Planning for an Integrated Europe: Lessons from the Border Regions

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Dcotor of Philosophy

by Caroline Jane Brown

November 2000

To my family

Acknowledgements

My first expression of thanks must undoubtedly go to my supervisor, Dr David Shaw for his help, infinite wisdom and enormous patience. His support and guidance has been invaluable.

I must also extend my thanks to all of those others that helped me during the course of this research. Particular thanks go to all of the interviewees, without whom this value of this research would have been greatly diminished. I only hope that I did justice to your insights. Thanks must also go to Sheila Cooper at Chesterton, and Vincent Nadin at the University of the West of England for their unfailing support.

Finally, very little would have been achieved without the help and support of my family and friends. From those who put me up when I travelled the length and breadth of Kent carrying out interviews, to those who have simply been interested enough to ask; thank you all. Lastly, a very special thank you to my dear parents: I am what you make me.

Abstract

Caroline Brown, *"Planning for an Integrated Europe: Lessons from the Border Regions".*

The central objective of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between European integration, spatial planning and border regions. An objective based on a number of observations related to European integration, the resulting focus on border regions and the adoption of both spatial planning and cross-border collaboration as mechanisms for promoting integration and reducing the economic significance of borders. The thesis thus tackles research at a point where a number of different themes converge. As a result, a number of additional research objectives were developed to complement the central task. These research objectives are as follows:

- to explore the characteristics of European border regions'
- to explore the definitions, characteristics and mechanisms of European integration;
- to investigate the nature of cross-border collaboration from a theoretical perspective; to explore the nature of cross-border collaboration in practice; and,
- to evaluate the role of spatial planning in European integration.

In order to address these objectives effectively, the research has two strands: top-down and bottom-up. The top-down or general strand approaches the subject from a theoretical perspective, researching the literature in order to address the border region, integration, collaboration and spatial planning themes. In doing so, the top-down strand formulated a number of hypotheses for the bottom-up strand to test. The bottom-up strand thus focuses on the examination and evaluation of cross-border collaboration in practice. This is achieved by investigating the practice of cross-border collaboration research in two case study areas.

In the course of the top-down strand investigations were made into the nature of European border regions, identifying their main characteristics and testing the validity of some of the claims made about them. At the same time investigations into the nature of border barriers resulted in the construction of a model of both integrated and non-integrated boundaries. This model attempted to establish the nature of an integrated border so that it would be possible to evaluate any progress that had been made as a result of cross-border collaboration. In addition, a dichotomous model of collaboration types was adopted for use in the bottom-up strand of the research along with a model of the way in which cross-border collaboration develops over time.

In the coures of the bottom-up strand of research, the emphasis was on the integration of the general ideas (theories, models and hypotheses) into the case study research. As a result, much of the case study work emulates the resaerch undertaken in the top-down strand. The case study chapters thus begin by revisiting the border region stereotypes before moving onto assessing the permeability of the different boundaries. The focus of the case study research however, was the experiences of cross-border collaboration in the two areas, particularly in relation to cross-border planning. Using models and ideas develop during the top-down strand, assessments were made of the impact of both cross-border planning and other types of collaboration were having on the integration of the border. The results showed that while cross-border planning is very valuable in terms of its contribution to integration, in practice there are many stumbling blocks which affect its ability to achieve tangible results.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: General Themes in Europe

Chapter Three: Understanding Border Regions

Chapter Four: Cross-border Collaboration

Chapter Five: Introducing the Case Study Areas

Chapter Six: From Networks to Partnerships?

Chapter Seven: Cross-border Planning and the Obstacles to Integration

Chapter Eight: Learning the Lessons

Appendices

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The objective of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between European integration, spatial planning and border regions. This objective is based on a number of observations.

First, that the achievement of economic prosperity, integration and social harmony lies at the heart of the European Community and has done since the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Since then, as the focus on economic and political harmony has intensified, Europe's border regions have been receiving an increasing amount of policy attention.

Second, that as the economic, political and administrative links between member states have deepened, co-operation and collaboration between regions has been encouraged as a means of tackling problems and reducing disparity.

Third, the emphasis on joint activity has been particularly noticeable in the border regions, which continue to symbolise non-integration of the member states. As a result cross-border collaboration is not only designed to help border areas overcome development problems, but it also has a crucial role to play in the overall achievement of European integration. Border regions are the test-bed of European integration process and policy (CEC, 1994b).

Fourth, it is not only cross-border collaboration that is important in achieving integration, so too is spatial planning. The process of developing the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) has highlighted the key role of spatial planning in promoting competitiveness, securing balanced development and achieving sustainability. This is particularly true in border regions, which have been encouraged to undertake cross-border planning since 1994 through the operation of the Interreg II Community Initiative[1].

Fifth, while great emphasis has been laid on the importance of co-operation and collaboration for the achievement of European integration, there has been little analysis or evaluation of the role of collaboration and co-operative action in this process. Each year, the European Union directs huge sums of money to the

[11] The Interreg I programme 1990-1994 did not include measures on town and country planning.

promotion of *"networks of co-operation across internal borders"* (CEC, 1994b, p.35) on the assumed rather than proven premise that this will enable border regions to secure economic development, enhance competitiveness and reduce disparity.

This chapter thus introduces the thesis, setting out the research framework and methodology developed to meet the thesis objective. The chapter includes an account of the generation of research questions and the choice of research techniques and information sources. This discussion helps to set the strengths and weaknesses of the research into context, and introduce the structure of the thesis as a whole.

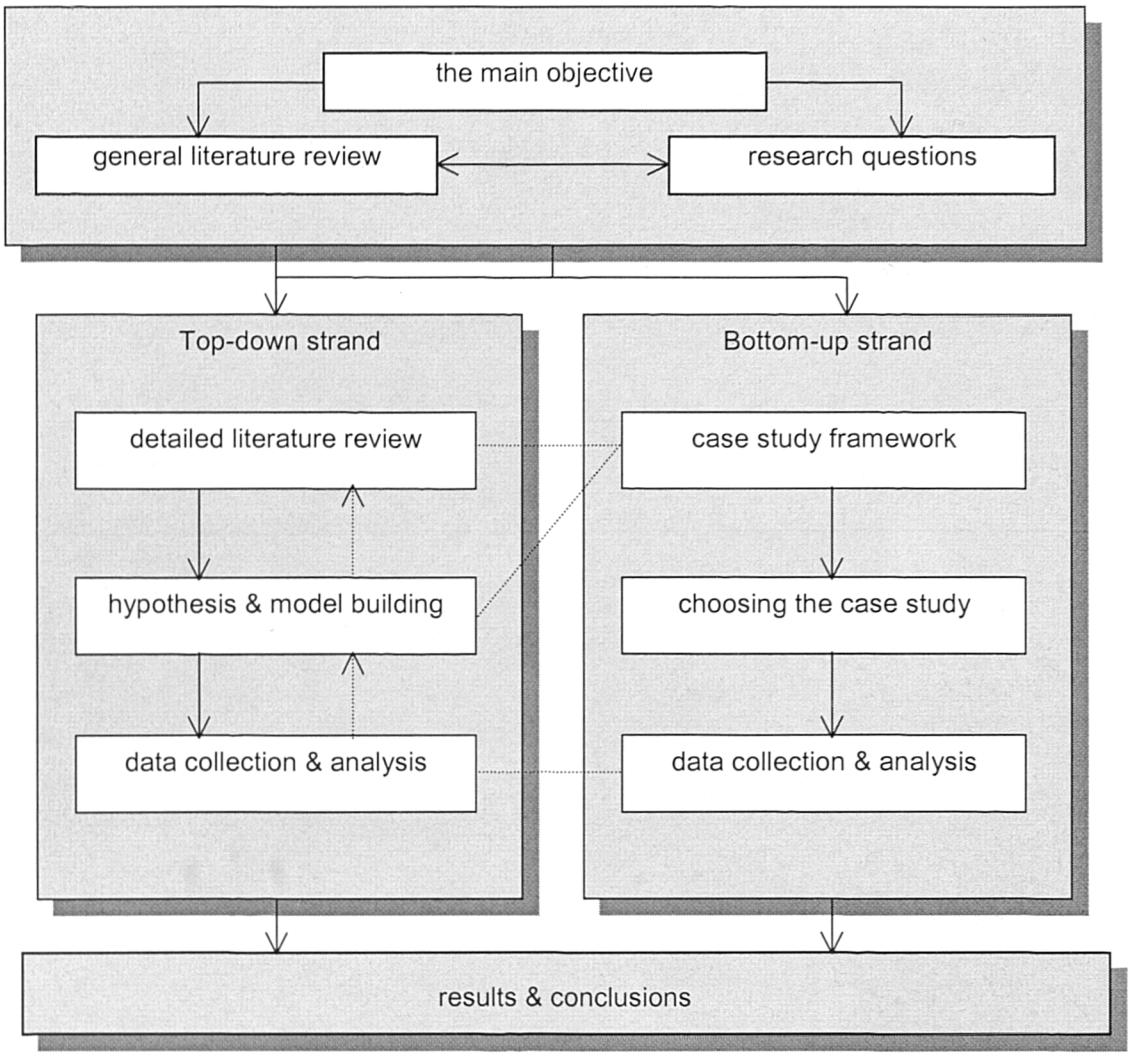
1.1 The Research Design

"Frontiers are many things in many guises; researching questions relating to them is necessarily multi-disciplinary and sometimes interdisciplinary."

Anderson, 1996a, p.18

Bearing these words in mind, approaching the subject of cross-border activities in relation to integration requires a framework that is both broad enough to encompass all of the relevant pan-European themes, and deep enough to unravel their inter-connections. This requirement for breadth and depth was the starting point for the research design. The result is a design based on a dual approach, top-down and bottom-up, as illustrated in Figure 1. The approach follows that adopted by a Department of the Environment report investigating the procedures for granting building permits across Europe (DoE, 1993). The report is based on two principal research elements: top-down - carried out through desk studies of planning systems and consent requirements, and bottom-up - interview surveys of companies and planning agencies (DoE, 1993). The advantage of adopting such a framework is that it permits not only a general investigation or evaluation of a subject, but also allows a specific exploration of the issue within a particular context. In this case the methodological framework shown in Figure 1.1 illustrates how the top-down literature-based strand concentrates on general questions (about border regions, integration and so on) while the bottom-up strand examines the same issues using a case study methodology (described further in section 1.5).

Figure 1.1: The Research Framework



note: feedback and cross-referencing links are shown with dotted lines

However, as Figure 1.1 also demonstrates, the framework has a number of other significant characteristics. First, an iterative review process at the beginning of the research helps to establish a substantive framework rather than a methodological one. Second, the framework allows the use of different techniques to be employed within the research strands: case studies for the specific questions, hypotheses and model building for the general questions. Third, it allows – and is strengthened by – cross-referencing between the two elements. General hypotheses and models generated through the top-down research strand can thus be tested via the bottom-up strand, while the results of the case studies can be interpreted and related to the general context. Such contextualisation is important because it adds weight to the findings by giving the specifics of case studies a general context, and adding concrete observation-based evidence to general observations and theories.

Finally, the framework also allows for iterative refinement of the research through feedback loops. These are particularly significant in the later stages of the research, where data collection and first results are used to refine the hypotheses and model building element in the top-down strand, and the case study research in the bottom-up strand.

1.2 The Research Objectives

The starting point for any research is the generation of research questions and objectives. As Figure 1.1 demonstrates, the first element of the research framework allows for the establishment of the substantive direction of the research.

To begin with, the thesis objective – to investigate the relationship between European integration, spatial planning and border regions – poses the question *what can cross-border collaboration tell us about the prospects for European integration?* Tackling such a broad question requires investigation into a number of distinct research strands, including: border regions, European integration, spatial planning and cross-border collaboration. These strands form the skeleton of the thesis, and in order to direct the research in both the top-down and bottom-up approaches, a number of additional research objectives were formulated. These objectives are as follows:

- to explore the characteristics of European border regions;
- to explore the definition, characteristics and mechanisms of European integration;
- to investigate the nature of cross-border collaboration from a theoretical perspective;
- to explore the nature of cross-border collaboration in practice; and,
- to evaluate the role of spatial planning in European integration.

As with the main objective, each of these additional objectives can be translated into a number of research questions. For example, exploring the characteristics of border regions raises questions about the definition of border regions. The objectives – and the research questions that they raise – thus provide a starting point for the detailed literature-based work of the top-down strand. As the following sections demonstrate, while the research objectives focus the research, they also provide sufficient flexibility to generate additional research questions. These

additional questions – along with the hypothesis and model building elements of the top-down research strand – are also significant in shaping the case study work.

1.3 The General Strand

Using the research objectives as the starting point for the top-down – or general – strand, detailed literature reviews were undertaken on each of the principal themes. The following sections describe this process in more detail, setting out not only the research questions addressed, but also the hypotheses that were generated for testing in the case study phase.

1.3.1 Border Regions

Beginning with the objective of exploring the characteristics of border regions, scrutiny of the literature on border regions reveals a tendency to treat borders as a distinct group of poor, peripheral and economically underdeveloped regions bearing little or no relevance to the economic and political heart-lands of their respective countries. Even the European Commission[2] treats, describes and characterises all border areas as regions deserving help to overcome "*... the special development problems arising from their relative isolation within national economies...*" (CEC, 1994b, p.35).

Despite the prevalence of these views on border regions (see for instance: Batten & Nijkamp, 1990; LACE 1990b; and Nijkamp, 1993), there appears to be no factual evidence to support them. So although claims are made about levels of GDP, income and unemployment, no evidence is presented to corroborate the claims. As a result, the hypothesis that it is inaccurate to classify all border areas as one distinct and disadvantaged group emerges for quantitative investigation. The intention is thus to shed light on the following research questions:

- *are border areas different to other regions?* and,
- *do they have an identifiable set of common characteristics*?

[2] also referred to as 'the Commission'.

Using a number of data sources, statistical comparisons are made between border and non-border regions. While on the one hand this involves picking out the border regions from general regional analyses and comparisons, on the other it involves scrutiny of data from the Regio databank[3] containing economic indicators for all regions at NUTS[4] level 2 and 3. While it is true that the databank includes only a relatively small range of indicators within each of the statistical domains[5], and may not reflect the true diversity and characteristics of border regions, statistics do nevertheless provides a useful shorthand for understanding some aspects of these areas. And as such, the quantitative approach taken provides an efficient means of carrying out very broad investigations into the position of border regions in Europe. Not only that, but this technocentric positivist approach reliant on indicators and statistics, fits in with the Commission's modus operandi, which relies on statistical classifications and measurements to make policy decisions about which regions are and are not eligible for funding allocations.

1.3.2 European Integration

Whatever the mismatch between the characterisation of border regions and their true status in the European context, what is beyond dispute is the cultural and institutional significance of the border as the boundary of the nation state. And, while European integration may have successfully diminished the economic significance of national boundaries by removing the tariff barriers associated with them, the non-tariff barriers of culture, language, law and governance still remain in place. The presence of many thousands of miles of border within the European Community is a reminder that despite the Single Market, Europe is still made up of fifteen member states, each with its own administrative, legal and political frameworks. The co-existence of so many differing systems creates 'costs' for people and businesses moving themselves, goods and capital around the Community. As the Cecchini Report highlighted, these costs can be overcome by removing the customs and tariff barriers that create them and working towards the harmonisation of regulations, standards and procedures (Cecchini, 1988). In many ways it is the differences

[3] collated by Eurostat.
[4] Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS). A system of breaking down territorial units for the production of Community regional statistics using institutional divisions within the member states. At present the system divides the (EU) territory into 71 Nuts 1 regions, which are then subdivided into 183 Nuts 2 regions, in turn subdivided into 1044 Nuts 3 regions (CEC, 1994a).
[5] which include unemployment, demographics, economics and agriculture (CEC, 1996a).

between the member states and their systems, which provide the greatest challenge for the integration process.

Exploring the research objective relating to integration raises a number of questions about the definition, characteristics and mechanisms of the European integration process. While much of the literature focuses on economics, politics and the evolution of European integration theory (see for instance: Richardson, 1996) overall a very complex picture of integration emerges for discussion. Building on a number of conceptions and constructions, it is possible to break integration into three essential elements – types, mechanisms and policies – each of which has many facets. These elements describe the type or policy arena in which integration is taking place, the mechanism employed to further integration in that field, and the policy developed to implement the integrative mechanism.

However, while this is important for understanding how integration can be achieved, only a few authors have begun to explore the concept of integrating border regions (see Nijkamp, 1993 and Krätke, 1997). This is a crucial gap, as without a model of an integrated border, it is difficult to evaluate what progress - if any - cross-border activities particularly spatial planning, can make towards the integrated territory dream set out in the European Spatial Development Perspective. Developing such a model is thus central to the thesis, and through critical examination of the concept of a border as not only an international feature but also as a regional and local one (Brown, 1997b), the differences between integrated and non-integrated boundaries can be illuminated (as set out in Chapter Three). The resulting characterisation of integrated boundaries is thus not only valuable in itself, but highlights the significance of a cross-border perspective - essential in an integrated border.

1.3.3 Collaboration and Co-operation

Throughout the history of the European Union, collaboration and co-operation have been important mechanisms for achieving integration. Not only because all political decision-making between the member states is based co-operation and inter-governmental agreement, but because the European Commission actively encourages networking, partnership and collaboration between regions and cities through the operation of the Structural Funds and Community Initiatives. Such encouragement is particularly directed at border regions where, through the

provisions of the Interreg initiative launched in 1990, all territorial border regions are eligible for funds to carry out cross-border projects to overcome the problems of economic underdevelopment (CEC, 1994b). However, despite the importance of cross-border collaboration within the European integration project (Bort, 1997), the reality is that it is nothing more than a mechanism, a way of doing something rather than an objective in itself.

While the main goal of cross-border collaboration is to overcome problems associated with border status (CEC, 1994b), there is little or no understanding about which bits of collaboration - types of activity or ways of working - are the ones that contribute to integration and economic development. Is all cross-border collaboration as worthwhile as the Commission's policy panacea approach implies? Or are there different sorts of collaboration, which have different sorts of impact?

In her work on competitiveness strategies in business, Polenske (1997) suggests that there are quite clear differences between collaboration and co-operation. She defines collaboration as direct participation by two or more actors in a designing or marketing process, while co-operation merely involves agreements to share information and/or resources. Thus while one involves communication and information exchange, the other involves joint working.

Despite the semantic difficulties that such a distinction presents – and there are many given that collaboration and co-operation are synonyms[6] – it appears to be a useful one. Whatever words[7] are attributed to the activities Polenske describes, it is the separation of two substantively different activities both found within the collaboration genre that is significant. This raises an interesting research question for investigation during the case study phase, namely whether the collaboration/co-operation distinction can be identified in the practice of cross-border working.

However, unless the distinction is also accompanied by a marked difference in outcome - which it is not in Polenske's work - it appears to hold little of wider value for this research. Considering Polenske's collaboration/co-operation distinction in a simple thought experiment however, suggests that these different activities may be associated with different outcomes in a cross-border setting. The simple reason being that there are some things - a cross-border spatial plan for instance - that

[6] this is discussed further in Chapter Four.

cannot be achieved by information exchange alone; the question is, *how are co-operation and collaboration related to the achievement of cross-border integration?*

Taking the same thought-experiment a stage further and relating the qualitative differences of joint working and information exchange to the integrated border model, leads to another research hypothesis. Namely, that joint working across a border is a prerequisite for achieving integration, and that as a cross-border partnership develops there will be a natural progression from mainly information exchange to mainly joint working because without this shift, progress towards integration in the border region will be significantly compromised.

1.3.4 The Competitiveness Paradox

The purpose of cross-border collaboration is not only to achieve integration, although that is the focus of this thesis, but to enhance competitiveness by removing barriers, improving infrastructure and tackling common development issues. However, while it is true that border regions may gain competitive advantage from cross-border activity, the relationship between collaboration and competitiveness is not necessarily a straightforward one. As all regions in Europe are competing for investment, development and jobs, how do partners in a collaborative relationship balance the need to collaborate with the need to compete? After all, contiguous regions generally share the same geographical context and locational advantages, with the added attraction - at national borders - of access to two national markets. They are - therefore - likely to be in direct competition with each other for the simple reason that they can offer similar things to prospective investors.

1.3.5 Spatial Planning

Helping regions become more competitive in both the European and global marketplace, is a key theme in European policies on economic and social cohesion. This objective, pursued since the Treaty of Rome in 1957, has been translated into an active programme of policies aimed at reducing regional disparity; closing the gap between the well-off, infrastructure-rich central regions and the poor, lagging,

[7] information exchange and joint working for example.

peripheries. Spatial - or territorial planning[8] - has become one of the main tools of this disparity reduction, with documents such as Europe 2000, Europe 2000+ and the ESDP setting out the role of territorial planning in reducing regional disparities and delivering sustainable and balanced development (CSD, 1998). Whether seen as planning or not, the action of directing development to particular areas, and managing demand in successful locations is 'de facto' spatial planning (Nadin, 1995). The question remains however, about the exact relationship between integration and spatial planning.

The process of directing and managing development in border regions is just as much spatial planning as it is anywhere else. Specifically supported by Interreg II [9], cross-border planning is an effective means of dealing with many of the issues important to border regions: environmental quality and protection, cross-border pollution; the co-ordination and provision of infrastructure and development (CEC, 1994b). As a result, some cross-border partnerships are gravitating towards specific planning projects, including the preparation of joint spatial plans setting out the priorities and opportunities for development of the cross-border region as a whole. Theoretically speaking at least, through spatial planning comes development and competitiveness, through harmonisation comes integration, and through collaboration comes the ending of economic underdevelopment. The question is whether the cross-border plans devised by border authorities ever become enough of a reality to help that happen?

As the relationship between cross-border collaboration, spatial planning and European integration is at the centre of the thesis, this question cannot be answered until all of the other objectives have been met. More specifically, it cannot be answered until the case study research has been completed. While each of the themes examined during the top-down strand considers issues at a general theoretical level, it is the intention of the research design that the hypothesis and models generated within them are directly related to the bottom-up strand discussed below.

[8] a discussion of these terms and their meanings is included in Chapter Two.
[9] the second funding period (1994-99) of the Interreg Community Initiative.

1.4 The Bottom-Up Strand

Since the principal objective of the thesis is to investigate the relationship between border regions, spatial planning and integration, it is clear that detailed research into border regions and cross-border collaboration is necessary. The examination of cross-border collaboration – and in particular cross-border spatial planning – in practice, is one of the principal objectives of the thesis. This alone is sufficient to justify the bottom-up strand, although the detailed approach has a number of other advantages.

First, detailed research offers the opportunity to generate a depth of understanding and knowledge that cannot be achieved via the general research strand. Second, it offers the opportunity to link the general to the particular and link theory to practice. This is important in itself, but it also provides a third advantage - the opportunity to test the theories and hypotheses in a very specific and contextualised manner through the use of a case study methodology.

1.4.1 A Case Study Approach

It is quite clear that uncovering the processes, themes and results of cross-border collaboration requires an in-depth approach that can only be satisfied by a case study methodology. As the essence of a case study has been described as the attempt "*...to illuminate a decision or set of decisions, why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result...*" (Schaum, 1971 in Yin 1994, p.11) it seems perfectly suited to this research topic. In addition, the case study approach has a number of other advantages that make it suitable for investigating how, why and with what result, border regions engage in cross-border collaboration.

First, case studies allow the researcher to explore complex social phenomena in situations where it is difficult to separate that phenomenon from its real life context (Yin, 1994). This is especially true of policy and decision-making processes, which are impossible to separate from the institutional, economic, social and political contexts that surround them. Second, the way in which this exploration can be achieved is infinitely variable, allowing the researcher to employ a range of observation and research techniques appropriate to the subject matter. In addition, the case study will often include a number of research techniques and types of

evidence, perhaps including surveys and interviews as well as statistical data. The use of a number of different techniques stems not only from the object of the case study being a complex social phenomenon, but also from the recognition that multiple techniques permit triangulation, a technique of cross-checking results and generating new insights into the data (England, 1993).

With these advantages in mind, a case study methodology has been adopted to investigate the process of collaboration between border regions. The objective being to develop an in-depth understanding of the relationships between cross-border collaboration, spatial planning and integration. While an obvious and often-made criticism of the case study approach is that it fails to generate any generalisable knowledge, this is not necessarily true. As Yin (1994) points out, case studies are like experiments, generalisable to theoretical propositions and thus useful for expanding and generalising theories. Certainly, in this instance, the intention is not only to develop in-depth knowledge and understanding, but also to test out and refine general ideas and hypotheses developed during the course of the top-down research.

1.4.2 The Case Study Analytical Framework

Before setting out the particulars of the case study research – the choice and number of case studies and the strategies for collecting data – it is important to set out the framework for the bottom-up strand. This framework is significant because it not only sits within the context of the thesis and its objectives, but also because it determines – to a very large extent – the shape and form of the case study research.

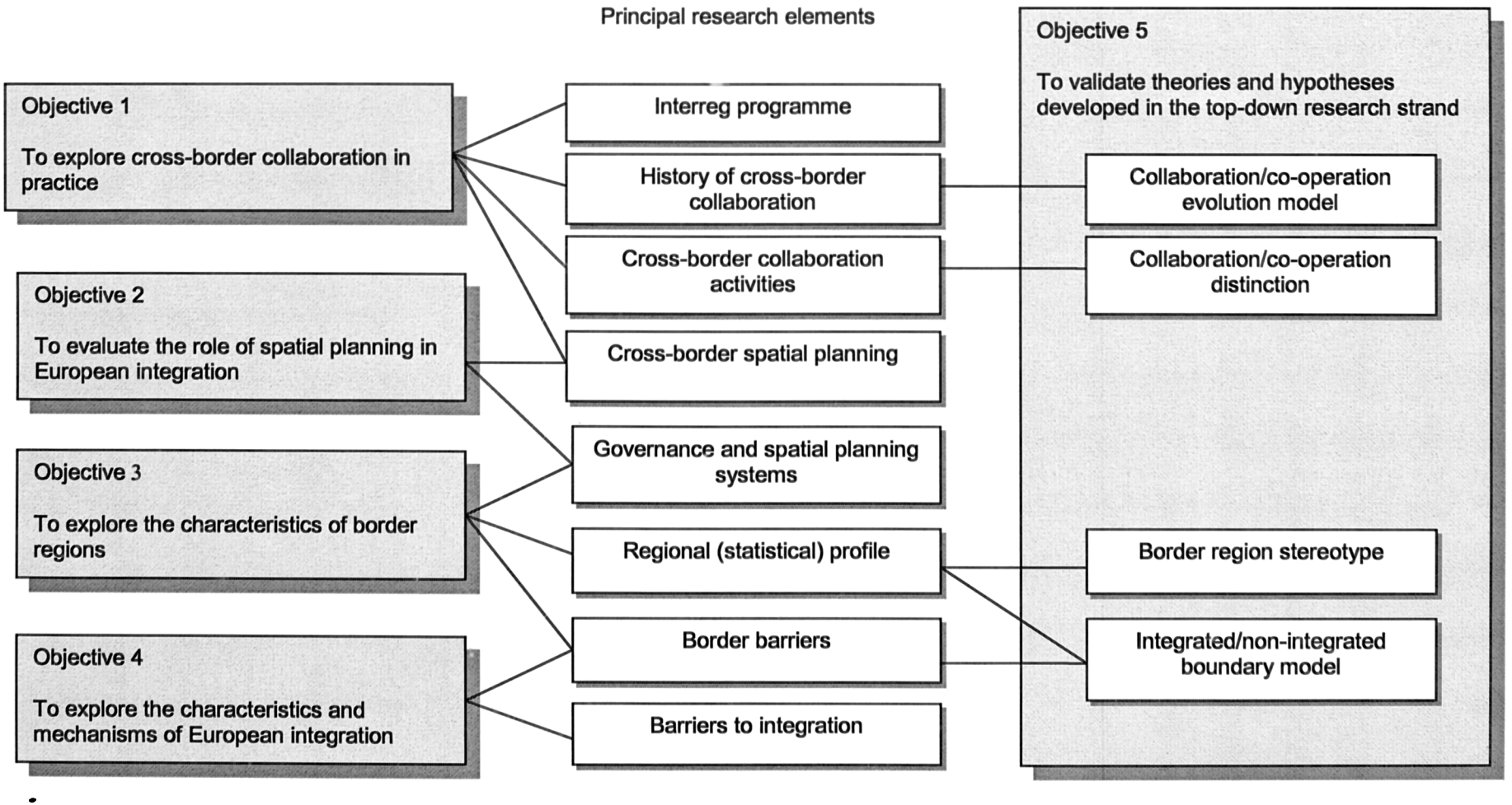
Bearing in mind the objectives of the thesis - and the cross-referencing research design - the purposes of the case studies include the unravelling of cross-border collaboration in practice, and the validation of the theories and ideas developed via the top-down research strand. In addition, the case studies also have to address the objectives of the thesis as a whole. The case studies can thus be seen to have the following objectives:

1. to explore cross-border collaboration in practice;
2. to evaluate the role of spatial planning in European integration;
3. to explore the characteristics of border regions;

4. to explore the characteristics and mechanisms of European integration; and,
5. to validate theories and hypotheses developed during the top-down research strand.

Together these objectives set the framework for the case study research and analysis. Figure 1.2 overleaf describes this framework in more detail, setting out the relationship between the case study objectives and the research activities required to meet them.

Figure 1.2: The Case Study Framework



1.4.3 Understanding the Case Study Areas

As discussed above, the notion of border regions has become dominated by economic underdevelopment and geographic peripherality. Echoing the statistical investigations undertaken during the top-down research, the starting point of the case studies is a profile of the areas under study, and their regional characteristics. Although such investigations are essentially descriptive, they are crucial as they set out the underlying socio-economic context necessary for developing an understanding of the area. In addition, such profiles offer an opportunity to revisit the border stereotype and integrated/non-integrated border model developed in Chapter Three.

The focus of spatial planning within the thesis mean that it is also necessary to examine the systems of governance and spatial planning operating in the different territories. The importance of this is twofold: first, it completes the contextual picture of the case study areas; and second, it illuminates the similarities and differences – or barriers – that exist across the border. It is these barriers which give us clues about how integrated the border is, and which have a significant role to play in the activities and outcomes of cross-border collaboration.

1.4.4 Understanding Cross-Border Collaboration

While the characteristics of the case study areas provide information about the underlying context of cross-border collaboration, the principal focus of the case study is the collaboration itself. This investigation has several facets, including an account of current cross-border activities as supported by the Interreg programme and the development of cross-border collaboration over time. The evolution of cross-border activities in each of the case study areas provides an opportunity to test the progressive collaboration model developed in Chapter Four by examining the development of the cross-border partnership over time. However, as this model is predicated upon the distinction between collaboration (joint working) and co-operation (information exchange), it is also necessary to test this distinction through the case studies.

Doing this requires not only scrutiny and classification of projects undertaken in the course of the collaboration, but also an understanding of way in which the projects

were developed and managed. An understanding which can only be achieved by discussing the projects with participants in the collaboration process itself. As one of the interviewees responded during the course of the case study fieldwork, "*... things that look good on paper, don't necessarily make good* (Interreg) *projects...*" underlining the difficulty of relying solely on documentary evidence. The result is a requirement for the case study to include material collected from key actors as well as that gathered from documentation.

The second objective also provides an opportunity to test the progressive collaboration model developed in Chapter Four by examining the development of the cross-border partnership over time. This then leads to questions about the balance between collaboration and competitiveness. Although the launch of the Interreg initiative coincided with preparations for a Single European Market, and was intended to help border regions benefit from the opportunities that this presented, it also means that those regions have to compete with each other in the European marketplace. Once again an issue which cannot be unravelled without the insights of those involved in the process.

1.4.5 Exploring European Integration

The third theme of the case study research is that of European integration, and in particular the integration of national borders within the Single European Market. This overlaps to some extent with both the background characteristics of the case study areas and the investigations into cross-border collaboration.

In the first instance, exploring integration in the case study areas requires an evaluation of the degree of integration across each of the borders. Building on the work in Chapter Three about the nature of integrated and non-integrated boundaries, data from the case study areas provides an opportunity to assess the level of integration across the case study borders. This then provides a starting point for the assessment of the impact of cross-border collaboration on integration, and – crucially – the tensions that form the barriers to integration. Of particular interest here is the experience of cross-border planning, not only because of the obstacles it seeks to overcome but also because of the integrative role attached to it by the European Commission and the ESDP.

1.5 Choosing the Case Study Areas

In order to maximise the potential of the bottom-up strand to contribute to general theories about cross-border collaboration, it was felt that one case study alone would be insufficient for sound conclusions to be made. However, given the time and resource constraints of the PhD framework - bearing in mind that much of the work involved would be focused in other European countries - it would not be possible to undertake lots of individual studies. Two case studies were thus seen as an appropriate number, allowing sufficient depth to meet the thesis objectives while providing the breadth necessary for robust research conclusions.

Given the significance of the Interreg initiative in promoting cross-border collaboration, it is obvious that one of the first criteria for choosing the case study areas should be that they are participants in the Interreg programme. The advantage of looking at Interreg areas is threefold: first, the area making up the co-operating border regions is defined under the regulations of the Interreg programme, thus eliminating the methodological difficulties of defining and delimiting a border region. Second, the participation of regions in Interreg means that funds will have been received from the European Commission for specific projects that involve and benefit both sides of a border. This means that all Interreg participants will be engaged in some kind of cross-border collaboration. Finally, the involvement in Interreg not only guarantees cross-border activity, but also guarantees that there is supporting documentation, information and evaluation of the projects.

After this initial sift, which excluded cross-border partnerships such as the Euroregion[10], a number of other criteria relating to the practicalities of the research and the specific objectives of the thesis were developed. These criteria are as follows:

- the need to have reliable and accessible information;
- the value of having cross-border activity which is not solely concerned with provision and co-ordination of basic infrastructure;
- evidence of some joint working in the field of spatial planning;
- the value of concentrating on regions within the European core or heartland because:

[10] a partnership comprising Kent, Wallonia, Flanders, Brussels Capital and the Nord-Pas de Calais, the activities of which are funded by the members themselves.

a. they are relatively well developed, without the basic infrastructure problems of more peripheral areas;
b. processes of catching-up are more rapid due to the higher level of economic activity going on there;
c. they will have the same locational advantage and accessibility.

