 'imaginary geography' of Ukraine being some kind of buffer state between Russian and European civilizations, as a grey zone, a state where from a western viewpoint Russia's sphere of influence should always be taken into account. It is framed as a country where this dichotomy prevails, and where a political choice has to be made for either the EU or Russia. In civil society's eyes, because of this it has taken a long time for the EU to recognize Ukraine as a fully European country (Scott, 2016).

This geographical imaginary leads to what is called the ''buffer zone complex.'' EU policies are then understood as a creation of a cordon sanitaire between the power blocs of Russia and EU. This 'buffer zone idea' is prevalent in Ukrainian media and used to fuel anti-EU tendencies. It is used to show that the EU is discriminatory and humiliating towards Ukrainian citizens (Scott, 2016). The unequal visa regimes also contributes to Ukrainian images of a ''fortress Europe,'' mainly interested in its own security. According to critics of the perceived *inbetweenness* that Ukrainians find themselves in, a Western idea is created of a foundational duality of Ukrainian identity, wherein Russian and European perspectives are presented as antagonistic opposites. These are for Ukrainian civil society historical oversimplifications (Scott, 2011).

• Analysis of the documents

5.1. The programme documents: a first reading

In this section, the documents will be summarized in order to give an idea about their contents and to make the reader familiar with its most important concepts. Some critical notes have also been added: these are a reflection of the researchers' first thoughts and ideas upon the source material. This is not an unusual first step in a discourse analysis, since the researcher first and foremost has to become acquainted with the source material. This step also holds the purpose to identify motivations of policy, which is a useful first step in a Critical Discourse Analysis (Hyatt, 2013).

5.1.1. THE ENI CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME POLAND-BELARUS-UKRAINE 2014-2020 (see PBU 2017 in sources list)

Firstly, it should be made clear that not every component of the document is equally interesting or relevant for this research. In case of the PBU document, consisting of five chapters, only the first three chapters are regarded as suitable for the analysis. These consist of a basic introduction and description of the programme area, and a more elaborate explanation of the programme strategy. Chapter four and five are on the Structures of the Programme Bodies and the Programme Implementation respectively. The former is merely a division of tasks among involved government agencies, whereas the latter is a legal anchoring. Those chapters might be relevant for a public administration or legal analysis, but are not considered of added value for this particular research, which is focusing on bordering practices. Nevertheless, the remainder of the document gives more than enough relevant material for this thesis.

Starting off, in the introduction it is made clear that the goal of the programme is ''to expand cooperation in the border areas of the three countries'' (p.5). It is a continuation of the earlier ENPI program which was in force between 2017 and 2013. There is an overseeing body called the Joint Programming Committee (JPC) consisting of representatives of both central and regional authorities of the three countries. Three special Thematic Working Groups were created based on the themes of Large Infrastructure Projects, Strategic and Thematic Objectives and Technical Assistance. Further, it is briefly explained how the JPC meetings laid the basis for the document and which EU regulations are relevant for the legal framework of the program. Finally in the introduction, it is mentioned that other relevant societal actors were consulted to gain feedback for the further finetuning of the program. The goal is summarized as follows: ''The overall aim of the Programme is to support cross-

border development processes in the borderland of Poland, Belarus and Ukraine, in line with the objectives of ENI laid down in ENI Regulation'' (p.10).

In the second chapter, the geographical programme area is described. In all three countries, the area is based on regional administrative levels (*voivodeships* in Poland and *oblasts* in Ukraine and Belarus). Interesting as well is that in all three countries a division is made between a core area and adjoining regions. The core regions have been in the previous programmes, whereas the adjoining regions are newly introduced for the period 2014-2020. However, all regions are treated equally and have the same level of opportunities to apply for funding. Under conditions, it is even possible to receive funding for activities taking place partially outside the programme area. The area is ''coherent with the definition of the eligible regions in line with the Programming document for EU support to ENI Cross-Border Cooperation (2014-2020) (and NUTS3 division 2008)'' (p.7). Some geographical facts are given, such as the number of inhabitants: 6.2 million in the Polish part, 7.2 million in the Belarusian part and 7.5 million in the Ukrainian part. Primarily for Belarus this is a big number, since the country accounts for only about 9.5 million inhabitants in total.

Thirdly, the programme strategy is elaborated on some more. It is based on a socioeconomic analyses, experience of the previous programmes and inputs of the various stakeholders. Three strategic objectives are defined on page 10:

A. Promote economic and social development in regions on both sides of common borders
B. Address common challenges in environment, public health, safety and security
C. Promotion of better conditions and modalities for ensuring the mobility of persons, goods and capital.

Four thematic objectives are added:
1. Promotion of local culture and preservation of historical heritage (TO HERITAGE)
2. Improvement of accessibility to the regions, development of sustainable and climate-proof transport and communication networks and systems (TO ACCESSIBILITY)
3. Common challenges in the field of safety and security (TO SECURITY)
4. Promotion of border management and border security, mobility and migration management (TO BORDERS)

The thematic objectives are divided in subobjectives, all of which receive further elaboration:

-Promotion of local culture and preservation of historical heritage

With this objective the programme aims at 'region building.' It attempts to work on the promotion of the region as a cohesive territory with a common history and culture. This should lead to an improvement in cross-border tourism. Sites with touristic potential must be improved, as well as the infrastructure. Cross-border cultural and tourism networks are to play a part in this.

-Improvement of accessibility to the regions, development of sustainable and climate-proof transport and communication networks and systems
This objective is partly complementary to the previous one. An improvement of infrastructure from this particular regional perspective might be beneficiary to cross-border flows. This objective can be about roads and other physical transport networks, but also about ICT networks.

-Common challenges in the field of safety and security
This objective focuses on the general well-being of the population of the region. This will be done by improving access to healthcare and taking measures against the spread of diseases, but also by developing the labour market.

-Promotion of border management and border security, mobility and migration management
This objective makes it clear that the programme does not simply aims at an increase in border crossings, but also improve border security. On the one hand it is about removing obstacles for border crossings, on the other hand it is about combating illegal migration, smuggling and crime. In this objective therefore we already see a glimpse of the two-faced nature which is characteristic for the ENP and its accompanying policies.

Furthermore, programme indicators by which success is measured are briefly explained and a socioeconomic analysis is given as a means to justify the programme strategy. Data are mainly collected from the national statistical offices. A factual geographical description of the area is given to support this. Western Europe apparently sets the standard even in this purely factual paragraph: ''It should be noted that a sizeable part of the population still live in rural areas, and the rate of urbanisation remains much lower than in Western European countries'' (p.18). It is also made clear that the income per capita differs significantly in each country, with that of Poland being about three times as high of that as Belarus and 4,5 times as high as that of Ukraine. All three areas share the feature that their income per capita is relatively low compared to the rest of their country. The economic structure in the whole region is considered ''unfavourable'' (p.18) because of the high share of traditional labor-intensive sectors. Too much labor force is being used up by the

''unproductive'' (p.18) agricultural sector. High unemployment is considered another problem. Further mentioned are the low levels of foreign investment and low presence of tourism, low level of innovativeness, bad shape of part of the infrastructure, and low infrastructural capacity for border crossings.

