

# LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION – BASIS, DETERMINANTS AND FORMS OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES IN POLISH BORDER AREAS

**Sabina SANETRA-PÓLGRABI**  
Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland

## **Abstract:**

**Aim:** The paper presents the main definitions and legal and economic aspects of cross-border cooperation in Polish border areas. In particular, the paper shows the development of Euroregional cooperation, town-twinning and cross-border clusters. Furthermore, the paper describes primary goals as well as achievements and barriers to Euroregional cooperation, as well as determinants and legal basis for cross-border activities.

**Design /research methods:** The study was based on an analysis of legal acts regarding the functioning of local government units, which was complemented by the findings stemming from the literature on the subject and the author's own research on cross-border cooperation between local communities and local government units operating under the Polish-Czech-Slovak Euroregion.

**Conclusions/ findings:** For local self-governments located very near the national border, a cross-border cooperation is an opportunity to implement a number of tasks delegated under the acts on local self-governments, thus making a higher quality of life of border communities a reality. The practice to date, however, shows that many barriers exist, mainly of legal and institutional nature, to successful implementation of cross-border initiatives.

**Limitations of the research:** Poland's southern border area.

*Keywords:* local self-government, Euroregion, cross-border cluster, twin towns, cross-border cooperation.  
JEL: K25; H76

## **1. Introduction**

Cross-border cooperation certainly represents an important element in the functioning of local authorities, involving predominantly communes and districts. However, its development has been uneven with numerous units making no effort at all in this respect, as they perceived the cross-

border cooperation as unnecessary or distorting internal legal order. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 1990s some local governments started to integrate with the units situated across the border with a view to deepen their cooperation, to diagnose problems, not infrequently common to the entire border area, and to acquire valuable experience through greater integration under the Union's structures.

The relatively oldest forms of cross-border cooperation launched by local authorities are Euroregions. Coming up with their precise definition is marred by many difficulties; however, in the paper emphasis was put on possible ways of approaching this form of cooperation. It is worth noting that while in Western Europe this type of initiatives was launched as far back as the 1950s, Polish border areas saw the first fully formalized cross-border structure established in 1991. Cross-border cooperation can also be conducted under different forms such as town-twinning and cross-border clusters. The latter constitutes a new link in cooperation providing a collaboration platform for economic entities, higher education institutions, associations and local authorities in border areas.

The forms mentioned do not exhaust the whole range of possibilities in terms of cooperation conducted by local authorities. There are multiple informal initiatives which were not included in the paper. The main objective was to show the legal basis for cross-border activities, the circumstances and cooperation forms implemented. What was highlighted in particular were the Euroregions, town-twinning and clusters. In general it is within their framework that the local authorities activate local communities to launch projects for the development of education, sport, tourism and culture. It is worth pointing out that apart from this scope there is also other i.e. security and emergency management as well as economic cooperation. There can be no doubt that engaging in cross-border activity by local authorities is to serve the border area population and to promote local governments.

## **2. Local government units in cross-border cooperation - determinants**

Many local government units situated along the national borders are very active in promoting cross-border cooperation. This cooperation is carried out across all dimensions and at all levels, whereby it should be noted that, as the outcomes to date have demonstrated, this is in the first place communes and districts that are engaged in the most enhanced projects aimed at establishing contacts with the other side of the border.

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION – BASIS, DETERMINANTS AND FORMS OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES IN POLISH BORDER AREAS

While elaborating on the issue of the reasons behind concluding agreements on cross-border cooperation, joining Euroregions or other forms of collaboration one should pay attention to spatial, social and economic aspects, including the resources available to communes and districts which determine the choices made within cooperation. With respect to the reasons one could thus mention the need to gain a variety of advantages, both material and non-material, which could jointly be referred to as the so called added value of cooperation (Table 1), being comprised of the following values: European, political, institutional, socio-economic and socio-cultural, according to how these benefits are defined by the European Charter for Border and Cross-Border Regions. The cooperation dynamics is, however, affected by all determinants, i.e. location and natural resources, demographic conditions, infrastructure, and local authorities' actions. Equally vital is the development of the institutional sphere, business environment, social climate and access to EU funds.