On the basis of these criteria, the choice of case study areas was focused on the European core, excluding border regions in the European periphery (Spain, Greece, Portugal etc.) which tend to be characterised by laissez-faire administrations and a focus on infrastructure projects. In addition, the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland was also excluded because of its unique historical and political context. Looking then for border regions within the core, with reliable documentation systems, a background of collaboration, an Interreg partnership and some evidence of joint action on spatial planning, the two that were chosen were: Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais; and MHAL - a collaboration between the Dutch, German and Belgian cities and regions of Maastricht/Heerlen, Hasselt/Genk, Aachen and Liège.

The obvious contrast between them - Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais being a maritime border and MHAL being a territorial one - adds further to the case studies by providing an obvious contrast in the underlying context. While it might be argued that the uniqueness of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais partnership makes it of little general value, the fact that several maritime borders[11] are being funded under Interreg II clearly demonstrates that cross-border activities do not only take place between contiguous regions. Indeed, the development of the Interreg IIc strand on transnational spatial planning takes this one step further, by encouraging collaboration on a much wider scale – that of the mega regions identified in Europe 2000 (CEC, 1991a). The contrast between the two case study areas should however, illuminate the validity, or otherwise, of collaboration between non-contiguous regions and the Interreg IIc approach.

[11] Namely: East Sussex\Picardy\Seine Maritime, Wales\Republic of Ireland, and Öresund (Sweden\Denmark).

1.6 Designing the Case Study Research

Having identified the *how* and *what* of the research, the next issue to be addressed is that of data collection. According to Yin (1994), evidence for case studies may come from six sources: documents, archival records, direct observations, participant observations, interviews and physical artefacts, each of which requires different skills and procedures and has its own advantages and disadvantages. However, given the logistical constraints of working in the case study areas - time, resources and language being the principal limitations, only two of these sources of evidence were appropriate: documentation and interviews. Direct and participant-observation was ruled out due to the practical limitations mentioned above, although they have been used in other cross-border studies (see: Church & Reid, 1996 and 1997). Artefact resources on the other hand, were excluded because they are difficult to utilise in relation to contemporary socio-political processes.

Figure 1.3: Strengths and Weaknesses of the Case Study Evidence

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Documentation	• stable - can be repeatedly reviewed • unobtrusive - not created as a result of case study • exact - contains exact names, references and details • broad coverage - long span of time, many events & settings	• retrievability - can be low • biased selectivity if collection incomplete • reporting bias - reflects (unknown) bias of author • access - may be deliberately blocked • bias due to lingual difficulty and inadequate translation
Interviews	• targeted - focus directly on case study topic • insightful - provides perceived casual inferences	• bias due to poorly constructed questions • reflexivity - interviewee gives what interviewer wants to hear • inaccuracies due to poor recall • response bias • bias due to lingual and cultural differences between interviewer and interviewee • bias due to gender and power relationship of interviewee and interviewer

After Yin, 1994.

The documentary evidence collected in the case studies covers a range of material from Internet web sites to the programming and evaluation documents for the Interreg Community Initiative operating in both areas. In general, the strategy was to obtain as much information as possible, from as many different sources as possible

in order to minimise the bias that comes with the selectivity mentioned in Figure 1.3 above. The other major issue relating to documentary evidence, also mentioned in Figure 1.3, is that of language. Although all of the official Interreg documentation for the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais case study is in both French and English, the trilingual arrangements of the MHAL area make translation necessary in most cases, although some material is available in English. In order to eliminate as much translation bias from the thesis as possible, all foreign language material is quoted in its original form - usually French, as this is common to both case study areas - and an English translation provided in a footnote.

1.6.1 Case Study Interviews

The interview element of the case study research is less straightforward than collecting documentary data, as a number of decisions have to be made about: who to talk to; how to identify likely interviewees; and, how to approach the interview itself.

In the first instance, reference to the original thesis objectives suggests that interviewees should be directly involved in cross-border collaboration through the Interreg programme. Representatives from local and regional governments were thus the obvious candidates for interview, along with other public and private sector participants in cross-border projects. However, identifying the individual interviewees within the organisations was a little more difficult. In one or two instances, contacts were made with the organisation to ask for the individual dealing with Interreg, and one interviewee was identified and contacted through a web-site and e-mail link. The vast majority of interviewees however, were identified by other contacts, reflecting the small number of individuals involved in cross-border activities, particularly Interreg, and the close working relationships between them.

In terms of the interviews themselves, there are a number of elements to consider. Firstly, the form of the interview itself, whether open-ended, survey or focused (Yin, 1994). Since the purpose of the interviews is not only to corroborate information found in the documentation, but to unravel some of the more complex issues of cross-border collaboration, it was felt that the survey interview would be too rigid to allow for exploration of interesting answers. Similarly, since the interviewees were likely to be busy public officers, it was felt that open-ended questionnaires would be

too demanding in terms of time, so the focused - or semi-structured - interview approach was chosen. This approach not only facilitated consistency between the interviews by allowing the use of an interview pro forma, but was flexible enough to allow exploration of interesting issues and the canvassing of personal opinions.

In general the interviews lasted around an hour, following the overall format set out in Figure 1.4. As it shows, the interviews were structured around the main research themes of the thesis, with the introductory section designed to elicit information about the organisation as well as its involvement in the Interreg programme. The final section on the other hand was designed to permit the interviewee to add her or his own insights and observations into the topic of cross-border collaboration – the reasons for this are discussed further below.

Figure 1.4: The Case Study Interview Pro Forma

Introduction	Background information about organisation and individual
Interreg	How is organisation involved in the Interreg programme? What is its role? Why is the organisation involved? How long has the organisation been involved? Has the involvement changed over time? in what way? Will involvement change in the future?
Collaboration/ Co-operation	Is the organisation involved in any other collaboration apart from Interreg? What is the nature of the relationship? co-operation (information exchange)? collaboration (joint working)? Would organisation be involved if it were not for Interreg? Will collaboration continue even if funding is withdrawn (post 1999)? Why is organisation involved in collaboration & Interreg?
Competition	What are the benefits of collaboration? How does the organisation balance the desire to co-operate with the need to compete? Can the tension between them ever be resolved?
Conclusion	Are there any other observations about Interreg and cross-border collaboration?

In each case the interviewee was given some background information about the research before the interview, so that they were aware of the key themes of the research, but not the specific questions. This was to avoid inaccuracy and bias due to poor recall, and minimise the risk of reflexivity in prepared answers. However, as this careful approach suggests, interviews are not a simple method of data collection, and there are many issues which can affect the quality of the outcome.

As noted above – and included in Figure 1.3 – language is an obvious difficulty in any international research context. In this case over half of the interviews were undertaken with native English speakers, and of the remaining six interviews only one was carried out in more than one language (a mixture of English and French).

The barrier of language – of understanding and misunderstanding between two individuals – is present even between two native (English) speakers as the meanings projected by the speaker do not necessarily correspond with those understood by the listener. The potential mismatch is of course much greater when one or both parties are speaking in a foreign language. Such difficulties echo Schoenberger's (1991) observations about the problems posed by the corporate interview. Difficulties which include the locus of control, interpretation, ambiguity and validity - to which one might also add gender.

On the subject of interpretation, language and meaning, Schoenberger (1991) notes how interviewers interpret the interpretations of the interviewees, and in doing so project their own meanings onto the words used by their respondents; projections which may or may not be accurate. Such difficulties are of course, compounded when one of the participants is using a second language, but can still be significant even when sharing the same social background and mother tongue. In order to minimise the chance of significant misinterpretation, all interviewees were sent copies of interview transcripts and case study chapters for comment and veto.

The issue of control is even more elusive, as she notes in her paper, *"...the corporate interview is susceptible to problems of control since the likely respondents are people accustomed to being in control and exerting authority over others..."* (Schoenberger, 1991, p.182). This is also true in this instance, where the goal of the interview is to understand and unravel an organisation's (rather than a firm's) behaviour, and the interviewees are predominantly found in the middle or senior management tier. The issue of control within the interview situation rests largely on the risk that the interviewee will address her or his own agenda rather than that of the interviewer. Although this risk cannot ever be eliminated, the use of an interview protocol within introductory information and structured questioning appears to offer the greatest chance of minimising the risk without frustrating either participant through over-rigidity or prescription. Schoenberger also suggest that respondents may be frustrated by the questions; a possibility tackled here by including an open invitation for comments at the end of the interview.

Quite clearly, the locus of control within an interview situation is not only related to the status of the interviewee, but also to the status of the interviewer and the relationship that exists between them. Although Schoenberger does not mention the issue of gender, it is worthy of consideration, particularly in the context of this research where I, as a woman - and in almost half of the interviews, a foreign woman - interviewed a predominantly white, middle-class, professional and male group of individuals. Notably only one of those interviewed was a woman, and only three in a similar age range. Of course, unlike other issues in the interview context, the effect of gender on the interview outcome can neither be avoided, minimised nor measured - but it should nevertheless be acknowledged.

The strategies employed during the case study interview process to deal with the issues of control, language, meaning and frustration are set out below in Figure 1.5.

Figure 1.5: Strategies employed in the Case Study Interviews

Strategy	Rationale
Pre-interview information to interviewees	Alerts interviewees to subject and themes of the research
Semi-structured interview format	Minimises opportunity for interviewee to pursue own agenda; permits pursual of new and interesting responses
Concluding open question	Gives interviewee opportunity to express own opinions, minimising frustration
Circulating transcripts and chapters	Minimises risk of misinterpretation

In addition to these strategies within the individual interviews, a strategy for managing the case studies interviews as a whole was developed. Since the case study research and interviews were taking place over a considerable period of time (more than a year elapsed between the first and last interviews) background knowledge and theorising were at different stages. So, in order to maximise the opportunities of the sequential interview situation, a grounded theoretical approach was taken to the interviews, and interesting or significant responses followed up in subsequent conversations. For example in response to the question *"why are you (the organisation) involved in cross-border collaboration?"* one interviewee answered *"we're in it for the money..."* an interesting response, followed up in subsequent interviews with direct questions about funding. The value of such an

approach is twofold: first, it maximises the value of the data collected during the course of the interview; and second, it allows the data to direct subsequent research independently of the theories generated during the course of the top-down research strand.

1.7 The Structure of the Thesis

In essence the thesis can be divided into three distinct parts. In the first – comprising the Introduction and Chapter One – the background and context of the research is set out, along with the development of the topic within an appropriate methodological framework. This sets the scene and theoretical framework for the rest of the thesis, divided - in line with the method discussed above - into top-down and bottom-up investigations.

Part Two (Chapters Two, Three and Four) presents the results of the generic investigations into cross-border collaboration and European integration, introducing general themes in the research in Chapter Two, before developing more in-depth and critical understanding of border regions, integration and cross-border activities in Chapters Three and Four.

While Part Two may be seen on its own as a useful exploration of the research topic in question, it does not exist entirely in isolation from the case study research presented in Part Three (Chapters Five, Six and Seven). This is not only because the general context of European integration, border regions and spatial planning is crucial to the understanding of the border region case studies, but because Part Two presents a number of verifiable ideas for the case studies to test.

Part Three sets out the results of the case study research beginning in Chapter Five with a contextual and descriptive account of the case study areas. Chapter Six classifies and evaluates the impact of different types of collaborative activity on integration. While Chapter Seven explores cross-border spatial planning and draws out the obstacles to integration encountered in each of the case study areas.

Finally, Chapter Eight sets out the final conclusions - drawn from both the generic and specific investigation - into the subject of border regions, spatial planning and European integration.

Chapter Two:
General Themes in Europe

2.0 Introduction

The development of the European Union over the last fifty years has seen Western European countries transformed from warring independent states to political and economic inter-dependent member states. A transformation which is remarkable not only for its speed, but for its depth and completeness. While the existence of a single Europe has not yet been achieved, there is no doubt that the fifteen member states are bound tightly together through politics, economics and territory.

Over the same period, the global economy has been similarly transformed. Moving from the nation-state as the basic unit of economic space, the economy now operates on a transnational basis, with markets, capital and corporations aspiring to global operations. An expansion of scale that has not only increased the mobility of capital and investment, but has also had a marked impact on the recipient territories. Regions - an increasingly important unit of political and territorial space - now compete for jobs and inward investment in a global marketplace. As a result, regions are having to adopt new strategies to manage their development in an increasingly competitive economic climate. These strategies focus on developing endogenous potential, fostering innovation and building mutually reinforcing networks of businesses. However, in some cases, place marketing and competitiveness strategies are not enough to overcome the natural disadvantages of some peripheral regions. For these regions, intervention in the form of national and/or Community policy is required; regional policy which aims to reduce disparity and increase competitiveness by improving infrastructure and enhancing endogenous potential. Although regional policy is largely motivated and shaped by economics, in the context of the Community, regional policy is one of the principal means of working towards economic and social cohesion. As one of the central goals of the European Community, achieving cohesion is also a key policy driver. To this end, regional policy not only focuses on enhancing competitiveness, but on reducing the disparities in infrastructure, opportunity, and the quality of life.

Directing development is also the primary function of spatial or territorial planning, and recent years have seen the overt development of a European planning agenda, which is beginning to address the development of the EU's territory as a whole. Planning across national borders is an integral part of such an agenda, with active support for cross-border and transnational planning by the Interreg Community Initiative. However, Interreg is not simply a mechanism for promoting spatial

planning. It also concentrates development resources in regions that have traditionally been viewed as both peripheral and problematic: border regions.

In many senses border regions are an ongoing challenge to the developing European Union, for their continued existence in physical as well as psychological space denies the reality of a single Europe. Yet, border regions are also the key to creating a socially and economically cohesive Europe. Interreg thus attempts to promote the development of border regions in a single Europe and a global market, breaking away from the geographies of the nation-state. In addition, the initiative hopes to break down the barriers to cohesion by promoting interaction between cultures, institutions and planning systems. The resulting mosaic of overlapping territorial spaces and networks of public-private partnerships, challenge not only conventional geographies, but governance systems too. While the subsidiarity principle seeks to ensure that decisions are taken at the most appropriate - and lowest - level, the generation of cross-border and transnational partnerships has introduced a new complexity to both governance and democracy.

As interrelated and inextricably linked issues, integration, globalisation, competitiveness, regional development, spatial planning and governance are the focus of this second chapter, forming overarching themes and significant undercurrents in the thesis. The aim of this chapter is thus to introduce these themes and the web of links between them, as a prelude to the rest of the thesis.

2.1 Globalisation and the Global-Local Paradox

The transformation of industry, society and the world economy over the last thirty years has been variously described as the shift from the industrial to the post-industrial, from Fordism to post-Fordism and from modernism to post-modernism. Whatever the terminology, the restructuring and reorganisation of industrial production and the expansion of economic activities across national borders is enormously significant and influential. The result – according to some - is a global economy dominated by the developed world[12] and a handful of transnational corporations. An economy '*...in which stress is placed upon the erosion of national barriers and movement of economic activities across national boundaries...*' (Allen & Hamnett, 1995, p.59).

12 Primarily Japan, North America and Europe

This increasing geographical scale, or *globalisation*, is the result of many interlinking and interrelated processes, a cumulative effect rather than a process in itself, as Amin & Thrift (1995) demonstrate in their observations about the origins of the globalising economy. Looking back to the early 1970's they identify a number of strands, which together form a globalisation web. Some of these strands relate to the nature and organisation of industry and the economy, while others relate to cultural and governmental issues. For instance, the increasing centrality of financial structures in the global trading centres of London, Tokyo and New York is forcing industry to operate at an increased geographical scale. In addition, the economic value now attached to information and expert knowledge, and the technological advances in computer and telecommunications technologies have contributed to this widening scale by making global operations cheap and relatively simple. Subcontracting, downsizing and outsourcing may be buzzwords in business, but they also describe the processes of functional specialisation, fragmentation and rationalisation so common in the global marketplace.

Set against these institutional and organisational changes, Amin & Thrift (1995) describe the influence of cultural diffusion and the increased flow of cultural goods and identities around the world. This diffusion is, in part, produced by an economy networked on a global scale, but in a mutually reinforcing relationship, it is also a prerequisite for the creation of world markets. The global operations of Pepsi, McDonalds and Nike (to name but three) depend not only on world-wide manufacturing and distribution networks, but also on the fact that Western culture is familiar and acceptable enough to create world-wide demand for such products. However, as Amin & Thrift (1995) point out, it is not only culture and industry that are becoming 'global', governments are too. This is evident in the expansion of state power from the national to the supranational scale, to form plural authorities in both the political and economic spheres. EFTA[13], GATT[14], OPEC[15] and the EU are all international affiliations designed to control and thus benefit from particular markets and sectors of the economy. The implication is thus, that just as industry has expanded its spatial horizons, so too has the nation-state. A point which illustrates not only the various strands of globalisation – social and political as well as economic – but that the historical process of globalisation has been shaped by states and other actors (Starie, 1999).

13 European Free Trade Association
14 General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs
15 Oil Producing and Exporting Countries

With all of the changes that globalisation has wrought, it often seems to undermine the significance of locality and place. The shift from standardised mass production to customised, diversified and horizontally-integrated industries (Toedling, 1995); the expanded geographies of politics, democracy and culture; and, new flexibilities in corporate strategies - efficiency, innovation and competition (Komninos, 1992) - all minimise the role of territory and suggest that location is a neutral factor. As Starie (1999) shows in his review of the globalisation literature, territoriality has changed its significance as a result of the compression of space and time and the switch to networks of interconnectedness based on speed rather than distance.

But, despite all this, the global society and the global economy continue to be constructed in and through territorially-bound communities (Amin & Thrift, 1995), and theories of development centred on innovative milieu ascribe greater salience to place than anything else. As firms, people and institutions relate to the specificities of places, then locality becomes central - rather than peripheral - to economic success. Places and spaces are thus at the heart of the global economy, and firms integrated into the global economy must also be embedded into the local one (Toedling, 1995).

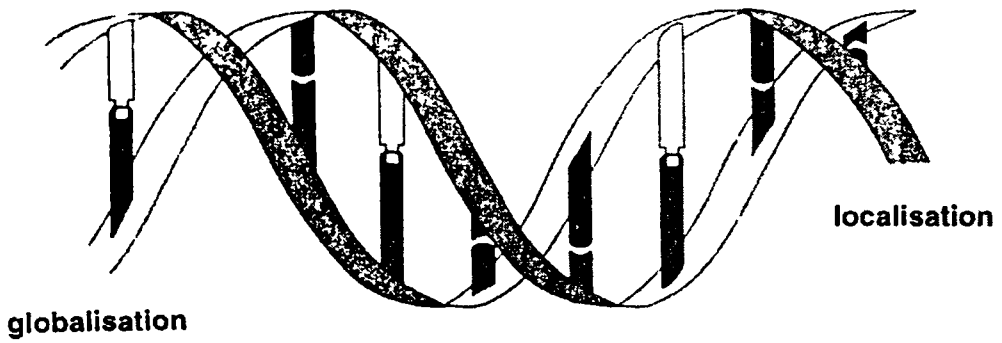
The association of contemporary globalisation with regional specialisation and re-concentration (Amin, 1992) has placed renewed emphasis on the importance of place. An importance confirmed by the response of regions to the challenge of globalisation. As elements of the localisation process, place marketing, business networks, community development and capacity building all focus on making the most of an area's physical, cultural and human resources. This emphasis on endogenous development potential has been enhanced by the rise of environmentalism and the concept of sustainability[16], placing emphasis on small-scale solutions to large-scale problems. As an objective that includes indicators relating to the quality of life in environmental, political and economic terms, sustainability links local conditions to global survival, emphasising the wider significance of local issues. In addition to the process of 'localisation' inspired by environmentalism, Swyngedouw (1992) identifies further support for this process in the rise of theories about flexible specialisation, milieu innovateurs, and the increasing prominence of local politics and decision-making. A prominence

16 after Brundtland and the Rio Earth Summit

reinforced by the emergence of subsidiarity enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty which sets out the principle of decision and policy-making at the lowest appropriate level.

Although the return to the local is a distinct phenomenon its own right, it is also bound up with the process of globalisation. In the fickle and footloose world of a global economy, places have to compete with each other for development and investment, marketing themselves, their specialities and particularities in order to create and maintain economic success. Thus while places are the settings for social and economic existence, they are also shaped and influenced by global forces (Amin & Thrift, 1995). For Swyngedouw, the symbiosis of globalisation and localisation can be described by one word: glocalisation, a single process of two inherently related, albeit contradictory movements (1992). This double, but single movement is akin to the double helix structure of DNA as shown in Figure 2.1 below, with the strands of globalising and localising forces linked together by the common threads of competitiveness, markets, information and networks etc.

Figure 2.1: Glocalisation: the global-local paradox



Industrial reorganisation and the changing configuration of political and administrative power are but two of these common threads, each having both local and global dimensions. In terms of changing industrial organisation, this is demonstrated by the fact that while the restructuring is itself a product of globalising economic forces, its effect has been to emphasise the importance of locality. Since global businesses are essentially footloose, it follows that the conditions governing success or failure will relate to external factors because management investment in a site will be equal wherever it is located. The configuration of political and administrative power can be viewed in the same light, with the relative dominance of

the nation-state now giving way to patterns in which both the local, regional and the global scale have risen to prominence (Swyngedouw, 1992). Thus, we see centralisation in the form of supranational bodies, and devolution in regional and local autonomy, with both movements a response to the challenge of living in the global.

2.2 Glocalisation, Competitiveness and the European Union

Contemporary processes of economic restructuring have done much more than just change the nature of modern business. As experiences in the European Union demonstrate, glocalisation has both shaped and been shaped by changes in policy and administrative structures.

One of the most obvious examples of this can be seen in the creation of the single European market (SEM) on January 1st 1993. By virtue of the single market programme (SMP), a bundle of policies that prepared the way for the SEM, the EU began the creation of a borderless territory within which goods and services, information, capital and people could move freely. The development of these four freedoms not only emulates but also reinforces processes of globalisation by enhancing the permeability of borders and the mobility of businesses.

Setting aside the political objectives of economic and monetary union, the rationale for the SEM is based firmly on neo-classical economic theory emphasising the trade benefits of liberalised markets, the removal of trade barriers, reduced production costs and economies of scale. By offering companies the opportunity to trade in a large – and increasingly deregulated – market, the EU expects welfare gains to enhance the quality of life by increasing consumer choice and reducing prices. However, there is also an expectation that the SEM will have even larger impacts. As Jacques Delors observes '... *this large market ... without frontiers, because of its size and because of the possibilities that it offers ... gives a unique opportunity to our industry to improve its competivity. It will also increase growth and employment and contribute to a better balance in the world economy.*' (Cecchini, 1988, p. xi).

This observation can be unravelled further to illuminate the link between globalisation, the single European market and economic and monetary union (EMU). By enhancing the mobility of factors of production, and blurring the

boundaries between national and regional economies (Cappellin, 1992) the single European market has achieved three things. First, it has increased the spatial scale at which firms are able to operate. Second, it has increased the accessibility of markets to those firms through the removal of trade barriers – and third, it has reduced operating costs and enhanced competitiveness by liberalising key market sectors and reducing the regulatory burden. Together these achievements can be seen as responses to the processes of economic restructuring, emulating - amongst other things - the increasing scale of economic activities. However, the creation of the single market also reinforces those restructuring processes by making it easier for businesses to operate over larger distances, and move capital, information and resources further and more frequently with smaller and smaller costs. The result as Starie (1999) describes it, is a regionalisation[17] of both the European economy and European territory. That is to say a growing interdependence, integration and co-operation between spaces within the European Union that enable it to compete on equal terms with the other key 'regions' in the world economy: North America and Japan.

Links between globalisation and European policy are also evident in another aspect of the SEM - competitiveness. As Cecchini sets out, the SEM is an opportunity to "*...propel Europe onto the blustery world stage of the 1990s in a position of competitive strength and on an upward trajectory of economic growth lasting into the next century...*" (Cecchini, 1988, p. xvii). The competitiveness of the European territory as a whole is thus an important element of the EU's economic policy – and the focus for the work of DG IV and the Competitiveness Advisory Group (CAG)[18]. As with the SEM, the approach to competitiveness is rooted in neo-classical economic theory and closely linked to globalisation processes. Reports of the CAG (Jacquemin & Pench, 1997) demonstrate this quite clearly. First, the conception of competitiveness set out by the group emphasises the importance of developing factors that are essential to long-term economic growth due to their influence on global productivity of the economic system (Jacquemin & Pench, 1997). European competitiveness is thus based on a number of factors, including the efficiency of markets, networks and organisations, and macroeconomic stability (Jacquemin & Pench, 1997). In policy terms this has been translated into the liberalisation of

[17] regionalisation is distinct from the process of regionalism according to Starie (1999), where regionalism is the process of designing and implementing projects for the reorganisation and development of a space along particular economic and political lines.

[18] Set up by Jacques Santer in 1995, when he was President of the European Commission. The Group advises the Commission and heads of government on all aspects of European competitiveness (Santer, 1997).

markets through deregulation and the removal of tariff barriers; the improvement of networks and infrastructure; and, the enhancement of social capital through education and skills training.

The Competitiveness Advisory Group is emphatic that this approach to competitiveness is not an end in itself, but a positive-sum game capable of delivering improved standards of living and social welfare (Jacquemin & Pench, 1997). This approach – and that of the neo-classicists – is not without its critics however (see for example: Cappellin, 1992 and Dunford, 1994), who argue that competitiveness is a zero-sum game that inevitably creates losers as well as winners. In a territory already divided by poverty and prosperity – and where social and economic cohesion is an active objective – both Cappellin (1992) and Dunford (1994) argue that regional disparities will be enhanced rather than eliminated by the European Union's approach to competitiveness and economic policy.

2.3 Regionalism, Regional Policy and Networking

The rise of the region in contemporary economic and political processes is widely acknowledged (see for instance: Keating & Loughlin, 1997 and Starie, 1999) although explanations for this phenomenon vary from an intrinsic part of globalisation (Keating & Loughlin, 1997) to a consequence of changing power structures (Bennett, 1997). As mentioned earlier, contemporary restructuring of the economy away from industrial production and towards knowledge-based capitalism has created a situation in which the local milieu has become increasingly important. As the context in which businesses operate, the region provides a series of resources affecting the basic factors of production (infrastructure, skills, costs etc.) and levels of competitiveness. Analysis of regional disparities by the European Commission emphasises a link between regional development levels and the quality of infrastructure, human capital and labour force skills (CEC, 1994a). However, while economic determinists may link regional resources with development levels, this does not in itself explain the rising significance of the region as a unit of administrative and economic space.

Dunford & Kafkalis (1992) point to two related explanations. First, the transfer of power and competences to the regional level by transnational governance structures attempting to deliver the conditions for economic development and enhanced

competitiveness. Second, they describe the resurgence of the regional economy within contemporary industrial restructuring processes as a result of the importance of local milieu in the global economy. However, while the accessibility of markets, infrastructure and so on are undoubtedly a significant part of that milieu, Raines (1996) and others argue that spatially localised mechanisms for the exchange of information and experience are equally important.

It is not simply the economic conditions of the region that are important, but rather the institutional conditions that prevail. Amin & Thrift (1995) describe these conditions as institutional thickness, a multi-faceted concept dependent on a number of factors. In essence, it depends on a strong institutional presence in the area, and a high level of mutual support, awareness and interaction between key actors (Amin & Thrift, 1995). Bennett (1997) and others emphasise the importance of these networks for a number of reasons. First, networks – whether economic or institutional – are seen as capable of creating added value through the generation of synergy between actors (Nijkamp, 1994a). Second, as a mechanism for information exchange, networks are increasingly important in the context of knowledge-based capitalism. Not only that, but where flows of information and networks are strong, they also become the focal point for knowledge creation and learning (Florida, 1995). The flow of information between local actors thus increases the local capacity for economic success and competitiveness by emulating the strategies of business – generating economies of scale, sharing information resources, reducing transaction costs and reducing risk. Finally, regional networks of institutions and actors which are sufficiently dense not only support competitiveness but also foster innovation through the exchange of information and the generation of trust and mutual dependence (Cooke, 1995).

Such discussions about learning regions (Florida, 1995) and institutional thickness (Amin & Thrift, 1995; Bennett, 1996) present the regional context as the anchor point for stabilising and supporting economic activity (Morales & Quandt, 1992). Regional policies which attempt to recreate these conditions are thus supported, although not everyone is convinced by the links made between networking and regional development (see for example Corvers, 1998). The European Commission however, actively promotes networking both within and between regions through the operation of the Structural Funds and Community Initiatives. Anderson (1996) clearly links the EU's approach with a number of arguments about the importance of developing strong regional structures. Such structures are assumed to have

democratic as well as developmental benefits, bringing decision-making closer to the local level and helping to create and recreate positive milieu.

The emphasis on regional institutions reflects a number of other processes and issues. First is the hollowing out of the nation-state as processes of glocalisation focus attention on the supranational scale and the local (regional) level. The result is that as European administrative systems develop and extend their competences, supranational governance structures transfer power away from the nation-state. Second, within this context of changing administrative structures, the region – and regional government – is becoming increasingly important as a means of expressing identity and difference. There are a number of reasons for this, including the increasing importance of regional boundaries in delimiting cultural and ethnic groups as state territories (in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union for example) fragment. In addition, as political and economic processes continue to facilitate globalisation, the economic significance of national borders continues to diminish. At the same time, the increasing autonomy of regions – supported by the emergence of the subsidiarity principle - reinforces the transfer of powers away from the national government. In the UK, for example, the devolution of governmental powers from central government in London, has created both a Scottish parliament and Welsh Assembly which have varying degrees of autonomy over policy-making and governance. Finally, even without subsidiarity and devolution at the national level, the creation of the Committee of the Regions within the Brussels decision-making structure has taken the regional strand a stage further by establishing a direct relationship between the regional and supranational levels of government thus supporting the politicisation and expression of regional identity through government.

While the region becomes an increasingly important unit of territorial space and level of government, in the context of the European Union, regions are also the focus of the Community's attempts to create economic and social cohesion. The existence of regional disparities within the EU has long been recognised, leading to the development and maintenance of a significant budget and policy mechanism for the reduction of those disparities - the operation of a regional policy. The principal mechanisms articulating support for regional development are the structural funds, particularly those objectives, set out below, which have a spatial focus.

Objective 1: the economic adjustment of regions whose development is lagging behind
Objective 2: the economic conversion of declining industrial areas
Objective 5b: the economic diversification of vulnerable rural areas
Objective 6: development of regions with an extremely low population density (CEC, 1995)

Funds are also directed to problematic areas through sectorally based structural fund objectives like Objective 5b which concentrates on restructuring agricultural and fishery sectors (CEC, 1995) and Community Initiatives such as Regen, Rechar and Retex. These initiatives offer smaller amounts of help to areas suffering from – for example – the decline of energy, coal and textile–based employment. Whether mediated through spatial or sectorally targeted funds, the EU's regional policy attempts to achieve both economic and social cohesion, shaping the territory in a number of ways. First, through enhancing the basic factors of production – infrastructure, education and skills training in the labour force – and second, by manipulating territorial configurations.

The latter is achieved in a number of ways, primarily through the development of trans-European networks (TENs), *connecting* localities in an attempt to change both their physical and virtual accessibility. Although initially regional policy was developed as a separate and distinct policy strand – the responsibility of DGXVI: Regional Policy & Cohesion – more recently it has begun to link itself with other policy areas. Perhaps most significant of these is spatial planning – the process by which authorities attempt to shape the development of a territory, and a subject of increasing attention in the European policy arena.

However, the link between regional policy and competitiveness is also apparent. The structural funds aim to enable individual regions to compete successfully in national, international and global markets, confident that this will deliver benefits to all regions. Critics of the approach and its roots in neo-classical economic theory, claim that competitiveness is a zero-sum game, and that for every winner there will a corresponding loser. The danger they argue, is that the processes of economic liberalisation going on at the European scale will perpetuate the patterns of core-periphery and rural-urban disparity, making regional policy little more than a means of compensating those who lose out (Dunford, 1994).

Whatever the criticisms, European regional policy can thus be seen as a response to economic restructuring, globalisation and territorial fragmentation. A response that both recognises and reinforces the emphasis given to regional milieu as a determinant of competitiveness and successful development. In addition, by emphasising partnership and networks in the operation of the structural funds and Community initiatives, EU regional policy can also be linked to the discourse surrounding institutional thickness and the learning region.

2.4 Power and Decision-Making: The Changing Shape of Governance

As economic restructuring, globalisation and the rise of the region continue to make and remake territorial milieu, the structures governing those spaces are becoming increasingly important. Discussions about institutional thickness and actor networks not only focus attention on the mechanisms supporting regional development, but also highlight the role of governance in that development. In many ways the use of the word governance – rather than government – is in itself significant, indicating the shift from state control to a more inclusive form of public administration. Healey (1997) describes governance as the processes through which collective affairs are managed, the principles for allocating resources within the community and the articulation of collective rules of behaviour. Governance is thus not simply the activity of government by elected representatives, but the shaping of local, regional, national and even transnational spaces and economies by organisations and individuals participating in policy networks and partnerships.

While globalisation may have shifted the scale at which governance processes and structures operate, economic restructuring and the emergence of the network economy have also shaped the nature of those systems and structures. In the first instance, the pursuit of competitiveness through economic liberalisation and market deregulation has tended to imply the rolling back of state control. At the same time, a second process related to the emergence of the network economy and policy partnerships has reinforced the withdrawal of state control. As formal government systems contract, responsibilities are transferred from the public sector to the partnerships and networks that remain. In some cases it is the operation of policy that achieves this shift of governance responsibilities away from purely formal institutions of the state. For example, the creation of partnerships – or networks – of regional actors, through the operation of the structural funds or Community

initiatives such as Interreg. In some instances this may involve a reallocation of tasks to a wider network of actors; in others the allocation of additional resources. In the case of Interreg and border regions, the management structures responsible for the operation of the programme, and thus the shaping of the cross-border territory are made up of a range of actors representing private and voluntary sector organisations as well as representatives from different government bodies (national, transnational, local and statutory organisations). The structure is then responsible for the additional task[19] of drawing up a suitable development framework and allocating funds to projects in line with that framework.

As mentioned earlier, the generation of partnerships and networks through the operation of the structural funds is not a felicitous side-effect of regional policy. On the contrary, policies of both the Commission and national governments actively support the creation and maintenance of actor networks. In doing so, policy protagonists hope to generate trust between the actors, so that the network can become a form of social and intellectual capital through which economic knowledge can flow (Healey, 1997). An approach that again links to the notion of institutional thickness in developing and maintaining economic development.