The population of the Belarusian and Ukrainian parts is decreasing, partly due to migration which is considered problematic, and related to the problem of ageing population. A positive note is given on the access to higher education. However, the share of the population of people with higher education remained relatively low. Development of social capital, measured by the number of NGOs per capita, differs throughout the three countries, as goes for the crime rate.

The region is considered to have ''outstanding environmental assets'' (p.21). Preservation of these natural areas requires cross-border cooperation. Some protected species are ironically under threat from growing tourism and infrastructural development, aspects which are . Renewal energy is so far underdeveloped.

The analysis is positive on the present cultural infrastructure, and highlights its importance for the regional identity and regional tourism.

Based on this socioeconomic analysis, strengths, weaknesses, possibilities, limitations, threats and opportunities are listed in a so-called SWOT analysis (p.23-24). Fields such as culture, trade and cross-border ecosystems where cross-border cooperation is relatively well-developed are seen as strengths. Interesting is that the border regime of the external border of the EU is considered a weakness which forms an obstacle for cross-border cooperation, along with national institutional differences, cultural barriers, wide economic gaps and poor transport conditions. The economic structure is considered a weakness, however there are many possibilities for trade which is considered positive.

In the document this is followed by a subchapter on coherence with other programmes (p.25-31). In coherence with two other Eastern Partnership flagship initiatives, one of which attempts to ''contribute to the peace, stability, security and prosperity of the Eastern Partner Countries, including Ukraine and Belarus'' hence placing those two countries in a special position. The programme is also coherent with the initiative ''integrated border management (IBM) aimed at facilitation of the movement of persons and goods across borders in the six EaP countries (including Ukraine and Belarus), while at the same time maintaining secure borders through the enhancement of inter-agency cooperation, bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation among the target countries, EU member states and other international stakeholders.'' This again places Belarus and Ukraine in a special position and suggests that, contrary to other parts in the documents, the external borders of the EU must be tightly controlled. Furthermore, the programme is coherent with other ENI programmes. Also the programme is coordinated with the Internal Security Fund, and must therefore

contribute to the instruments of Borders and Visa and ISF police. It is for this reason that issues such as border security are taken up in the document. Furthermore the programme is complementary to national strategy documents formulated by each involved country and therefore should also serve their national interests. The same goes for plans formulated by the involved regions; some of these explicitly aim at reducing negative effects of borders and turn their peripheral location into and advantage. Finally some cross-cutting issues are mentioned, which should always be taken into account as projects are implemented. These are environmental sustainability, respecting human rights, public health and democracy (p.32-33).

5.1.2 *Samenwerkingsprogramma in het kader van de doelstelling 'Europese territoriale samenwerking'* (See EMR 2014 in sources list)

Similar to the PBU programme document, not every component of the EMR document is relevant. The first two chapters, on the general programme strategy and the identified priority axes respectively, are certainly relevant for this thesis. These chapters already comprise more than half of the document. Furthermore the short chapter eight on ''Horizontal Principles'' holds some relevance. Again, those parts of the document can provide enough research material for this particular thesis. The rest of the document contains financial, legal and administrative details. Again this might provide for interesting research in other fields, but not for my particular aim of identifying bordering practices.

Chapter 1 is called ''strategy for the contribution of the cooperation programme to the strategy of the Union for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the realization of economic, social and territorial cohesion,'' which defines the goals of the programme. It is firstly mentioned that the EMR is one of the oldest Euroregions, existing since 1976. The region is told to be located in ''the heart of Europe'' (p.5). There is a great diversity in cultures, languages and landscape which are appreciated and experienced across the borders. This Euroregion as well exists of a core area and other regions which are only partially involved, as is illustrated by a map (p.5). Some regions are only ''privileged partners.'' Cross-border cooperation is said to bring many opportunities and to contribute significantly to the quality of life of the region's inhabitants. The EMR is told to be internationally oriented, with potential for a strong knowledge economy and a well-developed infrastructure. Furthermore the region has an attractive combination of urban and rural landscapes for both people and businesses. ''The core ambition of the EMR is the development towards a modern knowledge region and a technological top region with a competing economy and a high quality of life in an inclusive society which creates jobs'' (p.6). In this light the EMR seems mainly an economic cooperation structure, thereby taking its societal responsibility by creating an inclusive society. The

document claims that border regions can be a means to measure the level of success of European integration and that the removal of border obstacles is best done from the regional level. The EMR claims to be an ''example region'' (p.6) for Europe and wants to strengthen this position. The programme fits in the framework of the relevant national strategies as well as the EU strategy for 2020. It is a follow up of the previous EMR programme, which is considered a success according to this document. Choices made relating to the projects, matched ''perfectly'' (p.7) with the formulated goal of the EMR. Most of the projects can be considered a success as they reached the formulated goals. It is acknowledged though that many border obstacles still exist and a continuation of the programme is necessary. A special role is reserved for businesses which must be stimulated to work across the border. Much more progress is to be made in the fields of pollution and social integration. It is admitted that there were some less successful projects, however it is so far not made clear which they are. The programme consists of four priority axis: innovation, economy, social inclusion and education, and territorial development. For each priority ax a thematic goal is formulated (p.8-13):

- Innovation: the strengthening of research, technological development and innovation.
- Economy: improvement of the competitiveness of medium- and small-sized businesses
- Social inclusion and education: promotion of social inclusion, fighting poverty and each form of discrimination
- Territorial development: improvement of the institutional capacity of the government and interested parties and an efficient public governing by measures for improvement of the institutional capacity and to increase the effectiveness of public policy and the public services in relation to the execution of the EFRO fund, and in support of measures in the context of the ESF fund for strengthening the institutional capacity and the effectiveness of the public policy

In the case of innovation, the EMR wants to seek contact with other regions which are not fully part of the EMR but are given some special status, such as Leuven and Brabant. These regions are connected by streams of innovative networks and the EMR wants to take advantage of this by promoting these networks on an Euroregional scale. The border can still be an obstacle in this, and this priority ax attempts at taking this obstacle away. Cross-border cooperation between knowledge institutes, companies and (local and regional) governments can be a means to achieve this.
In the priority ax of economy, the EMR wants to promote itself as an attractive location for the establishment of businesses, against the background of globalization and internationalization. Special attention is paid to medium- and small-sized businesses, which are regarded as the driver of innovation and economy. The EMR aims to financially support those kind of businesses on its

territory. So far, economic structures and entrepreneur infrastructures are still too much nationally oriented. This should all happen with the background of sustainable development in mind.

The priority ax of social inclusion and education has a more ideological nature. It attempts to let all inhabitants participate in the ''euregional society.'' This includes responding to the ageing of the society, fighting poverty creating equal opportunities and improving the connections between city and countryside. The euregional level can play a role in this by exchanging best practices and executing cross-border projects. Disadvantaged areas, both urban and rural in the EMR should profit from this. How this will happen is not specified. Networks between educational institutes and businesses are also part of this priority ax, in order to improve the euregional employment. More attention for language education in the multilingual region could as well contribute to this. Investment in cross-border health infrastructure is also a part of this ax.