**Table 1. Added value of cross-border cooperation**

No.	Value	Meaning
1.	European value	-willingness to cooperate to promote peace, freedom, security and rule of law
2.	Political value	-practical implementation of Community rules, i.e. European integration, subsidiarity and partnership, -strengthening economic and social cohesion and cooperation, -raising the EU funds for cross-border cooperation
3.	Institutional value	-an active participation of communities, political and social groups on both sides of the border in a variety of initiatives, -gaining sound knowledge about one's neighbor, -continuous cross-border cooperation based on effective structures, -devising, implementing and financing jointly cross-border programs and projects
4.	Socio-economic value	-mobilization of local potential as a result of the stronger local and regional levels as partners and the driving force behind the cross-border cooperation, - collaboration between actors from the business and social sphere, -opening up the labor market and harmonizing professional qualification -additional effects of development (infrastructure, tourism, education, scientific research, cooperation between small and medium enterprises), -lasting positive effects for spatial planning and regional policy
5.	Socio-cultural value	-gaining information on geographical, structural, economic, socio-cultural and historical determinants of cross-border regions, -providing an overview of cross-border regions in publications as well as equal opportunities for and dissemination of the knowledge of the language of the neighboring country, or of a dialect as a component of cross-border regional development and a prerequisite for communication.

Source: Miszczuk (2008: 75-76).

Moreover, critical are the following determinants: natural and infrastructural, political and historical, and socio-economic (Obrębalski 2006: 69-70). Indeed, had it not been for the common history, the problems arising from the location and the need for economic and social development, it would be difficult to talk about the reasons behind communes and districts entering cross-border agreements.

The determinants mentioned are later on reflected in the actions undertaken within the structure concerned. It is in the first place about the cooperation between the administration on both sides of the border, including sharing good practices, organizing joint works or launching sessions of local administration authorities; within the framework of economic cooperation, next to planning works, a particular emphasis is put on combating unemployment, implementing common projects in the field of education, tourism, environmental protection, preserving culture and promoting communes and districts which launch initiatives under the cross-border structures (Wróblewski 2017: 79-81).

### **3. Legal basis for cross-border cooperation**

The legal competences conferred on local government units in terms of international cooperation vary across individual countries. Here we face the lack of subjective and objective uniformity, differences in the territorial structure and the fact that cross-border structures tend to integrate not only regional and local authorities but also representatives of central authorities, commercial law associations or firms<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup>To illustrate the point, in terms of political, legal and administrative cross-border cooperation, it is worth outlining the specificity present in the Czech Republic. There are four tiers in the country's administrative division: central, voivodship, district and commune. The administration and local government entities were unified within one organization governing the region. Hejtman (regional governor), who is elected in local elections, is at the same time the government's representative in the voivodship. There is no local government at a district tier. A district constitutes only the seat for intermediary administration and in relation to commune self-governments it exercises only administrative, supportive and control functions. Strategic in nature decisions on directions of development are the exclusive domain of the local government, mainly at the voivodship level, and to a limited extent, at the commune level. The objective of the Czech reform was to reduce the number of communes and to eliminate districts. The provisions laid down in the Czech Constitution define a commune as a principal self-government. It represents a community of citizens. The law set out which charges and taxes are of the commune nature. The commune may issue local laws which are universally binding in self-government matters; when they pertain to the central administration, the commune may only issue them upon being statutory authorized to do so. In the Czech Republic, communes may establish associations for the purpose of performing tasks. Commune residents decide on local affairs through representative bodies, a commune assembly or local referendum. The commune's responsibilities encompass those which pertain to the commune and its residents, provided they are not legally ceded to the country or special commune authorities, or they are not tasks delegated by the state authorities. The commune exercises its functions autonomously in accordance with local plans, conditions and customs thus establishing basis for social development and to satisfy its

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION – BASIS, DETERMINANTS AND FORMS OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES IN POLISH BORDER AREAS

It should be noted that the structures of cross-border cooperation could not find basis in the domestic law even though they were established after ratifying the Madrid Convention and the European Charter of Local Self-Government. The year 1997 saw a certain improvement of this situation when the Constitution of the Republic of Poland was adopted, which under Article 172 conferred on units of local government the right to associate, including joining other international associations of local and regional communities and to cooperate with those communities. However, in paragraph 3 of this provision, the Constitution refers to statute laying down the rules on how the units of self-government may apply those rights which after all had not existed when it came into force (Official Journal 1997, no. 78, item 483).