However, as Healey (1997) points out, the proliferation of actors within governance structures is not necessarily positive. Where such structures are entrusted with the allocation of resources, there is the danger that the participating officials/politicians become 'patrons', directing resources at a select group of 'clients'[20] (Healey, 1997). The result is a situation of ongoing obligation between the patron and client-group which may ultimately undermine the democratic and inclusivity objectives of the partnership or network as a whole. Not only that, but by undermining trust relationships, clientelism can also reduce the ability of the network to support positive economic development.

Finally, one of the key features of governance structures is the fact that their characteristics are not constant, but renegotiated with the community on an ongoing basis. As a result, argues Healey (1997), modes of governance are intricately linked to local contingencies, particularly cultural norms. It is unclear whether this means that the operational parameters of governance systems remain stable because of

[19] Additional in the sense that these roles have been created by the operation of the Interreg Community Initiative.
[20] A process Healey (1997) terms 'clientelism'.

these contingencies, or whether the shifting economic, administrative and political sands of globalisation will wreak a greater havoc. It does suggest however, that it may be difficult to form successful governance structures where local contingencies, particularly cultural values, vary.

2.5 Spatial Planning and the Shaping of Territory

The changing economic and administrative structures of the EU, whilst significant in themselves, have also had an impact on the spatial structure of the Community. Enlargement of the Community has - in the past - significantly changed the structure of the Union's territory. This was particularly true during the last round of enlargement when the northern and sparsely populated territories of Finland and Sweden gained accession, resulting in the creation of a border between Russia and the European Union for the first time. The next challenge will be the expansion of the EU into Central and Eastern Europe following the collapse of the former Communist bloc. Despite the economic and democratic requirements of entry into the European Union, the impact of eastern expansion will be significant. Even the most prosperous regions in the accession countries are poor in European Union terms, and apart from the economic and policy implications of such an enlargement, expansion to the east will also significantly alter the geographic structure of the EU.

As mentioned earlier, one of the main characteristics of the single European market was that it introduced the idea of Europe as a single territory, where people, capital and so on could move freely, unimpeded by national boundaries. The notion of a single European territory is a powerful one; a notion that has helped to reinforce the significance of regional and transnational governance. In addition, the increased mobility of people, capital and information has also had an impact on the geography of the European Union. By creating a single territory, the SEM has made it possible for businesses to choose one European location, rather than several national ones. In doing so the SEM contributes to both the increasing scale at which firms operate, and the diminishing significance of the nation-state as a unit of economic space.

Changes in the geographic and economic structure of the European Union have also been more actively pursued through the operation of EU policy, particularly regional policy. The creation and construction of trans-European networks for example, whether in terms of rail and road infrastructure or telecommunications and

energy, are designed to alter the shape of the territory by changing patterns of accessibility and mobility. On a broader level, the operation of European regional policy has actively sought to alter the development trajectories of regions suffering from geographic and economic peripherality and under-development (including border regions). While some commentators view regional policy from the perspective of economic and competitiveness policy, it is clear that the pursuit of economic and social cohesion through the spatially targeted structural funds is but one step away from the active spatial management – or planning – of the European territory. Forays into the fields of transport, infrastructure, environmental protection and regional policy are not only an intrinsic part of the integration process, improving the competitiveness of less favoured regions and enhancing the quality of life, but are notable for their spatial impacts. The result is an increasing awareness of the spatial dimensions of European policy initiatives and a growing pressure for the development of a pan-European spatial planning policy.

Figure 2.2 Chronology of Developments Relating to European Spatial Planning

1988	Reform of the structural funds introducing spatial targeting
1989	First informal meeting of the Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning in Nantes
1990	Publication of the Commission's Green Paper on the Urban Environment
1991	Publication of "Europe 2000: Outlook for the Development of the Community's Territory - a preliminary overview".
1992	Establishment of Committee on Spatial Development Establishment of Committee of the Regions
1994	Publication of "Europe 2000+: Co-operation for European Territorial Development" Agreement of the Leipzig principles as the basis for the ESDP by the Ministers responsible for Spatial planning Launch of Interreg II initiative, including measures on town and country planning
1996	Launch of Interreg IIC strand on transnational spatial planning Publication of "European Sustainable Cities" report by the Expert Group on the Urban Environment
1997	Publication of the first volume of "The EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies". Publication of the "European Spatial Development Perspective, first official draft"
1998	Publication of the "European Spatial Development Perspective, Complete Draft" Announcement of the continuation of Interreg (both cross-border and transnational strands) post 2000
1999	Publication and agreement of the "European Spatial Development Perspective: Final Draft"

After Brown, 1998

As Davies (1996) notes, this pressure, coming particularly from the Environment and Regional Policy Directorates-General within the European Commission has propelled spatial planning from relative obscurity to centre stage of the European policy platform. The recent publication of the finalised European Spatial

Development Perspective (ESDP) is the culmination of a ten year process of policy and initiative-building by the both the European Commission and the member states. As Figure 2.2 above demonstrates, there have been a number of spatial planning policy initiatives preceding the ESDP, from the relatively simple introduction of spatial targeting in the Structural Funds, to the ambitious and experimental Interreg IIc initiative on transnational spatial planning. However, while the ESDP is undoubtedly the pinnacle of European spatial planning policy achievements to date, it should be noted that unlike the other initiatives set out above, the ESDP is not an official document or policy of the European Community. Instead, produced by inter-governmental consensus between the ministers responsible for spatial planning, the ESDP is entirely voluntary enabling *"...each country to take it forward according to the extent it wishes to take account of European spatial aspects in its national policies..."* (Leipzig principle as quoted by the CSD, 1997, p. 6).

According to the EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies (CEC, 1997a), the emergence of a European spatial planning rationale is linked to four main issues: first, the need to maximise the economic potential of the SEM by ensuring that infrastructure gaps and inconsistencies are minimised. Second, the need to co-ordinate public investment – particularly the Structural Funds - in order to maximise their impact on competitiveness and disparity. Third, the need to make the most of cross-border collaboration for the resolution of common problems. And finally, the potential of spatial planning to guarantee sustainability and balance economic growth with environmental protection.

In addition, the Compendium (CEC, 1997a) notes that the growing importance of European spatial planning is being reflected at nation-state level by movements towards strategic planning. This trend is evident in a number of member states including, Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands. In Britain this is represented by the creation, in 1997, of a governmental super-ministry that deals with issues of transport, regional policy, planning and the environment, while in Denmark there has been a general broadening of spatial planning to address much wider issues than those related only to land use.

A second strand of European spatial planning to emerge has been that of transnational planning and the development of a pan-European macro planning scale. Within this strand the ESDP in particular set out to resolve the discrepancy

between the levels at which plans are made, and the scale at which globalising economic forces operate (CSD, 1997). The development of this *"... shared vision of the European territory as a whole, a common reference framework for action..."* (CSD, 1997, p. 6) has the additional intention of resolving the potential conflicts and fragmentation of territorial development linked to uncoordinated national planning systems. By setting out a pan-European planning framework with clear principles and objectives – balanced development, sustainability and enhanced competitiveness – the ESDP hopes to foster complementarity and convergence between the 16 or so different planning systems operating in the member states, integrating policies both horizontally and vertically.

On a more practical basis, the experimental Interreg IIc initiative announced in 1996 actively seeks the harmonisation of national planning systems by requiring them to collaborate. As the ESDP argues *"... it is above all at the transnational level that the integration of the policy aims and option into spatial strategies and action programmes can be readily managed..."* (CSD, 1997, p. 62). In addition, by tackling common issues and the harmonisation of planning systems in practice, transnational spatial planning also enhances the operation of the single market by reducing the non-tariff barriers associated with the presence of different planning systems. Negotiating unfamiliar planning and consent systems has costs attached to it that may create barriers to the free movement of business and capital (see DoE, 1993 for a more detailed account of this).

The emergence of a pan-European planning policy can thus be linked to three main factors. First, the desire to manage development in Europe in order to achieve social and economic cohesion. Second, the need to act at a scale that is commensurate with the scale at which the economic forces shaping development are operating. Finally, the need to enhance regional competitiveness by reducing conflicts between planning systems and dismantling the non-tariff barriers associated with negotiating their separate structures and policies.

2.5.1 A Note on Terminology

The inclusion of a chapter entitled "Language and meaning: the Tower of Babel problem" in Williams' (1996) book on European spatial planning, indicates the importance of terminology in the discussion of European planning issues. As Williams points out, language is significant for a number of reasons, ranging from

the ability to hold 'secret' conversations at European meetings to understanding the finer points of provisions made in the Treaty of European Union. In planning terms however, the principal issue is the potential confusion that can be caused by (mis)translating the planning terminology of the member states. While the term 'planning' has a clear meaning to planning practitioners working in the UK, the British system of *town and country planning* is very different to the French *aménagement du territoire*, or German *Raumplanung*. Retaining the original meaning of country specific terminology is thus imperative, and the Compendium of EU Spatial Planning Systems and Policies (CEC, 1997a) has established the practice of using original planning terms at all times. However, while such an approach may be useful when undertaking comparative studies of planning systems, it does not facilitate less detailed discussions about EU planning. Generic terms are thus required. *Spatial planning* and *territorial planning* have emerged as suitable candidates for this task – and are used throughout this thesis to describe the activity of managing territorial development. This is a much broader activity than the land-use focused town and country planning practised in the UK, including within it all spatially significant policy sectors (environmental protection, infrastructure and transport). However, where references are made to country specific systems or practices in the course of the thesis text, original terms are used[21].

In addition to the precision required by planning terminology, it is also important to distinguish between activities taking place at different scales, and over different spaces. As Chapter Four illustrates, a specific terminology has developed to differentiate between activities carried out by neighbouring authorities and those carried out at a European scale. Despite the variation in the use of terms (see Chapter Four for discussion of this), throughout this thesis *supranational* is used to describe activities organised at a European scale; *transnational* is used to describe regions and countries which together form a contiguous and multi-national area; and, *transboundary* is used to describe activities occurring across borders of any type.

[21] Indicated by underlining (or other emphasis).

2.6 Integration and the politics of ever closer union

No discussion of European policy issues and themes is complete without mentioning European integration and the political process that underpins it[22]. Since the establishment of the European Community in the 1950s, economic and political integration has been a principal theme; first, in the achievement of a lasting peace, and second, in the desire to deliver economic prosperity to Europe's citizens.

As an overarching theme in the history of the European Community, integration has been shaping all aspects of European development from policy and procedures to the nature of Europe's institutions. At the heart of European integration lies a political process founded on post-war peace-making and the establishment of a European Community. This process has two main manifestations: first, the construction of a complex supranational governance structure; and second, the pursuit of particular policy objectives, including economic and monetary union. While the creation of institutions such as the European Parliament and the European Courts is *a product* of political integration, the existence of this European governance infrastructure is also intrinsic to *further integration* as it provides the structures and processes necessary for policy-making at the European level. In this sense, these European institutions *symbolise* the supra-national community that has resulted from political agreement between the member states. But at the same time they are involved in setting the European policy agenda and promoting further integration of the Community, its economy and territory. As Cram (1996) notes, policy *is* politics, and the pursuit of integrationist policies by the European Union is *a function* of political integration, although it is not always clear whether it drives or is driven by other elements of the integration process. Cram (1996) also notes that while economic integration is usually based on political objectives, it often has political consequences and results in or requires further integration. Regardless of these intricacies, the process of political integration undoubtedly lies at the core of European integration as a whole.

As policy objectives the pursuit of both economic integration and competitiveness are an enormously powerful force shaping the European community. In the last decade alone the European Community has not only created a single European market in which national borders are no longer economic or tariff boundaries, but it

[22] Although discussions here are limited as this subject is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

has also begun the process of economic and monetary union between the member states. While these achievements should be seen only as the culmination of a very long-term policy and political process, they demonstrate the enormous significance of the European Community in contemporary economic processes. The pursuit of economic integration by the EU is at once a response to globalisation, and an intrinsic part of it. The removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers within the Community for example, whilst emulating the globalising tendencies of business and economies, also reinforces that process by making it easier for businesses, capital and information to move around.

While the movement towards economic integration by the European Union is not in doubt, the pursuit of economic and social cohesion is more problematic. As mentioned earlier, critics of the EU's neo-classical approach to economic development argue that instead of promoting integration, EMU and the creation of the single market will have a negative effect on the social cohesion of the European Community, by maintaining and even recreating geographies of economic inequality. Since the European Union actively pursues the goal of cohesion through a very well-developed, and expensive, egional policy, it could be argued that economic integration goals are not compatible with attempts to promote development in the poorest regions of the 15 member states. Despite the assurances of the European Commission that economic integration will deliver benefits for all regions, it is clear that the relationship between the two policy objectives is a complex one.

The influence of European integration processes can be seen in many areas - not just economics - including the shaping and reshaping of the European territory. While globalisation is said to refocus attention on the locality as everything is located somewhere, the creation of a single Europe has also helped to focus attention on the region as a unit of cultural, economic and political space. Subsidiarity and the Committee of the Regions are only part of this process, which has also been influenced by changing patterns and structure of governance and administration. The active shaping of the European territory has also become increasingly important for a number of reasons. These include the ability of spatial planning to help deliver economic and social cohesion by 'directing' economic development away from congested regions and towards under-developed regions. In addition, the emergence of a transnational scale of planning activity can help to resolve the tension between territories and the economic forces shaping them. It can also

provide an appropriate scale for dealing with environmental issues such as air pollution and the management of water resources.

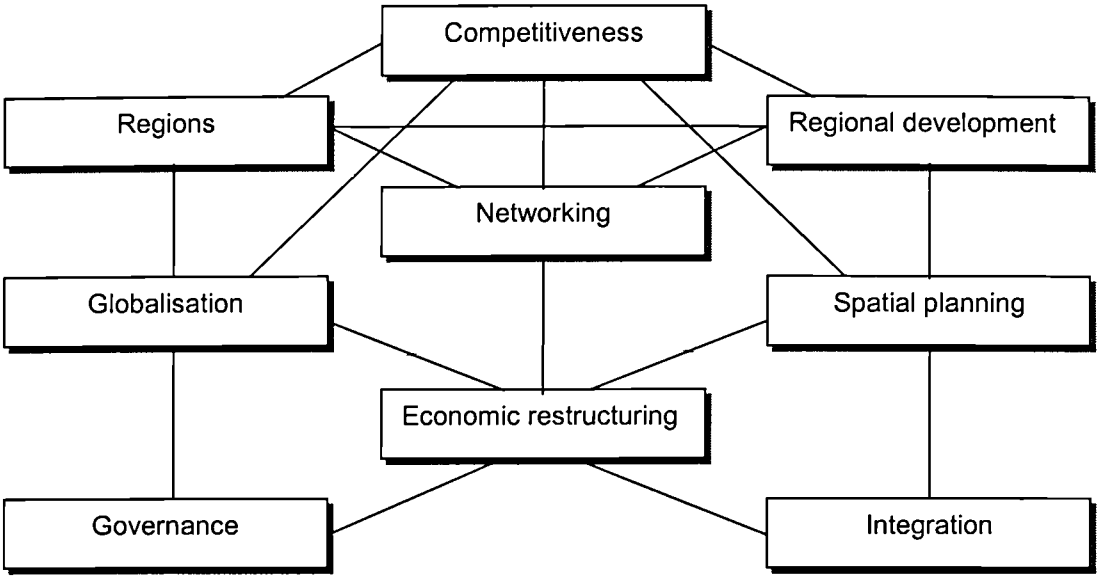
As a whole, the process of European integration can be seen in almost all policy developments in the EU. A key principle which is not only helping to drive the processes of regionalism, globalisation and networking, but which is also driven by them. Crucially for this research, the process of integration in Europe is focussing attention on two things: the role of spatial planning and the significance of national borders in the single Europe.

2.7. Conclusions

The preceding sections have discussed a number of strong themes shaping the context of both spatial planning and cross-border collaboration in the European Union. As the text demonstrates, there are many links between these themes, some of which are illustrated in Figure 2.3 below. However, as the preceding text also reveals, those links are not necessarily clear or positive. For example, while globalisation is argued by some to support the region and the locality, the expanding scale of the market in which those localities have to compete provides a serious challenge to their economic survival. As if to compound the situation still further, European Community policy attempts to further both the restructuring and increasing scale of economic activity, and to overcome the regional development disparities that the global market enhances. The links between integration, competitiveness and regional development are thus not necessarily all positive ones.

In many instances, as the previous sections attempt to illustrate, the themes shape and are shaped by each other. Thus while successful regions may have strong networks of regional actors, it is not only that such networks help to create successful regions, but that success strengthens networks by attracting new participants and generating further synergy and dynamism.

Figure 2.3 The Thematic Web



Taken together however, these themes form the context within which contemporary policy discourses and economic development are taking place. It is thus important to set out the broad structure of the themes and the links between them as they form the backdrop to the thesis. In common with all regions in Europe, border regions are shaped by the processes of glocalisation, integration and economic restructuring, and the policy responses to those processes (spatial planning, regional policy and competitiveness). The following chapters explore some of these links in more detail, paying particular attention to the relationship between border regions, spatial planning and European integration.

Chapter Three:
Understanding Border Regions

3.0 Introduction

Historically, culturally, economically, politically - borders are one of the most important features of the European Union, with internal borders alone stretching for more than 15,000 km[23]. While in the past they have divided state from state, nation from nation, now - in an integrating Europe - borders symbolise the contiguity of the member states and the possibilities of a single Europe.

The deeply paradoxical nature of borders - the fact that they both join and divide territories, acting as points of contact and separation - is constantly emphasised and re-emphasised by the movement towards social, economic and territorial cohesion. Each time the EU takes another step towards integration - from the Treaty of Rome in 1957 to the drafting of the European Spatial Development Perspective in 1997 - borders are brought into sharp focus as a reminder of the persisting non-integration between member states. Borders are central to the vision of an integrated Europe because that vision is predicated on the diminution, possibly even elimination, of borders as significant economic features.

It is the intention of this chapter therefore to explore the nature and importance of border regions in relation to the process of integration. To this end, the chapter is divided into two sections. The first part of the chapter focuses on the border itself, examining in turn definitions, characteristics and problems and taking a critical quantitative look at some of the stereotypes that exist. After introducing a new typology of borders, the chapter goes on - in its second part - to consider border regions in the context of integration and pin down the essential characteristics of integrated and non-integrated boundaries.

[23] based on figures for the EUR 12 and EFTA countries (CEC, 1994b).

I: Approaching Border Regions

3.1.1 Defining Borders, Boundaries and Frontiers

Essentially an arbitrary line in space, borders, boundaries and frontiers denote the spatial limits of an organisation or authority's competences. The traditional distinction between borders - or boundaries - and frontiers, revolves around the idea of the former as lines which separate or join nation-states, and the latter as zones of contact and transition (O'Dowd et al., 1995; Labrianidis, 1996). Where one is precise and linear, the other is diffuse and zonal, and where one is 'inner-oriented' the other is 'outer-oriented'. Labrianidis (1996) thus explains a frontier to mean 'in front', directing its attention towards the outlying areas which are both a source of danger and a coveted territorial prize. A boundary, on the other hand, is created and maintained by central government, and as a result is inner-oriented, existing only to separate and delimit the nation state. However, as Anderson points out, *"...frontiers are not simply lines on maps..."* (Anderson, 1996c, p.27), rather they are institutions and processes, established by political decisions and regulated by legal documents. As the demarcation of legal, political, fiscal, administrative and cultural systems (Anderson, 1996a) international boundaries are synonymous with customs, tax, currency and tariff barriers.

The association of borders with barriers – epitomised by the closed and heavily defended frontiers of the Iron Curtain – is fundamental to both the definition and understanding of border regions. While conceptions of border regions have yet to catch up with the realities of European integration in the shape of the Single European Market and the Schengen Agreement, the traditional view of border regions is of sub-national areas whose social and economic life is directly and significantly altered by proximity to an international boundary (Hansen, 1977; Anderson, 1983). Such a definition highlights not only a preoccupation with the nation-state and the border as a barrier to economic interaction, but the cultural significance of boundaries. According to Anderson *"..the modern frontier, in conventional thinking about the nation-state, separated two distinctive peoples or...civilisations..."* (1996a, p.23). As the history of Europe and continuing conflicts in the Balkans demonstrate, boundaries are enormously important culturally, for they not only unite, but also divide people and territory. The relationship between territory, identity and boundaries is an important one in the context of an integrating Europe and disintegrating former Soviet Union, and there is a considerable body of

work devoted to this issue (see for instance: Kockel, 1991; Anderson & Bort, 1996; Gibbins, 1996; Martinez, 1996).

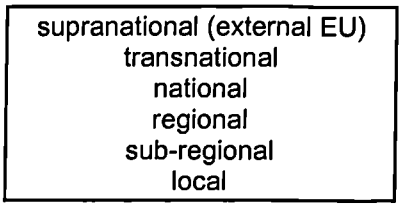
Borders, boundaries and border regions are thus complex socio-political and economic phenomena whose significance is derived mainly from their separating function. Boundaries denote difference and distinctiveness – or so it seems. Scott eloquently sets out the paradoxical and complex nature of the border as follows:

> *"Borders are a political and administrative fact, they exist to protect the territorial and functional integrity of nation-states. They are also a point of reference, a physical and cognitive element of order, signification and identity that allows us to distinguish between 'here' and 'there' and between 'us' and 'them'. Simultaneously, however, economic necessity, environmental pressures and basic human curiosity guarantee that borders are permanently transcended, perforated, 'spiritualised' or otherwise disregarded. As such national borders...are constantly being created and re-created, abolished and resurrected. We struggle for the preservation of self-identity and yet strive for the attainment of borderless interaction; only within this curious dualism can we understand the changing roles of borders in a complex and internationalising world"*
>
> (Scott, 1996, p.7)

However, the changing geopolitical context of the European Union – with ever-deepening integration; the demise of nationhood and the rise of sub-national and transnational regionalism – raises a number of questions about these concepts of borders and border regions. In the first instance, the literal meaning of border as the dividing line between political or geographic areas (Collins, 1991) indicates that the term applies not only to nation-states but also to other scales and circumstances. It is not only at the nation-state level that boundaries can be identified. Given that regions[24], whether defined economically, politically or geographically, are by their very nature bounded, this suggests that there are a number of types of boundary which can be identified. As Van der Welde observes *"regions and borders are inseparably joined...the essence of borders always is the fact they are marking the ultimate extent of regions..."* (Van der Welde, 1997, p.1). Figure 3.1 below illustrates a hierarchy of border types that can be identified.

[24] an area considered as a unit for geographical, functional, social or cultural reasons (Collins, 1991)

Figure 3.1: Hierarchy of Border Types



After Brown, 1997.

Borders and boundaries are thus a familiar feature of all territories, and yet most discussion of border regions relates only to sub-national areas whose social and economic life is significantly altered by proximity to an *international* boundary (Hansen, 1977; Anderson, 1983). Not only is such a definition a very narrow one (Ratti & Reichmann, 1993) but it presents a number of difficulties for the study of border regions. First, it is based on the assumption that international borders are qualitatively different to other types of border, and only international borders affect the regions adjacent to them. However - as discussed below - none of the theories about borders suggest that this is the case. Work by Hansen (1983) and Batten & Nijkamp (1990) show that it is the *nature* of the border as a *barrier* which creates discontinuities in market networks, price gradients and service provision. Despite the association of international boundaries with barrier effects, such effects are not limited to international borders. Logically speaking, any border that acts as a barrier will have an effect on the regions adjacent to it.

Second, the reference to direct and significant effects suggest that it may be possible, theoretically at least, to identify regions where effects are neither direct enough nor significant enough, however they are defined and measured, for them to be classified as a border region. Similarly, the focus on social and economic life begs the question of whether social or cultural effects are sufficient by themselves to define a border region. The creation of a Single European Market has brought about many radical changes to the national borders within Europe. As customs and tariff barriers have been disappearing, the nature of national borders has been changing - particularly in the economic context. Will that mean then that the cultural differences remaining - language, religion and ethnicity - will be insufficient for these areas to be regarded as border regions under Anderson's definition?

Of course, it is inconceivable that the areas adjacent to national boundaries should not be considered to be border regions, but it is clear that as national borders become more permeable, the distinction between them and other types of border

becomes much less clear. Consider for instance, the Welsh-English marches and the former East German-West German border. Both have distinct cultural and even lingual significance, although there is monetary and administrative union across them. The boundary between the Flemish and Walloon provinces of Belgium on the other hand, has administrative as well as lingual and cultural differences to contend with, and yet as an internal or domestic border it is excluded from the traditional border region genre.

These questions about what does, and what does not, constitute a border region are further muddied by the problem of delimitation. Two possibilities exist: distance from the boundary line or the functioning of the transfrontier economy (CEC, 1994c). Setting aside the complexities of the regional question[25], the European Commission considers all areas along the internal and external land borders delineated at NUTS III level,[26] as border regions. This policy-driven approach contrasts with Klemencic & Bufon's view (1994) that the whole of Slovenia can be characterised as a border region, since the capital is no more than 100 km from important international border crossings to the north and the west.

However, unless one follows the Commission's pragmatic example, the methodological difficulties of studying - or even defining - border regions become almost insurmountable. What effects are significant, and how are they measured; and, how does one obtain information about a functional region, which surely changes size and shape as the nature of the border changes?

3.1.2 The Characteristics and Problems of Border Regions

Whatever the definition of a border or a boundary, the tradition of border regions as defensive buffer zones combined with the integrationist preoccupation with removing barriers and reducing disparity has resulted in the almost endless reworking of the border as both barrier and periphery. The result is a view of border regions as doubly disadvantaged: peripheral and poor - or as Eskelinen & Snickars (1995) put it, geographically remote, economically lagging and culturally obsolete.

[25] what is a region; how is it defined and delimited?
[26] areas eligible for assistance under the INTERREG programme, which aims to assist both internal and external border areas in overcoming their special development problems.

Five factors have been suggested to explain the poor economic profile of border regions. First, a peripheral and isolated location with respect to the economic and political centres of their respective countries (Anderson, 1983; LACE, 1990; Maillat, 1990; Nijkamp, 1993 and Labrianidis, 1996). Second, the separation of economic centres and their natural hinterlands, thus distorting patterns of trade and service provision (Batten & Nijkamp, 1990; LACE 1990; Nijkamp, 1993 and Labrianidis, 1996). Third, relatively poor infrastructure due to their geographic location at the extremes of transport and communications networks (Boot & Van der Veen, 1990; LACE, 1990; Nijkamp, 1993 and Labrianidis, 1996). Fourth, low agricultural production, poor endowments of natural resources and provision of social and commercial services (LACE, 1990 and Nijkamp, 1993). Finally, large differences in legal, administrative and social welfare systems as well as lingual and cultural traditions which hamper interaction and dampen innovation (LACE, 1990 and Nijkamp, 1993).

The cumulative effect of these various disadvantages is reflected in the observation that '... *in general, the present EC border areas have a lower income per capita and a higher unemployment rate than the other regions of their countries ...*' (Nijkamp, 1993, p.435). Yet, the core of Europe – the golden triangle of Europe's economic and political power between Paris, London and Frankfurt, is also a place of borders, boundaries and frontiers. Why is it then that the negative rather than positive characteristics of border regions seem to prevail?

3.1.3 The Emergence of a Tradition

The answer appears to lie in the influential classical and neo-classical conceptions of economic space developed by Christaller, Lösch and others. As Hansen demonstrates, Christaller's model portrays borders as distorting factors, disrupting the regular pattern of central places and their hinterlands by cutting up spatially complementary regions (Hansen, 1977). For Lösch on the other hand, the existence of frontiers creates gaps on the market network, discouraging industries from settling near to a border due to the depressed economy and the difficulties of overcoming other barriers, including that of defence (Hansen, 1977). Such ideas can be clearly linked to the more modern, incomplete growth pole theories discussed by Boos (1983), Giaoutzi et al (1993) and Ratti & Reichmann (1993). These theories

posit that closed frontiers should be considered as incomplete growth poles for the following reasons:

1. customs barriers limit the establishment and growth of markets;
2. complementarities are under-exploited;
3. infrastructure grows along the lines of rivalry and competition; and
4. skills and assets are under-utilised.

It is unsurprising then, that contemporary discussions of the border region still cite separation of the market from its hinterland as a reason for the depressed nature of border economies (see for instance: Batten & Nijkamp, 1990; LACE, 1990b; Nijkamp, 1993; and, Labrianidis, 1996). However, given the development of the Single European Market and the free movement of goods, capital, information, people and services around Europe, such separations must surely be the exception rather than the rule.

Economic depression at the edge of nation-states is also linked to the defensive role that frontiers, rather than borders, had in the past. With centres of power and decision-making strategically distanced from frontiers, it is unsurprising that border regions should feel peripheral, after all boundaries by their very nature are also peripheries. As *national* peripheries, border regions suffer from their position at the extremities of national infrastructure networks (Labrianidis, 1996; Nijkamp, 1993); although whether that also makes them isolated is difficult to say. However, while borders *are* peripheral at the national level, in a Europe of the regions where blue bananas and golden triangles are overtaking national geographies, it is the geopolitical order of the EU that is most important. As Nijkamp (1993) observes, border regions are crucial to the shifting geo-politics of the European Union. No longer peripheral, internal border regions are now an integral part of a single European territory.

The cumulative effect of European integration and these views of border regions, has been the evolution of a border region characterisation based on two themes. The first concentrates on the economic profile of the border and the negative effects that it has on markets and networks. The second theme revolves around the geography of borders, emphasising their economic and political peripherality and a lack of infrastructure. The result is a composite view of European border regions that relies on general descriptions: economically lagging, underdeveloped and culturally

obsolete (Eskelinen & Snickars, 1995; Clement, 1996), and assertions: border regions in Europe have higher unemployment rates and lower income than other regions, they have low agricultural productivity and poor infrastructure provision (Rumley & Minghi, 1991; Nijkamp, 1993).

There are two main problems with this view of Europe's border regions. First, it treats border regions as if they are a distinct group displaying a number of common characteristics, and second, it fails to provide any real evidence for the claims that are made. Rumley & Minghi (1991) may claim that per capita income is likely to be lower in border regions, but neither they, nor Nijkamp (1993), provide any hard evidence for the observation. Without this evidence, it is difficult to ascertain whether these assertions are still true for the borders of an integrating Europe.

3.1.4 Beginning the Exploration

Approaching this question, the interest in regional disparity and classification has produced a useful body of work in which to search for clues about the 'true' nature of borders and border regions. As a starting point for our exploration, four very different regional analyses were assembled and examined in relation to European border regions. Although there are some limitations to such an approach, particularly in relation to the spatial level of analysis[27], as the results show, regional analyses can, and do, reveal things about border regions.

In order to provide a consistent interpretation of these secondary sources, border regions have been defined as *all* Nuts II and III regions that contain areas eligible for Community support under the second Interreg programme[28]. This pragmatic approach may ignore the important - but vexed - question of defining and delimiting border regions, but as the purpose of the Interreg programme is to help border regions overcome the specific problems associated with their relatively isolated position (CEC, 1994a), then it seems safe to assume that regions which are eligible for the Interreg programme are in fact areas whose economic life is significantly affected by proximity to an international frontier[29].

[27] as most "general" investigations rely on data at the Nuts II level, the exact character of border regions (more accurately described at the Nuts III level) is harder to discern because of the noise of other (non-border) regions in the Nuts II grouping.
[28] the eligible areas are set out in the Annex to: EC, 1994a.
[29] the definition of a border region as set out by Anderson (1983) and Hansen (1977).

3.1.5 GDP and Unemployment in the Borders

The European Commission is probably the most assiduous assessor of the state of regions, with its Periodic Reports on the social and economic cohesion of the Union[30]. Within these reports, the Commission produces tables ranking all European Regions on the basis of their GDP and unemployment levels. Table 3.1 shows part of such a table.

Table 3.1: Table of European Regions ranked according to GDP (1989-91)

Rank	Region		GDP/head in PPS average (89-90-91) EUR12=100	Unemployment rate average (91-92-93)	Population 1991	
					Total (in millions)	cumulative share (%)
1	Thüringen	(D)	30.0	139.3	2.6	0.8
2	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	(D)	33.0	158.8	1.9	1.3
3	Sachsen	(D)	33.0	125.9	4.8	2.7
4	Alentejo	(P)	33.9	85.1	0.5	2.9
5	Voreio Aigio	(GR)	35.0	145.3	2.9	3.7
6	Brandenburg	(D)	35.2	100.8	0.2	3.8
7	Ipeiros	(GR)	36.0	129.4	2.6	4.5
8	Guadeloupe	(F)	36.2	111.1	0.3	4.6
9	Centro	(P)	39.0	250.3	0.4	4.7

Source: CEC, 1994b, p.192

Assuming that border and non-border regions are equal in their diversity[31], we would expect to see between four and five border regions appearing in each decile of the table[32]. However, as literature and theory predict lower GDP and higher unemployment levels in border regions (Nijkamp, 1993; Clement, 1996), the alternative hypothesis predicts rather more than five border regions in the top ten of each table. In fact, examination of the tables in both the Fourth and the Fifth Periodic Reports (CEC, 1991b; CEC 1994a) reveals that:

- nine out of ten of the poorest regions (1986-88) were border regions;
- seven out of ten of the poorest regions (1989-91) were border regions;
- four out of ten of the regions with the highest unemployment levels (1988-90) were border regions; and,

[30] see: CEC, 1991 and 1994b.
[31] that is to say, that they come from the same population and there are no significant differences between them.
[32] as 80 of the 171 regions in Fourth Periodic Report and 86 of the 179 regions in the Fifth Periodic Report are border regions.

- three out of ten of the regions with the highest levels of unemployment (1991-93) were border regions.

The results in the GDP tables thus confirm the predicted dominance of border regions among Europe's poorest regions. However, the figures on unemployment are less conclusive, with fewer border regions than expected appearing in the top decile.

Widening the field of vision, and repeating the exercise for the top and bottom twenty rankings in each table, merely confirms these preliminary observations. However, as Table 3.2 illustrates, the rankings also reveal a rather more complex picture than the claims about low GDP and high unemployment suggest.