Priority ax number four, that of territorial developments, is the most all-encompassing and possibly the most interesting one. The goal is ''the improvement of the quality of life of the inhabitants by reducing the barriers that are related to the border and by developing common territorial strategies'' (p.13). It is mentioned that after 40 years the cross-border cooperation in the EMR is far-developed. In spite of this, inhabitants see themselves confronted on a daily basis with institutional differences between the three countries. Matters such as culture, identity and history play a significant part in this. The EMR formulates the ambitious goal to map, discuss and eventually break down these barriers. This should eventually improve the quality of life of the inhabitants. This attempted cohesion should be established by letting the inhabitants know each other's language and culture and take away stereotypes. Public safety is one matter that falls under this category, and it is admitted that great institutional differences exist in this field. Euregional measures against climate change are also placed in this category. Both in an institutional and socio-cultural sense, the labour market is admitted to be far from integrated in the EMR. This situation must improve in order to find solutions for the problem of ageing populations. The quality of healthcare in border areas is under pressure; it is up to the EMR to work on this by providing cross-border solutions. Legal differences are still a significant barrier for cross-border healthcare. Finally there is the matter of nature, culture and cultural heritage. A combination of cross-border ecological areas and attractive inner cities make the EMR a promising touristic region. The cross-cutting point between German and Roman cultures can also be a feature to profit from in this sense. Also issues of mobility should be regarded upon from a euregional perspective. In this way, the less central areas in the region could profit from an improved accessibility. Furthermore, cross-border public transport is something to be worked on. In terms of territorial development, the EMR concludes that this is where it stands: ''after the experiences that are gained and the barriers that are taken away in the preceding programme

periods, there is now a need for a common vision, an accompanying strategy and concrete projects that actually lead to an improvement of the quality of life of the inhabitants of the EMR'' (p.15).

Another interesting chapter that can tell something about the ideology behind the EMR is the one about the horizontal principles. These horizontal principles can be applied to the aforementioned priority axis. The first one of these is sustainable development. This means that in implementing measures issues such as environmental protection demands, efficient use of resources and climate change should always be taken in to account. The second principle is that of equal opportunities and non-discrimination. The project must promote equality and in relation to access to finances discrimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity religion, handicap, age or sexual orientation may never take place. Related to the second principle, but formulated separately as the third principle, is equality between men and women.

5.2. Applying Hyatt's frame to the documents

In this section, the results of the analysis will be presented according to the elements of Hyatt's frame (see chapter 3) that were useful for this particular analysis. Once again, it is not the case that a clear-cut predefined set of steps was followed. Rather, aspects such as modes of legitimation, warrants and evaluations were used to identify several relevant features of the documents. An overview of those features will be given here.

5.2.1 PBU

Justification by quantitative science

In the PBU programme document, what Hyatt (2013) calls the evidentiary warrant is clearly present. The programme is for an important part backed by apparently scientific evidence, often presented in a quantitative manner. As is common in a policy document, the validity and reliability of the used methods is not questioned. The document often refers to the socio-economic analysis of the region, which is the main scientific source for the composition of the programme.

The document claims that the achievement of the programme can be measured by ''objectively verifiable indicators'' (p.16). The expected results of the programme are quantitively reflected by percental increases of these indicators in a baseline value and a target value. Furthermore, output indicators, which are expected to contribute to the result, are also quantitively measured. An example of this can be given by looking at the Thematic Objective ''promotion of local culture and history.'' It is questionable how such an objective can be measured in a quantitative way since the fields of culture and history are naturally more qualitative-based. In the TO security, one of the indicators is the ''population covered by improved health services as direct consequence of the

support.'' How is this measured and what is viewed as a direct consequence of the support? The accompanying number is almost 8 million, implying that almost one third of the population of the region enjoys improved healthcare as a direct consequence of the programme. This would mean that the programme's impact is very large in scope and that it would be unmissable to the region. There are more of these indicators that can be criticized and questioned, however it is not necessary to further elaborate on all of them. These examples are merely meant to illustrate the very quantitative nature of the programme's justification, and how numbers can be used in portraying the programme's role as highly important.

Another important role in the document is reserved for the socioeconomic analysis, which is supposed to report on the state of the region. A very interesting quote: ''The aim of the analysis is to provide a diagnosis of the current economic, social and natural conditions of the border regions concerned. The data used for this analysis primarily come from the national offices for statistics (p.17).'' The word 'diagnosis' implies that the region is currently in a state which is somehow not acceptable. Also the source of the data is given: national offices for statistics. The fact that this source is never questioned again shows the positivistic philosophy and belief in quantitative measures that is behind this document.

The socioeconomic and environment analysis itself is for the superficial reader merely an objective collection of facts and figures. However, even in the paragraph on population and settlement structure – which appears to be only an overview of population numbers – a comparison with Western Europe shows up: ''It should be noted that a sizeable part of the population still live in rural areas, and the rate of urbanisation remains much lower than in Western European countries'' (p.18). The words 'still' and 'remains' imply that there must be some kind of change in the future: Western Europe has set the standard and the PBU region must reach the same level. It implies that urbanization is desirable and the way forward. It also places Western Europe in a superior position compared to the eastern border region.

In the paragraph on 'human and social capital' it is laid out how the population numbers change and what the causes of these changes are. Migration is called a ''serious problem'' (p.20) but it is ''compensated'' by natural increase, so population growth is considered as desirable. Furthermore ageing is posed as a problem, since as many members of the population as possible should be of working age. Conclusion are drawn on other desirable features, such as low unemployment and high levels of education solely based on quantitative measures from the national offices of statistics.

Another evidentiary element is the SWOT analysis. This is based on the 'diagnosis' provided by the previous chapter. It consists of strengths, weaknesses, possibilities, limitations, threats and opportunities. Again a quantitative element comes into play, since a weight as a fraction of 100 is

given to each factor. How these weights were determined, remains unclear. Again, it is questionable how these factors can be measured anyway. How to measure 'strenghts' such as ''well-developed socio-cultural cooperation?'' Or an ''Interest in developing institutional cooperation, expressed by partners on both sides of the border?'' One of the identified threats is ''little progress in the processes of integration with the European Union in the neighbouring countries.'' This is remarkable, since on paper the whole idea behind the creation of the cross-border region is to integrate the particular regions with the European Union. Elsewhere in the document it can be read that the previous programme period was considered a success. This particular identified threat puts a big question mark behind those claimed successes.