Initially, the cross-border cooperation was governmental and administrative in its nature and it was only occasionally that it assumed the form that was strictly speaking a local model of communes' integration, hence the first act on self-governments that referred in its content to the issue of international cooperation was that of 5 June 1998 on voivodship self-government, which under Article 12 point 6 conferred on voivodship self-government the right to cooperate with international organizations and regions of other countries, in particular the neighboring ones when formulating development strategies for the voivodship and pursuing its development policy. This right, however, was revoked on 15 July 2000 (Official Journal 2001, no. 142, item 1959). Further on, Article 18 point 13 of the act required that the regional council establish "priorities of the voivodship's regional cooperation," while in point 14 it authorized the council to adopt resolutions on participation in international regional associations and other forms of regional cooperation. Moreover, it was first and foremost chapter 6 that was in its entirety devoted to the voivodship's foreign cooperation and which in Article 75, *inter alia*, laid down the substance of the said "priorities," as the main aims of cooperation, and the geographic priorities and intentions as to joining international regional associations; in addition, Article 77 set out the procedure for adopting the priorities and provided for the requirement to obtain the consent of the minister in charge of

---

residents' needs in terms of health care and its promotion, communication, transport, as well as information, education, physical culture and public order security. It has also the right to issue local regulations. Delegation of responsibilities is only possible via laws. They are also to set out the financial resources necessary to carry out their responsibilities. If the commune is unable to perform a task that it has been entrusted with, the task is taken over by the voivodship. However, if the commune is capable to carry out this task, the task will again be handed over to it. Moreover, communes may become members of legal persons at the international level, associations of other states and cooperate with communes from other countries (Leński 1993: 102-105; Przeorek-Smyka, Januszewska 2005: 35; Zięba-Załucka 2008: 63; Żemła 2002: 151).

foreign affairs. However, a vast majority of authors stresses that international cooperation of voivodships is not the same as cross-border cooperation (Czarnow 2000: 54; Właźlak 2010: 356). Moreover, in Article 76(1) the act referred to separate provisions which had not yet been in place.

What appears striking is that the Act on District Self-Government that was passed on the same day in no way referred to the issue of cooperation in the international arena despite the already mentioned Article 172 of the Constitution and the ratification of the international agreements (Official Journal 2001, no. 142, item 1593). This gap, just like the one in the Act on Commune Self-Government, which throughout all those years failed to provide for the commune's right to participate in all forms of cooperation, in which the communes had, in fact, already been participating – was only filled on the date on which the Act came into force on the rules on joining by local self-government units international associations of local and regional communities, and which, *inter alia*, laid down the provision which provided for the cooperation with local and regional international communities as the commune's direct responsibility; and ultimately, by adding point 12a to Article 18(2), it equipped the commune councils with power to adopt resolutions on matters of cooperation with local and regional communities of other countries and on joining international associations of local and regional communities, which actually shows certain inconsistency between the scope of the commune's activity and that of the competences of this body (Official Journal 2000, no. 91, item 1009). The same act implemented a provision authorizing the district council to adopt resolutions on matters of cooperation with local communities of other countries and on joining international associations of local communities, in spite of failing to extend the scope of the district's responsibilities. Likewise, Article 7(1) of the Act on Commune Self-Government introduces the task involving international cooperation, which suggests that the participation in these forms is still not a district's responsibility and that the district, unlike the commune, may not participate in regional organizational forms, while the voivodship may participate not only in regional but also in local forms, which seems rather illogical.

The already mentioned act on the rules on joining associations refers to participation in associations understood as organizations, unions, associations established by local communities of at least two countries, in accordance with their domestic laws (Article 1). As such, the act, in fact, does not provide for establishing a single cross-border organization but rather at least two in each

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION – BASIS, DETERMINANTS AND FORMS OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES IN POLISH BORDER AREAS

country, and only then for their cross-border cooperation. This is the model that is applied in the Euroregions analysed, as, on the Polish side, they do not link communes, districts or voivodships but their associations, which are usually established for this purpose. The Euroregions' statutes only confirm this conclusion in that they exclude a direct membership of a local self-government unit. Moreover, the act clearly limits the legal nature of associations by excluding the possibility of delegating to it or to any of its members public tasks of the acceding local self-government, nor any property or property rights to intangible assets available to the unit<sup>2</sup>.