Table 3.2: Incidence and Expected Incidence of Border Regions in Rankings of GDP and Unemployment Levels

	Observed	Expected	observed	expected	
Rankings	GDP 86-88		GDP 89-91		
top 10	9	4.6	7	4.8	poorest
top 20	16	9.2	13	9.6	⇩
Bottom 10	4	4.6	3	4.8	⇩
Bottom 20	14	9.2	9	9.6	richest
	Unemployment 88-90		Unemployment 91-93		
top 10	4	4.6	3	4.8	highest
top 20	10	9.2	6	9.6	⇩
Bottom 10	7	4.6	7	4.8	⇩
Bottom 20	8	9.2	12	9.6	lowest

As expected, the ranking for the regions with low GDP are dominated by border regions, in line with the observations of Nijkamp (1993) and Clement (1996). Rankings at the other end of the spectrum, however, refuse to confirm this pattern. If border regions are associated with low GDP, then very few border regions should feature amongst those with the highest levels of GDP. In fact, in the Fourth Periodic Report (GDP 1986-88), fourteen of the twenty richest regions are border regions, and Groningen - one of the Dutch border regions - has the highest level of GDP in the whole of Europe. The border region\GDP relationship is thus not as straightforward as the literature suggests.

In terms of the unemployment question, as seen above evidence from the ranked tables refuses to confirm the claim that border regions tend to have higher unemployment levels than their national counterparts. Of course, examining data from the whole of Europe does not permit country by country analysis, but

nevertheless the fact that border regions *dominate* the ten areas with the lowest unemployment rates must cast some doubt on the assertion.

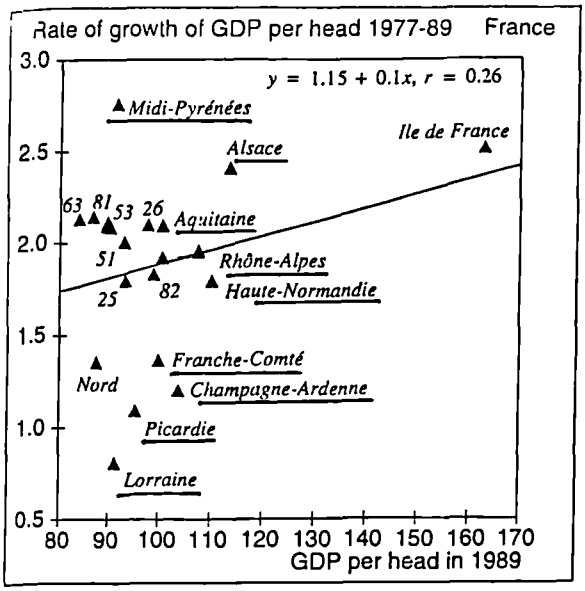
While the tables in the Fourth and Fifth Periodic Reports on economic and social cohesion contain some clues about the economic performance of border regions, they also indicate whether that performance has changed over time. Although we do not yet have figures for 'before' and 'after' the creation of the Single European Market[33], Table 3.2 does suggest some very slight improvement in the position of border regions. A move away from the 'top' deciles of both GDP and unemployment can be seen, along with a rise in the number of border regions with the very lowest levels of unemployment in Europe. However, as this time period also sees the inclusion of the new German Länder - with their considerable economic problems - it is difficult to unravel how much of this change is a general improvement rather than an increment produced by the inclusion of regions with very poor indicators.

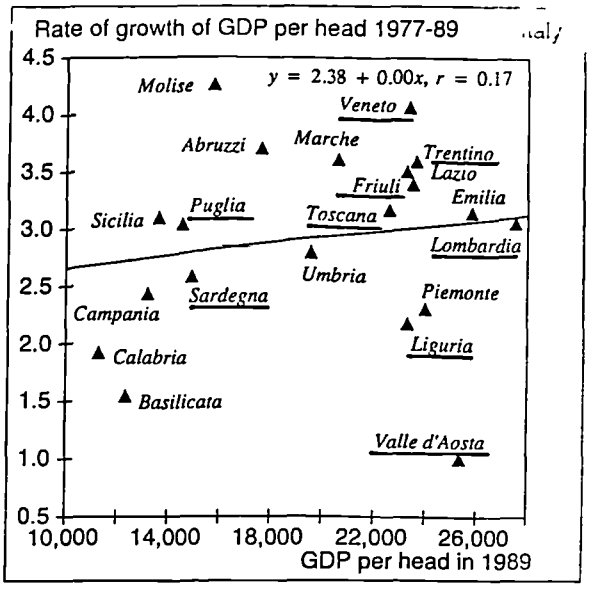
Dunford (1993) has also undertaken an analysis of regional disparities in the European Community using figures from the Regio Databank. As part of this study, he examined regional growth and inequality for the period 1977 to 1989. Although this was not undertaken with border regions in mind, the resulting graphs (shown in Figure 3.2) allow us to distinguish rates of growth in border regions from those in non-border regions.

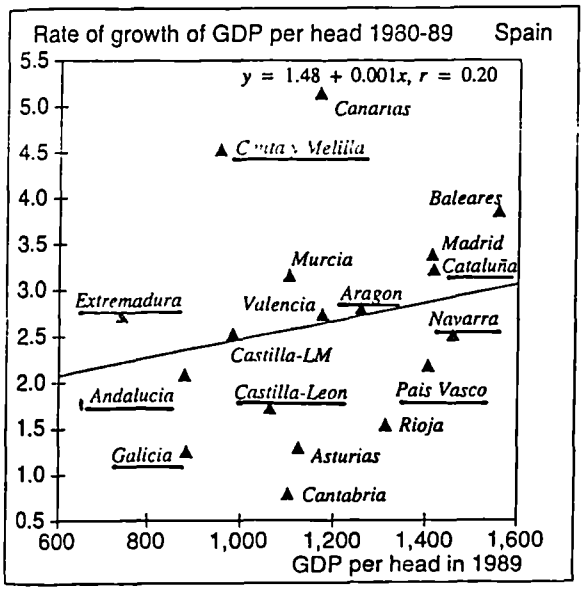
It would appear from the graphs that in each of the countries examined, border regions (at the Nuts II level) feature amongst both the poorest and richest areas, and display a range of growth rates. Compare for instance, Cataluna and Extramadura in Spain, or Valle d'Aosta and Puglia in Italy, all of them are border areas and each with very different levels of GDP and economic growth. Although it is not possible to draw any specific conclusions about these graphs, the diversity evident among the border regions shown, does suggest that general claims of economic underdevelopment seem to be misplaced and that border regions are rather more varied that is often implied.

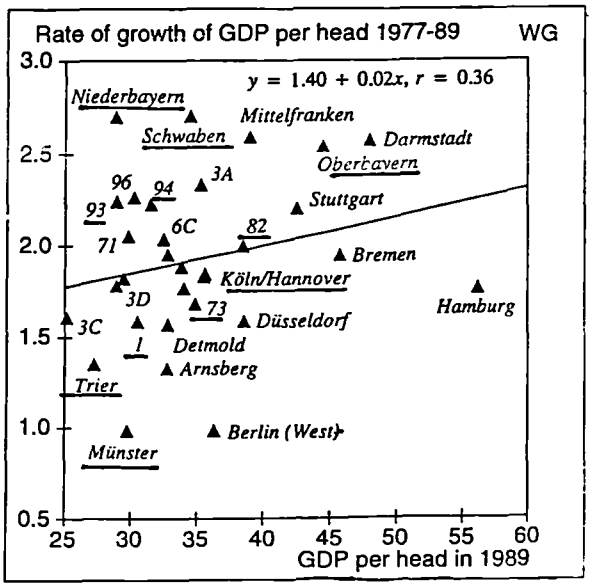
[33] a development which would seem to have particular significance for border as it has involved the dismantling of tariff (and non-tariff) barriers which, economic theory tells us, are responsible for distorting economic space and depressing the development of the border region.

Figure 3.2: Regional Growth and Inequality in France, Italy, Spain and West Germany 1997 - 1989









Source: Dunford, 1993, p.737.
note: border regions are distinguished by underlining

3.1.6 Regional Classifications

In a very different piece of work using the Regio databank, Alderman & Charlton (1995) present a new classification of European Regions based on cluster analysis. The main question that the authors try to answer is whether it is possible to produce a meaningful classification that transcends national boundaries and stereotypes. Using cluster analysis, and a variable radius kernel density estimation technique[34], Alderman & Charlton experiment with a number of classifications using different variables from the Regio databank[35]. Their preferred classification - avoiding both national stereotypes and clusters of extreme size (either large or small) – is based on twelve clusters which, they feel, successfully describe regional types across Europe. Given that "border" also appears to describe a particular type of region, comparing the two would seem to be useful in this exploration of the nature of border regions.

Highlighting the border regions that occur within each cluster grouping reveals a good spread of borders in each regional type, as Table 3.3 shows. However, the cluster descriptions would lead us to think - if the conceptions about border regions are correct - that few border regions would fit into clusters 3, 6 and 7 and lots of border regions would appear in clusters 4, 10 and 11. It is perhaps a little surprising to find that almost all of the Industrial Heartland (cluster 7) is made up of border regions, and that half of the Successful Manufacturing regions (cluster 6) are also border areas. On the other hand, the 100% saturation of cluster 10, Stable Agricultural Periphery, is not at all surprising if we think of border regions as agricultural, peripheral and poor, although the two other clusters fitting this model (11 & 4) each only manage a 50% presence of border regions.

[34] This technique has the advantage of not being sensitive to extreme cases, and is less biased than other parametric techniques (Alderman & Charlton, 1995).

[35] Variables include: population density 1990; harmonised unemployment 1990; GDP per capita (PPS) 1990; population change 1980-1990; GDP change 1980-1990; proportion of those employed in manufacturing; and, proportion of those employed in the service sector.

Table 3.3: A New Classification of European Regions

Cluster	Description	Key indicators	Regions	Border Regions
1	Economically Growing	High GDP change	30	7
2	Low growth, Central	Low GDP change, central	24	11
3	Urbanised, Industrial	High GDP, industrial, *high density*	17	4
4	Stable, Rural, Mixed Economy	Low GDP change, rural, mixed	10	5
5	Rapid Growth Service Economy	High GDP growth, services, *low unemployment*	21	9
6	Successful Manufacturing	Low unemployment, high GDP, central, *industrial*	6	3
7	Industrial Heartland	High GDP, *industrial*	7	5
8	Declining (Peripheral) Old Industrial	Low GDP, *high unemployment*	14	5
9	Major Growing Urban Area	high pop growth, non agricultural, *high population, high population density, high GDP*	16	7
10	Stable Agricultural Periphery	Low unemployment, peripheral, *low population density, low GDP, agricultural*	7	7
11	Declining Agricultural Periphery	Low population density, peripheral, *low population, low GDP, low GDP growth, agricultural*	6	3
12	Growing Periphery with Structural Problems	Low GDP, high GDP growth, *high population, high unemployment*	9	5

Source: Alderman & Charlton, 1995.

Note: indicators shown in italics illustrate extreme characteristics.

Of all of the information examined so far, this rigorous statistical classification of regions on the basis of a number of economic indicators seems to provide the best evidence for rejecting a stereotypical view of border regions and adopting a more dynamic and diverse one.

3.1.7 Border Dynamism

The immense interest in regional dynamics and disparities is not merely confined to the academic and policy-making world. Businesses, particularly inward investors, are also interested in the trajectories of European regions. As a result, guides offering information on the attractiveness of different regions have been produced to help inward investors make their decisions. In a discussion of these and other works, Hallin & Malmberg (1996) examine the 1993 Empirica report[36] which offers investors an explicit guide to the regions of Europe. The report differentiates investor

[36] Empirica, 1993, Zukunftstandsorte in Westeuropa. Ein Regionalfuhrer fur Investoren in EG und EFTA Wirtschafts und socialwissenschaftlichen Forschungs und Beratungsgesellschaft mbH, Bonn. (This text is not available through the British Library, although attempts were made to obtain it),

priorities into three areas, and provides listings of 'top' regions, as shown in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4: Regions identified as most attractive for inward investors by the 1993 Empirica Report

Rank	Manufacturing	Distribution	Communications
1	Ireland	Limburg (NL)	Zurich
2	Andalusia	Limburg(B)	Oberbayern
3	Norte	Navarra	Ile de France
4	Lorraine	Champagne-Ardennes	Lombardia
5	Basse Normandie	Lombardia	Emilia Romagna
6	Overijssel	Zeeland	Hannover
7	Basilicata	Franche-Comté	Noord Holland
8	Puglia	Emilia Romagna	Piemonte
9	Canarias	Hannover	Geneve
10	Highlands & Islands	Veneto	Darmstadt

Source: Hallin & Malmberg, 1996

Note: border regions are shown by underlining

As Table 3.4 illustrates, a high proportion of the regions presented as attractive investment locations are border regions. Even without the underlying methodology to illuminate the results, if border regions really are poor, peripheral and underdeveloped, then it seems unlikely that they would be attractive to any type of investor. On the other hand, if border regions are dynamic, innovative and outward looking, it might explain why they are on Empirica's list.

3.1.8 Looking More Closely

Having compared the border region stereotype with existing statistical classifications, the next step is a more detailed investigation into border regions themselves. The objective here is to compare the claims made about border regions in the literature with the numeric facts. In order to make this comparison, economic indicators for regions at the Nuts III level[37], and for as many countries as possible were assembled. Unfortunately however, the data available was confined to six countries: the UK, Germany, Belgium, Spain, France and the Netherlands, of which both the UK and Germany presented various problems[38], resulting in their exclusion.

[37] Nuts III is the level at which the European Commission defines border regions ('*...all areas along the internal and external land borders of the Community delineated at ...Nuts III...*' (CEC, 1994a, p.36)).

[38] as the UK has so few areas eligible as border regions, and as the data for Germany were so difficult to manipulate given the partial inclusion of the New Länder.

For the remaining four countries a profile of border and non-border regions was developed on the basis of the nine different variables set out in Table 3.5. That is to say that a matrix of summary statistics was prepared for each country individually, and the four countries together, showing the profiles of each variable for all regions, all border regions and all non-border regions. It should be noted here that the comparisons made are based on these summary statistics rather than the raw data (which was not available to the author).

Table 3.5: Variables used in Nuts III analysis of Border and Non-Border Regions

Variable Name	Description
GDPCAP (1991)	Level of GDP per capita in 1991
GDPEMP (1990)	Level of GDP per employee, 1982-90
GE (1982-90)	Growth rate of employment (1000 persons) 1982-90
GQ (1982-91	Average annual growth rate of GDP per capita 1982-91
GY (1982-90)	Average annual growth rate of GDP per employee 1982-90
ACDEN (1991)	Active population (1000 persons) per square km
GA (1986-91)	Average annual growth rate of active population 1986-91
GAD (1991)	Average annual growth rate of active population per km sq.
UN (1991)	Unemployment rate (%)

note: all GDP variables in PPP ECU of 1990, using nation-wide price deflators

Beginning with the claim that border regions have higher unemployment rates than other regions in the same country (Clement, 1996; Nijkamp, 1993), within country statistics reveal that while in Spain and Belgium the average level of unemployment was slightly higher in border regions, in France and the Netherlands, unemployment levels are actually lower in the border areas. These results are illustrated in Table 3.6 below.

Table 3.6: Average Unemployment Level 1991 (%)

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	7.91	6.71	7.37
Spain	18.07	14.36	15.46
France	8.375	8.534	8.49
Netherlands	7.15	7.35	7.29

In addition, Maillat's claim that border regions have above national average unemployment rates (Maillat, 1990) can also be challenged. Comparing individual values with national averages shows that border regions are no more likely to have higher than average unemployment rates than any other region. In fact, as Table 3.7 shows, border regions in all of the countries except Spain, are actually less likely to have an above average unemployment rate than their non-border counterparts.

Table 3.7: Percentage of Regions with above Average Unemployment Rate (1991)

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	50	52	44
Spain	50	36	40
France	45	50	46
Netherlands	33	43	40
All countries	45	42	43

With regard to the question of income, as there was no data available on levels of income in Nuts III regions, GDP has been used as an alternative indicator. The question is thus whether border regions really do have lower income levels per capita than other regions in their countries (Clement, 1996; Nijkamp, 1993; and, Rumley & Minghi, 1991). Looking at the data, the answer seems to be yes, as in all four countries average GDP per capita is higher in non-border regions than in border regions, even though the differences are quite small, as Table 3.8 illustrates.

Table 3.8: Average Level of GDP per capita (1991)

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	13.24	14.14	13.66
Spain	10.14	10.73	10.55
France	14.14	14.51	14.41
Netherlands	13.89	14.48	14.27
All countries	13.08	13.61	13.43

Putting these very specific claims to one side, the next question is whether the data can lend any credence to Nijkamp's assertion that '*...the current regional economic profile of European frontier regions is far from favourable. They have in general poor economic performance...*' (Nijkamp, 1993, p.435). In terms of employment growth (1982-90), the evidence from the data-set shows that border regions in France have a higher average growth rate than their national non-border counterparts, while in Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands the reverse is true.

Table 3.9: Average Growth in Employment (1982-90)

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	0.008	0.009	0.008
Spain	0.009	0.014	0.012
France	0.024	-0.002	0.005
Netherlands	0.005	0.044	0.046
All countries	0.021	0.011	0.014

Figures for the density of the active population - an indicator of economic opportunity - reveal lower average figures for border regions in all of the countries

studied. Not only that, but the differences between the groups (except in Spain) is quite marked, as Table 3.10 demonstrates.

Table 3.10: Average Density of Active Population

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	0.1228	0.2537	0.1837
Spain	0.0348	0.0428	0.0404
France	0.0508	0.3307	0.2562
Netherlands	0.1599	0.2666	0.2283
All countries	0.0898	0.2447	0.1919

It would seem then - on the basis of these four countries, and in accordance with Nijkamp's (1993) views - that border regions do not have a terribly good economic profile. However, as the figures also demonstrate, the disadvantage to border regions is actually very small.

While the evidence from the individual variables has provided clues about the validity of specific claims about border regions, it also reveals something of the nature of border regions as a group. Standard deviation values for each of the variables give some feel as to the homogeneity of the regional groupings, indicating in all instances, that border regions are a more homogeneous group than non-border regions[39]. That is not to say that border regions *are* a homogeneous group, merely that they are *less heterogeneous* than non-border regions.

A more reliable assessment of the statistical similarity of border and non-border regions is provided by the F-test analysis of variance, which examines the ratio of variance in two samples. The null hypothesis in this instance is that the border and non-border samples are drawn from the same parent population, so any differences between them are explained by chance.

Table 3.11: F-test analysis of Variance

	F value	significant at 95%
GDPCAP (1991)	2.527	✓
GDPEMP (1990)	6.495	✓
GE (1982-90)	1.413	×
GQ (1982-91	0.895	×
GY (1982-90)	1.886	✓
ACDEN (1991)	122.4	✓
GA (1986-91)	1.487	×
GAD (1991)	1.487	×
UN (1991)	2.02	✓

[39] as all standard deviation values for border region groupings are smaller than those for non-border regions.

As the results in Table 3.11 above show, for four of the variables, the null hypothesis - that the samples come from the same population - could not be rejected at the 95% level. Interestingly though, for those variables where there are confirmed differences in the samples, the F values add weight to the GDP and unemployment issues discussed earlier, confirming that the lower level of GDP in border regions is statistically significant.

3.1.9 Specks in the Eye-Glass

Before rushing to make any conclusions about these results and what can be learned from them, it is necessary to set out the limitations of the analysis. First, the dataset is rather a small one, based on only four of the fifteen member states in the European Union. While the sample may be reasonably balanced between large and small, and central and peripheral regions, it is nevertheless only a small part of the European picture. The second obvious limitation of the dataset is the age of the data - with most figures dating from 1991 or before. While this isn't necessarily a disadvantage, in the context of border regions and the fundamental changes they are undergoing, challenging the proclaimed anachronisms of the border region stereotype does rather depend on having up-to-date information(!). It remains to be seen whether more current data will reinforce the traditional view or explode the myth forever.

II Integrating Border Regions

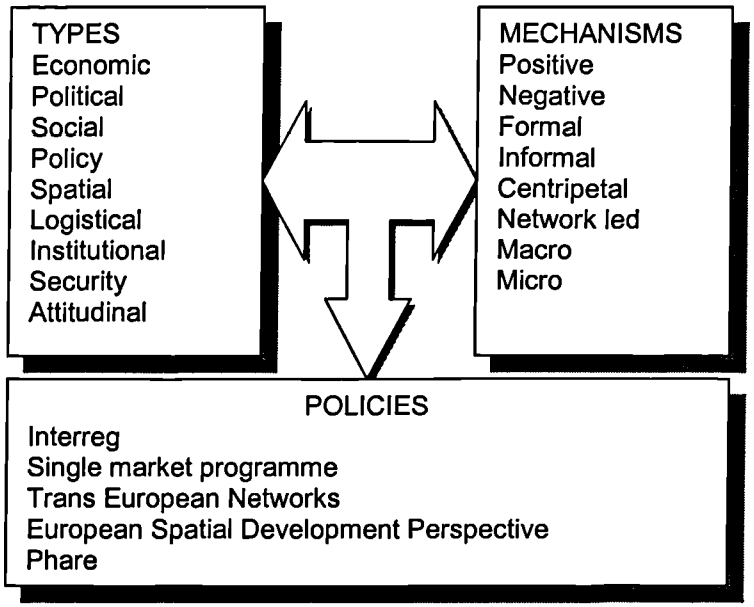
The previous discussion of the nature and understanding of border regions reveals the link between border, barrier and the process of integration. Exploring this link further, this section attempts to unravel the concept of an integrated border. In doing so, the section begins by deconstructing the concept and process of integration in order to relate it to boundaries and frontiers.

3.2.1 Integration

After fifty years of political, institutional and economic integration across Europe, the body of literature exploring, analysing and explaining integration is huge. With its counterpart economic and social cohesion, integration dominates European policy-

making on everything from economic and monetary union to local training programmes, and yet understanding of what integration is and how it is achieved at the regional level remains as hazy as ever.

Figure 3.3: The Three Essential Elements of European Integration



At its most fundamental, European integration is the process of collective action and agreement by, and between, member states in order to secure long-term peace, economic prosperity and an improved quality of life. In this sense, integration is essentially a political process, which Haas describes as persuading political actors *"to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new and larger centre..."* (Haas, 1972, p.92). The result is a pan-European policy forum with institutions, powers and responsibilities of its own, acting at both the macro and micro scale to promote the goal of integration.

While integration is seen by Mayes as "... *inherently complex and multi-faceted ...*" (Mayes, 1994, p. 265), it is described by Cram as essentially political (Cram, 1996) although neither of these views adds to our understanding of the nature of European integration. However, it is possible to reduce integration to three essential elements: type, mechanism and policy, as illustrated in Figure 3.3 above. These elements – described in detail below – represent the areas in which activity on integration takes place - the economy and so on, the mechanisms and processes of integration at both macro and micro scales, and the policies adopted to pursue integration.

Together these elements, and their many components, combine to explain the variety and complexity of contemporary European integration.

3.2.2 Types of Integration

As the arenas - or policy areas in which actors or member states reach consensus and agree on action, *types* of integration describe a number of distinct strands within European integration. Economic integration is probably one of the most important and familiar of these, describing the long-term development of macro-economic policies leading to, among other things, the Common Market and the Single European Currency. From the economic point of view, integration involves the harmonisation and interdependence of European economies along with the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. Quite clearly these objectives, and the policies required to achieve them form a coherent strand within the integration process. Territorial integration has similarly emerged as an integration *type,* focussed on the creation of single European territory with a balanced and polycentric system of cities (CSD, 1997) and supported by a bundle of policies and programmes. Security and defence have also become obvious themes within the European Union with the introduction of a Common Foreign and Security Policy as one of the three pillars of the Treaty on European Union.

Even more significant than these policy-based areas of integration, is the broad strand of political integration which is itself a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. As Cram (1996) notes, European integration is essentially political given its roots in post-war political movements - and in this sense all of the types of integration have some link to politics, although the focus here is on the overtly political type of integration. There are essentially three dimensions to political integration. First, is the ongoing process of political agreement between nation-state governments, which began with the creation of the European Community in 1957 and has continued since then as the membership has expanded. Second is the translation of the Community's objectives into policy; the most obvious example of this being the aspiration to economic and social cohesion which underpins policy on the SEM and economic and monetary union. The third dimension of political integration is concerned with the organisation of governance at the European level, the structures, institutions and processes required for pan-European policy making; decisions about *who* is represented, *where* and by *how many* are all part of the

political integration strand, along with questions about *how* decisions are made. Political integration in this sense is about creating the infrastructure necessary to support and maintain a political community, and as such it is distinct from other policy objectives.

In addition to the technicalities of organising and managing pan-European governance, political integration has embedded into it institutional integration: the creation of pan-European bodies with specific responsibilities and decision-making powers to which member states cede varying degrees of sovereignty. This process of integrative institution building began in the 1950's with the European Coal and Steel Community and the creation of its High Authority, Council of Ministers, Common Assembly and Court of Justice. Institutions which are now embodied in the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the European Court of Justice (see: Nugent, 1995) and which although not themselves an objective of the integration process, are nevertheless a necessary part.

However, institutional integration is different from political, economic and territorial integration, as it is a means to an end and has little or no policy dimension - it is a more intrinsic type of integration, like that of social - or even attitudinal - integration. This element, focussing on individual attitudes to Europe, might be described as the creation of European citizenship. Citizenship in terms of the gradual convergence of public views and understanding, rather than freedom of movement of individual rights.

3.2.3 Mechanisms of Integration

While 'type' describes the area of integration, *mechanism* details the way in which that integration is achieved or pursued. Pinder described the difference between positive and negative integration in the early 1970s, where a negative mechanism simply removes barriers and discrimination while the positive involves the formation and implementation of common policies (Pinder, 1972). Wallace, on the other hand, describes a formal/informal dichotomy relating to deliberate and spontaneous interaction. Thus while formal integration requires deliberate actions by policy-makers to shape and redirect the patterns of interaction, informal integration is the spontaneous result of the dynamism and synergy created by social exchanges in market, communications and technological networks (Wallace, 1990).

The formal-informal dichotomy is echoed in the identification of centrifugal and network-led integration. In this instance, centrifugal integration is led by the centre as a top-down policy-based approach. Network-led integration on the other hand relies on grass-roots action and bottom-up processes whether formal or informal.

In addition to these dichotomous mechanisms of integration, there is the question of scale. The European Union is an obvious perpetrator of both macro and micro integration with its pan-European policies on economic and monetary union and its regionally specific programmes that aim to promote integration at the small scale.

3.2.4 Integration Policy

Alongside these types and mechanisms of European integration, comes the inevitable focus on policy. Although in many ways policies only reflect the types and mechanisms of integration pursued at any one time, the fact that specific policies can be identified in relation to these criteria demonstrates that European integration is an overt and actively pursued political process. Without policy support and implementation, that political process could never have achieved the level of integration evident in the European Union today. As Nugent observes (1995), it is not inevitable that economic interdependence will lead to other integrationist policies. In order for integration to progress in anything other than an informal manner, it is thus necessary to draw up and implement policies.

3.2.5 Integrating Border Regions

3.2.6 Exploring Integration

Together the types, mechanisms and policies of European integration present a complex picture of the integration process as a mosaic of many different elements each contributing to the whole. Nugent - in sympathy with Mayes[40] - comments that "*... the process of co-operation and integration have operated in many different forms, at many different levels, in many different ways and at many different speeds...*" (Nugent, 1995, p.96). However, while the types, mechanisms and

[40] who said that integration was inherently complex and multifaceted (Mayes, 1994)

policies of European integration help our understanding of what integration is on a theoretical and macro level, they do little to illuminate the objectives of integration at the local level or the characteristics of an integrated region.

Border regions are the apotheosis of non-integration in a European sense because they represent - in both space and time - the continued existence of differences between the member states. And yet, the characteristics of an integrated border or the policy mechanisms required to achieve it are far from clear, despite both the interest in border regions and the operation of the Interreg initiative[41].

Logically speaking, it is clear that the goal of integration is not to make things the same. It would not be possible, or desirable, to make all of Europe's regions identical, and as the definition of integration is to join separate parts together to make a whole, the crucial point seems to be that the individual parts function as part of the whole. This idea fits neatly with the objectives of the single European market to create a borderless territory in which people, capital, good and information can move freely; a functional rather than homogenous whole. Although the SEM is a very general and largely economic objective of EU integration, it provides a number of clues about the nature of integrated boundaries, as the realisation of the four freedoms relies almost exclusively on the transformation of borders. National borders in particular are crucial as they are the geographic location of most - but not all - barriers preventing the free movement of goods and so on taking place. The objective of the Community in relation to border regions would thus seem to be the replication of regional boundaries within member states: boundaries which still recognise important cultural and lingual differences, but which join, rather than separate, areas with common political, economic, judicial and administrative frameworks and which permit the free movement of people, capital, services and information. Set within a national framework of policy and law, regional boundaries allow regions to be distinct and bounded, and yet function as part of the whole. Regional boundaries are also notable because they allow free movement across them in the spirit of the SEM. Examining the difference between these regional or 'integrated' boundaries and the more traditional international border regions thus illuminates what integration means in the border setting.

[41] discussed later in the chapter.

3.2.7 Integrated and Non-integrated Boundaries

While the range of regional boundaries in Europe is vast, there appear to be two main characteristics that set them apart from international borders. First, although regional boundaries may separate culturally distinct areas with different historical and even lingual traditions, they also join areas with common institutional, administrative and governance structures. Thus while regional and local governments may respond to the priorities and needs of their respective territories, they operate within a national context of law and policy-making and implement the same policies and principles as their neighbours. This means - whether or not there is a strategic policy making level - that the individual parts function as components of the whole, and can thus be regarded as integrated.

The second major characteristic of regional boundaries is their *permeability*, that is to say, the ease with which they are crossed. For border regions, the presence of tariff and non-tariff barriers at the border lies at the root of their difficulty, because the costs of moving across the border suppress economic interaction and affect economic performance[42]; an impediment which is not apparent to the same degree at regional boundaries. Although the SEM is of universal importance across Europe, its greatest impact has been on the least permeable boundaries - at the edges of the member states. Regional boundaries on the other hand have not been affected in the same way, as goods, capital, people and information can all move freely across them. The four freedoms thus provide a useful starting point for analysing the characteristics of integrated and non-integrated boundaries.

Clearly, while regional boundaries allow the free movement of people, goods, capital and information the differences in member states fiscal, legal, eduational and financial systems form impediments to these movements. In the case of people for example, there are a number of barriers which can be identified: physical barriers relating to the openness of the border, fiscal and legal barriers relating to employment law and taxation; and institutional barriers relating to the mutual recognition of qualifications for example. However, as the four freedoms are essentially *policy* objectives, they do not include barriers which cannot be dismantled by the single market programme. For example, lingual and cultural differences, geography, climate and time are not included within the sights of the four freedoms. Similarly, as permeability is not the only distinguishing characteristic

[42] It is this phenomenon which underpins many of the traditional views of border regions.

of an integrated border, an analysis framework which is predicated on *movement* would form only part of the picture. As a result, although the four freedoms are a useful starting point for exploring the differences between integrated and non-integrated boundaries particularly in relation to the permeability of a border, the concentration on tarrif and non-tarrif barriers means that other differences are overlooked. However, *together* with issues of culture, governance and policy, the four freedoms form the basis for a characteristation of regional and international boundaries show in Table 3.12 below.

Table 3.12: The Differing Characteristics of Regional and National Boundaries

Regional Boundaries[43]		National Borders
Possibly	Lingual/cultural difference	Yes
No	Different currency	Yes[44]
No	Different governance and Administrative structures	Yes
No	Different legal systems	Yes
No	Different spatial planning systems	Yes

Of course many examples can be found that do not fit into this typology, which represents the theoretical extremes of practice rather than the subtle and myriad variations in between. The border between England and Scotland for example, is much more like a regional boundary than an international one. A common currency, language and institutional context join the two countries, although there are some important differences in spatial planning and legal systems. The regional boundary between the Belgian provinces of Flanders and Wallonia on the other hand, is much more a national border than regional one, separating different systems of planning, governance and administration, as well as different lingual and cultural traditions.

These anomalies suggest two things: first, that there can be no clear distinction between border types; and, second, that it is the degree of integration across a border rather than its geographic dimension which is most important. As European integration deepens, border barriers are diminished in line with the objectives of the SEM and the four freedoms. The result is the convergence of national and regional boundary *characteristics* to the extent that many of the economic assumptions about national borders no longer hold true. Although borders can still be distinguished on the basis of their geographical dimensions (national, regional etc.), the relationship between scale and degree of integration is not at all clear, and is certainly not

[43] Regional boundaries in federal countries (such as Belgium) may not fit this model.
[44] Except where there is economic and monetary union.

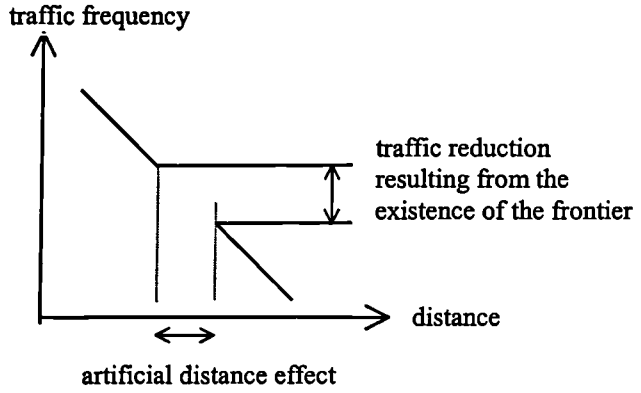
constant. However, as the convergence between national and regional boundaries in Europe does not yet appear to be complete, for the time-being the association between regional boundaries and integration, and national border and non-integration remains intact.

3.2.8 Pinning down Permeability

While the differences between regional, or integrated, boundaries and national, or non-integrated, boundaries seem to be clear, describing them does little to aid understanding about how the integration of borders is achieved. In order to do this, the component parts of integration and non-integration need to be explored further.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, the definition of border region places emphasis on the effect of the border on the adjacent sub-national area, effects that are related by traditional economic theories to the presence of border barriers. These barriers are defined by Batten & Nijkamp as *"a particular type of obstacle which restricts or impedes the smooth transfer or free movement of a person or commodity from one place to another..."* (1990, p. 233). Such obstacles tend to have a distinct and step-wise disruptive influence on spatial flows (Nijkamp et al, 1990) as shown in Figure 3.4 below.