Accountability by referring to results in the past

One important means of justification are the references towards policy results from the past. The document refers multiple times to the forerunners of this programme, mostly the ENPI Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine of 2007-2013. The current programme is developed within the same framework. This is best exemplified in the paragraph 'lessons learnt' (p.25). The document claims here that the programme builds on experience on cross-border cooperation in the region developed since the 1990s. The impact of the cross-border cooperation projects so far is then exemplified by the amounts of money involved in the earlier programmes. This amount was 186 million between 2007 and 2013, giving it a large-scale impression. A particularly interesting quote is: ''Although a lot has been done, the main conclusions from the analysis of the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian border region remain similar to those presented in previous years. Programme should still focus on the increase in the economic development in its area, on improvement in tourism, transport, border and environmental protection infrastructure and on social awareness increase of population'' (p.25). This rather vague and double-natured sentence implies on the one hand that significant progress was booked, but on the other hand that there is no improvement in the situation at all since ''conclusions remain the same.''

The PBU region as a political necessity

What Hyatt (2013) calls a ''political warrant'' in policy documents is often identifiable by references to the greater good or a presentation as a service to the public. This is firstly reflected in the determination of the general goal of the programme (p.6): ''the overall aim of the Programme is to support cross-border development processes in the borderland of Poland, Belarus and Ukraine, in line with the objectives of ENI laid down in ENI Regulation.'' Important to note here is the broadly interpretable term of ''cross-border development processes.'' This certainly gives the impression that

the programme will be beneficial to the population as a whole and enhance its development, and that the programme will make all of this happen with a cross-border character. On page 7 the programme claims to bring ''substantial added value'' to the area, and some extra regions were invited to achieve ''stronger CBC impact.'' The related projects are seen to be beneficial for the programme area. In the analysis, the ''common national and regional priorities of the participating countries and their regions were identified (p.10).'' This implies that not only the involved region will benefit, but the three involved countries as a whole will also profit. This makes the political legitimation even bigger. The three defined strategic objectives are (p.10):

A. Promote economic and social development in regions on both sides of common borders

B. Address common challenges in environment, public health, safety and security

C. Promotion of better conditions and modalities for ensuring the mobility of persons, goods and capital.

The mentioned elements (economic and social development, environment, health, security) are significant societal issues that strengthen political legitimation. They can be generally viewed to be in the interest of the general public and it is seen as the task of politics to improve results on these issues. On page 13, it is mentioned that the programme must contribute to economic growth and enhance the socio-economic cohesion of the area. This implies that the programme will contribute to both prosperity and regional equality. Objective B is presented very ambitiously (p.14). It must improve the quality of life of the area inhabitants. It will improve the general health by facilitating access to health care and fighting the spread of diseases. In the socioeconomic sphere, social services and the labour market must be improved and unemployment must be taken on. The ''socioeconomic potential'' of the area must be not only fully used, but also enlarged (p.14-15). This must be done by removing any border obstacles that are in the way of the movement of goods, services and people. These are all signs that the programme envisions a big political role for itself.

There is a subchapter fully dedicated to the coherence with other strategies and policies. It is, next to the general ENI cross-border programme, also coherent with PPRD East, an Eastern Partnership Flagship Initiative with large political ambitions: (p.26): ''The PPRD East will contribute to the peace, stability, security and prosperity of the Eastern Partner Countries, including Ukraine and Belarus, and protect the environment, the population, the cultural heritage, the resources and the infrastructures of the region by strengthening the Partner Countries' resilience, prevention, preparedness and response to man-made and disasters caused by natural hazards. It is also

compliant with the European Union for the Baltic Sea Region, which has ambitions such as 'increase prosperity' and 'connect the region.' The subchapter dedicated to the coherence with other programs holds element of both the accountability warrant and the political warrant. By referring to many other strategic policy documents, both national and regional, more accountability and apparent reliability is created. All those programmes are summarized shortly, and again many grand political goals come forward, ranging from territorial cohesion to economic growth to combating climate change.

Finally, more political legitimation is clearly visible in the subchapter ''mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues'' (p.32-33). These issues are not treated extensively, yet show large ambitions. The programme wants to make sure it promotes human rights; especially gender equality is elaborated on. It is not so much mentioned that the programme will improve this itself, but it is made clear that projects with a direct negative impact will not be financed. Interesting to note is another cross-cutting issue: that of health. It is not mentioned here that anything is directly done to raise health awareness, but that this happen through economic growth: ''The Programme is able to reach that objective inter alia by supporting the economic development of its eligible area. More economically advanced society is more inclined to care about its health'' (p.32). The final cross-cutting issue democracy promotion. This is concretely visible in the public hearings of the programme draft documents. Furthermore the programme must always promote democratic values.

Moral values

Multiple times in the document, certain moral values can be identified. These pose another means of justification for the programme document. For example: the programme says to be especially aimed at non-profit institutions (p.6), emphasizing that the eventual goal is the greater good, and the programme does not exist for the sake of making profits. It is also emphasized that the CBC is a non-commercial undertaking (p.10).

The three thematic objectives inherently hold moral justification, since these are issues against which no moral objection can apparently exist: socioeconomic development, environment, public health, security and mobility are issues that are universally desirable to improve (p.5).

In the paragraph on safety and security, it is mentioned that there is a poor access for the population to the healthcare system which also could be interpreted as a moral appeal (p.14). Such a moral appeal is also visible in the mentioning of the fight against human and man-made disasters and the fight against organized crime (p.14-15). The desirability of border security and effective border management is unquestioned and taken for granted. It is viewed as essentially contributing to a safe environment: ''The increased throughput capacity of the border crossings and their safety

improvement condition the achievement of other Programme's objectives'' (p.14). Strong border management is presented as morally correct and a means to fight illegal immigration, smuggling and trade in endangered species. However the overall goal is at the same time to improve the mobility of persons, goods and capital, showing a dual goal when it comes to border management. The intention is to enhance border-crossings for those who deserve it, and reach the contrary for those who do not.

On page 25 it is stated that The main lesson learnt, ''is that joint cross-border initiatives play an important role in building good neighbourly relations between the residents of the border areas and help enhance mutual understanding'' (p.25). This is again a kind of moral argument, where people on different sides of the borders are brought closer together, reflecting a bigger cosmopolitan idea of breaking the border down. CBC projects are also claimed to be of help to lay down ''lasting contacts.''

The earlier mentioned paragraph on cross-cutting issues (p.32) also can be regarded as showcasing moral values. Issues such as the environment, human rights, public health and democratic practices can hardly be seen separated from morality. For most of these issues, the programme has no concrete points to achieve results, but the programme as a whole should always be seen against the background of these issues.

The programme legitimized by authorities

Throughout the document, there are several ways in which the programme policy is justified by referring to authority, in the shape of the EU-wide ENI-programme but also of national and regional governments. The document already starts off by mentioning that the CBC operates *under* the ENI, acknowledging the authority of the latter (p.5). This implies that the conditions formulated by the ENI are to be naturally followed. However the architects of the programme are central and regional authorities in the region. This strengthens the idea that all relevant authorities agree to the programme, and that it should naturally be carried out.

Another way to derive authority is from democratic legitimation. This is reflected in the mentioning of the approval of the representatives of all three countries and the public consultations on the draft programme (p.5-6).

The authoritarian legitimation is furthermore reflected in the EU-based legal framework in which the programme was drawn (p.5). However also other parties than government entities were consulted for the programme, making the legitimization even stronger (p.6).