The act provided for a specific procedure of joining or co-establishing international associations with a pronounced role to be played by the minister in charge of foreign affairs (Article 4, paragraphs 2-5) who has to agree to the participation through an administrative decision, which is the condition for the resolution of the decision-making body of a local government unit to be effective, and as such is a preventive measure of supervision *ad meritum*. Moreover, the act provided for the role of the competent minister in charge of public administration whose duty is to announce by means of a notice in the Official Gazette „Monitor Polski” the list of local government units which joined, co-established or left an association over the course of the previous year, and the list of associations which have been dissolved and of which those units were members, including indication of those associations („Monitor Polski” 2001, no. 32, item. 503).

#### **4. Forms of cross-border cooperation**

Cross-border cooperation can unfold in a variety of forms and with the participation of various entities located across the border areas. The fields of cooperation also represent an important criterion. With respect to the forms, what is most frequently referred to are the formal and informal relationships, external or international, cross-national and foreign cooperation of local governments. A more in-depth analysis shows that in all cases the cross-border activity on the part of communes, districts or voivodships must be defined in detail in terms of the reasons of the cooperation, its aims and structures of operations. There exists a very large number of actions

---

<sup>2</sup> It cannot therefore evince the nature of an agreement between local government units, referred to Article 8(2) and Article 74 of the Act on Commune Self-Government, in Articles 4 and 5 as well as 73 and 74 of the Act on District Self-Government; Article 8(2-4) or the relationship between local government units, referred to in Articles 64-73 of the Act on Commune Self-Government and Articles 65-72 of the Act on District Self-Government.

launched by local governments which display the characteristic features of cross-border activity, yet it is only with its formalization, establishing competent authorities, adopting the statute and devising a strategy, as in the case of Euroregions, that we can talk about the cross-border cooperation as shown by the approach envisaged in the Madrid Convention of 21 May 1980 (Official Journal 1993, no. 61, item 287).

The practice to date of launching cross-border cooperation by Polish local governments shows that Euroregions have been the dominant form, with activities under twin towns developing equally rapidly, and cross-border cluster being established thanks to the European Territorial Cooperation.

With respect to the first form mentioned, the Euroregion could be conceived of as a specific type of a region and structure of cross-border cooperation with separate bodies, tasks and different membership status. One can also come across other definitions which associate Euroregion with a specific agreement, type of union or an instrument fostering local development (Chmaj 1999: 69-70; Eberhardt 1994: 55-73; Gorzym-Wilkowski 2005: 245-246; Jurek 1996: 418; Kessler 1999: 1-2; Kuciński 1996: 275-280; Kosiedowski, Słowińska 2009: 41-42; Miszczuk 1996: 129-139).

In Poland, the cooperation based on Euroregions was initiated in the early 1990s with the subsequent years seeing a continual development of those structures, while currently along all Poland's land and sea borders 16 Euroregions are operating, of which three are active on the western border and include Pro Europa Viadrina, Spree – Neisse – Bober, Neisse; there are seven Euroregions on the southern border, namely: Glacensis, Pradziad, Silesia, Śląsk Cieszyński, Beskydy, the Tatras and Carpathians; and four on the eastern border: Bug, Niemen, Białowieża Forest, Łyna – Ława; and two on the northern border Pomerania and Baltic. Enhancing the cross-border cooperation in the form of Euroregions and its further development was linked to legal possibilities, for it has to be made quite clear that at the outset it was an administrative government model of Polish Euroregions that dominated. Local challenges were also important, and in particular the earlier traditions of cooperation on both sides of the border, cultural closeness and longstanding social and economic relationships. The local leaders' taking interest in this type of undertakings represented also a vital aspect (Sanetra-Półgrabi 2015: 92-95).

As regards the assessment of the Euroregional cooperation, one can formulate several conclusions. At first, launching cross-border tasks was aimed at developing dialogue and gaining experiences before the onset of the more extensive integration within the European Union. This

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION – BASIS, DETERMINANTS AND FORMS OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES IN POLISH BORDER AREAS

may be demonstrated by the last 10 years of cooperation under which the most advantageous solutions have been sought for to deepen local relationships and make them more flexible, including the creation of the European grouping of territorial cooperation and the drawing up and implementation of strategies common for the entire border area, as is the case for the Polish-Czech Euroregions.