Figure 3.4: The Effect of Frontiers on Traffic Flows



source: Batten & Nijkamp, 1990

While barriers may exist between any two points in space, many – although not all – barriers are found at the peripheries and borders of countries and regions. As mentioned above, the reason for this coincidence rests largely with the political,

economic and legal characteristics of borders rather than their intrinsic nature. Nijkamp at al. (1990) identify five different reasons for the existence of barriers, including natural, physical barriers such as mountains and rivers, and the unintentional effects of different policies and standards. These reasons, and the barriers associated with them are set out in Table 3.13 below.

Table 3.13: Reasons for the Existence of Barriers

Reason	Example
1. given by nature	mountain, river
2. convenience in tariff structures	road pricing; telephone charges: discontinuous cost increase when zone border crossed
3. protection	physical: Great Wall of China; Offa's Dyke; boundary fence. non-physical: institutional protection; trade barriers.
4. unintentional side effect of policies, standards and values	where different national standards suppress international trade
5. consequence of other barriers	information, language and cultural barriers

after Nijkamp et al. 1990.

However, while this explains the reasons for the existence of barriers, it says nothing about the nature of those barriers. This nature – or barrier type – is described elsewhere (see for example: Nijkamp et al, 1990; van Geenhuizen et al, 1996) with groupings of types ranging from physical to technical and cultural. Table 3.14 below sets out the eight different types of barrier and their consequences described by Nijkamp et al (1990).

Table 3.14: A Typology of Barriers

Physical	natural: rivers, mountains manmade: Iron Curtain
Congestion	traffic and communications infrastructure where there is a discrepancy between demand and supply
Fiscal	import duties, government subsidies
Institutional	currency, law, regulations, accounting practice
Technical	incompatibility in infrastructure (railways, pipelines) standards and testing
Market regulation	tariffs due to regulation e.g. air travel, cabotage and road haulage
Time zones	difficulty of (telephone) business across time zones
Culture, language and information	hamper communications through machine and protocol differences

after Nijkamp et al. 1990

Together the reasons and types of barriers identified within the literature combine to create a varied palette of possible barrier characteristics. A complexity and variety mirroring the multi-faceted process of integration, which logically exists to overcome and eradicate these barriers wherever possible. While not all of these various types of barriers are found at national borders, the two often coincide. For example, the physical barrier between Spain and France formed by the Pyrenees, coincides with the lingual, cultural and institutional differences that distinguish the two countries. However, the one characteristic common to all barriers – whatever their cause, type and location, is that negotiating them involves costs. Westlund (1997) describes the costs - both economic and non-economic - of negotiating border barriers as *interaction costs,* as shown in Figure 3.5 below. Together these costs determine the permeability of any given boundary whether local, regional or international, and where the costs are low, permeability and integration are high. However, as Westlund shows by dividing interaction costs into five different groups, the potential for changing them varies greatly. Thus while economic factors such as capital transfer and production costs can change over very short periods due to the vacillations of the world and foreign exchange markets, the costs associated with geography and distance are rather more difficult to overcome. van Geenhuizen et al (1996) also note that although political borders may disappear relatively quickly, their cultural and institutional heritage may persist for a long time.

Figure 3.5: Interaction Costs in Border Regions (grouped by potential for change)

Rapid ⟵ ⟶ Slow

Technical & Logistical	Political & Administrative	Economic Structure	Cultural & Historical	Geographical & Biological
• production costs	• national & regional rules & regulations	• economic development level	• language (including computer)	• geographical barriers (rivers)
• transport costs	• customs duty	• economic structure	• ethnicity	• distance
• cost of info & info transfer	• tariff barriers	• educational level	• population density	• human biology
• capital & capital transfer costs	• spatial planning system	• compatibility & standard of infrastructure	• power structure & property rights	• time zones
• vehicle standards	• environmental regulation		• religion	

after Westlund, 1997

In light of both the diversity of these interaction costs, and the potential for changing them, achieving a high level of permeability - or integration - is clearly a long-term process requiring a mosaic of changes in everything from social attitude to

institutional context. And, since interaction costs are an expression of non-integration, reducing these costs holds one of the keys to achieving integration in border regions.

However, permeability is not the only feature of an integrated border. Another - as mentioned earlier - is the ability to function as part of a whole. A characteristic which, in the case of nation-states and their regions, is made possible by the presence of a higher strategic tier of government and a national framework for policy administration and law. Deutsch goes further than this and describes four *conditions of integration* including the mutual relevance of units to one another - or the ability to function as part of the whole. In addition he sets out the need for mutual responsiveness based on a common identity or loyalty and compatible values, as well as joint rewards (Deutsch, 1972). The implication being that integration is as much about the social and cultural dimensions of interaction as anything else.

Together, these factors lead to the conclusion that integrated boundaries depend on three things:

1. a high level of cross-border permeability (low interaction costs);
2. a strategic cross-border or transnational framework; and,
3. the development of mutually beneficial relationships based on a common identity.

3.2.9 Achieving Integration

The integration of a border region can thus be seen to be extremely complex involving policy interventions in everything from planning systems to customs barriers and from infrastructure to information exchange. Many of these individual issues are pan-European in nature and respond only to national and international efforts. The presence or absence of tariff barriers, costs of capital transfer and level of customs duties are normally controlled by national governments or the European Union. For border regions the creation of the single European Market and the Single Market Programme have been particularly significant in their elimination of the tariff and non-tariff barriers located at the border regions. The imminent prospect too of a single European currency in eleven of the fifteen member states promises to eliminate one of the most tangible border barriers: the need to change currency.

However, while the integration of border regions is intimately linked with the policies and processes of pan-European integration, the success of that macro integration depends, in part, on integration at the micro level. And, although border regions themselves have many economic gains to realise by increasing integration between them and their neighbour(s), member states and the European Commission also have a vested interest in integrating the border regions.

The mechanism promoted at both the macro and micro levels for achieving that integration is cross-border collaboration: a basket of policies, projects and programmes promoting the development and integration of Europe's border regions. Chapter Four discusses this mechanism – and its contribution to integration – in more detail.

Chapter Four:
Cross-Border Collaboration

4.0 Introduction

In response to the complexities and challenges of integration, cross-border collaboration has become almost standard practice for Europe's border regions. In fact networking of every and any kind is a commonplace strategy employed by regional, city and local authorities throughout the European Union. The result – it would seem – of ongoing European integration and policy-making, globalisation, the network, subsidiarity and pragmatism.

Following on from the discussion of integration and integrating border regions in the previous chapter, this chapter examines the mechanisms and objectives of inter-regional networking and collaboration. Discussion begins with the nature of networking itself, and the factors underlying the proliferation of partnerships. Scrutiny is then given to the very specific field of cross-border collaboration, its characteristics and history, including the development of the Interreg Community Initiative, and the emerging cross-border planning tradition. Having explored and explained the background, causes and context of collaboration, the final part of the chapter goes on to deconstruct the generic term and present a typology of collaboration which links activity and outcomes. New hypotheses about the contribution of cross-border collaboration to European integration are then presented for investigation.

4.1 Understanding Collaboration and Co-operation

Collaboration, co-operation, networking and partnerships[45] have, over the last few years, become the mainstay of almost all policy responses throughout Europe. From the nation-state to the neighbourhood, co-operation between partners seems to have become a ubiquitous, but infinitely flexible, strategy for promoting development, enhancing competitiveness and overcoming problems. Understanding and discussion of these terms is quite clearly shaped by the fact that all of the terms are *descriptive*; adjectival nouns that explain to a greater or lesser extent *how* activities are undertaken. As a result, definitions of these terms focus on other aspects of the activities, including the *scale* at which the partnerships operate and the organisations involved. However, a diverse and highly confusing and confused vocabulary of collaboration and co-operation has developed in recent years. Terms

[45] although these terms may be defined in different ways, they are treated here as interchangeable, describing the joint actions of two or more actors in pursuit of common objectives.

such as transfrontier, supranational, transnational, interregional, cross-border, transborder and transboundary amongst others are all used to describe joint working between both contiguous and non-contiguous regions. Despite this confusion over terminology, the literature generally distinguishes between at least three distinct forms of collaboration:

- collaboration between geographically contiguous regions
- collaboration between non-contiguous regions; and,
- collaboration across large, continuous multi-national spaces.

Such distinctions are obviously made on the basis of the scale at which the partnerships operate, rather than the type of activities undertaken or the partners involved. However, this is not always the case as Perkmann's (1997) rather unconventional definition of four forms of inter-regional and cross-border co-operation demonstrates, as set out in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1: A Definition of Cross-border and Inter-regional Co-operation

- Proximity cross-border co-operation: between contiguous sub-national authorities across national borders.
- Inter-regional co-operation: collaboration between non-contiguous regions or cities in different nation-states (including: urban networks, internal and external mobilisations).
- Working communities: co-operation between a number of regions forming a transnational contiguous area (for example: the Northern Periphery, and Baltic Sea partnerships).
- Peak Associations: trans-European organisations with large numbers of individual members, usually local and regional authorities (for example: Association of European Border Regions; Car-free Cities Club).

(Perkmann, 1997)

Not simply concerned with issues of geography, this classification also includes issues of both size and volume. The result is somewhat confusing as it assigns ambiguous terminology (working community; peak association) to very specific meanings which are not wholly distinct from each other. These difficulties aside, Perkmann does at least reaffirm the definitions of cross-border and inter-regional

which have emerged in the last few years. The work of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) clearly and consistently defines *cross-border collaboration* as co-operation across proximate borders (CEC, 1997b), *and inter-regional collaboration* as networking between non-contiguous regions. *Transnational* on the other hand has emerged as a specific term denoting collaboration between regions and countries forming a continuous and multi-national geographic areas following the development of the Interreg IIc initiative on transnational spatial planning (discussed below), although it has in the past been used as a generic term applying to all types and scales of collaboration. Other terms, including transboundary, transfrontier and transborder are used less specifically. However, the subtle variations in terminology, and the one-dimensional classifications described above, fail to expand on the basic notion of collaboration and co-operation as 'working together'. And yet it is clear that cross-border collaboration is more complex than simply joint working.

Some of this complexity is hinted at elsewhere in the literature. Scott (1997) for example, emphasises the multi-dimensional nature of collaboration when he says:

> *"Transboundary regionalism is an advanced form of local and regional interaction across national boundaries, characterised by spatially integrated approaches to political co-operation, economic development and environmental protection ... a political concept and policy instrument ... promoted as a model of inter state integration at the local and regional levels" (p.1).*

The multi-dimensional nature of collaboration is also emphasised by the Commission's Practical Guide to Cross-border Collaboration (CEC, 1997b). The Guide, a comprehensive handbook of advice for those involved in cross-border collaboration, makes it quite clear that the purpose of cross-border collaboration is to remove barriers, restrictions and any other factors which contribute to the separation effect of border barriers (CEC, 1997b). The removal of border barriers – as discussed in the previous chapter – is one of the basic objectives of the integration process. However, the emergence of collaboration and networking as near universal policy mechanisms, does not lie *only* in their association with European integration. As a complex socio-political process, based on the interaction and mutually beneficial co-operation of public authorities and actors, the rise of partnership can be linked to a number of large-scale phenomenon including globalisation, and the network economy. Before examining these influences, the role of the European Union in the rise of collaboration deserves more scrutiny.

4.2 The European Union and Policy Partnerships

As one of the most important institutions in the world, the European Union affects every aspect of life, politics and governance in the modern Europe. And, as discussed in the previous chapter, the central aim of the European Union – to achieve social and economic cohesion is also enormously influential: the driving force of economic integration through political co-operation and supra-national authority (Anderson, 1996a).

The presence of both cohesion and integration as on-going themes within the EU has quite clearly contributed to deepening political co-operation between the member states. At the same time, the pursuit of integrationism has, necessarily, required the promotion of co-operation and collaboration for the simple reason that they are an intrinsic part of any formal integration process[46] (Laffan, 1992). This is particularly significant for border regions. As Anderson (1996a) and others have observed, the vision of a future Europe has become one in which national borders become no more significant than administrative boundaries, and member states melt seamlessly into a single territory. In line with this vision, the creation of the Single European Market in January 1993 linked international borders with the process of integration by emphasising the need to dismantle the tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. Since most of those barriers manifest themselves at the borders of member states, then the need to collaborate across borders becomes particularly important if the obstacles to integration are to be successfully dismantled. Together, this produces the paradoxical situation in which borders appear to have no role in the future of the EU, and yet they are also seen as holding the key to the integrationist dream. As Bort (1997) puts it, cross-border collaboration is the cornerstone of the European integration project.

While it is easy enough to see the links between European integration and cross-border collaboration, Blatter (1996) argues that the spill-over of a continental integrationist idea is enough in itself to inspire cross-border activities. As evidence for this, he points not only to the mushrooming of cross-border region building that paralleled the development of the Single European Market and the North American Free Trade Agreements, but also to particular projects including the American-Canadian project, "Cascadia". This initiative, on the border between the states of Washington, Oregon and British Columbia, has resulted in the creation of a powerful

[46] the deliberate actions of policy makers to make and adjust rules and establish common institutions.

and innovative political actor stimulated by the continental debate about economic integration (Blatter, 1996).

However, European support for collaboration is not confined merely to the general championing of economic integration and social cohesion. Instead, the Commission has put partnership at the heart of its own policies and programmes, in order to make cohesion and integration a reality. With close collaboration as the guiding principle in the operation of the Structural Funds (CEC, 1996), the emphasis on co-operation has been particularly noticeable over the last decade. In that time, we have seen not only the Single European Act, the Single European Market and the Maastricht Treaty, but a plethora of Community Initiatives based on co-operation and partnership (Jacobs, 1997). Interreg, Atlantis, Recite, Ouverture and Ecos[47] may be tackling different types of problem in different types of region, but they all have one thing in common: they are relying on co-operation to achieve their aims.

The prominence of partnership in current Community policy has an inevitable impact on local and regional government for the simple reason that access to European funding is entirely dependent on co-operation between the partners in the preparation of submission documents and delivery of projects and programmes. As Martin (1996) observes, the availability of funding is a major impetus to the European activities of local authorities[48]. With Interreg as the largest of all the Community Initiatives[49], there appears to be a very large incentive for border regions to collaborate. However, the relationship between the activities of border regions and the EU is not all one way. In fact, border regions are not only excellent at promoting their own special circumstances, but they have their own pressure group in the form of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR). Formed in 1971, the Association is the self-styled representative body of European border regions, and in its own words "... *plays a crucial role in the awareness-raising of cross-border co-operation issues throughout Europe and helped prepare the Community Initiative Interreg ...*" (AEBR, 1998). Thus while the availability of funding encourages cross-border collaboration, the institutions undertaking that collaboration also play an important part in ensuring that funding for collaboration *is* provided by the EU (Krätke, 1996).

[47] all examples of Community Initiatives and programmes funded by the European Union.
[48] based on local authorities in the UK.
[49] During the current funding period, 1994-1999.

The influence of the European Community on the development of collaboration in general and cross-border collaboration in particular, is thus rather complex produced partly by external factors shaping the Community and its policies – globalisation, competitiveness and interest groups - and partly by the internal form and structure of the Community itself. It is not simply that borders are the barriers to integration in Europe, or that co-operation and partnership have become popular policy mechanisms in pursuit of competitiveness - but the language of the European Union, with its focus on cohesion and integration reinforces, and is reinforced by, the experiences of the borders themselves.

4.3 The Network Economy

As the European Union has changed and developed over the last forty years, so too has the economy. Globalisation, localisation, flexible specialisation and the rise of post-Fordism have together produced a new economic and industrial order: the network economy. Characteristics of this new order include the dominance of the network as the mechanism through which advantage is achieved, and a spatial dynamic no longer rooted in the nation-state or the region. Globalising trans-national corporations have thus begun to decentralise and regionalise activities such as research & development (Morales & Quandt, 1992), while clusters of firms work together for mutual advantage and synergy.

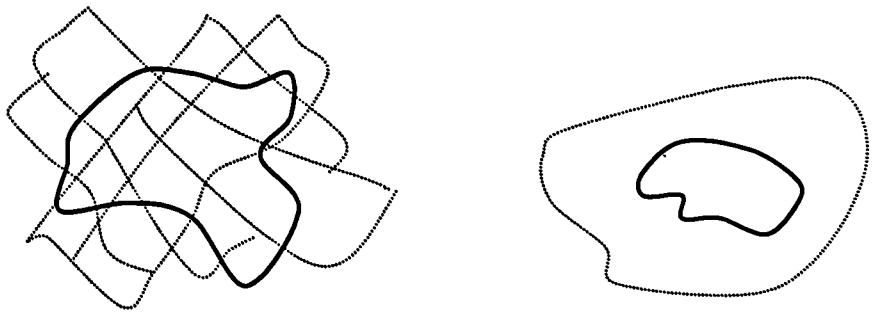
Networks have long been recognised as an important organising principle for interaction between companies (van Geenhuizen *et al.,* 1996). As business has moved away from sectoral growth towards flexible production, the result has been the emergence of the *networked firm* (Hansen, 1983), businesses which emulate the increasing spatial scale of economic activities by linking themselves to other companies. Whether organised horizontally as inter-firm links between SME's, or vertically as supply-side chains, the effects and objectives are manifold. In the first instance, the formation of business networks whether international or regional, helps to reinforce the processes of glocalisation. Breaking out of the geographies of domestic markets and the nation-state, the networked firm expands economic horizons, while at the same time reinforcing the importance of the local by establishing small-scale clusters. Such networks, whether mediated through global of local geographies, help firms to create external economies of scale. In some cases, the focus of these external economies is research and development, in

others supply-side networks. At the same time, this shifting of economic structures has had an irresistible effect on administrative structures and forms of governance (Bennett, 1997). The creation of more flexible markets, with is associated effect on population and employment has, argues Bennett, inspired a number of institutional changes (Bennett, 1997). These changes include:

- the amalgamation and de-amalgamation of local units;
- the abolition and establishment of upper tiers of government; and,
- the reassertion and suppression of the region.

Trends which although contradictory, echo the global-local dichotomy evident in the glocalisation process. A response to both the increasing scale of production, and the need for local conditions to be oriented towards economic development. As patterns of demand change, and border become less and less important in economic terms, there are an increasing number of "spillover" effects. These effects arise where people and enterprises located in one government area make significant demands on the services or finance of another area. The result is a tension between *functional* areas such as labour markets, environmental impact areas and travel to work areas, and *administrative* areas, which is particularly acute in border areas. According to Bennett (1997) most administrative structures are *under-bounded* (as shown in Figure 4.2), with functional activity space stretching across several administrative areas, generating problems of accountability, representation and participation.

Figure 4.2: Under-bounded and over-bounded administrative structures



Source: Bennett, 1997

Where structures are over-bounded - as shown in the example on the right - the functional activity space is smaller than the administrative region. The result of these imbalances - it can be argued – is not only to inspire the formal changes to governance structures mentioned above, but to encourage partnerships between authorities. Such partnerships, particularly those across national boundaries, help to

resolve the tension between functional and administrative spaces, by creating the illusion of a large administrative unit which functions as a whole.

Much attention has been given to the role of networking in the development of a region, and the relationship between institutional structures and regional competitiveness (see for example: Amin & Thrift, 1995; Morgan, 1995; Evans & Harding, 1997). Generally speaking, the emulation of modern business techniques by government is assumed to be positive as it gives access to the same benefits that businesses enjoy. These include the ability to tap into collective intelligence in and beyond the scope of the region (Dunford & Kafkalis, 1992), reduced transaction costs and economies of scale achieved through resource-sharing (Church & Reid, 1996). However, the use of the term "network" in the regional context, does not simply refer to the relationships between key actors, but also includes physical, infrastructural and communications networks. Bearing this in mind, it is possible to see why networks have become both a *sine qua non* for regional development, and an explanation for the differences in regional performance (Zanen, 1996).

Networks[50] are important in two respects: first, for meeting the physical and infrastructural requirements of a competitive region, and second for creating a supportive economic space for competitive business. While the need for physical infrastructure is obvious, supporting space is an abstract idea explained by Svensson (1996) as the product of strategic relations with, and between, public institutions. This space determines the local production conditions and the resources available for business development and expansion. It also facilitates the transfer of experience between companies via spatially localised mechanisms such as milieu (Raines, 1996). Like supporting space, milieu focuses on the relationships between businesses and public organisations, Amin and Thrift (1995) describe these relationships as "institutional thickness" arguing that institutional structures are crucial to the creation and support of inter-firm and contract networks and the circulation of information. By providing businesses with a positive economic atmosphere in which to innovate, such structures promote success by encouraging firms to exploit common interests and opportunities. Without those relationships, links and supporting spaces, development will be missing, as Zanen (1996) puts it.

[50] The term "network" does not only imply the co-ordination of actors and activities in a contiguous geographical areas. In fact, one of the most notable European networks - The Four Motors - was formed between geographically distant (but economically similar) city-regions, and this form of inter-regional networking is increasingly common across Europe.

Borders are as much barriers within the network paradigm as they are within the integrationist one, with the result that cross-border collaboration is again widely promoted. However, while integrationism provides only one real reason for borders to collaborate - the achievement of integration, the network paradigm provides several. First, where collaboration addresses physical networks, it can be used to fill in the missing development by co-ordinating road and rail infrastructure (LACE, 1990b) or harmonising utility networks. Second, where cross-border collaboration focuses on developing a positive milieu – or supporting space – it offers the attraction and advantage of joining *existing* networks together. The third reason for collaboration is the expectation that border regions which co-operate and integrate will be more sympathetic to the nature of modern business (Hansen, 1982) and thus more supportive to successful enterprise. This characteristic is vital to the competitiveness of border regions given the prevailing view of such areas as economically underdeveloped and lagging.

Another valuable feature of collaboration in the network economy is the creation of synergy and dynamism. This is seen as beneficial because it increases interdependence with other regions, embedding the area into a wider economic sphere. For border regions that have suffered due to the difficulties of core-periphery and transnational relations, cross-border collaboration would seem to be particularly worthwhile. Increasing interdependence allows border regions to be integrated into larger regional systems, where connections with other regions become more and more important (Zanen, 1996). As that happens, Cappellin & Batey argue (1993), collaboration will allow border regions to represent a transnational meso-region with enough synergy and dynamism to compete successfully against other meso-regions. Finally, the arguments of Bennett (1997) about the mismatch of *administrative* and *functional* spaces in a globalising economy provide another motive for cross-border collaboration; the resolution of these two spatial scales. Collaboration between the authorities on either side of an increasingly permeable economic border provides an administrative framework – a supporting space for the economic development of that cross-border region.

4.4 Power, Autonomy & Regional Identity

Putting the integrationist and network economy paradigms to one side, other factors influencing collaboration can be discerned relating to the nature and role of the

region. Globalisation – and to some extent subsidiarity - are widely regarded as having shifted the balance of power away from the nation-state and towards the region (see for example: Florida, 1995 and Starie, 1999). A shift, it can be argued, that has led to a greater feeling and expression of autonomy amongst regional authorities than ever before. Engaging in collaboration thus becomes a means of asserting regional identity and challenging the inequity of a core-periphery relationship (Blatter, 1996).

In parallel with the expression of autonomy as a motive for collaboration, a new cultural dynamic is also emerging in Europe. As the role of the nation-state has diminished, regions have been looking for niches in which to create and/or recreate distinctive identities and gain competitive advantage. To some extent this has been expressed in the rise of nationalist and separatist movements in Europe. However, Strassoldo (1982) sees cross-border collaboration as a function of ethnic regionalism, and the expression of a minority's demand for self-government and autonomy. Interestingly though, where separatism seems to be based on an existing and historic ethnicity, cross-border relations are creating a new ethnicity of their own. Bort (1997) cites the example of the tripartite French-German-Swiss alliance around Basel where locals have not one, but two identities – one belonging to the local region and one belonging to the cross-border region. Because the alliance is based on mutual co-operation and understanding, there appears to be no conflict between a local regional identity and a transnational regional identity. The ability to create, express and maintain new cultural identities through cross-border collaboration not only provides an incentive for the creation and continuation of collaboration, but also, argues Bort (1997) holds the key to the success of the European integration project.

4.5 Pragmatism & Politics in Practice

While the influence of the European Union, integrationism and the networked economy has provided considerable support for cross-border collaboration generally, events at the local or regional level are no less significant. Political will, a shared desire to work together and a specific problem or project may all be crucial to the development of a collaborative relationship, regardless of the wider context.

Blatter (1996) sees cross-border collaboration as a specific problem-solving strategy developed by interested and willing regional actors. Although such actors are not isolated from the processes of European integration or the network economy, it is local need that is seen as the driving force; a practical response to a real-life situation. While such pragmatism may be unromantic, there are examples of cross-border collaboration that began with a specific issue. Discussions over water pollution in the Rhine and the development of the Channel Tunnel are both good examples of problem-solving requiring - and inspiring - collaboration across borders. However, while it may be a single issue that begins the collaborative process, it is likely to be a myriad of local and regional problems that keeps the process going. Economic development, infrastructure provision, joint labour markets and the co-ordination of environmental policy and protection; as long as there is a cross-border issue to deal with, collaboration is likely to continue.

In a similarly pragmatic vein, Martin (1996) describes the formation of networks and alliances as having three main purposes: the exchange of information and experience; the lobbying of the European Commission and others; and, the procurement of funding for joint projects. This model also emphasises the practical benefits of collaboration, suggesting that border regions may not only be responding to problems but taking a strategic view of collaboration in relation to future opportunities. Although it is difficult to identify partnerships based purely on information exchange, it is not unusual for partnerships to be set up with the intention of lobbying the Commission and/or obtaining funds. The Euroregion alliance between Kent, Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels and the Nord-Pas de Calais is a good example of such a grouping. Although the partnership has a series of joint working groups and undertakes joint projects, the Euroregion receives no continuous funding from the Commission. However, the Euroregion does have a Brussels office, and actively lobbies the Commission on regional policy issues. A similar group has also been developed along the Channel coasts of England and France. The Transmanche Metropole, as it is known, is made up of various city authorities, and while it might not have obtained EU funding yet, there is little doubt that the group is looking forward to the next Interreg funding period.

However, it is not just funding and lobbying that inspire collaboration between border regions. Power and politics are also important, as Svensson (1996) points out in relation to the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. Collaboration here, he argues, is being used as a political strategy for handling the changing relations between east and

west. Quite clearly, an ongoing relationship at the sharp edge can help to stabilise a political situation in the long-term. However, there is a danger that in such cases collaboration becomes inter-governmental rather than local, depriving the border region of real involvement or benefit. This is certainly true of the Irish situation, where collaboration between the Republic and the North has been handled by Westminster and Dublin[51] rather than the border authorities themselves. The result has been criticism of the relationship, and a questioning of its relevance to the Irish border (O'Dowd et al., 1995). Collaboration may have an important role to play in international and regional politics, but collaboration based on politics alone will achieve little real benefit for the border region.

4.6 The History of Cross-border Collaboration

Although the proliferation of transboundary co-operation has occurred relatively recently, inspired by the processes outlined above, the roots of cross-border activities reach back at least 50 years. Initially, collaboration began rather tentatively along a small number of borders in Germany, France, Scandinavia and the Netherlands (CEC, 1997b). Anderson describes early co-operation between the countries adjacent to the Rhine as one strand in the Franco-German reconciliation process (Anderson, 1996b). While the Commission claims a more pragmatic origin to early cross-border collaboration, namely the need to overcome the negative effects of border barriers (CEC, 1997). Whatever the origin and impetus of the co-operation, until the mid-1960's collaboration tended to be ad hoc and informal, as much about building political partnerships as practical action. The result of early difficulties overcoming legal and administrative differences and the concentration on enhancing the socio-cultural and economic situation of local residents.

The emergence of these legal difficulties during the 1960's marks the beginning of a second phase of collaboration in which cross-border partnerships become more formalised. The Regio Basiliensis grouping emerged during this time (1963), a Swiss organisation for co-operation in the Upper Rhine area. Initially a partnership of Swiss cantons, the Regio has expanded gradually to become a tripartite collaboration between Germany, France and Switzerland. By 1970, the ability to act on transboundary issues had been secured with a legal agreement and the creation of an international co-ordinating department (Haefliger, 1993). The resulting bipartite

[51] In other words, between the national governments of the Irish Republic and the United Kingdom.

and tripartite commissions co-operate on themes including: the economy, transport, regional planning and environment (Haefliger, 1993). They have also been instrumental in discussions over the Upper Rhine high-speed rail link and second Rhine bridge (Anderson, 1996a). Similarly, the specific problem-solving partnerships that emerged further along the River Rhine were also based on legal agreement. Potash mines in French Alsace - which were polluting the River Rhine with saline waste – resulted in a 1976 agreement to allow the French to find an alternative to polluting the river (Anderson, 1996a).

While various border areas experimented with forms and degrees of cross-border collaboration at the local and regional levels during the 1960s and 70s, European organisations were also developing an interest in this area. The Council of Europe in particular began to investigate the potential and problems of cross-border collaboration in practice during the late 1970s. As hinted above, one of the biggest difficulties to emerge as a result of the early partnerships was that relating to law. In many cases local and regional authorities were prevented from undertaking *active and formal* collaboration by their lack of competence in cross-border matters. A competence usually reserved for national governments and foreign policy. However, without a single agreement of public law which is valid throughout Europe (CEC, 1997b), collaboration by local and regional governments depends on the existence of bi and tri-lateral agreements between countries.

Recognising the legal difficulties of cross-border collaboration, the Council of Europe published an Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation in 1980. The convention - also known as the Madrid Convention - provided a model legal framework for regions wishing to engage in cross-border collaboration. Despite this convention, the expansion of collaborative partnerships appears to have been based on the existence of inter-state agreements. A bilateral agreement between Germany and the Netherlands concluded in 1991 for example, established a framework allowing regional and local authorities to establish legal agreements governing co-operation (CEC, 1997b). The result has been a proliferation in the number of Euroregion organisations along the German/Dutch border. Although the cultural and political links between Germany and the Netherlands have generated a long history of collaboration, as Euroregions the partnerships share a common framework, legal basis and structure.

In 1989 another framework for co-operation was established with the development of European Economic Interest Groupings (EEIGs) (CEC, 1997b). These groupings form a supranational legal framework which allows participants, usually companies, to work together on economic activities and functions (CEC, 1997b). Although this mechanism was not established specifically for the purposes of cross-border collaboration, it has been used as the basis for cross-border activities in some areas. The Euroregion collaboration between Brussels, Wallonia, Flanders, Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais for example, set up an EEIG as part of its partnership[52].

The emergence of both EEIG's and Euroregions at the end of the 1980s heralded a shift into a third phase in the history of cross-border collaboration: the proliferation and standardisation of collaboration throughout Europe. A proliferation which has also been influenced and encouraged by the increasing interest in cross-border collaboration from organisations like the Council of Europe, the Association of European Border Regions and latterly the European Commission. Ongoing research into the benefits and practicalities of cross-border collaboration has helped not only in resolving legal issues, but improving the practice of collaboration. At the same time, the deepening European integration epitomised by movement towards the SEM, construction of the Channel Tunnel and the breakdown of the Iron curtain focussed attention on Europe's borders, and presented new opportunities for cross-border collaboration to take place.

The most important factor in the proliferation of cross-border collaboration however, has undoubtedly been the emergence of the Interreg Community Initiative, developed by the European Commission to help border regions overcome their special development problems (CEC, 1994b).

4.7 Interreg – a Community Initiative

As part of the process of dismantling Europe's internal borders, the Commission began to explore the potential of cross-border collaboration as a specific policy mechanism in the late 1980s. Following a number of pilot programmes, the Commission announced a new Community Initiative called Interreg in 1990 (CEC, 1994b). The initiative was focussed specifically on promoting the integration of

[52] Local government officer

internal border regions in preparation for the creation of the SEM in 1993, and included the following objectives:

- to help the internal border regions of the Community tackle the problems of economic under-development associated with their border status, and especially with the transition to the single market;
- to encourage cross-border co-operative actions between the internal border regions; and,
- to prepare the external border regions of the Community for their new role at the edge of the single market (CEC, 1994c)

During the course of the first funding period (1990-1993) some 31 operational programmes were implemented with a total budget of 1,034 mecu (CEC, 1994b). Of these programmes, 24 covered internal border regions - including the maritime partnership between Kent and the Nord-pas de Calais, which had successfully argued for their inclusion in Interreg I on the grounds of the terrestrial link formed by the Channel Tunnel. However, in line with Community regulations on the Structural Funds, the majority of funds were concentrated in Objective 1 regions. And, although the Initiative was specifically oriented towards economic development, the key feature of all the activities undertaken within it, was that they must be cross-border in their nature and delivery. The principles underlying this – quite clearly – that fostering cross-border collaboration helps to overcome the obstacles and barriers associated with border regions.

Following the success of the first Interreg programme, a second slightly modified Interreg initiative was launched for the funding period 1994–99. Like its predecessor, the aims of the Interreg II initiative were:

- to assist both internal and external borders of the European Union in overcoming the special development problems arising from their relative isolation within national economies and within the union as a whole.
- to promote the creation and development of networks of co-operation across internal borders, and where relevant the linking of these networks to wider community networks in the context of the completion of the single market in 1992.
- to assist the adjustment of external border regions to their new role as border areas of a single integrated market

- to respond to new opportunities for co-operation with third countries in external borders areas of the EU;
- to complete selected energy networks, and to link them to wider European networks.

(CEC, 1994b)

As a rather larger initiative than the modest Interreg I, Interreg II not only had the largest budget of all Community Initiatives with 2.4 becu at 1994 prices, but was divided into 2 distinct strands; A on cross-border collaboration and B on the completion of energy networks[53] (CEC, 1994b). Eligibility criteria for participating regions were also extended to all internal and external border regions, and a selected group of maritime boundaries. While the scope of the programme was widened the inclusion of the energy strand notwithstanding, to include issues and activities related to health, education, media and communications, and significantly, spatial planning (CEC, 1994b).

Although spatial planning was only one of the measures supported by Interreg IIa, in 1996, the Commission announced another strand in the Interreg programme: Interreg IIc on transnational spatial planning. An experimental initiative, Interreg IIc was introduced with the intention of fostering collaboration on spatial planning issues over much wider areas than the traditional cross-border programmes. This time, loosely based on the mega-regions established in Europe 2000+ (CEC, 1994b) the collaboration is based on large, continuous geographic spaces covering groups of member states and third countries. Seven Interreg IIc areas - covering almost all of the European Union and a number of central European countries - have been established in response to the initiative. It remains to be seen what has been achieved by the Interreg IIc strand. However, the Commission has already indicated that transnational spatial planning will be included in the third Interreg programme due to begin in the year 2000.