The programme builds on the experience of the regional governments in the region, again giving an authoritarian sense to the project. (p.24) Some key issues are being mentioned for the

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programme period of 2014-2020. One of these is close involvement of the national and regional authorities. (p.25).

Finally, it is summed up how the programme is coherent with both EU-wide, cross-border and relevant national and regional development plans created by the relevant authorities. This again gives a sense of authorization. If it fits with such a significant number of governmental programmes, should it be not reliable? (p.26).

Economic rationalization

An important feature of the document is the economic rationalization behind it. The identified issues to be worked on are often connected to economic development.

On page 11, the Thematic Objective (TO) heritage is rationally justified. Promotion of local culture leads to development of cross border tourism, which leads to higher incomes and an increase of employment and investment. The TO accessibility as well holds a rational-economic background, as it holds mainly economic goals. The main goal of improving the infrastructure seems to make the region more attractive for investors (p.12). Furthermore, the TO accessibility is meant for economic growth and enhancement of socioeconomic cohesion. The TO safety and security and TO borders can also be seen as rationally justified, as they are linked to improved access to the labour market and unemployment minimization.

Issues that have by border scholars been placed under the 'security discourse' are covered up by a rational appeal of developing the region as a whole: The removal of the administrative, institutional and infrastructural obstacles in the movement of goods, services and people through the borders are the conditions of the full usage and enlargement of the socio-economic potential of the Programme area (p.14-15). The document, in the paragraph about tourism development, also attempts to create a regional narrative: a shared culture and heritage that stretches across the three countries. The aim of this is however a rational and economic one: to develop the regional tourism (p.11).

In the socioeconomic analysis, it becomes clear that economic growth is to be accomplished by transition from agriculture to industry, foreign capital flows and a more efficient use of the workforce. These are all presented as rational non-ideological means for economic development, but can as well be regarded as justifications for neoliberal policies, which put pure economic growth as a central goal. The paragraph on economic capital as well holds many implications. It is pointed out that the available numbers signal wide disparities in the area. The interesting part however, is the identification of the causes of this: poor economic conditions are attributed to an ''unfavourable economic structure'' (p.18), reflected in a high share of labour-intensive sectors. The shift from

agriculture and industry towards the service sector is encouraged and seen as desirable. The document also judges that the labour force is used inefficiently and the share of employment in the agricultural sector is considered ''excessive.'' Furthermore, the attractiveness to foreign capital is seen as a positive feature and by the numbers shown to be lagging behind in the eligible area. The same goes for the number of Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises.

The PBU as a region in development

The document holds several evaluative elements of the current state of the region. The verdict is generally that the area is in an underdeveloped state. The document claims that the region's current image and attractiveness must me improved and the vitality of local communities must be increased, implying that they are currently in an unacceptable state. Regional heritage must be ''better used'' and cultural and heritage sites need improvement. Tourism infrastructure must be further developed. This subchapter paints a picture of the PBU as an underdeveloped region on the field of tourism, justifying aid from outside.

In the TO accessibility, (p.12-13) it is stated that ''the Programme area is characterized by a weak connectivity and insufficient communication networks and systems which hamper the cross-border contacts and impede transit traffic, and in consequence cripple the region's attractiveness for investors.'' The status of the region in this respect is spoken of in terms of ''deficiencies'' and ''needs.'' It is interesting that this is directly related to the attractiveness for investors. Issues that need improvement: transport accessibility, development of environmental-friendly transport, construction and modernization of communication networks and systems and improvement of the informational and communication infrastructure on the Programme area. The infrastructure is another aspect of the area which is in an inferior state. This must be improved for the sake of economic growth and socio-economic cohesion.

The TO Security (p.13) continues along this line: ''Peripheral border areas are characterised by a low quality of life of their residents, in a number of aspects ranging from difficult material conditions and worse access to the labour market, through the insufficient provision of social infrastructure to the poor access to the health care system.'' This quote explicitly states that the region as a whole is in a bad state and unpleasant for its inhabitants to live in, in many respects. This creates a sense of urgency for the programme to be implemented.

5.2.2 EMR

Justification by quantitative science

Like is the case in the PBU, the composition of the EMR programmes is largely based on unquestioned scientific analysis. It works from a similar methodology, holding an important role for the SWOT analysis and a focus on the socioeconomic profile which is present throughout the document.

Another similarity with the PBU document is the role of the quantitative indicators by which results are measured. Like the PBU, the EMR works with baseline values and target values in order to measure their success when it comes to the result indicators. Throughout the document, this is reflected in many different tables. The chosen accompanying numbers are again not clearly justified. Some examples will be given to illustrate this. In the priority ax of innovation for example, one of those indicators is ''the number of businesses that takes part in cross-border, transnational or interregional research projects'' (table 5, p.28). What exactly makes such a research project border-crossing is not specified. On top of that is not made clear what the consequences will be if the targets will not be met. In the economic priority ax, many indicators are listed that are about businesses receiving financial aid from the programme, without clearly doing activities of a border-transcending nature (table 11, p.33). In the priority ax on social inclusion and education, some indicators are listed on issues such as border-transcending functioning of the labour market and education. One of those is the ''number of supporting projects aimed at strengthening the connection of education and labour market.'' The real activity and impact of these projects is not measured, just the fact of their existence is enough to be considered success (table 18, p.38). Another interesting quantification is in table 19 (p.39). This one is on the specific goal of ''enhancing the social integration of vulnerable groups.'' This is based on the Eurostat statistic of ''number of people for whom poverty or exclusion is a threat.'' It is questionable how such data can be measured. Another remarkable indicator is the ''number of the population that profits from better health services'' (table 27, p.47). Again the question of measuring comes into play here. Furthermore there are many indicators on the several fields that are all measured in the number of projects.

Apart from those indicators however, the EMR document is somewhat of a less quantitative nature than the PBU document. The economic state of the region is elaborately described, however more so in words and less so in numbers. It can be said that this state of the region is generally viewed in a positive way.

The EMR as a self-proclaimed success story

For the sake of the accountability of the programme, the document often refers to the programmes of the past. It is ''partially based on the results and experiences of the previous programmes, most prominently the INTERREG IV-A programme'' (p.6-7). It then continues with the self-congratulating remark that the challenges that were posed were abundantly met.

An entire paragraph is dedicated to the experiences from the previous INTERREG programme. The choices made were perfectly consistent with the presupposed goal. This is illustrated by the ''numerous projects'' (how much exactly is unclear) on the fields of technology, innovation and maintaining of nature and landscapes. They are claimed to have contributed importantly and to have improved the attractiveness and even the quality of life in the area. Next, it is mentioned that 50 projects were ''not only carefully chosen, but also have reached their purposes'' (p.7). ''The realisations on the indicators as taken up in the year report 2013 speak for itself.'' There is no further reference to this report or explaining on the used terms. According to the document the predefined target values were far exceeded. If the numbers are to be believed, more than 450 jobs were created because of the programme and 2800 companies were involved in this. These successes are seen as a justification to invest significantly again in a new cross-border programme.