Moreover, the functioning of the Euroregions has so far shown that for the vast majority of cases, the aims which they implement have been centered on enhancing the economic and social cooperation, which is to promote local development; yet the initiatives which have proven the most successful are those based on education, culture, tourism and sport. This is precisely these fields that have the most integrative dimension fostering mutual understanding and dismantling negative stereotypes. This very element was critical when establishing the first Euroregions across western border areas. Another conclusion to be drawn from the assessment of the functioning of these forms is that the involvement of local authorities tends to vary. Some local leaders do not recognize the Euroregions as a desirable form of exerting influence on local development, but merely see them as an element supporting educational and cultural contacts. Also, the development rate of cross-border relationships is determined by the commitment and potential on the other side of the border. The legal and institutional, and socio-economic differences are what largely accounts for the differentiated level of development of different Euroregions. In most structures, cross-border projects have been developed, bilingual magazines are being published, as in the Tatras Euroregion, with conferences, tourist fairs, cultural festivities being organized and business fora established with representatives coming from the area of the particular Euroregion (Lewkowicz 2013: 174-210). To assess precisely the functioning of cross-border structures of this type is not easy. To be sure, their role should not be overestimated in the local development; still, the authorities of many communes and districts recognize the integrative and social dimension of the Euroregions (Sanetra-Półgrabi 2015: 231-235).

Another form of cross-border cooperation are contacts based on the formula of town twinning, or in other words – twin towns with their primary goal being economic, educational, and cultural exchange (Formuszewicz 2004: 25-26; Furmankiewicz 2001: 53-59). The cooperation is based on the formula of an association of communes, districts and voivodships operating under cooperation agreements, letters of intent or other types of agreements in writing, as well as based

on informal contacts. For many communes this form provides an opportunity to gain experiences and knowledge on how effective local governments of other countries are in exercising their functions. Moreover, thanks to twin towns the integration between people is getting tighter (Szewczyk 2007: 263).

Considering the international spatial ties conditional on the distance from the state borders, one can distinguish the following types of bilateral cooperation of local governments: cooperation of towns divided, followed by adjacent, cross-border communes (districts), and other bilateral associations. In the case of the first type, there are structures developed in the past and institutions which link both sides of the towns artificially fenced off by the state border. As a result of establishing relationships anew and of opening up the borders, cooperation has intensified within the scope of municipal services and social economy, especially in terms of education and culture. This is exemplified by such divided towns as Zgorzelec/Görlitz, Frankfurt/Słubice, Gubin/Guben, Cieszyn/Ceski Tesin. Other towns and cities that illustrate this form are Nicosia or former West and East Berlin. For bordering communes (districts) there also exist developed internal structures with the units being also integrated through the functional area that is the natural surroundings as well as infrastructural and economic uniformity. A different term applied to contiguous communes is cross-border communes. For the third type, that is, cross-border communes, cooperation may unfold around a variety of matters, including those arising on account of emerging financial opportunities. The remainder of bilateral associations is referred to as sister or twin communes. If it proved possible to achieve a relatively enhanced scope of cooperation, then this type of projects could be called twin communes, towns (Furmankiewicz 2002: 13-14).

With respect to the cooperation scope, the principal reason as mentioned above for seeking a foreign partner on the other side of the border is to integrate local communities, which is centered around education, sport, culture and tourism. Considerable attention is also dedicated to economic and scientific exchange as well as ecology and security. Within the framework of cooperation, one seeks support from the other side while devising interesting solutions aimed at preventing fire and flood risks. The cross-border cooperation based on twin towns is also a chance to expand collaboration under Euroregions or cross-border clusters (Skorupska 2015: 45-54).

Still another form of the cross-border cooperation which, in comparison to the forms already described above, represents a relative novelty in local authorities' exerting impact on development in a broad sense of this term is cooperation built on clusters. The term itself has been described by

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION – BASIS, DETERMINANTS AND FORMS OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES IN POLISH BORDER AREAS

M. Porter, who as such describes geographic grouping of firms, various organizations and institutions at large operating in a specific field and being mutually interconnected (Porter 2001: 248-266). In other words, a cluster denotes a group of entities with complementary concepts which participate in value-creation chain with their aim being improvement of the quality of processes and of final products (Bucka 2007: 194).

Although the concept of cluster is reserved for firms, we can still encounter numerous examples of cooperation between local authorities, higher education institutions and associations for development of a specific field within the area concerned, i.e. food industry, tourism, advanced technologies. A number of studies pays considerable attention to the issues centered around cooperation between local authorities within clusters, whereby it should be noted that not every initiative which at its outset shows cluster characteristics will end up as such in the future (Staszewska 2009: 100-102).