The extension of Interreg to include non member states under Interreg IIC and extneral border through interaction with the Phare[54] programme provides additional clues as to the purpose of cross-border collaboration for the European Commission. While the objectives of both the Interreg I and II programmes focussed on the economic development of border regions, the extension of cross-border collaboration to non member states reveals that *political* integration is also

[53] formerly the REGEN initiative.
[54] Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring the Economy

important. Whatever the stated objectives, the amount of money available for projects, particularly in external border regions, has been relatively small and certainly insufficient to tackle any structural problems in border region economies. What is clear however, is that the Interreg initiative is expected to play a significant part in the generation of cross-border networks and the fostering of relationships between border authorities. In some senses Interreg is promoting a micro-scale repeition scale of the integration process which occurred at the European level post world war II. In order to spend the funds available from the Commission, a certain degree of political integration is needed to set the objectives for the programme area. In addition, there need to be cross-border institutions to manage funds, approve projects and steer the programme to a successful conclusion. Interreg and Phare thus clearly include integration goals which are political as well as economic.

4.8 The Emergence of Cross-Border Spatial Planning

The inclusion of spatial planning measures within both the Interreg IIa and IIc Community Initiatives marks the culmination of two significant processes. First, the convergence of integrationism and the European spatial planning agenda, and second the natural evolution of cross-border activities in well-established partnerships.

According to the EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies (CEC, 1997a) the emergence of a European spatial planning rationale is linked to four main issues (as discussed in Chapter Two): first, the need to maximise the economic potential of the SEM by ensuring that infrastructure gaps and inconsistencies are minimised; second, the need to co-ordinate public investment – particularly the Structural Funds – in order to maximise their impact on competitiveness and disparity; third, the need to make the most of cross-border collaboration in resolving common problems; and, fourth the potential of spatial planning to guarantee sustainability and balance economic growth with environmental protection.

The convergence of this rationale with that underpinning cross-border collaboration – the promotion of territorial competitiveness; the resolution of common issues; and, the minimisation of border barriers – has clearly contributed to the emergence of cross-border spatial planning as a Community policy. This is particularly clear when

one considers that the rationale underpinning both the ESDP and Interreg IIc (CEC, 1997a) requires a European spatial planning policy to do three different things:

- to co-ordinate the territorial impacts of sectoral policies at both the macro and micro scales in order to further the integration process;
- to harmonise the goals and mechanisms of national planning systems in order to eliminate conflict between them and reduce barriers to the free movement of business and investment; and,
- to integrate planning systems at the micro level, in order to further integration of the border regions.

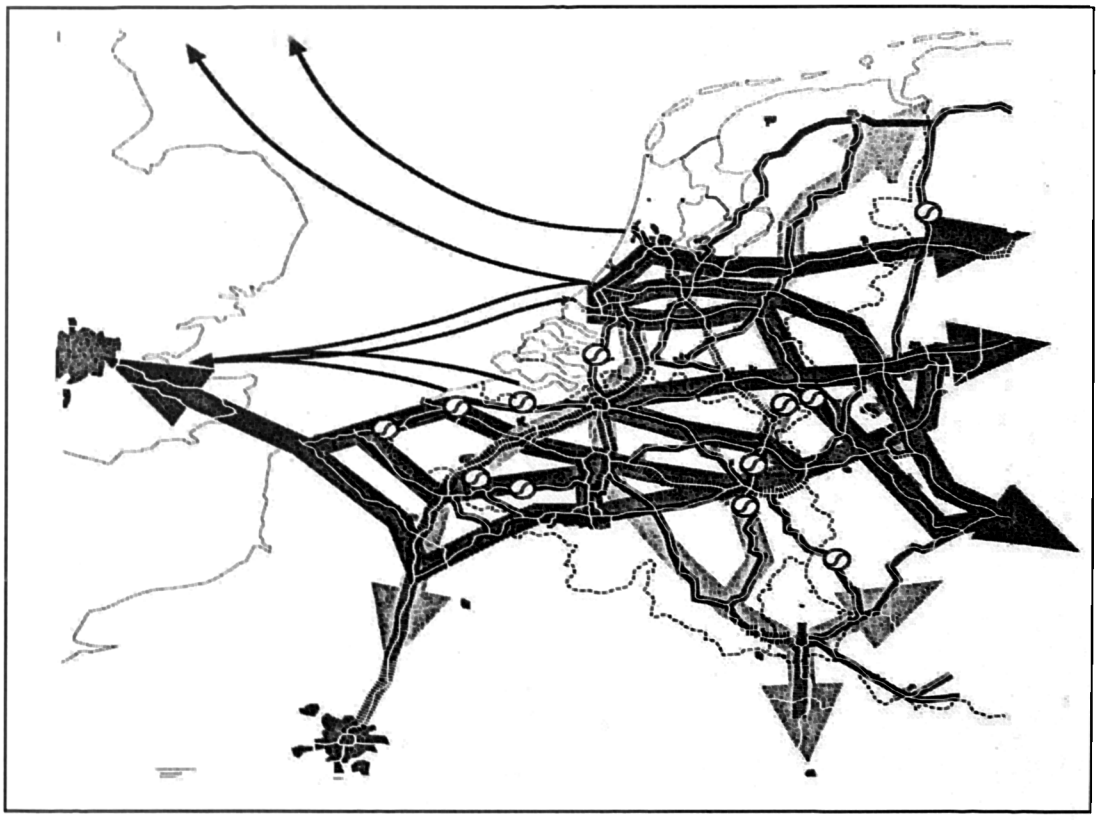
The development of transnational spaces appears to demand not only the creation of *European* spatial planning strategies, but also the creation of *cross-border* spatial planning strategies. In addition, the natural evolution of cross-border partnerships has also produced a movement towards cross-border planning. After some 40 years or so of experiences in cross-border collaboration, cross-border planning has emerged not only as a natural extension of cross-border activities, but a necessary one too. Historically, co-operation was aimed at solving specific problems associated with the presence of a border. While concern about the integrated development of border areas tends to appear later, in some cases common planning problems do emerge along international boundaries. As Herzog (1991) notes, the urbanisation of boundary zones in both Western European and North America generated a set of common planning problems including: the need to co-ordinate land uses, tackle traffic congestion and the management of common watersheds. The Regio Basiliensis partnership, discussed above, has included planning as one of its main themes since the early 1970s. Not only as a mechanism for dealing with the shared resource of the Upper Rhine, but also as a means of co-ordinating regional infrastructure and dealing with the issues raised by the location of French nuclear plants along the border (Herzog, 1991). In these situations, where there is no systematic – or common – framework to resolve problems of land-use incompatibilities, pollution, waste-water management and infrastructure networks, cross-border planning has emerged as a practical response to problematic situations.

Generally speaking though, the initial impetus for cross-border spatial planning has come from the nation-state and inter-governmental committees on spatial development (CEC, 1994b). Although Europe 2000+ also notes the limitations of

such approaches where committees have not followed the trends towards decentralisation and subsidiarity.

Among the most significant and successful of the nation-state approaches is that of the Benelux countries - Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. There – as part of their longstanding partnership – the three countries have developed a Structural Outline. This document sets out a spatial planning framework for the area, tackling those issues which cannot be adequately dealt with by the countries and regions involved (Houthaeve & Faludi, 1997). The Outline, the second of its kind, was published in 1996, a recognition of the interdependence of the three countries, and the spatial forces operating at a transnational level. As figure 4.3 below demonstrates, the plan analyses Benelux as a single area while taking the wider European context into account. The plan also sets out three principles for the development of the area: sustainability and spatial quality, diversity and cohesion (Secrétariat général Union économique Benelux, 1996

Figure 4.3: Infrastructure and movement in the Benelux countries



source: Secrétariat général Union économique Benelux, 1996

4.9 Exploring Cross-Border Collaboration

Thus far the terms cross-border collaboration and cross-border co-operation have been used synonymously as the generic term for all forms of institutional relationships across national boundaries. However, within this single term – rarely defined in the literature – there are a gamut of different activities ranging from projects to protocols, projects to partnerships. This variety within the genre of cross-border collaboration is reflected in the variety of effects attributed to that collaboration in the literature. As seen earlier, for Williams (1996) it promotes networking, cross-border planning and lobbying of the EU, while Church & Reid (1997) assert that it means access to funding, information and best practice for the authorities involved. Not only that, but cross-border co-operation also gives authorities the chance to reposition themselves politically, resulting in the creation of new political spaces which bear little relation to the traditional spaces of urban and local authorities (Church & Reid, 1997).

Such differences in opinion highlight the fact that the outcome of collaboration is not so easily defined as the collaboration itself. It also reveals the limitation of an approach that makes no connection between what collaboration *is* and what collaboration *does,* but rather sees collaboration as a goal in itself; a form of desired behaviour that ensures successful action (Alexander, 1995). The question is: does all cross-border collaboration promote cross-border planning and provide access to funding, or are there different *types* of cross-border activity which have different outcomes?

The obvious answer is, of course, that not all cross-border activities are the same in either nature or consequence, but that while some create new political spaces others merely provide access to information and best practice. The crucial point is thus: that the generic treatment of collaboration/co-operation across border does little to unravel the relationship between *what* is done and *what results* from it, but insinuates that all collaboration is equivalent in - for example - networking information, giving access to funding and creating new political spaces. If we are to investigate and understand what cross-border collaboration can and cannot achieve, then we need to deconstruct generic analyses and identify the key components of cross-border activities.

4.10 Constructing a Typology

A number of different typologies of cross-border collaboration exist in the literature. Although none are widely known and quoted, all suggest that there are different stages or types of cross-border collaboration that can be identified in some way. Matzner (1993) has devised a typology based on the socio-economic and politico-cultural context of the collaboration, that is to say the relative economic performance of the regions involved. The result is a four level typology of co-operation as follows:

> Type 1: transboundary co-operation at the European level.
> Type 2: transboundary co-operation between regions of similar above average levels of productivity and income. RICH-RICH.
> Type 3: transboundary co-operation between regions of similar below average levels of productivity and income. POOR-POOR.
> Type 4: transboundary co-operation between regions with huge differences in productivity and income. POOR-RICH.

However, while this and others like it (see for instance: Committee of the Regions, 1998) distinguish between different contextual settings for cross-border collaboration, it fails to distinguish between the activities which go on within those settings. The European Commission on the other hand, identifies three types of cross-border activity in its guidelines on the second Interreg programme. These are:

> *"a) the joint planning and implementation of cross-border programmes;*
> *b) the introduction of measures to improve the flow of information across borders and amongst border regions between public agencies, private organisations and voluntary bodies;*
> *c) the setting up of shared institutional and administrative structures to sustain and promote co-operation."*
>
> (CEC, 1995, p.35-36)

Alternatively, LACE[55] (1990a) concentrates on the activities involved in the co-operation, drawing only a broad distinction between:

- problem solving: preparatory measures to interconnect networks and facilities and to animate and inform the cross-border region, and

[55] LACE is an organisation closely associated with the Associate of European Border Regions. LACE stands for Linkage Assistance and Co-operation for the European Border Regions, and acts as an observatory for cross-border collaboration.

- developmental and strategic co-operation aimed at activating latent endogenous potential and promoting new economic activity and jobs in the cross-border area through the new opportunities for synergy presented by the single market.

(LACE, 1990a, p.7)

In both of these examples, useful distinctions are made between activities which are not only qualitatively distinct and discrete, but which have equally distinct outcomes and consequences. The Commission's identification of structure building for example, might be expected to contribute to the creation of new political spaces. The planning and implementation of cross-border programmes on the other hand implies access to funding. The links between activities and outcomes that these typologies begin to hint at, although useful, are limited by their essentially arbitrary nature. What is the difference - for instance - between measures which are implemented a part of a cross-border programme and measures which are implemented in order to improve information flows? And, does the joint planning of cross-border programmes not also imply the existence of shared administrative structures?

Other authors take a slightly different approach with their typologies of cross-border collaboration, presenting progressive models rather than static distinctions. The Committee of the Regions (CoR) for instance, in a recently published opinion on cross-frontier and international co-operation, states that partnerships are based on a step-by-step progression. Step 1 involves only basic co-operation involving the exchange of information and experiences and getting to know each other. Step 2, temporary co-operation sees the beginnings of joint working with fixed term pilot projects. Such projects and their appraisals – say the Committee – may form the basis for Step 3 ongoing co-operation, sustained joint working on projects which may include large infrastructure projects. The final - and fourth – step in the progression follows on directly from this and is termed transnational networking (CoR, 1998).

Bennett (1997) describes a similar process of partnership building with a three stage model which – like the CoR – emphasises the importance of trust early in the partnership. However, Bennett focuses on the way that the activities of the partnership are organised rather than the type, scale and duration of the projects undertaken. The progression he describes is as follows:

Stage 1: development of expertise and experience, the development of trust and limited networks for specific projects.

Stage 2: ongoing effective commitment by a broad range of agents, sometimes requiring an external force such as a development agency to catalyse, organise and provide technical support.

Stage 3: self-sustaining networks – where each partner responds to the needs of others – facilitating an entrepreneurial, progressive and self-reinforcing partnership.

The limitations of these typologies thus raise a more fundamental question: is it possible to distinguish different *types of collaboration* - and do those different ways of working also have an effect on the eventual outcome of the collaboration?

4.11 A Fundamental Distinction

In terms of the first part of the question, although collaboration and co-operation are used interchangeably by most, Polenske (1997), sees a sharp distinction between the two activities. In her exploration of the strategies firms employ to remain competitive in a restructured marketplace, Polenske (1997) asserts "*...that although collaboration and co-operation are both collective types of behaviour, they differ significantly from each other...*" (p.1). Thus, in her view collaboration is direct participation by two or more actors in designing, producing and/or marketing a product, while co-operation involves the formal or informal agreement of actors to share information, supply capital and/or managerial support. Furthermore, collaboration takes longer to develop than co-operation - although both may last for either long or short periods of time - and while collaborative arrangements tend to be exclusionary, co-operation allows for the provision of collective goods on a non-exclusionary basis, (Polenske, 1997).

Although Polenske is primarily concerned with the relationship between collaboration, co-operation and competition, something she terms '*an uneasy triangle,* and not in the spatial setting of the milieu she investigates, it is interesting to note that her examples do have a firm geographical basis. This suggests not only that it is possible to distinguish between the substantively different collaboration and co-operation, but that these strategies are influenced by the areas - or regions - in which they are discovered.

In the cross-border setting then, it is possible to distinguish between co-operative networking activities in which partners agree to share information and best practice and collaborative programmes in which partners draw up and implement cross-border projects. In spatial planning terms, the difference might be illuminated by having parallel but co-ordinated land-use plans -co-operation - and having a single land-use plan covering the whole area - collaboration. Such a distinction is undoubtedly useful, but as Polenske has chosen synonyms for her model, it is also semantically difficult to maintain. In order to address this difficulty – but without losing sight of Polenske's original work – the terms *co-operative networking* and *collaborative joint-working* have been developed to replace co-operation and collaboration as the descriptors of these distinct activities.

4.12 Building Hypotheses

While Polenske's typology is based on the competitiveness strategies of firms, it has much to offer the study of cross-border collaboration and co-operation. First, it presents two qualitatively different methods of joint working which are both easy to explain and understand; and, second, it offers a solid framework for the analysis of cross-border activities and their outcomes[56]. However, while the causal relationship between activity and outcome is not in doubt, the question remains whether there is a difference between the outcomes of co-operative networking and the outcomes of collaborative joint working in the cross-border setting.

The European Commission certainly seems to think so, as Shotton[57] explains in his paper on the Interreg programme (Shotton, 1997):

> *"The policy emphasis has clearly shifted strongly to promoting true[58] cross-border co-operation..."* (p.1). *"The highest level of ambition is projects jointly agreed and jointly implemented on both sides of the border, the second level of ambition is projects implemented by one party alone, but which are jointly approved and have identifiable cross-border benefits for both sides of the border; the lowest level of ambition is projects which are decided unilaterally and whose development effect is limited to one side of the border area."* (p.4).

As the objective of the Interreg programme is to help border regions capitalise on the opportunities of a Community without frontiers - that is to say: to help them

[56] although Polenske herself does not make this link or evaluate the effectiveness of either co-operation or collaboration for achieving competitivenesss.
[57] Head of Unit DGXVI, Commission of the European Communities

achieve integration - it seems clear that DGXVI expects *true cross-border co-operation* as they define it, to help achieve that goal. It thus follows that lesser forms of co-operation - unilateral and uncoordinated actions - are less likely to achieve integration, although they may be important first steps in establishing a cross-border tradition. In the context of the Polenske collaboration/co-operation model, this means that DGXVI expects collaborative[59] actions to make the greatest contribution to integration. When combined with the idea of a progressive partnership model, the distinction between *types* of collaboration provides the starting point for the construction of a cross-border collaboration model.

4.13 A Model of Cross-Border Collaboration

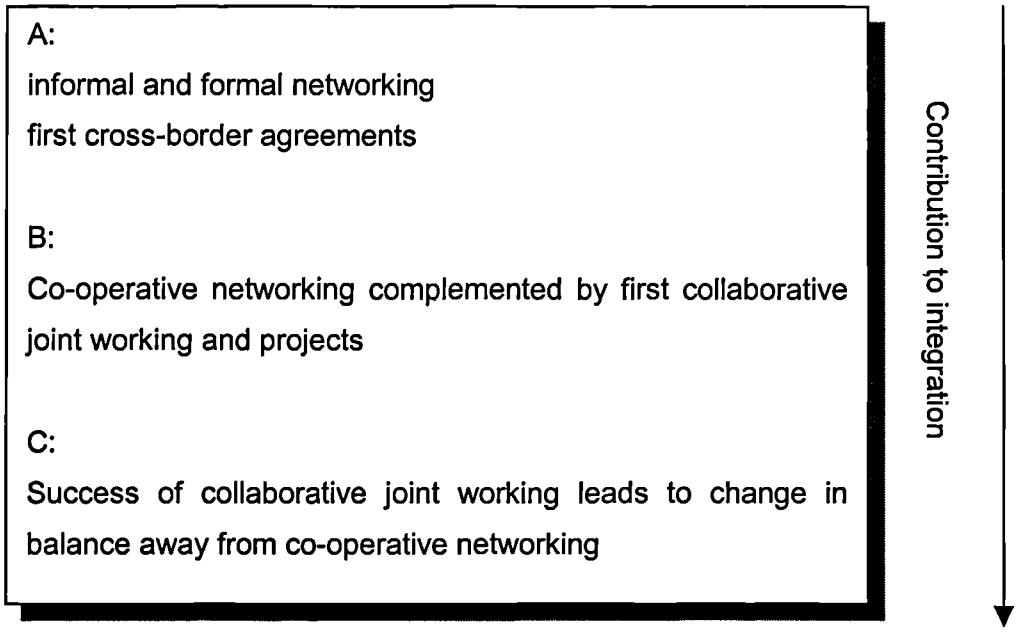
Drawing on the various typologies and definitions of cross-border collaboration discussed above produces a number of fundamental issues shaping contemporary transboundary partnerships. These issues revolve around the following hypotheses:

- there are different types of cross-border activity each of which has a different outcome;
- there is a clear and substantive difference between collaborative activities and co-operative activities and that these differences also have an impact on the outcome of cross-border collaboration
- only collaborative activity can create the conditions necessary for permeability and integration;
- cross-border collaboration develops over time, becoming more complex as the partnership progresses.

Together, these four principles and the discussions that surrounded their genesis, have been used to construct a new model of cross-border collaboration. Unlike the examples discussed above, the model tries to take account not only of changes over time, but the types of activities undertaken by the partnership, and the contribution to integration that this makes.

[58] author's emphasis
[59] or what they call true cross-border co-operation.

Figure 4.4: A Model of Cross-Border Collaboration



As the diagram shows, cross-border collaboration partnerships can be seen to develop over time, with informal networking relationships becoming formalised, and joint working becoming the norm rather than the exception. However, the model does not assume that all partnerships start in the same place, nor does It assume that partnerships progress smoothly from one category to the next. It is perfectly possible for cross-border partnerships to begin with joint working, rather than tentative and informal networking. This is particularly true of partnerships that have resulted from the Interreg Initiative, as this is predicated on joint working and the existence of cross-border institutions to manage the programme. It is also possible for partnerships to move between categories in a non-linear manner – perhaps jumping from A to C, or regressing from C to B when Interreg monies are withdrawn for example.

This model provides a starting point and a framework in which to analyse and explain cross-border partnerships. Its validity or otherwise, is tested in the following chapters, where it is applied to the two case study areas.

Chapter Five: Introducing the Case Study Areas

5.0 Introduction

Leaving behind the general theorising and investigations of the top-down research strand explored in Chapters Two, Three and Four, this chapter begins the more intensive bottom-up research by introducing the case study areas, the Transmanche region (Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais) and the MHAL region (Maastricht, Hasselt/Genk, Aachen and Liège). The objective is twofold: first to introduce the case study areas, and second, to evaluate their border qualities.

Beginning with the geographic and economic profiles of the case study areas - and their performance when measured against the border region stereotype - the chapter sets out to describe the regional and historical context within which cross-border collaboration is taking place. Attention is then given to cross-border discrepancies and the differences - or similarities - of governance and spatial planning frameworks in order to illuminate the obstacles to integration in the area and the operational context of the cross-border collaboration taking place. Much of the information included within this chapter comes from documentary evidence collected during the course of the case study research.

5.1 Revisiting the Border Stereotype

As discussed extensively in Chapter Three, the traditional definition of a border region is one which refers to the significance of an international boundary on a neighbouring region, but which - generally speaking - is not applied to coastal regions. Regions which, like land borders, are by their very nature the edges, fringes and boundaries of their national territories. This begs an interesting question, namely: whether coastal regions are also border regions in the strict traditional sense of the term, and whether they suffer from the same problems of peripherality, economic underdevelopment and high unemployment?

Exploring this question, the objective of this part of the thesis is to measure the two case study areas - including the coastal regions of Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais - against the border region yardstick discussed in Chapter Three, whilst also giving a general introduction to the areas and their characteristics. It should be noted, however, that unlike the previous investigations, comparisons here take place in a national context rather than a European one. This gives an opportunity to test the

validity of the stereotype in the context in which it was developed - that of the nation state - and examine how well or badly the case study regions perform when measured against it.

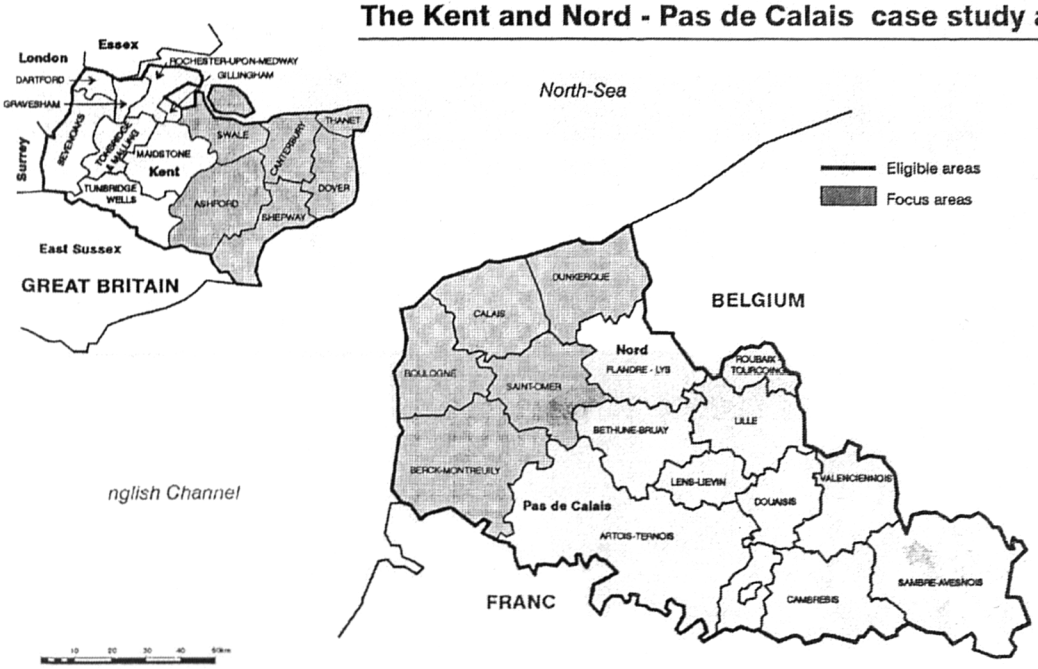
5.2 Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais: An Introduction

Divided by the Channel, language, culture and a long history of English-French conflict, Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais are not obvious partners for cross-border - or in this case cross-channel - collaboration. However, their relative geographic proximity - separated by a bare 20 miles of sea, as shown in Figure 5.1 overleaf, and the prospect of the Channel Tunnel Link prompted some action from the respective authorities. Beginning with informal arrangements and initiatives including town twinning, Kent County Council (KCC) and the Conseil Régional du Nord-Pas de Calais soon graduated to more formal links. In April 1987, a Joint Accord between the regions was signed at Leeds Castle in Kent, formally establishing cross-border collaboration as a mechanism to help maximise the economic benefits of the Channel Tunnel and the Single European Market. In addition, since 1992, the Transmanche region as it is also known, has been receiving funds from the EU's Interreg Initiative on cross-border collaboration.

As the second Interreg submission document notes "*...the absence of a land border and the cultural differences meant that transfrontier issues had not been identified as a matter of course...*" (GOSE, 1996, p.18). Set against a background of difference - the garden of England and the declining industrial Nord-Pas de Calais - the question is what are the characteristics of these regions which make them suitable for consideration as border regions with special development problems?

Figure 5.1:

The Kent and Nord - Pas de Calais case study area



5.3 Peripheral, Poor and Underdeveloped?

5.3.1 Kent

On the English side, the county of Kent constitutes the south-eastern tip of the UK covering an area of some 3,700 km^2 stretched between the Thames estuary to the north and the strait of Dover to the south and east. With its long coastline, Kent boasts a number of traditional seaside resorts and cross-channel ferry ports; principally Dover, Folkestone and Ramsgate, of which Dover is the most significant as Europe's largest passenger port (Euroregion, 1995). Traditionally viewed as the "*garden of England*" because of its fruit orchards (CEC, 1993), Kent forms part of the South-East region, and enjoys a reputation - due to its proximity to Greater London - as a prosperous and economically buoyant area. In addition, like much of the South-East, Kent has a large population - some 1.5 million inhabitants, giving a population density of almost twice the UK average (GOSE, 1996).

Employment in the area is concentrated in the service sector which accounted for some 71.4% of jobs in 1991. Although, the proportion of jobs in both agriculture (3.3%) and industry (17%) is falling (Euroregion, 1995). This situation reflects the decline of the relatively small industrial base - down by 27.4% between 1981 and 1991 - and the subsequent expansion of the service sector, which grew by 23.8% in

the same time period (GOSE, 1996). In terms of unemployment, 1998 figures show that the rate for Kent county was, at that time at least, lower at 5.4%, than the 5.9% rate for the UK as a whole (Kent Forums, 1998). A picture that seems hardly commensurate with the poor, peripheral and underdeveloped image projected onto border regions.

However, despite the influence of London on the county - contributing to the industrialisation of the Thames and Medway river corridors (CEC, 1993), and raising land and property prices in the mid-Kent commuter belt - the relative remoteness of eastern Kent makes it peripheral to centres of political power. Removed from both national and regional centres of power, the area is in danger of further peripheralisation as young people are drawn away into urban areas (GOSE, 1996), it is the coastal belt that has the highest levels of unemployment. In January 1994 Thanet and Shepway had unemployment rates in excess of 15% compared to a figure for the county of only 9.5% at that time (GOSE, 1996). Similarly, although Kent has a below average figure for GDP in the European context (85 against an index of 100) it is in East Kent in particular that earning levels in the service sector are at their lowest (GOSE, 1996). Further confirmation of North and East Kent's poor economic performance comes in Kent's 1998 Competitiveness Report, which shows that despite some improvements, these areas are still developing more slowly than their neighbours (Kent Forums, 1998). This is linked in part to the completion of the Channel Tunnel works and a net loss of jobs in East Kent of around 8,900 construction related jobs[60] (GOSE, 1996). Of these, up to 6000 were thought to be Dover residents (GOSE, 1996).

Such a profile mirrors the traditional description of a border region almost exactly. From the proclaimed peripherality of the Interreg II submission document (GOSE, 1996), to the figures demonstrating higher than average unemployment rates and lower levels of income, North and East Kent fit Nijkamp's (1993) characterisation of European border regions[61] perfectly (cf. Chapter Three, section 3.1.2). In addition, the rail network is notoriously problematic with severe under-investment meaning that the region is home to some of the UK's oldest and most decrepit rolling-stock, and few high quality high-speed services, except on the Channel Tunnel route.

[60] These figures are based on research carried out into to the direct impact of the Channel Tunnel construction in Kent, and they claim to relate directly to the loss of employment among local people rather than transient workers.

[61] In which he says "... *in general, the present EC border areas have a lower income per capita and a higher unemployment rate than the other regions of their countries...*" (Nijkamp, 1993, p. 435)

Tourism too - although flourishing in the cathedral cities of Rochester and Canterbury - has suffered from under-investment, particularly in East Kent where the traditional seaside resorts of Thanet and Shepway have experienced a decline in bed spaces (GOSE, 1996).

Official recognition of this economic under-performance comes from both the UK government and the European Union through designation under Objective 2 of the Structural Funds and the UK's Assisted Area Programme[62]. Under this programme, Thanet Travel To Work Area (TTWA) has enjoyed Development Area status since 1993 and Objective 2 status since 1994, while Dover, Deal and Folkestone have enjoyed Intermediate Area Status for a similar period (GOSE, 1996).

However, while these coastal districts do conform to the border region stereotype, as hinted above - the picture is much less clear for the county as a whole. So although it is true that Kent has *"...greater numbers of unemployed that any other county outside London[63], with high unemployment rates, low activity rates and an over-dependence on London for employment..."* (GOSE, 1996, p. 5), as mentioned above recent figures reveal that at 5.4%[64] Kent's unemployment rate is lower than the 5.9% across the whole of the UK (Kent Forums, 1998).

The county also outperforms the UK on labour productivity in manufacturing with a level of £31,115 compared to £30,155. (Kent Forums, 1998). But, having said that, on both GDP and average hourly earnings, Kent does rather worse than the UK as a whole. So, while GDP per capita[65] in Kent is £8,287, for the UK it is £9,087 with gross average hourly earnings trailing £8.20 to the UK level of £8.70 (Kent Forums, 1998).

In terms of the border region stereotype, this profile means that Kent fits the lower income prediction, but fails on the higher unemployment test. A mixed picture, influenced no doubt by the mixed nature of the area: prosperous commuter belt towns and settlements with high land prices and booming inward investment related to the Channel Tunnel rail link and Ashford International[66], with on the other hand,

[62] this makes regional grant aid available to companies creating or safe-guarding jobs (GOSE, 1996).
[63] that is to say around London, in the South East region.
[64] 1997 estimate.
[65] 1997 estimate.
[66] A railway station on the Channel Tunnel route, where it is possible to catch Eurostar trains to the continent.

peripheral rural and seaside areas suffering from long-term decline in agriculture and industry and under-investment in tourism.

5.3.2 Nord Pas de Calais

On the other side of the Channel, Nord-Pas de Calais occupies the north-eastern corner of France, covering roughly 12,500 km^2 of land (CEC, 1993) and with 3.5 million inhabitants (Euroregion, 1995). Along the coast, Nord-Pas de Calais boasts France's top three ports: Calais, Dunkerque and Boulogne - while to the east the region forms a land border with neighbouring Belgium. And, although not close to its capital in the same way as Kent, the region has its own metropolitan area centred around Lille, which with its neighbours Roubaix and Tourcoing, is home to around one million inhabitants (CEC, 1993). As a result of this large population, population density in the region is high at 319 inhabitants per square km, more than three times the French national average (Euroregion, 1995).

Long-term decline in the region's heavy industry has seen three decades of upheaval as local coal mining and shipbuilding have disappeared and textile, manufacturing and steel production have been heavily restructured with the loss of several hundred thousand jobs (Euroregion, 1995). Between 1982 and 1990, the energy sector in the coastal strip lost 58.2% of its employment, while overall industrial employment fell by 21.7% (GOSE, 1996). Together with industrial dereliction (in the early 1990's the area contained half of France's disused industrial land) the decline has contributed to an image of the region dominated by slag heaps and mining villages (CEC, 1993).

However, despite the industrial image, about 75% of the land area is under cultivation and more than 80,000 hectares are covered by woods (CEC, 1993). As in Kent, this signals the presence of isolated and low-density rural communities, and explains the 3.4% of employment found in the agricultural sector (Euroregion, 1995). Although agriculture remains significant in the regional economy - particularly for Haut Pays d'Artois and Boulonnais (GOSE, 1996) - the industrial tradition of the area is still reflected in a high level of employment, some 25% of the region's jobs. While the new growth area - the service sector - contributes to 65% of employment, of which 40% is located in the Lille area (Euroregion, 1995). Unemployment though

still remains high at 13.2% in 1994, slightly above the national figure of 12.2% at that time (GOSE, 1996).

Overall, the picture of Nord-Pas de Calais appears much less encouraging than that of Kent. Higher than average unemployment, serious industrial decline and a poor regional image, all contribute to a convincing border region profile. As in Kent though, the regional picture disguises the very poor performance of the coastal strip on which the Interreg programme is concentrated, as shown in the map of the area. It is here in the Nord-Pas de Calais priority zone that the effects of completed Channel Tunnel construction have been most keenly felt and where unemployment is highest - 15.8% in 1993, compared to a regional average of 13.2% (GOSE, 1996). As a whole, the coastal area is tending towards population stagnation with only St Omer, Calais and Dunkerque experiencing any in-migration, and the rural Boulonnais in particular suffering from low population density (GOSE, 1996). In addition, Boulonnais and Haut Pays d'Artois both suffer from slow development and low incomes: the Boulonnais only merits 82 against a regional income index of 100 (GOSE, 1996). Having said that, the area is overwhelmingly youthful - with over 30% of the population aged less than 20 (GOSE, 1996) - but nevertheless it is the coastal zone in which both national and European regional programmes are concentrated.