Projects of the previous programme are claimed to be essential for social integration. Examples are projects in healthcare, mobility and revitalizing decayed neighborhoods. It is only carefully acknowledged that some projects were not as successful as hoped and that there is room for improvement.

On top of the experiences of the previous programme, the programme as a whole and each priority ax specifically is also based on a plethora of other sources. These are mainly relevant (inter)national and regional strategies, and analyses provided by knowledge institutions. Another source is ''consensus among the partners.''

The EMR programme document largely reads as a positive evaluation on itself. The context of multiple countries, cultures and languages is seen as a ''unique feature'' of the region which is situated in the ''heart of Europe,'' giving the region somehow an exclusive status. Cross-border cooperation is evaluated positively as it contributes to the ''quality of life'' of its inhabitants (p.5). The EMR is furthermore viewed as a modern knowledge-region, internationally oriented with possibilities to develop towards a ''leading knowledge economy'' (p.6). This is backed by the wide presence of universities and knowledge institutes. Furthermore, the region has a ''fascinating combination of urban and rural areas'' contributing to its attractiveness (p.6). The conditions of the EMR are apparently so favourable that it has the potential and ambition to become an ''example region'' in Europe (p.6). The EMR also contributes to the smart, sustainable and economic growth (p.6). The previous programme (INTERREG IV-A) is very positively evaluated, as it is claimed that the

set goals were ''abundantly met'' (p.7). This actually implies that the general goal was reached, which contained the notion that the region is a coherent unity where borders in no way are a barrier. It then continues to evaluate itself positively, noting that choices made perfectly coincided with the predefined goal. Projects in every area were considered successful including technology, innovation, landscape and nature. Again it is mentioned that this caused an increase in the quality of life in the region. The EMR is repeated to have a ''special character'' (p.7), again emphasizing its exclusive status.

Projects that are close to the people are called essential, because they are ''the motor of the European integration process.'' The EMR creates an very important role for itself here. The projects are said to be both carefully chosen and to have reached their desired goals. This is backed by numbers: more than 450 jobs were created by the programme and 2800 companies were involved in this. After this the acknowledgement follows that there are still obstacles for the development of the border regions. There is elaboration on the limitations, however what they are remains rather vague. This is exemplified by sentences such as ''on this subject still many aspects are to be covered'' (p.7). It is also acknowledged that national legislations are often differing and still forming obstacles. It is mentioned that some priorities' were less successful in the area because the problems were wider than the reach of the programme. What these priorities were and how many, remains unclear. Some issues are either considered too big (and better suitable for national governments) or too small (better suitable for local government). All these remarks combined make it very unclear to judge how successful the programme really was.

In the chapter on the priority axes, there is a lot of talk in terms of chances and opportunities. Companies in the region form a strong cluster and together with knowledge institutes can be complementary in the field of technology. This gives a strong potential for the development of the knowledge economy (p.24). When it comes to social inclusion and education, some problems of the regions are mentioned, such as declining working population and a ''brain drain'' (p.36). On page 43, it is mentioned that the programme contributes to the breaking down of border barriers. This happens in the psychological sense but also in concrete cooperation activities between citizens and institutions. It is acknowledged that in the issue of employment, the borders still forms a serious barrier.

The EMR as a political necessity

Like the PBU document, the EMR programme document is filled with rhetoric that emphasizes the necessity of the Euroregion as an administrative layer. An important expression, already mentioned several times earlier, is ''quality of life.'' The added value of the programme is

explained as an ''important contribution to the quality of life to the 4 million inhabitants of the region.'' The mentioning of the population number gives it a large-scale impression with a high significance for many people.

''The core ambition of the EMR is the development towards a modern knowledge region and a technological top region with a competing economy and a high quality of life in an inclusive community which creates jobs'' (p.6). A lot is to be derived from this. It could be said that with such goals, the EMR has ambitions to take on tasks that were traditionally reserved for the nation state. It holds both economic an societal (''inclusive community'') components. Looking back at the previous programme, the goal was: ''a sustainable development of a coherent Euregion Meuse-Rhine on the field of economy, spatial development and on the social field, where borders do not form a barrier. An EMR which is acknowledged as an innovative region where social cohesion and protection of the environment are integrated in the process to stimulate the economy and the creation of jobs'' (p.7). This goal might be considered even wider and more ambitious, since it involves even more areas.

The EMR, claiming to have a ''special character,'' is necessary because it involves projects that are close the inhabitants, which are ''the motor of the European integration process'' (p.7). With this quote the EMR gives itself a strong political role. Furthermore there is a strong societal role: the EMR wants to make sure that everyone participates in society, deal with consequences of ageing, fight poverty and promote equal opportunities.

Especially the priority ax on territorial development can be seen as holding strong political implications. The goal is again to improve the quality of life, in this case specifically by removing all obstacles related to national borders. This also involves creating a common territorial strategy. The EMR wants to do away with such barriers, often of a legal characters (p.13). However this is not only for the inhabitants, it holds as well the aim that the region should be attractive for visitors (p.14).

Political ambitions are also formulated on the ax of social inclusion and education (p.36). Through education, the EMR wants to directly invest in the people and improve equality and social inclusion.

Moralization and economic rationalization

In the EMR document, moralization and economic rationalization are often intertwined in the formulation of the goals of the programme. The general goal of the previous programme (INTERREG V-A) held a combination of idealistic (moral) and economic (rational) aspects. This is for example reflected in the management of landscape and nature, which have an environmental preservation but also an economic aspect (increased attractiveness of the region) (p.7). This is also reflected in the

priority ax of innovation, which is linked to both economic prosperity and the issue of sustainability and combating climate change (p.8-9).

The ax on social inclusion and education on the other hand, takes more of a moral stance (p.11-12). The improvement of social inclusion and the fight against poverty and discrimination are of a moral and ideological nature. This moral appeal is expressed by asking more attention for vulnerable groups in society (p.11). However, the economic component is always taken into account, in this case when it is made clear that good education is also a condition for a well-functioning labour market (p.12). This priority ax basically consists of issues that have a moral basis, but economic rationalization provides extra justification to carry out the plans regarding this issue.

The chapter on ''horizontal principles'' can shed some more light on the moral or ideological values behind the document (p.72-75). Those principles are sustainable development, non-discrimination and equality between men and women. The former is again economically rationalized as it provides chances for the development of a sustainable economy. This chapter is strongly comparable to what in the PBU document is called 'mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues.' They provide an ideological framework rather than being issues on which concrete results must be achieved.

5.3 Answering the research question: overview of bordering practices and contextualization of results into European integration

(De)bordering practices in the PBU

From a policy analysis point of view, what is the nature of the PBU region according to its official document? It can be said that this particular CBC showcases strong ambitions. It is aspiring to be a strongly integrated region which will play an essential role in a wide range of societal areas, including those which can be considered to be under the authority of 'higher' levels of government, especially the nation state. Its meaning of existence is to provide a better quality of life for all its citizens. Both authority and morality are called upon to justify the existence of the programme. Quantitative methods are elaborately used in order to describe the state of the region and to evaluate policies so far. The CBC is considered a success based on the previous programme period, which is another means to justify its existence.