Two structures can offer examples of clusters operating in cross-border areas, namely: Bieszczady Cross-Border Tourism Cluster (Bieszczadzki Transgraniczny Klaster Turystyczny) and “Berlin – Szczecin – Baltic Aquatic Route” Cross-Border Tourism Cluster (Transgraniczny Klaster Turystyczny „Szlak wodny Berlin – Szczecin – Bałtyk”). The first one consists of the following districts: Bieszczadzki, Starosamborski and Turczański as well as 50 entities, in particular agritourism farms, hotels, art workshops and conference centers. Within the cluster local authorities of Bieszczadzki, Starosamborski and Turczański districts collaborate, while on the Ukrainian side it is only farms that participate. The aim of the initiative is to prepare brand tourism products in the field of education and research tourism, trapper tourism and comprehensive tourist services. The cluster was established within the framework of the project *Polish-Ukrainian development strategy for tourism as a necessary element for joint projects*, which received funds from the European Regional Development Fund (Sala 2016: 92-94).

With respect to “Berlin – Szczecin – Baltic Aquatic Route” Cross-Border Tourism Cluster, this is also a town-twinning formula linking initiatives, people, institutions, firms and local government organizations with a view to not only promoting this route as a leading tourist offer of Pomerania Euroregion, but also, first and foremost, to envelope it with an attractive tourist program carried out on land and water. In fact, such program is built on a yearly basis before summer in every commune across the region. Establishing the cluster was initiated by the Marshall of

Zachodniopomorskie voivodship as a cooperation between Polish and German entities in the field of cross-border tourism promotion (Połomska-Jasieniowska 2016: 182-183).

One more cluster is worth mentioning and this is the Polish-Slovakian cluster which sadly was only temporary as it was established under a project implemented within the framework of the “European Territorial Cooperation Program the Republic of Poland – the Slovak Republic 2007-2013”. The cross-border Polish-Slovakian technological cluster was implemented between July 2011 and December 2013 and raised the issue of public and operational security pertaining to large structures. What underpinned the network were the relatively satisfactory effects of the previous cooperation under twin towns, e.g. Bielsko-Biała – Žilina, Żywiec – Čadca, Czechowice Dziedzice – Žilina. The economic cooperation between Žilinský kraj and Podbeskidzie region was strengthened by the twinning between Polish-Slovakian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bielsko-Biała, which have been implementing joint cross-border projects for a number of years (Kurowska-Pysz, Gregor 2014: 64-65).

## 5. Summary

The cross-border cooperation in Poland involving local and regional authorities have been growing successfully for nearly 30 years. Since the very beginning, authorities of numerous of communes and districts declared their intent of joining cross-border Euroregions, twin towns or clusters. The commitment of self-government leaders has been evolving while specific areas of cross-border cooperation have been created within different fields. Such a long period spanning the integration of local governments with their neighboring units on the other side of the border shows that some sort of institutionalization of the cross-border cooperation has been created in that specific structures and bodies are being established under agreements and tasks are being implemented. Moreover, local authorities make financial and organizational efforts to carry out planned cross-border endeavors and before that devise, implement and evaluate them. The factor linking local governments, which even the names themselves of the individual Euroregions show, is the spatial location of local governments across the geographic region, and therefore in many cases the need to protect the environment and to ensure environmental safety has been the key factor while establishing a particular Euroregion.

It is worth highlighting that the individual forms of cross-border cooperation have been evolving. The agreements for cooperation under twin towns were the earliest form, with

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION – BASIS, DETERMINANTS AND FORMS OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES IN POLISH BORDER AREAS

Euroregions being established concurrently, while the post-accession period marked the beginning of cross-border clusters. A major role in enhancing the cooperation has been played by the EU funds, including in particular the financial programs scheduled to run over the period of 2007-2013, that is, funds of the European Territorial Cooperation.

In summing up, it is worth emphasizing that for local governments which are contiguous to the state border launching cross-border cooperation is a chance to carry out many tasks required under the acts on local self-governments and, thus, raising the quality of life of the border area population is indeed becoming realistic. Yet another important factor prompting the local and regional communities to join international associations is the promotion of a commune and a district to the outside world, integration of inhabitants, as well as the will to dismantle stereotypes. The practice to date shows that there exist a number of barriers to successful cross-border initiatives with these barriers being mainly of legal and institutional nature, hence the need to work out common cross-border good practices.