Under the French Contrat de Plan the area is eligible (between 1994 and 1998) for a total of 13.3 billion French francs in aid, spread over six priority measures including: economic development, town planning, infrastructure, transport and environmental protection (GOSE, 1996). In addition, certain parts of the region, including Dunkerque and Calais-Boulogne have been designated as Priority Zones due to industrial decline, with programmes following a number of themes involving business support, training and infrastructure improvements (GOSE, 1996). The history of long term industrial decline in the area has also attracted European Structural Funds in the shape of Objective 2 status granted in 1989, which has to date directed funds towards economic development, derelict land treatment, education, training and urban regeneration (GOSE, 1996).

As on the Kent coast, although port infrastructure is well-developed there has been under-investment in other transport infrastructure - apart from the Channel Tunnel. Rail links between the three French ports are weak, with most rail services and other public transport links directed towards Paris and Lille, although the recent

completion of the A16 and A25 motorways have improved the regional road network (GOSE, 1996).

Overall then, the Nord-Pas de Calais region - and the coastal belt in particular - appear to fit the border region stereotype: unemployment is higher than both national and European averages throughout the region (GOSE, 1996 and Euroregion, 1995), while regional income falls way behind at only 4796 ECU per capita compared to Kent's 5270 (Euroregion, 1995). GDP is similarly placed, at 94 points compared to the European average index value of 100 (GOSE, 1996) or 13,774 ECU per capita in 1991 against 15,005 (Euroregion, 1995). This is despite the presence of a large metropolitan area - Lille - which not only attracts inward investment due to its high speed Channel Tunnel and Paris rail links, but is also the region's main centre of service sector employment growth.

5.4 Transmanche - a Maritime Border

The poor economic performance of both the Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais coastal zones - as described above - fits in well with the traditional theories about border regions. Not only is this *"...immediate border area..."* (GOSE, 1996, p.2) seen as peripheral, removed from centres of decision-making and power, but it suffers from all of the classic problems of border regions: poor infrastructure provision, high unemployment and low incomes. This finding confirms not only that coastal zones can be considered as border regions, but that the border region stereotype may have more value in the nation-state context than it appears to have in the European one.

Apart from its profile as a peripheral and under-developed border region, the Transmanche has a number of other less than positive characteristics. First, as a gateway region in the heart of the Central and Capital Cities region[67], the Transmanche area is in danger of becoming a thoroughfare rather than a destination in its own right due to the influence of Eurostar and the Channel Tunnel. Despite a combined passenger throughput of 36 million people per annum[68] (Euroregion, 1995), the economic impact of tourism is small (GOSE, 1996). However, there is great potential for tourism to build on the attractive coastal fringe -

[67] as identified by Europe 2000 (CEC, 1992)
[68] excluding airport passengers.

rural hinterland image of the region and the many areas covered by nature reserves and landscape designations[69].

Second, although there has been recent investment in infrastructure in the region, when coupled with an economic decline this has had a deleterious effect on the built environment of several coastal ports and towns (GOSE, 1996). This is particularly true in the minor ports where competition from the Channel Tunnel has seen cross-channel services dwindle - and in the case of Ramsgate-Dunkerque, cease completely.

Third, the decline of heavy industrial and military uses has bestowed a legacy of derelict and often contaminated land on the region. Table 5.1 below sets out the amount of derelict land in Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais according to different former uses, and demonstrates the large issue of derelict land, particularly on the French side.

Table 5.1: Derelict Industrial Land by Type[70]

(figures in hectares)	Kent	Nord-Pas de Calais
Coal mines	183	2871
Quarries	395	576
Industrial	111	1049
Others	60	2988
Total	749	7474

source: Euroregion, 1995.

A further environmental issue is that of air and water pollution, which is often cross-channel in nature. In Kent, the proximity of London, and the location of industrial areas in the north of the county, contribute to air pollution, while on both Channel coasts water pollution from industrial discharge, untreated sewage effluent and heavy marine traffic threatens water quality (GOSE, 1996).

Table 5.2: Employment by Sector (%)

Sector	Kent	EU	Nord-Pas de Calais
agriculture	3.3	6.3	3.4
industry	17	32.9	24.6
construction	8.3		6.6
services	71.4	60.8	65.4

source: Euroregion, 1995

[69] more than 75% of Kent's territory is covered by special designations including internationally important Ramsar sites, SSSI's and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), while in Nord-Pas de Calais nature reserves and special protection zones cover more than 28,000 hectares (GOSE, 1996).

[70] No comparable figures are available for other regions or nation-states.

Fourth, both areas have suffered significant job losses as a result of the completion of the Channel Tunnel construction and associated infrastructure works (GOSE, 1996). However, despite broadly similar structural employment patterns, (see Table 5.2 above) in terms of business size the two areas are quite different. While in Kent the economy is dominated by very small companies with less than 25 employees, in Nord-Pas de Calais small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) account for only 7.5% of jobs. This is due to the influential presence of two very large employers, La Cristallerie at Arques employing 10,000 people and Sollac near Dunkerque employing 5,500 (GOSE, 1996).

In summary, the Transmanche region can be characterised as follows:

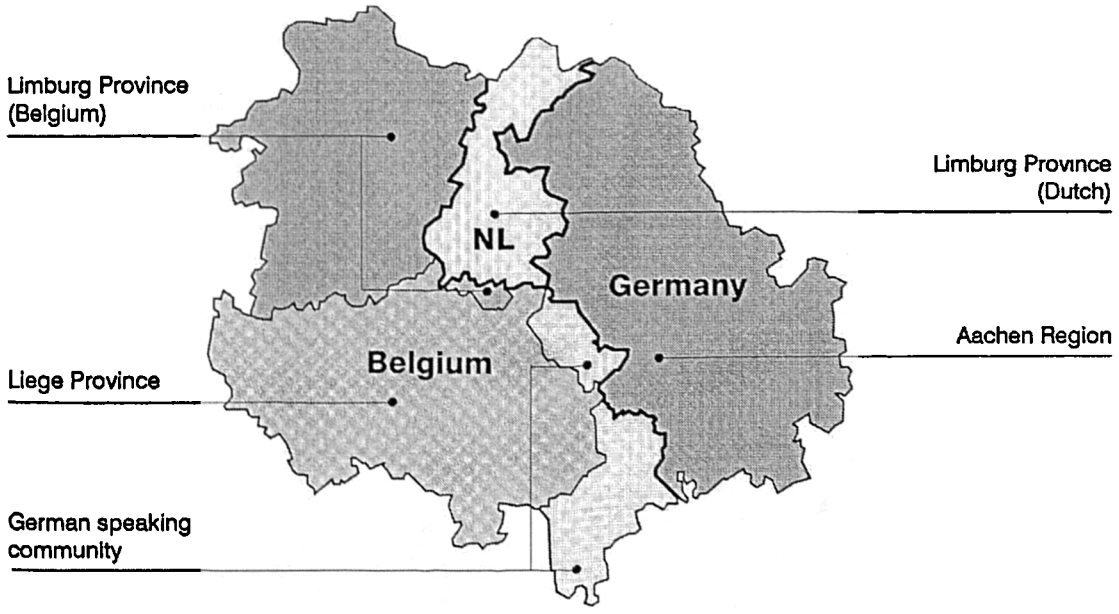
- a maritime border region with a strong gateway function;
- a densely populated area within the Centre and Capital Cities Region;
- a landscape of contrast, from countryside and rurality to heavy industrial and urban areas;
- an area suffering from long-term industrial decline but showing recent growth in the service sector;
- an area with a number of environmental threats including derelict land, air and water pollution;
- a region with higher than average unemployment levels and lower than average incomes;
- dislocated from centres of power and decision-making;
- with uneven infrastructure provision; and,
- receiving national and European regional aid.

5.5 Maastricht, Heerlen, Hasselt/Genk, Aachen and Liège: An Introduction

In stark contrast to the maritime case study of the Transmanche, the second case study area - the MHAL region - is found at the territorial boundaries of Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, as shown in Figure 5.2 below. Styled today as the Three Frontiers region - the meeting point of three countries and three languages - this area has in fact been divided up between Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands for only a century (SEGEFA, undated). The historical vacillations of power and empire-building have seen the territory united and divided in a variety of permutations under Spanish, Austrian, French and Dutch rule. However, despite shifts in both boundaries and governing powers, a common artistic and cultural heritage has developed (SEGEFA, undated). Quite clearly, this commonality has been influential in inspiring cross-border collaboration between the regions, which began in 1974 with the constitution of the Euregio Maas-Rhine (Stichting Euregio Maas Rhine, 1995). Since then co-operation has flourished in a number of fields and through a number of different partnerships, not least of which is the Interreg programme, which introduced 23.2 million ECU of investment into the region between 1991 and 1993 (Stichting Euregio Maas Rhine, 1995).

Figure 5.2:

The MHAL case study area



Territorially the arrangements are somewhat complex, with the provinces of Aachen and Belgian Limburg co-operating with a substantial part, but not all, of Dutch Limburg[71]. In addition, although the whole of the Belgian province of Liège participates in the Euregio, it is split between French and German-speaking communities, with German-speaking communes effectively forming a fifth partner region (SEGEFA, undated). Because of these idiosyncrasies in the nature of the Euregio, obtaining accurate economic indicators and statistics for the partner regions has been more difficult than for the Transmanche case study, and in some instances figures published by the Euregio itself conflict with regional figures available elsewhere. In addition, although the regional Chambers of Commerce have proved a useful source of information - especially through their web sites - it is not always clear which territories the statistics refer to. For example, the Industrie und Handelskammer zu Aachen[72] table of unemployment figures between 1993 and 1997 includes statistics for Aachen, Arbeitsamt bezirk Aachen and Kammerbezirk Aachen, although it is not clear which - if any - of these refers corresponds to the Aachen *region* participating in the Euregion partnership. Where there is any doubt about the comparability of figures, or where statistics are only available for slightly different areas, these are clearly indicated in the text.

5.6 Poor, Peripheral and Underdeveloped?

5.6.1 Aachen

The Aachen region forms part of the Regierungsbezirk Köln[73] in the Land of Nord Rhine Westphalia. Consisting of the Stadt Aachen[74], Kreis Aachen[75], Kreis Düren, Kreis Euskirchen and Kreis Heinsberg, the region abuts both Belgium and the Netherlands covering some 3,533 km^2 (Chambers of Commerce, undated). Traditionally an area of heavy industry, the Köln-Aachen-Mönchengladbach area is famous for its extensive brown coal deposits worked by the world's deepest open-cast mines (CEC, 1993), although these are now in decline and likely to close completely before the end of the century (Corvers, 1998). Nevertheless, mining and the associated engineering, aluminium and chemical industries remain important in

[71] Dutch participants in the Euregio come from Zuid Limburg and five districts of Midden Limburg (SEGEFA, undated)
[72] Aachen Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
[73] County of Cologne
[74] Aachen city authority
[75] Aachen district authority

the area, with 45% of employees in the ten largest manufacturing industries working in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and coal-mining (Corvers, 1998).

As a result of economic restructuring to accommodate the decline in mining and heavy industry, perhaps the most significant feature of the region today is the concentration of knowledge infrastructure. The area is extremely well equipped with institutions of further and higher education, including the largest technical university in Europe - the Technical University RWTH, the Polytechnic Aachen and public research establishments including the Federal Research Centre at Jülich and the Fraunhofer Institute for Laser Technology and Production Technology in Aachen (Corvers, 1998). In addition, according to SEGEFA's Euregion brochure (undated), the Aachen region has a number of "very important" private research centres working in the automotive, non-metallic materials, medical, biotech and environmental sectors, augmented by "important" centres of research on data processing, optics and lasers, textiles and production technology.

In terms of its status as a border region, the upbeat descriptions of Aachen by its Industrie und Handelskammer suggest that it is far from the peripheral and under-developed area one might expect according to the border region stereotype. Indeed, the Industrie und Handelskammer emphasise its geographic location as a strength rather than a weakness, stating "*...der Wirtschaftsstandort im Herzen Europas verfügt über eine hervorragende Infrastruktur und traditionell beste Kontakte zu den Europäischen Nachbarländern...*[76]".

In terms of unemployment, the 7.9% figure for 1995 given in the Chambers of Commerce Euregio brochure, is well below the German figure of 10.2% in that year (Industrie und Handelskammer zu Aachen, 1998). However, the more detailed figures of the Industrie und Handelskammer zu Aachen web site fail to correspond with the figure given above (as shown in Table 5.3). Interestingly none of the figures given for Aachen, Arbeitsamt bezirk Aachen or Kammerbezirk Aachen replicate this pattern, but instead show substantially higher unemployment levels in the border region than in the country as a whole. In addition, as Table 5.3 below demonstrates, figures for other communes along the border also show high unemployment levels.

[76] "*...the economic location* [of Aachen] *in the core of Europe gives access to an outstanding infrastructure and excellent links with neighbouring member states...*"

Similarly, although the figures cited by Corvers (1997) also fail to match those given by the Industrie und Handelskammer for 1993, she too reveals slightly higher rates of unemployment in the Aachen region, 6.7% against the Land's 6.6% and Germany's 5.9% (CEC, 1993).

Table 5.3: Arbeitslosenquote (%) (Unemployment)

	31.13.1995	31.12.1996	31.12.1997
Aachen	14.2	15.2	15.2
Alsdorf	11.7	13.4	13.7
Geilenkirchen	12.5	14.0	14.7
Heinsberg	11.3	13.4	12.8
Arbeitsamt bezirk Aachen	12.4	13.8	13.9
Kammerbezirk Aachen	11.1	12.4	12.4
Deutschland	10.9	12.0	13.1

source: Industrie und Handelskammer zu Aachen, 1998
note: border communes shown in shaded cells

While this suggests some merit in the high unemployment element of the border region stereotype for areas closest to the border, as a region Aachen - if the Chambers of Commerce are to be believed - performs relatively well. Further obfuscation of the stereotype comes in the form of GDP per capita figures for 1989 provided in the Portrait of the Regions (CEC, 1993). Here, a figure for Aachen *Stadt* at 121 compares favourably with the EU average of 100 and Germany's 112, although Aachen Kreis (*not* region) performs exceptionally badly, with a GDP/capita index of only 71. Slightly more recent statistics however, confirm the view of Aachen as lagging - with a gross regional product per capita (GRP) of only 15,432 ECU compared to Nord Rhine Westphalia's 18,924 (Corvers, 1998).

5.6.2 Belgian Limburg

The Belgian province of Limburg - part of the region of Flanders - covers the north eastern corner of the country, abutting the culturally similar Dutch territory Zuid Limburg, and covering some 2400 km^2 with a population of 755,600 inhabitants (SEGEFA, undated). The area is described in the Commission's (1993) Portrait of the Regions as *"...a new province: new residential districts, modern public buildings and offices, with extensive and generally unspoilt countryside with ample facilities for recreation and tourism.."* (p.162).

However, despite its location in the heart of Europe, the decline of the Kempen coal mines from the mid 1980's until closure of the last pit in 1992, has contributed to industrial decline and growth in unemployment (Corvers, 1998 and CEC, 1993). Manufacturing - a significant part of the regional economy - has also declined, losing ground to the service sector over the last decade (Corvers, 1998). But, within the diverse structure of the Flanders economy, the area has been able to take advantage of foreign investment (Euroregion, 1995) particularly in the form of branch plants. The net result being that more than 50% of manufacturing employment belongs to foreign companies (Corvers, 1998).

Like much of the Benelux area, Limburg is densely populated with 316 inhabitants per square kilometre (Chambers of Commerce, undated), concentrated in the Hasselt/Genk settlements. These centres of population are the focus for business parks and R&D facilities, which are particularly significant in the automotive, biotech and environmental fields (SEGEFA, undated). As a border region, Limburg falls on the borderline with regard to the stereotype examined here. Infrastructure networks are well developed - particularly in terms of waterways - and in 1989 a GDP/capita index score of 100 put the region right on the average EU, and very marginally below the Belgian figure of 101 (CEC, 1993). Similarly, in Corver's (1998) figures for GRP/capita in 1991, Limburg at 15,789 ECU is only slightly behind the Belgian 15,974. For unemployment the performance is similarly placed, with only 0.2% between the national and regional rates in 1993 (Corvers, 1998).

5.6.3 Dutch (Zuid) Limburg

The Dutch province of Limburg - a European pan handle - is surrounded to the east, south and west by German and Belgian territory. In addition, in the context of the Euregio partnership, it forms the geographic centre of the cross-border region. This territory covers only 681 km^2 but with a population of some 641,600 has an extremely high population density of 941 inhabitants to the square km (SEGEFA, undated and Chambers of Commerce, undated).

The historical context of the province - it only became part of the Netherlands in 1839 (CEC, 1993) - with its strong lingual, cultural and geographic links make Zuid-Limburg very similar to Belgian Limburg. The decline and restructuring of the local coal industry bestowed a legacy of unemployment and dereliction which has all but

been eradicated by the restructuring programmes of central and provincial governments (CEC, 1993), largely achieved by transforming Dutch State Mines into a chemical enterprise (Corvers, 1998). However, industry still contributes 29% of the regional product and represents 25% of all employment in the province as a whole, (Provincie Limburg, 1997) with the wood, paper, chemicals and ceramics industries employing 43% of manufacturing workers (Corvers, 1998). The fertile plains along the banks of the River Maas support intensive agricultural production, particularly in the northern parts of the territory, so that it represents some 5% of provincial employment. On the other hand, the growing service sector now employs the majority of workers in the area, contributing to 53% of total jobs (Provincie Limburg, 1997).

Maastricht, the historic fort city in the south of the province, forms much of the focus of economic (re)development in the area. With an established University and Hogescholen[77] - as well as cultural centres - the city forms an important link in the Euregio's knowledge infrastructure. And, in common with other partner regions, the area is home to a number of important and very important research centres in the automotive, chemical, electrical and non-metallic sectors (SEGEFA, undated).
As a border region, Zuid Limburg - from the geographical point of view at least - is quite isolated in its national context. However, inward investment figures for the province of Limburg show a reasonable performance compared to the provincial average, as Table 5.4 below illustrates.

Table 5.4: Inward Investment into the Netherlands

		Netherlands	Limburg	Provincial average[78]
1992	no. of projects	67	5	6
	total investment	2162	28	197
	jobs created	2605	85	237
1993	no. of projects	70	7	6
	total investment	1135	320	103
	jobs created	2376	377	216
1994	no. of projects	79	5	7
	total investment	661	78.2	60
	jobs created	3548	382	322
1995	no. of projects	95	10	8
	total investment	965	143.5	88
	jobs created	3780	1148	344

sources: Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency 1994, 1995 and 1996.
note: total investment given in millions of Dutch Guilders

[77] Institute of Higher Education.
[78] There are 12 provinces in the Netherlands.

As the table illustrates, the province of Limburg only falls below the provincial average in all three measures in 1992, and in successive years performs significantly better than this average. In addition, inward investment rankings of the provinces using the same data reveal Limburg as an above average performer, twice reaching premier position: once in 1993 with its figures for total investment, and again in 1995 in terms of job creation. Unemployment figures are less encouraging - with 9.2% in 1993 comparing poorly with the national figure of 8.2% (Corvers, 1998).

GDP is similarly placed from a border region point of view, with Zuid Limburg scoring only 90 against an EU index of 100, and the Netherlands' 102 (CEC, 1993). Figures for 1991 are no more encouraging, with GRP/capita at a miserable 13,911 compared to a national average of 15,733 (Corvers, 1998).

5.6.4 Liège and the German-speaking Communes

The province of Liège covers the easternmost territory of the Belgian region of Wallonia, forming borders with both Germany and the Netherlands. Although predominantly French-speaking, the nine communes adjacent to the German border are German-speaking, and form a distinct language community within the province. In the context of the Euregion partnership, the German speaking communes participate in the collaboration as a separate fifth partner. In some instances this means that separate figures are available for the two language communities, but in most cases figures are given for the province as a whole. In size terms though, the German-speaking community with only 68,200 inhabitants and 854 km^2 is much less significant than the French-speaking community which covers over 3000 km^2 and almost a million people (Chambers of Commerce, undated and SEGEFA, undated), although one should bear in mind that at 854 km^2, the German-speaking area is still larger than Dutch Zuid Limburg, which covers only 681 km^2 (SEGEFA, undated).

Whatever the population split between the two communities, the focus of the whole province - both economically and socially - is the city of Liège, Europe's third largest river port and home to some 621,000 people (Euroregion, 1995). As one of Belgium's main conurbations, Liège has been a centre for service sector growth over the last decade. And, although manufacturing remains important in the regional economy - particularly the metal industry which accounts for 44% of manufacturing

jobs - there has been a major shift in the sectoral economic structure in Liège over that time (Corvers, 1998). In addition, like its Euregio counterparts Aachen and Maastricht, Liège has its own University and Higher Education Institutions, and very important centres of research in the mechanical engineering, spatial and biotech sectors (SEGEFA, undated).

In terms of its performance in relation to the border region model, the picture is pretty clear, with an unemployment rate of 11.9% in 1993 comparing rather badly with the national figure of 8.8% for the same year (Covers, 1998). Similarly, GRP figures for 1991 show the region lagging behind the national average with only 14,670 ECU per capita compared to 15,974 (Corvers, 1998) although it can be argued that both set of figures are linked to the economic restructuring of the area rather than its location. It is thus interesting to note that in the disaggregated figures for unemployment in 1995 given by the Chambers of Commerce, the German-speaking community - despite being closest to the border - has a much lower unemployment rate at 6.4% than the rest of the province with 13.2%. A stark contrast to the pattern observed in the Aachen region, where communes closest to the border appeared to have much higher rates of unemployment than the rest of the province. However, as noted earlier, there may be some doubt about the accuracy of the figures given in the Chambers of Commerce brochure.

5.7 MHAL – A Territorial Border

In contrast to the very poor economic performance of the Transmanche region, the five partner regions[79] of the MHAL area have a much less convincing border region profile. While Belgian Limburg comes close to national averages on both unemployment and GDP, both Aachen and Maastricht have more mixed fortunes depending on the figures which are scrutinised, and it is only the Belgian province of Liège which really fits the high unemployment, low income model well - with the exception of the German speaking community, which has a relatively low unemployment rate. However, it should be noted that despite the exceptions, generally speaking the border region stereotype does hold true - albeit in a marginal rather than overt manner - although it could be argued that the cause of much of this pattern of unemployment and decline is attributable to the closure of the region's

[79] Liège, Belgian Limburg, Dutch Limburg, Aachen and the German speaking communes.

coal mining and associated heavy industry rather than the effects of border barriers in the local economies.

As a single territory, the MHAL region, with its 3.7 million inhabitants (SEGEFA, undated) is not only situated in the core of the Central and Capital Cities Region, but benefits from well-developed infrastructure links with Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Düsseldorf and Brussels (SEGEFA, undated). The legacy of local coal deposits - now virtually exhausted - is an industrial and manufacturing tradition which still persists today, contributing to 32% of the area's employment (SEGEFA, undated). This also accounts for the over-representation of very large firms (over 500 employees) in the regional economy and the presence of many foreign investors (Corvers, 1998).

Although manufacturing industry is now declining in the area and the service sector expanding, relatively little emphasis is placed on services by the Euregio's promotional literature. Attention is instead focused on the region's knowledge infrastructure - the network of public and private research centres and educational establishments. However, for all of the emphasis given to this regional knowledge network and its contribution to a highly skilled workforce, Corvers notes that *"... firms in the subregion of the Euroregion* (sic) *appear to perform less R&D than their counterparts in the Netherlands, Nord Rhine Westphalia and Belgium."* (1998. p.13).

The Euregio Maas Rhine can thus be characterised as follows:

- a densely populated region located in the core of the Central and Capital Cities region;
- an area which has, historically, been dominated by coal-mining and manufacturing industry, both now in decline;
- an area close to the densely populated and influential metropolitan areas of Brussels, Frankfurt, Köln, Amsterdam, Antwerp and Rotterdam;
- a region with good infrastructure links and:
- a dense network of Universities, Institutes of Higher Education and private R&D centres;
- an area with pockets of high unemployment.

5.8 Assessing Integration

As well as assessing the case study areas in terms of the border region stereotype, it is also instructive to examine the characteristics of the borders themselves. Discussions in Chapter Three explored the differences between integrated and non-integrated borders in terms of their permeability and the ability to function as part of a whole. Building on this discussion, the purpose of this investigation is to assess the degree of integration in each case study area, and to unravel the nature and types of border barriers present. The focus of this discussion is the continuities and discontinuities of the spatial planning and administrative systems, as planning is the principal theme of the thesis.

5.9 Kent Nord-Pas de Calais: an Integrated Boundary?

With some twenty miles of water separating Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais, it seems clear that the permeability of this maritime boundary is relatively low. Not only does crossing the border involve navigating a significant physical barrier (with a direct financial cost), but also negotiating a number of cultural and administrative differences, not least of which is language. Comparing the characteristics of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais border with those set out for national (or non-integrated) boundaries (Table 3.12) appears to confirm expectations about this maritime border, as Table 5.5 below demonstrates.

Table 5.5: The Characteristics of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Boundary Compared with those of a National Border

Kent Nord-Pas de Calais		National borders
Yes	Lingual/cultural differences	Yes
Yes	Different currencies	Yes
Yes	Different governance and administrative systems	Yes
Yes	Different legal systems	Yes
Yes	Different spatial planning systems	Yes

While the use of different currencies in the two countries may change at some point in the future, the comparison in Table 5.5 demonstrates that the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais border conforms to the non-integrated or national boundary model. However, this does not explain in any detail the nature of the differences between England and France, or the type of border barriers that have to be negotiated. The following

section thus attempts to set out the principal continuities and discontinuities between the two areas, using Westlund's (1997) table of interaction costs (Figure 3.4) as the framework for this assessment.

5.10 Kent Nord-Pas de Calais – Assessing the Barriers

Following the structure of Westlund's table, the analysis begins with the barriers which are slowest to change – if they can be changed at all – geographical and biological interaction costs. In the first instance, as a maritime border the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais boundary is a considerable physical barrier – 20 miles (or 32 km) of water. While both geography and distance form a significant obstacle to physical interaction across the border, matters are further complicated by the time difference between the countries. The hour difference may appear relatively insignificant, but it does affect cross-Channel communication such as telephone calls and meetings, by reducing the time available for interaction.

Cross-Channel communication is also affected by differences in language – one of Westlund's (1997) cultural and historical group of costs. Neither the English nor the French are renowned for their linguistic abilities, and in many ways the differences in language are a tangible dimension of the different cultural traditions of England and France.

The economic differences and similarities between Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais have largely been described in previous sections of this chapter. Quite clearly, the two areas have different - but overlapping economic - characteristics, with tourism, agriculture and the service sector key features in both areas. However, when it comes to the issue of infrastructure, comparison of England and France illuminates two or three small – but possibly significant – differences between England and France. These include the differences in electrical power supplies, railway gauges, and the fact that the two countries have different traffic systems – driving on different sides of the road. While none of these differences is significant alone, as part of a bundle of border barriers, they illustrate the subtle discontinuities between the two countries.

The next group of costs that Westlund (1997) deals with relates to political and administrative issues. These are among those that are the quickest to change,

although in Westlund's table the most rapid changes can be wrought among the technical and logistical costs group. These costs include those associated with production, transport and the transfer of information and capital. Although there are identifiable differences between Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais associated with these issues, the activities of the European Union in the sphere of EMU, the single market and competitiveness have been very influential in this area. As a result, the technical and logistical costs associated with the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais border have not been included here.

Returning to the subject of political and administrative issues provides the opportunity to examine – in detail – the continuities and discontinuities between the French and English planning and governance systems. The description of England (the UK) and France at the heart of two fundamentally difference state traditions (Loughlin & Peters, 1997) provides a first clue as to the differences between the two countries. In France, where the Napoleonic tradition holds sway, *l'État* has a clear legal basis making it capable of entering into legal contracts. Under the Anglo-saxon model evident in the UK on the other hand, the notion of state is much less concrete, based only on the government and its departments and without a written constitution (Loughlin & Peters, 1997). Despite this difference, the EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies (CEC, 1997a) characterises both countries as having unitary governmental systems. The essential nature of these systems being that power resides with the state – or national government – although some responsibilities may be delegated to other organisations or levels of government (CEC, 1997a).

While both countries are strongly shaped by central state and government power, the degree of centralisation and delegation of that power is quite different. In France, the central state is supported by 26 regions[80], 100 départements[81], and 36,666 communes[82], (Dal Cin & Lyddon, 1992). The resulting four tier governance system is notable for the small size of the communes which have an average population of only 1550 (CEC, 1997a). Although the four tiers have overlapping powers and complex inter-relationships (CEC, 1994b) the influence of central state power is evident in both regions and départements which are essentially decentralised arms of central government (CEC, 1997a).

[80] Of which 4 are overseas.
[81] Of which 4 are overseas.
[82] Of which 113 are overseas.

This situation is quite different in England, where there is essentially only central government and local government. The absence of a regional or strategic tier is the most obvious contrast with the French system, although regional institutions are of increasing importance. While the integrated regional offices act as decentralised arms of central government, the newly created Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)[83] are responsible for preparing regional economic strategies and fostering economic development. However, despite the existence of these regional institutions – and the other organisations involved in regional development and planning[84], the gap between central government and local government is quite large. At the local level there are three types of local authority: the county, the district and the unitary authority. Counties and districts together form a two-tier framework of local government in which county authorities deal with strategic issues such as health, education and transport, while the lower level district authorities deal with the detail. Unitary authorities on the other hand form a single tier of local government, and are usually found in metropolitan areas, where they are known as boroughs. However, following reorganisation of local government in the mid-1990s, the two-tier and one-tier systems are no longer neatly confined to the county and metropolitan or rural and urban contexts. For example, while the county of Kent has retained its two tier system of local government for the most part, since the 1st April 1997 Gillingham and Rochester-upon-Medway in the north of the county, have been unitary authorities. The result is that the system of English local government should be viewed as a mosaic of one and two-tier government rather than a simple and uniform hierarchy.

In planning terms, the mosaic is further complicated by the groupings of local authorities which form to deal with strategic planning issues. These groupings exist at the regional level – and in some cases at the county level where there is no county authority. This mosaic is not entirely unique to the English side however. Due to the sheer number of communes in France (in excess of 36,000) co-operative planning agencies have been created in order to achieve greater efficiency in the planning and management of local areas. A number of different types of these agencies exist, including 9 *communautés urbaines* (district planning agencies), 214 *district urbains* (district planning agencies) and 35 *agences d'urbanisme* (local area planning agencies) (Dal Cin & Lyddon, 1992).

[83] Regional development agencies were established in 1999; they are made up of appointed representatives drawn mainly from the business sector.
[84] Principally the regional planning conferences (which help prepare regional planning guidance) and regional development agencies.

At the national level one of the most obvious differences between the two countries planning systems can be seen in the nature and scope of the respective systems. In France, *aménagement du territoire* is intricately linked to the administrative and political traditions of the country and regional economic planning at the broadest level (CEC, 1997a). This approach to planning considers wide social and economic objectives – including those related to regional disparity – and issues associated with architecture and urban design (CEC, 1997a). In the UK on the other hand, the system of *town and country planning* is largely a regulatory mechanism, controlling land-use and the development process which is separate from sectoral planning (CEC, 1997a). However, despite the differences in approach to spatial planning, as *unitary* states both countries are linked by the fact that both governments are responsible for making planning laws and guidelines which are applied throughout the country (CEC, 1997a). In France, the state codifies national planning law – the *code de l'urbanisme* (CEC, 1994b) – and sets out a framework for spatial development in a national plan, the *Schéma national d'aménagement et de développement du territoire*[85] (CEC, 1997a). In England, on the other hand, central government offers national guidance in the form of planning policy guidance notes (PPGs). These notes provide advice on both sectoral and procedural issues, and must be taken into account by local government when preparing plans and determining planning applications. The French government also issues sectoral planning guidance, most notably in the form of the *Schémas directeurs d'infrastructures* which ensures the long-term coherence of major infrastructure projects (CEC, 1997a).

At the local level, both countries have two principal types of plan. In the UK structure plans are drawn up by county authorities where they exist, or sometimes by groups of unitary authorities, and set out general proposals for development concentrating on strategic issues such as employment, transport and housing (Dal Cin & Lyddon, 1992). Local plans with detailed proposals for land use at the local level are prepared by both unitary and district authorities. In France, the Schéma directeur plan (SDAU) defines the general objectives for a number of communes, while the Plan d'Occupation des Sols (POS) sets out detailed proposals for an area (Dal Cin & Lyddon, 1992) and acts as a regulatory instrument. In both countries, lower level plans must conform to higher level plans (where they exist) and take into account government guidance and planning law (CEC, 1997a).

[85] National plan for territorial development and regional planning

However, despite the similarities in the two-tier system of local planning instruments, there is one major difference between them, While the French POS is a regulatory instrument, setting out detailed site specific zonings for building, land use and infrastructure (CEC, 1997a) the English development plan is not. Development plans in common with the Schéma Directeur are described by the Compendium (CEC, 1997a) as a framework instrument, which sets out broad land use and infrastructure patterns. While the French planning system uses both regulatory and framework instruments, the English system is notable for the absence of legally binding and regulatory plans.

5.11 Kent Nord-Pas de Calais – Integrated or Non-integrated?

Examining the similarities and differences across the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais border has revealed rather more discontinuities than continuities between the two areas. These range from the prosaic differences in driving conventions to the significant mismatch between tiers of government. There are a number of these discontinuities which seem to be significant in the context of the planning and governance systems. First, the three tier system of government in Britain and the four-tier hierarchy evident in France, fail to correspond almost completely. The most obvious discrepancies being in the absence of regional government in England, and very different sizes of the lowest level authorities - French communes and English districts.

Second, there are significant differences in the approach of the two countries to the subject of planning. While the French have quite a broad view of planning which includes design traditions as well as regional economic planning, the scope of town and country planning in the UK seems quite narrow in comparison. The difference in approach is also echoed in a third characteristic of the two systems. While the French state has national plans directing both spatial development and infrastructure networks, the British government offers only national guidance.