What does this imply for borders and bordering practices? In many instances, the general tone is that the national border is nothing but a hindering obstacle which must be done away with as soon as possible. This is reflected in the plans for the fields such as nature preservation, tourism promotion and cross-border infrastructure improvement. A liberal economic ideology is strongly resembled, since the document is pushing for a more efficient use of the labour force and to shift

away from agricultural dominance towards industrialization and the service sector, in order to gain faster economic growth and eventually a higher income per capita. The border is related to this, as it seen as an obstacle from an economic perspective. When it comes to the outer borders of the project region, a certain fuzziness and fluidity of borders becomes clear. This is reflected in the fact that it has expanded with some new regions in regards to its predecessor, meaning that it does not necessarily have a fixed territory. Many actors can in theory make use of the project by applying for funds. This flexibility of territoriality and possible high actor involvement is reminiscent of the *geography of networks* view, a concept that for some academics preoccupied with the subject matter is the most suitable view to explain CBCs. The PBU Euregion, if selectively looked upon, is an entity that does not hold traditional ideas about borders and attempts to fade them away by creating cross-border networks on a territory that is not fixed for the long term.

However, this is not the case when the issue of border management is brought up. In this case, the most important thing apparently to put up a strong border between Poland and the other two countries, in order to combat illegal immigration, crime and smuggling. This part of the document can be said to be reminiscent of the idea of a tightly-controlled fortress Europe. Furthermore, those parts of the region which are not on EU territory are looked upon from a developmental perspective. This can be argued to be a case of 'soft' rebordering, already often observed by scholars who tend to see the EU as a normative empire.

(De)bordering practices in the EMR

If a similar analysis is applied on the EMR document, similarities with the PBU region show up. The same means of justifying its existence and the same quantitative methodologies are used. The EMR is highly ambitious in its language: it attempts to improve the quality of life for all its inhabitants, presenting itself as a highly necessary project. Even more so than the PBU, the EMR evaluates itself as a success story. An important part of the documents sounds like the EMR is mainly an instrument to achieve economic growth. This is already reflected in the formulated goal of the EMR, in which the economic components dominate. In this case the focus is predominantly on medium- and small-sized businesses which should be able to do their business across the borders without the difficulties that they still encounter today. All this must happen against a background of equality and sustainability, issues which are often mentioned throughout the document. An important role in the programme is held for knowledge institutes; the same liberal economic ideology is visible in this document, but since the economic development is 'further' advanced than in the PBU, the focus is now on the shift towards a knowledge economy.

In its language, the EMR is very much about debordering. Like is the case in the PBU, the territory is not fixed and extra partner regions can join the projects. Furthermore, networks between

actors such as educational institutes and businesses are strongly stimulated, which is again reminiscent of the *borders as networks* view. The goal of the EMR regarding territorial development is very ambitious. From the document we can derive that the EMR sees something of a common culture and common history on its territory, which creates opportunities for creating a common identity. A 'grand idea' is visible, one of truly creating a relevant geographical entity for the inhabitants of the region. It seems to truly aim at a post-national world, a Europe of the regions where borders once so present are not a factor anymore. The EMR, concluding from this document, is a project aiming at economic benefits with a larger debordering ideology behind it.

The role of CBCs in European integration

      How do these bordering practices identified in the documents relate to the project of European integration? The PBU region is a part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, meaning that the larger geopolitical issue at stake is the relationship between the EU and the partner states. The question is therefore how a CBC on the eastern edge of Europe can play a role in integrating such a state as Ukraine into the EU. As pointed out by critical EU and border scholars, the relationship between the EU and Ukraine is much more complicated than a simple 'yes' or 'no' to the membership question. While halting expansion with new member states, it can be argued that the geopolitical strategy of the EU is to create a 'buffer zone' or a 'ring of friends' (Kramsch, 2011). This can as well be seen as falling under the spectrum of integration, although it is not as straightforward as an expansion with new member states. It can be argued that this CBC document confirms these critical ideas brought forward by both scholars and Ukrainian civil society (Scott, 2011; 2016). While the PBU document partly resembles the idea of a strongly integrated region with important responsibilities, integration is at the same time hindered by the emphasis on border management. It indeed gives the impression that the EU is making attempts at cooperation and integration, however this is happening with the EU's own security interests in mind. It can therefore be argued that this particular CBC is on paper an extension of the double-natured Neighbourhood Policies of the EU, illustrating this particular strategy in European Integration policies.

      On the other hand, the EMR rhetoric as found in the document shows ideas on full and uncompromised integration and regional CBCs are presented as being the key in this. The EMR is presented as being especially privileged to fulfill such a role, since this region is seen as historically a natural unity. Judging by the official EMR programme, the ultimate goal of the EU seems to achieve complete debordering. The ideal image is that of a region in which borders are invisible and rather than identifying with one of the three nation states, an individual considers himself as a citizen of the EMR or of Europe. When it comes to the formulation of concrete policies however, the focus is mainly on business-oriented economic cooperation. The political ideals are formulated grandly, but

the document gives little concrete measures on realizing them. The EMR is therefore on paper an idealistic example of full European integration. This idealistic idea is however not supported by recent literature on the INTERREG-funded CBCs, in which such ideas are considered unrealistic (Knippenberg 2004; Kooij & Jacobs 2013) and which has seen a shift towards more moderate thinking on the subject matter. Rather, experts on the subject do not consider the existence of Euroregions as some kind of political revolution, but rather as a potential useful tool in coping with issues of a cross-border nature (Cressati 2010; Engl 2016; Evrard 2016).

The identified bordering practices do illustrate a contradiction concerning the European project and its accompanying philosophy on national borders. It can be argued that this does in fact represent different phases of European integration. EMR language echoes a progressive optimism of times wherein the EU was preparing for an eastward expansion without a limit in sight. The PBU on the other hand is a product of a time and policy where geopolitical and security concerns prevail over boundless expansion. As to an extent the programmes are products of the same Euroregional concept, most importantly they reflect the different times and the different wider policy frames (ENI and INTERREG) in which they were conceived.

6. Concluding remarks

Finally, to come back to the central question of this thesis: How do bordering practices from both internal and external EU-wide regional Cross-border cooperation structures, as identified in their policy documents, correspond to the project of European integration?

Identified bordering practices

To identify bordering practices, it is important to list similarities and differences between the studied programmes. Firstly, it can be observed that to a certain extent the logic of the internal CBCs is exported to the external borders of the EU. Both programmes give the overall impression that they come from the same school of bureaucrats who apply the same methodology set when it comes to the creation of policies for cross-border cooperation structures. Both seem to hold an undisputable belief in quantitative methods of measuring the state of a society. Both are also claimed to have been successful in the past, yet both have challenges to overcome that justify the continuing existence of the programmes in the future. The most important similarity is however that both are justified by claiming to be of service to the greater good, and to be necessary for the development of their regions, presenting themselves as a necessary instrument in further steps to European integration. The documents showcase large ambitions and aim to significantly impact the lives of their respective citizens. To achieve such goals, both regions seem to share ideals of debordering. The EMR explicitly aims at community-building by becoming a unity based on a shared cultural-historical identity. The PBU is more moderate with such language, yet it is envisioning a serious policymaking role for itself in a wide range of areas. In order for the PBU to make such an impact, it expresses that border obstacles should be taken away as much as possible.