### References

- Bucka M. (2007), *Klasyfikacja innowacyjne jako zintegrowana forma przedsiębiorstw w regionie*, w: *Polityka regionalna w okresie transformacji. Cele, doświadczenia, perspektywy*, Kauf S. (ed.), Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole.
- Chmaj M. (red.) (1999), *Leksykon samorządu terytorialnego*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Graf-Punkt, Warszawa.
- Czarnow S. (2000), *Współpraca zagraniczna województw*, „Państwo i Prawo”, no. 11, pp. 59-60.
- Eberhardt P. (1994), *Problematyka tzw. euroregionów na wschodnim pograniczu Polski*, w: *Węzłowe problemy współpracy przygranicznej*, Eberhardt P., Miros K. (ed.), Instytut Geografii i Przestrzennego Zagospodarowania PAN, Warszawa, pp. 55-74.
- Formuszewicz R. (2004), *Współpraca zagraniczna samorządu lokalnego w Wielkopolsce*, Instytut Zachodni, Poznań.
- Furmankiewicz M. (2001), *Zróżnicowanie regionalne związków partnerskich polskich samorządów gminnych*, w: *Geografia różnorodności – różnorodność w geografii*, Łęcka I. (ed.), Warszawa, pp. 53-59.
- Furmankiewicz M. (2002), *Funkcjonalno-przestrzenne sieci współpracy samorządów lokalnych*, „Studia Regionalne i Lokalne”, vol. 8 no. 1, pp. 5-24.
- Gorzym-Wilkowski W.A. (2005), *Region transgraniczny na tle podstawowych pojęć geograficznych – próba syntezy*, „Przegląd Geograficzny”, vol. 77 no. 2, pp. 235-252.
- Jurek J. (1996), *Identyfikacja i percepcja barier współpracy transgranicznej w regionie szczecińskim*, w: *Problemy regionalnej współpracy transgranicznej*, Kitowski J. (ed.), Wydział Ekonomiczny UMCS w Rzeszowie, Rzeszów, pp. 415-431.
- Kessler M. (1999), *Laboratorium integracji europejskiej. Euroregiony*, Wydawnictwo Inter Nationes, Bonn.

- Kosiedowski W., Słowińska B. (2009), Podstawowe zagadnienia współpracy transgranicznej w warunkach integracji Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej z Unią Europejską, in: *Pogranicze w trakcie przemian. Rozwój i współpraca transgraniczna regionów Polski Wschodniej i państw sąsiednich w kontekście integracji europejskiej*, Kosiedowski W. (ed.), Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, Toruń, pp. 27-49.
- Kuciński K. (1996), Euroregion jako typ ekonomicznej jednostki przestrzennej, in: *Gospodarka, przestrzeń, środowisko*, Wich U. (red.), Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin, pp. 275-280.
- Kurowska-Pysz J., Gregor M. (2014), The transfer of knowledge In technological cross-border industry cluster – case study, „*Management Systems In Production Engineering*”, no. 2, pp. 63-67.
- Leoński Z. (1993), Samorząd terytorialny w Czechach, „*Samorząd Terytorialny*”, no. 1-2, pp. 101-107.
- Lewkowicz Ł. (2013), Euroregiony na pograniczu polsko-słowackim. Geneza i funkcjonowanie, Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin.
- Miszczuk A. (1996), Idea euroregionów i przykłady jej realizacji w Europie Zachodniej i w Polsce, in: *Regiony, euroregiony, rozwój regionalny*, Bałtowski M. (ed.), Wydawnictwo Norbertinum, Lublin, pp. 129-139.
- Miszczuk A. (2008), Granica państw jako międzynarodowe uwarunkowanie rozwoju regionalnego, w: *Międzynarodowe uwarunkowania rozwoju regionalnego*, Józwiak B., Ponikowski H. (ed.), Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin, pp. 71-82.
- Obrębalski M. (ed.) (2006), *Rozwój euroregionalnego obszaru gospodarki i pracy*, Karkonoska Agencja Wydawnicza, Jelenia Góra, [http://www.igr-elbe-neisse.org/data/files/24/Rozwoj\\_euroregionalnego\\_obszaru\\_gospodarki\\_i\\_pracy.pdf](http://www.igr-elbe-neisse.org/data/files/24/Rozwoj_euroregionalnego_obszaru_gospodarki_i_pracy.pdf) [07.10.2018].
- Połomska-Jasieniowska A. (2016), Transgraniczne klastry jako forma współdziałania gospodarczego na pograniczu, „*Studia Ekonomiczne. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach*”, no. 255, pp. 176-185.
- Porter M. (2001), *Porter o konkurencji*, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa.
- Przeorek-Smyka R., Januszewska M. (2005), Formalnoprawne podstawy działania samorządu terytorialnego jako podmiotu kształtującego warunki rozwoju turystyki w krajach Euroregionu Nisse-Nisa-Nysa, in: *Gospodarka turystyczna. Wybrane problemy współpracy w turystyce w euroregionie Nysa*, Rapacz A. (ed.), Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej im. Oskara Langego, Wrocław, pp. 26-40.
- Sala K. (2016), Clusters as a form of cooperation and innovation on the example of the Bieszczady Cross Border Tourism Cluster, „*Zeszyty Naukowe Małopolskiej Wyższej Szkoły Ekonomicznej w Tarnowie*”, no. 4, pp. 87-96.
- Sanetra-Półgrabi S. (2015), *Funkcjonowanie euroregionów na pograniczu południowym Polski. Studium porównawcze trzech euroregionów: Śląsk Cieszyński, Beskidy i Tatry*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń.
- Skorupska A. (2015), *Dyplomacja samorządowa. Efektywność i perspektywy rozwoju*, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa.
- Skorupska A. (ed.) (2005), *Współpraca międzynarodowa samorządu gminnego*, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa.
- Staszewska J. (2009), *Klaster perspektywą dla przedsiębiorców na polskim rynku turystycznym*, Wydawnictwo Difin, Warszawa.
- Szewczyk J. (2007), Zagraniczne związki partnerskie polskich samorządów miast, powiatów i województw, „*Prace Geograficzne. Instytut Geografii i Gospodarki Przestrzennej UJ*” 2007, no. 117, pp. 259-274.
- Wlazlak K. (2010), *Rozwój regionalny jako zadanie administracji publicznej*, Oficyna a Wolters Kluwer Business, Warszawa–Kraków.
- Wróblewski Ł.D. (2017), *Koncepcja pięciostopniowej integracji regionów przygranicznych. Ocena stopnia integracji miast na pograniczu polsko-niemieckim*, Wydawnictwo Difin, Warszawa.
- Zięba-Załucka H. (2008), *Współpraca międzynarodowa samorządów*, „*Samorząd Terytorialny*”, no. 1-2, pp. 63-71.

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION – BASIS, DETERMINANTS AND FORMS OF LOCAL ACTIVITIES IN POLISH BORDER AREAS

Żemła M. (2002), System zarządzania turystyką na tle ustroju samorządowego w wybranych krajach europejskich, „Folia Turistica”, no. 11, pp. 145-163.

Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 r., Official Journal 1997, no. 78, item 483, as amended.

Obwieszenie Ministra Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji z dnia 4 października 2001 roku w sprawie wykazu jednostek samorządu terytorialnego, które zostały członkami międzynarodowych zrzeszeń społeczności lokalnych i regionalnych, „Monitor Polski”, no. 35, item 569.

Obwieszenie Ministra Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji z dnia 8 lipca 2002 roku w sprawie wykazu jednostek samorządu terytorialnego, które zostały członkami międzynarodowych zrzeszeń społeczności lokalnych i regionalnych przed wejściem w życie ustawy z dnia 15 września 2000 roku o zasadach przystępowania jednostek samorządu terytorialnego do międzynarodowych zrzeszeń społeczności lokalnych i regionalnych, „Monitor Polski”, no. 32, item 503.

Ustawa z dnia 12 maja 2000 roku o zasadach wspierania rozwoju regionalnego, Official Journal 2000, no. 48, item 550.

Ustawa z dnia 15 września 2000 roku o zasadach przystępowania jednostek samorządu terytorialnego do międzynarodowych zrzeszeń społeczności lokalnych i regionalnych, Official Journal 2000, no. 91, item 1009, as amended.

Ustawa z dnia 5 czerwca 1998 roku o samorządzie powiatowym, Official Journal 2018, item 995.

Ustawa z dnia 5 czerwca 1998 roku o samorządzie województwa, Official Journal 2018, item 913.

Ustawa z dnia 6 grudnia 2006 roku o zasadach prowadzenia polityki rozwoju, Official Journal 2018, item 1307.

Ustawa z dnia 8 marca 1990 roku o samorządzie gminnym, Official Journal 2018, item 994.