Aside from the ideological, there is as well an economic dimension to the expressed debordering ideals. The programmes resemble (neo)liberal economic ideas in which development of the regions must come from the influx of capital and economic growth. The regions must change in such a way that economic growth is to be achieved faster and more efficiently. Borders are seen as rather harmful than helpful in this. From an economic perspective, opening up borders is not a goal, but merely a means to achieve growth.

A specific focus on border policies unveils essential differences between the two regions, illustrating the dilemma the EU faces. The EMR document showcases a discourse wherein borders are in fact nothing but unnecessary obstacles, an unnatural and artificial phenomenon which raises unnecessary barriers. If the EMR is to be believed, it should be given enough time and space and it can successfully deal with those barriers. It denies differing legal structures in the existing countries and the centuries-long impact the nation state has had on the development of the subregions. In the

case of the PBU, borders are on some occasions seen as undesirable, when it comes to relatively small-scale projects on matters such as cultural cooperation or natural preservation. When it comes to actual border management policies however, it becomes clear that the security discourse, often mentioned by geopolitical scholars, is at play. At this point the Euroregion is suddenly a mechanism to secure the border, to combat such things as smuggling and illegal migration. At the same time, the throughput capacity must be enhanced and a greater number of border crossings is cheered upon. Borders are thus regarded as useful and hindering at the same time, depending on who or what crosses the border.

Apart from border management, both regions are treated as from a different nature. The PBU region is often emphasized to be lagging behind in many areas, both political and economic. The EMR is apparently in an alleviated state and in a different phase of its development. Criticism from a political nature is only reserved for those regions outside of EU territory. This is reminiscent of the paternalism from the EU towards its neighbourhood which is often observed by academic literature and a voiced concern by Ukrainian civil society. Such an approach subtly creates differences between certain territories which are fully included, and those areas which are neither fully included nor excluded. Geopolitical scholars have pointed out that the EU creates a normative entity by pointing out how these very norms are lacked by its neighbours. The PBU programme document is not free of such normative-identity building, certainly not in comparison to the EMR document in which such normative issues play no role.

Implications

A comparison of the official programme documents of both the internal and external CBCs have further illustrated the dilemma the EU faces on what to do with its neighbourhood. The EU has exported the concept of the Euroregion with its accompanying debordering ideals to the external edge of its territory. However, rather than being an answer to the unequal nature of the ENP, the studied cross-border programme is an extension of that very unequal nature by emphasizing strong border management and treating non-EU territory from a paternalistic perspective. Official EMR communication still resembles grand ideals of a borderless world. In practice, these ideals have so far been surpassed by a reality where cross-border community building is not as easily achieved as was hoped for. As both regions are in a different phase of European integration, the Euroregional concept is in these two cases placed in a different context and therefore hold different implications. It is important to emphasize the different meaning of all this for the inhabitants of the particular regions. For citizens of the PBU, other stakes are at play than for citizens of the EMR. To this day, there is room for more cross-border cooperation and integration in the EMR and the national border can still

be a mental barrier. Time will tell how the Euroregion will further deal with these challenges in the future However, this is a long way from the challenges for someone living outside of EU territory, as might be the case in the Ukrainian part of the PBU. Those challenges are reflected on many levels; whether it is the individual for who a simple daytrip across the border is a time-consuming struggle, or those civil society members who are seriously engaged with European integration but find many political frustrations in their attempts at getting closer to the EU. Can a regional CBC structure be of any use to those on the eastern side of the EU border?

Critical border thinking combined with more moderate optimism have shown that INTERREG Euroregions do have a future. Regarding the Euroregion not one-dimensionally as a downscaled nation state but rather a concept of its own in a complex reality allows for a realistic perspective. The Euroregion might find new capabilities without having to live up to such high expectations, which have caused disappointment in the past. It might be exactly this critical thinking that could be useful in the future of the external CBCs. Critical thinkers have shown that internal CBCs can be disconnected from scalar or territorial dimensions. There is no reason why the same would not be applicable to external CBCs. The point is not that the Euroregions should be involved in an abolishment of border management between the EU and its neighbourhood. In the end, such border management decisions inevitably come from higher policy levels. However, I argue for a Euroregion that aims at realistic capabilities, one that does make attempts at debordering but in doing so is not an extension of the problematic nature of the ENP. Even if this means that its ambitions can only be very moderate, it can provide for honest policymaking without frustrations caused by a double-natured programme. If policymakers, in accordance with civil society actors, are able to move in such a direction, the external CBC might truly be a small but important step towards integration of external border regions of the EU.

7. Reflection

Naturally, there are more aspects to the Euroregions than I have treated in the theoretical framework. It can be said that they have gained a significant amount of criticism which has not been elaborately discussed here. It is not the intention to deny this criticism. On the contrary, it is something which is important to be aware of. The choice was made to put the focus on the possibilities of the Euroregions in the future, since this provides for a more current and relevant perspective. Another element to reflect on is the fact that the theoretical framework has been largely based on the perspective of critical border thought. This can have as a consequence that a certain side in the academic debate is taken. This has allowed to bring across the argument, however it is important to keep in mind that this is certainly not the only perspective on the subject matter, and that other perspectives might as well make valid points.

This thesis was carried out on a relatively small empirical base. One reason for this is that it turned out to be practically difficult to gain more empirical data in order to provide an answer to the research question. This was especially the case for the PBU region. Furthermore, as the policy documents were similar in size and scope they turned out to provide for an equal comparison. By choosing this specific empirical material I could give equal attention to both regions, which this thesis set out to do. However, it is important to note that the relatively small size of the empirical base as well holds important limitations. This research has not been of a generalizable kind. If for example the same method was applied on other CBCs, the results would not have been an exact copy. It is furthermore essential to keep in mind that language in policy documents is not copied one on one into society. The discrepancy between used language and practical reality is especially clear in the case of the Euroregions. The chosen method is therefore not meant to directly reflect possible intentions of policymakers or consequences of Euroregional policies on society, but rather to tell something about the ideas and views of policymakers and to analyze *how* the used policy language corresponds to societal reality (Hyatt, 2013). It is true that the relation between the executed research and the relevant societal issues are only indirect, which is a consequence of the chosen method and empirical material. Naturally, there is more to be said about bordering practices of European CBCs, and this thesis does not have the pretention to give a universal answer to this issue. Rather, this thesis is meant to gain a small portion of new insight by making a comparison which was not done before yet; the used method and empirical material have allowed for this, even though its scope was relatively small.

8.Sources

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