Overall the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais border can be shown to have the following interaction costs associated with it:

- geographical distance;
- the physical barrier formed by the sea;
- lingual and cultural differences;

- 1 hour time difference;
- infrastructural differences (driving conventions, electricity network, rail gauge);
- Napoleonic/Anglo-saxon governance traditions
- mismatch between French 4 tier and English 3 tier governance structures (no regional tier on the English side)
- different planning traditions - *town and country planning* and *aménagement du territoire;*
- differences in the nature and scale of planning instruments.

5.12 MHAL – An Integrated Boundary?

In contrast to the maritime boundary of Kent Nord-Pas de Calais, the territorial boundaries of the MHAL case study area appear to have many fewer border barriers to contend with. First, there are no significant physical barriers to negotiate in crossing the border, and distances are small. Second, given the complex history of the area, there is a shared lingual and cultural heritage between some of the constituent regions, particularly Dutch and Belgian Limburg. This is best illustrated by the fact that the three language communities – German, French and Dutch (Flemish) do not correspond with the Belgian, Dutch or German national borders. This means that although there are cultural and lingual differences to overcome, the contrast between the regional groups is not necessarily a stark one.

Third, unlike the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais border, the partners in the MHAL area do not have to deal with any of the logistical and infrastructural problems that separate England and France. For instance, there is no time difference between the three countries and both rail and road infrastructure are compatible (i.e. everyone drives on the same side of the road). Finally, and most significantly in the context of the integrated/non-integrated boundary model presented earlier (Table 3.12), as members of "Euroland[86]", Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands are now moving towards full monetary union and will soon be using the same currency.

This single change will shift the MHAL border away from the non-integrated model of national border towards the integrated model of regional boundaries. Given that

[86] Euroland is the term given to the area in which EMU is nearing completion, and where the transition to the use of the euro has begun.

the MHAL case study area includes both national and regional boundaries, Table 5.6 below sets out the characteristics of both the Flemish/Walloon regional boundary and German/Belgian/Dutch national borders.

Table 5.6: The Characteristics of National and Regional borders in the MHAL case study area

Regional boundaries	Wallonia Flanders		MHAL	National borders
Possibly	Yes	Lingual/cultural differences	Yes/No	Yes
No	No	Different currencies	No	Yes
No	Yes	Different governance & administrative systems	Yes	Yes
No	?[87]	Different legal systems	Yes	Yes
No	Yes	Different spatial planning systems	Yes	Yes

As the table illustrates, the difference between the regional boundary and the national borders within the MHAL case study area is actually very small, although as a federal country Belgium's internal boundaries are inevitably rather different to regional boundaries in non-federal states. The similarities between these boundaries have a wider siginificance however, in that they illustrate the changing nature of boundaries, particularly in contemporary Europe.

The result is that while the Wallonnia/Flanders boundary seems quite different to the stereotpye of regional borders, the MHAL borders seem very similar to the stereotype set out for national boundaries. This situation appears to overlook the very different nature of the MHAL border compared to the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais boundary which is clearly non-integrated. The following section explores the nature of the MHAL boundary in more detail in order to form a more balanced view about the border's characteristics.

5.13 MHAL - Assessing the Barriers

Returning to Westlund's (1997) model of interaction costs (Figure 3.4) the starting point for this assessment is again the geographical and biological group of costs. With its territorial borders, the MHAL region does not have any significant physical or geographical barriers to overcome, nor is there any temporal discontinuity associated with the border. However, while the borders in this part of Europe have

[87] This issue is a little unclear, as in planning at least the two regions have independent bodies of planning law (CEC, 1997a).

few geographical barriers associated with them, they do have cultural and historical significance. As mentioned above, the three language communities in the area do not correspond with the national borders of the three countries. This means that the borders themselves do not necessarily have language barriers associated with them, although quite clearly there are lingual and cultural differences to overcome in the region as a whole.

In terms of economic structures, as described above the economic characteristics of the MHAL partner regions have many similarities. These include the well-developed network of educational and research establishments, and the problems of dealing with declining coal-mining and associated industries. In infrastructure too, the area has few difficulties, although the degree of integration between the three national networks is an issue.

Setting aside the technical and logistical groups of interaction costs focuses attention - once again - on the systems of planning and governance in the three countries concerned. In doing so, the common cultural and historical interlinking of the territories in the MHAL area become apparent. Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands are all associated with the Germanic state tradition, in which both the state and the law are extremely important (Loughlin & Peters, 1997). However, there is one important distinction to be made between the Netherlands and the other two countries. While Belgium and Germany are both federal countries in which constituent regions share law and policy making responsibilities with the central state; this is not the case in the Netherlands which the Compendium describes as a unitary country, where power is held at the centre with varying degrees of delegation to lower tiers (CEC, 1997a).

This difference does not affect the structure of the different governance systems, but rather the powers and status of those authorities. Generally speaking the territories making up the MHAL partnership have very similar governance hierarchies which involve the central state, regional or provincial authorities and local or municipality authorities. The federal nature of both Germany and Belgium complicates this situation slightly, as there is some variation between the constituent regions. In terms of the MHAL partnership there is an obvious contrast between the Wallonia and Flanders regions of Belgium which need to be taken into account in this analysis of continuities and discontinuities. Although the MHAL partnership involves three countries, the difference between the regions of Flanders and Wallonia means

that there are *four* different systems of governance and planning to take into account.

The federal nature of Belgium and Germany has an impact on planning systems as it inevitably confers a great deal of autonomy in policy and law-making to the consituent regions. In Germany, the federation as a whole is responsible for setting out framework legislation for city and regional planning (CEC, 1994b). The Länder on the other hand have considerable autonomy in planning issues, and are responsible for *Landesplanung, Regional planung* and construction codes (Dal Cin & Lyddon, 1992). In Belgium the national government plays little or no part in planning issues as it has no competence to act on planning matters (CEC, 1997a). Unlike Germany, the autonomy of Belgian regions is such that since federalisation in 1982, the three regions have developed entirely independent bodies of planning policy and legislation (CEC, 1997a). This separation of regional planning law is one of the main factors explaining the contrast between Flanders and Wallonia. Put briefly the contrast is such that the number of planning tiers, the nature of planning instruments and the focus of planning policies are all different.

In Flanders three tiers of government are involved in planning - the region, the province and local authorities - and preparing three different types of plan. At the regional level there is the *Ruimtelijk Structuurplan Vlaanderen,* a strategic document for the region as a whole, while at the local level there are two types of planning instrument, the *Algemeen plan van Aanleg* and the *Bijzonder plan van Aanleg* (CEC, 1997a). The differences with Wallonia are subtle but significant. Where Flanders has three tiers of government involved in spatial planning, Wallonia has only two - the region and the municipality (Dal Cin & Lyddon, 1992), although both areas rely on plans at the regional and local levels. As in Flanders, the Walloon region has its own strategic planning document the *Plan Régional d'Aménagement du Territoire*, although this is augmented by the *Code Wallon de l'aménagement du territoire du l'urbanisme et du patrimonie,* providing a regional framework into which all plans and planning decisions must fit. There is no equivalent legislative framework in Flanders. Finally, the last difference between the two regions can be seen in their respective priorities. In Wallonia the main emphasis is on rural areas and the decentralisation of planning powers to the local level. In Flanders on the other hand, the main emphasis is on sustainable development, the preservation of open space and the concentration of new development in existing urban centres (CEC, 1994b). Despite this divergence in regional priorities, the planning system in Belgium as a

whole is notable for its weakness, particularly on the implementation side (CEC, 1994b). This contrasts with the situation in both Germany and the Netherlands, where spatial planning systems are mature, respected and well understood (CEC, 1994b).

In many ways, both the German and Dutch planning systems are similar to those described in Belgium. The Dutch system has a well-defined hierarchy of plans from the national down to the local level, which is repeated to some extent in the German system. Unlike Belgium both countries have national plans and, in the case of the Netherlands sectoral guidance as well. At the strategic - or regional - level of plan making, Germany can be distinguished from both the Netherlands and Belgium by virtue of its two tier approach. While Dutch planners either prepare *structuur plans* for provinces or *streekplans* for city regions, German planners have two levels of strategic planning to deal with: the *Landentwicklungsplan* at the regional level, and the *Regionalplan* at sub-regional level (CEC, 1997a). At the local level, the three countries have a very similar approach, with a framework instrument and a regulatory instrument providing both broad patterns and priorities for development and detailed (and binding) zonings for buildings and sites. In Germany these instruments are known as the *Flachennutzungsplan* and *Bebauungsplan,* and in the Netherlands *structuurplan* and *bestemmingsplan* (CEC, 1997a).

While the type of planning instruments in the three countries are very similar, perhaps the most significant difference between them comes in their overall nature. As seen earlier, the Belgian regions have different priorities for development and different legal frameworks, although they also share links with the land-use management approach to spatial planning. This approach concentrates attention on the conversion of land and the development process (CEC, 1997a). However, as mature and responsive planning systems, Germany and the Netherlands are both rooted in a comprehensive and integrated approach to planning. This is marked out by the systematic and formal hierarchy of plans that exist, and the mechanisms that exist for co-ordinating public sector activity across different sectors (CEC, 1997a).

5.14 MHAL – Integrated or Non-integrated?

In contrast with the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais border, the examination of the MHAL border has tended to reveal similarities rather than differences. These include the

similarities in state traditions, and structures of both government and planning systems. However, there are some differences too - including the traditions of language and culture which, although not divided along national lines, are nevertheless a characteristic of the area. Perhaps the greatest contrast in planning terms, comes in the nature of the systems themselves - which while mature and well-respected in Germany and the Netherlands, are weak and rapidly evolving in Belgium.

Overall, the MHAL boundary can be shown to have the following interaction costs associated with it:

- differences in language and culture;
- contrast between federal and unitary state traditions;
- contrast between comprehensive integrated approach and land use management approaches to planning;
- contrast between mature and stable planning systems and weak rapidly changing systems.

5.15 Conclusions

The investigations of the two case study border areas set out in this chapter, reveal that while situated in the core of the European territory both areas suffer from some of the classical border region characteristics (discussed in Chapter Three). In this sense the two case study areas are quite similar, particularly in their struggle to adjust to a declining industrial base. However, scrutiny of the border barriers and interaction costs associated with each of the boundaries, reveal quite different levels of permeability in the two areas. Thus while the MHAL region is characterised by a reasonably permeable border, the Transmanche area has many, many more obstacles to overcome in terms of its integration.

Chapter Six:
From Networks to Partnerships

6.0 Introduction

While the general characteristics of the case study areas provide an overview of their border qualities, this chapter begins the process of unravelling the details of cross-border collaboration. Discussion in Chapter Four examined a number of themes related to cross-border collaboration, including policy partnerships, the network economy, power, autonomy and typologies of collaboration and co-operation. In addition to the themes shaping cross-border collaboration, the chapter also set out a number of hypotheses about different types of cross-border activities and their contribution to integration. These hypotheses form the basis of a model about the evolution of cross-border partnerships and their contribution to the integration process. The central objective of this chapter is thus to examine the detail of cross-border collaboration in each of the case study areas in order to do three things. First, to uncover the themes shaping the development of cross-border collaboration in the case study areas, and its development over time. Second, to analyse the types of cross-border activities undertaken in each case study area and to test the collaborative/co-operative typology set out in Chapter Four. Finally, the chapter sets out to test the model of cross-border collaboration set out in Chapter Four, and the hypotheses on which it is based.

The chapter begins with a detailed historical account of the development of cross-border collaboration in each of the case study areas. Subsequent sections explore the collaboration/co-operation typology, the link between cross-border collaboration and integration, and test the cross-border model.

6.1 The Evolution of the Transmanche partnership

The strong transport links between Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais have, over the years, stimulated both formal and informal links between the two sides. Church & Reid (1997) report town twinning arrangements fostering cultural exchange as far back as the 1950's, and Arup (1994) describes a school exchange programme between the two regions dating from 1968. In addition, discussions with a number of interviewees revealed tentative partnerships forming in the 1980s particularly between ports with ferry links. Dunkerque and Ramsgate for example, have had port links since the ferry service between the two towns began in 1980[88]. However, it is

[88] local government officer

since the mid 1980s that cross-channel linkages have really begun to flourish, influenced by two main issues. First, was the discussion about, and subsequent decision to construct the Channel Tunnel. The second factor was the general détente between European countries, particularly England and France, that arose in anticipation of the creation of the Single European Market.

Plans to build the Channel Tunnel stimulated initiatives by both Kent County Council (KCC) and the Conseil Regional du Nord-Pas de Calais even before the construction agreement was signed in 1986 (Church & Reid, 1995). Concerns about the potentially negative effects of both the Tunnel and the SEM were at the forefront of cross-border discussions, and in April 1987 a formal co-operation agreement between KCC and the Conseil Regional was signed at Leeds castle (GOSE, 1996). This agreement - the Joint Accord - established a working relationship which aimed to maximise the benefits of SEM and the Channel Tunnel while minimising any negative impacts from them and protecting the natural environment on both sides of the Channel (KCC, 1996). The Joint Accord also made provision for the creation of cross-border institutions including a joint standing committee responsible for the implementation, a secretariat to support the activities of the standing committee, and technical working groups to focus on various policy issues (Arup, 1995). A pragmatic problem and policy focussed partnership was thus created between the two areas.

The Joint Accord identified a number of policy areas where co-operation was expected, including: strategic planning, economic development, culture, tourism and the environment (Arup, 1995). Although co-operation was agreed between the regions as a whole, initial efforts were concentrated on linking the coastal - or border - districts of Thanet, Dover, Shepway, Ashford and Canterbury with Dunkerque, Calais and Boulogne. The initial output of the partnership was a joint study completed in 1988 with funding from DGXVI (Arup, 1995). By September 1990, the results of this and a follow-up study had been assembled into a series of potential initiatives and a Transfrontier Development Programme (TDP) (Church & Reid, 1995). The preparation of the TDP coincided with the Commission's announcement of the first Interreg Community Initiative, heralding a period of intense lobbying in Brussels for the Transmanche partnership. Although only territorial borders were at that time eligible for Interreg funds, the Transmanche authorities worked hard to convince the Commission that the Channel Tunnel was a terrestrial link, and that they should be included in the cross-border programme. Approval for the Kent Nord-

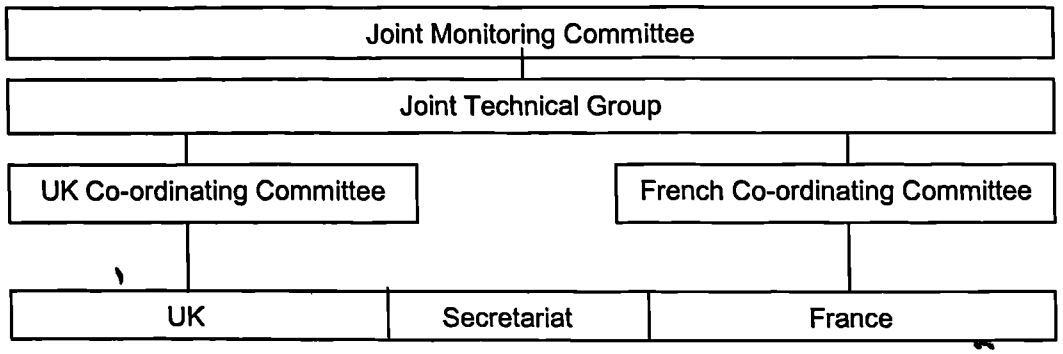
Pas de Calais Interreg I programme was given in May 1992 (Church & Reid, 1995). Kent County Council described the decision as follows: *"...recognising that Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais would require support to address the issues the future would present, the European Commission awarded the area financial backing through a new interregional funding programme, 'Interreg'."* (KCC, 1996, p.2).

The formal approval of the programme made Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais not only the first European regions separated by water to secure Interreg funding (KCC, 1996), but also the first Interreg programme to include an area of Britain (Church & Reid, 1995). The strategic objectives of this first operational programme were:

- to provide an appropriate response to the local economic and environmental problems posed by the Channel Tunnel and related transport infrastructure;
- the promotion of joint policies aimed at developing tourism and economic development;
- to promote facilities for co-operation and exchange at official level (Arup, 1994).

The total budget of the programme was 53 mecu, divided between six sub-measures: transport and infrastructure; planning and the environment; economic development; training and education; tourism; and technical assistance (GOSE, undated). More than 100 projects were funded during the first Interreg programme, although the late approval of the programme by the Commission left less than two years in which to commit the funds. As a result of this, the majority of funds and projects were concentrated in the planning, environment and tourism sub-measures (Church & Reid, 1996) where projects were easiest to develop. The management structure responsible for administering the programme is set out in Figure 6.1 below.

Figure 6.1: Management Structure of the Transmanche Interreg programme



Source: Brown et al., 1999.

Given the short history of formal co-operation between the partners prior to the development of the Interreg programme, it is unclear whether this structure was wholly new and shaped by the Commission's guidelines, or influenced by the provisions of the Joint Accord.

As might be expected from a programme that began with links between Kent County Council and the Conseil Régional du Nord-Pas de Calais, both were key participants in the management structure when the partnership began. However, as Church & Reid (1996) note, what began as regionally-based co-operation in the shape of the Joint Accord, has become more internationalised through the direct involvement of both English and French central government. Representatives of departments in both the UK and French governments participated in Interreg structures during the first Interreg programme, and have taken on more significant roles in the second funding period; a development that reflects not only the strongly centralised nature of both countries, but also the wider significance of cross-border collaboration. As noted in Chapter Four, one of the difficulties of cross-border collaboration has been that while local communities on either side of the border may want to co-operate in order to tackle problems, their respective governments view contact with neighbouring countries as a matter of foreign policy. In addition, the processes of handling European funds and programmes in both the UK and France requires the involvement of central government. Other participants in the programme include: representatives from the Commission - again a requirement of Structural Fund regulations - and a range of other actors drawn mainly from the public sector, as Table 6.1 below illustrates. The motivation for involvement varies between the partners however, with some there as token representatives of other sectors, some there to pursue strategic political objectives, and others simply there to get hold of the money. This was certainly the case for at least one district authority on the Kent side during the first Interreg programme, as one local government officer confessed *"...to be quite honest, we came into it for the money...and we're still in it for the money..."*

Table 6.1: Participants in the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Interreg I programme

Committee	Representatives
UK Co-ordinating Committee	South East Regional Office (now GOSE) Government departments, local authorities and participating organisations
French Co-ordinating Committee	SGAR, Government departments, Conseil Regional du Nord-Pas de Calais, other relevant institutions
Joint Monitoring Committee	UK and French government departments, officials from programme secretariats in England and France, Conseil Regional du Nord-Pas de Calais, Kent County Council, East Kent Initiative, SGAR, the departments of Nord and Pas de Calais.

(Arup, 1994)

Although the first Interreg programme was successful in committing funds to around 120 projects, interviewees on both sides of the Channel have been quick to admit that in some cases it was difficult to find either suitable projects or suitable partners. Difficulties that were undoubtedly linked to the inexperience of the institutions in cross-border projects, and the very short time period available for committing the funds to suitable projects. As a result, a number of capital – rather than cross-border – projects were funded, and ex-post evaluation of the programme revealed that some 37% of projects involved no effective cross-border co-operation, while only 22% of projects were truly cross-border[89] (Arup, 1994). Evaluation of the programme linked some of these difficulties to the sheer inexperience of some partners in undertaking any cross-border working, let alone cross-border projects. As a local government partnership officer explained, in some cases partnerships were created simply to develop a project and gain access to funds. As a result, once the project was completed, the partnership disappeared.

Building on the experiences and partnerships of the first Interreg programme, the second Interreg programme bid was submitted to the European Commission in December 1994, although formal approval was not granted until 1996. While KCC had been at the forefront of the first programme, the second bid was led – on the UK side – by the integrated regional office of central government, the Government Office for the South East (GOSE). A development that illustrates the further expansion of the role of central government in Interreg, with a corresponding diminution of the strategic role of regional authorities in the initative. Examining the objectives of the second Interreg programme reveals a wider set of goals than those

[89] Described by Arup (1995) as a single united project occurring across the border.

set out in the first programme and the Joint Accord. This expansion reflects both the evolution of the Interreg programme itself and the evolution and experience of the Transmanche partnership. The second Operational Programme has four strategic objectives, and 14 sub-measures (GOSE, undated). The objectives are as follows:

- to encourage the emergence of an integrated Transmanche region with high quality communication links;
- to improve the attractiveness of the Transmanche region in order to develop sustainable growth;
- to minimise the negative effects of the redistribution of maritime traffic and encourage the economic and technological developnment of the Transmanche region;
- to develop and promote the networks of relationships between players on both sides of the Channel (GOSE, undated).

Total funding available for the 1995-1999 period was 95 mecu, almost twice as much as that available during the first programme. Of this amount, some 60% was to be contributed by national, regional and local government, and 40% by the European Commission (GOSE, undated). These funds however, were not equally divided between the two countries (Brown et al, 1999). While the English partners were allocated 19 mecu, the French partners were allocated 26 mecu, a difference related to the concentration of funds in the Objective 2 areas of the participating regions. The prefecture of Nord-Pas de Calais has rather more Objective 2 areas than Kent, where only Thanet qualifies for spatially targeted European Structural Funds.

At the same time that the TDP was being developed and Interreg funding pursued back in 1990, Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais were involved in the formation of a larger cross-border grouping - the Euroregion. This region - made up of Kent, Nord-Pas de Calais, Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels - consists of regional authorities who have joined together to explore and develop issues of mutual importance through joint initiatives (Euroregion, 1994). The partnership built on the bilateral agreement between Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais, and has a very similar structure to that originally set out by the Joint Accord in 1987. With a College of Members[90], a Brussels-based secretariat and an Executive Council, the Euroregion is more than an informal network. Its five working groups: economic development,

[90] made up of five elected representatives from the five regions (Euroregion, 1994).

strategic planning, environment, personnel training and public relations have - according to the promotional literature - a firm work programme for joint working on selected topics (Euroregion, 1994). Projects to date include "A Vision for the Euroregion" analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the area (Euroregion, 1994) in anticipation of future strategic planning work, and the "Statistical Digest of the Euroregion" (Euroregion, 1995) further illustrating the similarities and difference of the member regions. Both of these projects have been part-funded by DGXVI under Article 10 of the ERDF regulations (Euroregion 1994 and Euroregion, 1995). Generally speaking however, the Euroregion is supported by commitments of personnel from the partners, rather than Commission funding, and is designed to be more strategic than the Transmanche relationship (Church & Reid, 1997). The strategic nature of the partnership is reflected in the development of a project application submitted to North-West Metropolitan Area Interreg IIc programme[91] early in 1999.

The proliferation of partnerships both within and without the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Interreg programme funding, continues as the Transmanche region comes to the end of its second Interreg programme. Since the beginning of the first Interreg funding period in 1990, the Transmanche has not only seen growth in its own linkages, but in those of its neighbours too. East Sussex, the neighbouring county to Kent also received Interreg funding in 1995 for co-operation with Seine-Maritime and Somme - a partnership also known as Rives Manche (Church & Reid, 1997). Similarly, the coastal cities of Southampton, Portsmouth, Bournemouth, Poole, Caen, Le Havre and Rouen have formed a cross-border grouping called the Transmanche Metropole (Church & Reid, 1997). While an even bigger network of authorities - called the Arc Manche - has also developed, covering: Bretagne, Basse Normandie, Haute Normandie, Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex, Hampshire and Dorset, (Church & Reid, 1997).

The cross-channel perspective has fostered other links between the Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais. For example, the submission document for the second Interreg programme (GOSE, 1996), describes how the projects of the first programme have begun to translate regional co-operation into local co-operation. A number of local authorities have signed co-operation agreements, including: Dunkerque and Ramsgate, Calais and Dover, Boulogne and Folkestone, and Wimereux and Herne

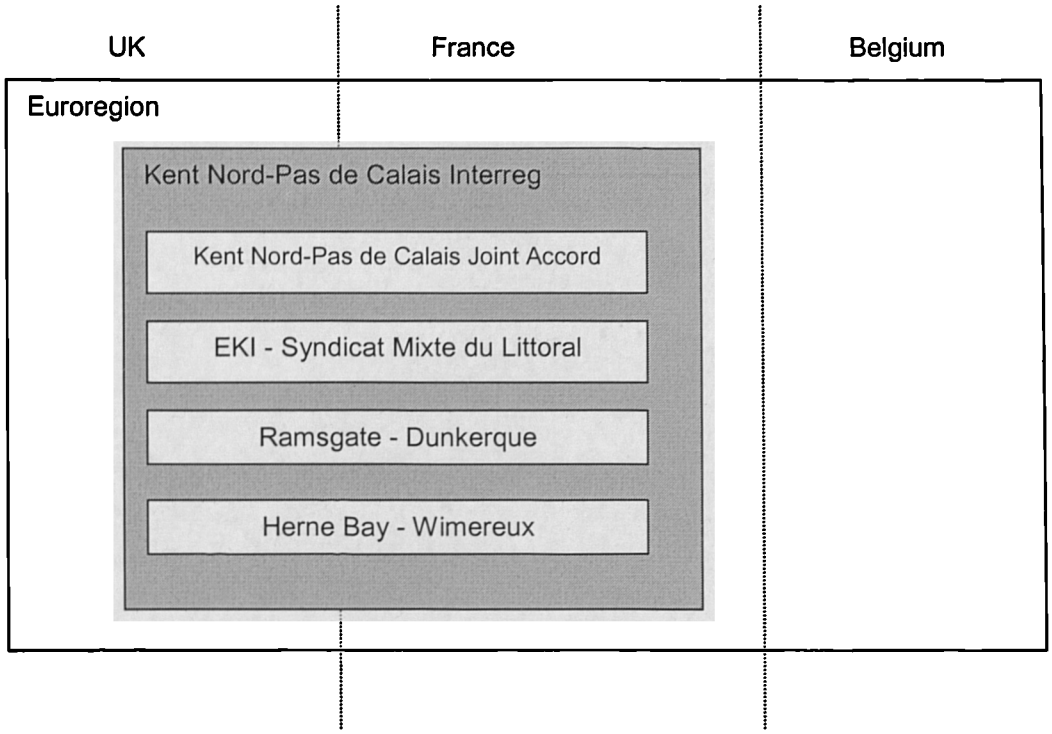
[91] The NWMA Interreg IIc programme covers all or part of the following countries: UK, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland and Luxembourg.

Bay (GOSE, 1996). Similarly, in May 1995 the East Kent Initiative (EKI) - a partnership between national and local government and the private sector in the East Kent area (KCC, 1996) - signed a co-operation agreement with the Syndicat Mixte du Littoral, a similar sub-regional grouping of French authorities and private sector partners (EKI, 1995).

The result of these partnerships is a cross-border collaboration between Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais that is broad in both the scope of the activities and the range of participants. From the modest beginnings of town-twinning and cultural exchange in the 1970's, formal collaboration now incorporates activities related to cross-border tourism and marketing for inward investment. One of the principal themes running throughout the cross-border activities however, is that of economic development. The challenges posed by the construction of the Channel Tunnel to ferry services, and the opportunities of the single market are both recurring themes for the various Transmanche partnerships. As regions linked by a maritime environment, environmental issues also feature strongly in the work programmes of the different partnerships, regardless of the scale at which the partnerships operate.

Today the barrier presented by the physical reality of the English Channel and 20 or so miles of sea is transcended in many different ways and at many different scales by a cobweb of cross-channel partnerships. While some of the links may be gossamer fine, others are more substantial, strengthened with time and mutual understanding. Figure 6.2 below attempts to illustrate the range of these partnerships and the different geographical areas that they represent.

Figure 6.2: The Cross-Channel collaboration web



As the diagram shows, the partnerships overlap and reinforce each other. Sometimes links are built as the result of existing arrangements, as with Kent Nord-Pas de Calais and the Euroregion. In other cases, existing links have been strengthened by the availability of Interreg funds. The result is a complex arrangement of partnerships, each with a slightly different origin and focus.

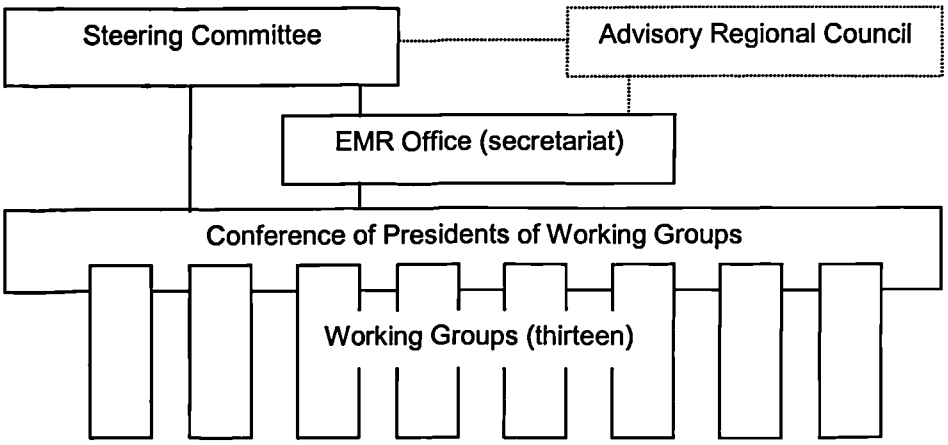
6.2 The Evolution of the MHAL partnership

While partnerships in the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Transmanche region have been strongly stimulated and shaped by the Interreg programme, this is not the case in the MHAL region. The convoluted and shared history of the constituent regions and, of course, the territoriality of the border, is reflected in both a longer and broader tradition of cross-border partnerships. Formal links began in 1976[92], when the Euregion Maas Rhine (EMR) was established, although informal contact began much earlier, in the 1960s. The Euregio Maas Rhine is a regional partnership between the regional (provincial) governments of Dutch Limburg, the Belgian provinces of Liège and Limburg and the German region of Aachen (Corvers, 1998).

[92] There is some confusion about when the partnership actually began, with interviewees and supporting literature providing different information. The dates used here are those quoted most often.

The aim of the partnership at that time was to improve socio-economic development in the area, although early efforts were limited to cultural exchanges and sporting events[93]. After modest early achievements, a cross-border action programme was formulated by the Euregion in the early 1980s. However, it should be noted that the Euregion is not simply a network or institutional partnership, but an organisation in its own right, having been established as a *stichting*[94] under Dutch law in 1991 (Brown et al., 1999). As a result, the EMR is able to work on a wider range of issues and handle (European) funds more easily. The creation of the stichting also helped to overcome problems associated with the differences in the competences of the provincial partners. The structure of the Euregio is illustrated below in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3: The Management Structure of the Euregio Maas Rhine



based on SEGEFA, undated.

The structure is clearly dominated by the thirteen working groups, which co-operate on the following issues: economics; the environment; art & culture; teaching; vocational training; tourism; health; order and safety; youth; sport; technology transfer; planning and traffic; structural policy (SEGEFA, undated). However, as a regional body, one of the most striking characteristics of the structure is the small number of individuals involved. Both the steering committee and secretariat have representatives from each of the five participating areas, including the German-speaking community in Belgium, but few other representatives. The advisory committee on the other hand has a very large number of participants - around 120[95], although it has a very limited role in the structure.

[93] Municipal government officer.
[94] A foundation or organisation.
[95] Municipal government officer.

At around the same time as the preparation of the cross-border action programme, the Dutch ministry of spatial planning published its Fourth Report on Spatial Planning which discussed the development of the Dutch territory into the 21st century (Corvers, 1998). The significance of the document was that it suggested a project to improve cross-border infrastructure in the MHAL area through co-operation with the Belgian province of Limburg, the cities of Maastricht and Heerlen and the Dutch ministry of economic affairs. A year later the initiative had widened and a declaration of intent to co-operate was signed by the ministers of spatial planning for Flanders, Wallonia, the Netherlands and Nord-Rhine Westphalia. A key element of this agreement was the preparation of a cross-border spatial perspective – a project known as the MHAL project (Corvers, 1998).

The domination of cross-border collaboration by national and regional government elicited a local response at this time, when the MHAL cities network was established. This network, linking the cities of Maastricht, Hasselt, Aachen and Liège, has its own structure and work programme concentrating on a range of issues from economic development to tourism and urban renewal. This network has not taken any part in the Interreg programme, due according to one municipal government officer, to the ongoing tension with between the city authorities and the EMR. If true, this appears to indicate a serious rift, as one would expect lower tiers of government to be prominent participants in the Interreg programme, given the availability of funds for joint projects. This situation contrasts quite clearly with that in the Transmanche region, where the vast majority of projects have been led by local government.

Following the proliferation of cross-border partnerships and agreements in the late 1980's, the area successfully bid for Interreg funds covering the period 1991-1995. The programme as a whole had a budget of 23 mecu, which was divided between seven priorities for action – shaped by the 1988 cross-border action programme. The priorities - along with the proportion of funding allocated to each - were as follows:

- environment (33.4%)
- leisure and tourism (20.1%)
- creation of networks (19.4%)
- job creation and training (10.8%)
- research and project management (8.4%)

- technology transfer and innovation (7.1%)
- transport and infrastructure 0.8% (Euregio, undated).

The pre-existence of the Euregio structure, with its secretariat and council of members, meant that the requirements for management of the Interreg programme set out by the Commission could be met within the existing structures. The EMR office and secretariat in Maastricht thus acts as the Interreg secretariat, and the participants in the programme management and project selection are the same as those involved in the Euregion – namely, the provincial or regional authorities of the participating regions.

The success of the first Interreg programme in the area led naturally to participation in the second Interreg funding period. Once again the 1988 cross-border action programme formed the basis for the programme, although the MHAL project was also very influential. The project (discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven) – set out a framework and priorities for spatial development in the region. Its influence on the second Interreg programme is reflected in the inclusion of a spatial planning measure with a funding allocation of 15% (Euregio, undated). The priorities and funding allocations for the second Interreg programme were as follows:

- spatial planning (15%)
- economy, technology and innovation (28%)
- nature and environment (26%)
- job creation and training (11%)
- social integration (15%)
- technical assistance (5%) (Euregio, undated).

The total budget for the programme was 71.9 mecu of which some 35.7 mecu was to be contributed by the Commission.

Soon after the start of the second Interreg programme, the stichting of the Euregion Maas Rhine added a new layer to its administrative and management structure. A regional council was created (as shown in Figure 6.3 above), with 118 representatives from municipalities and other local organisations[96] (e.g. Chambers of Commerce). The council acts as an interface between the regional government participating in cross-border collaboration, and the local level. One of the interviewees, while welcoming the increased involvement of local organisations in

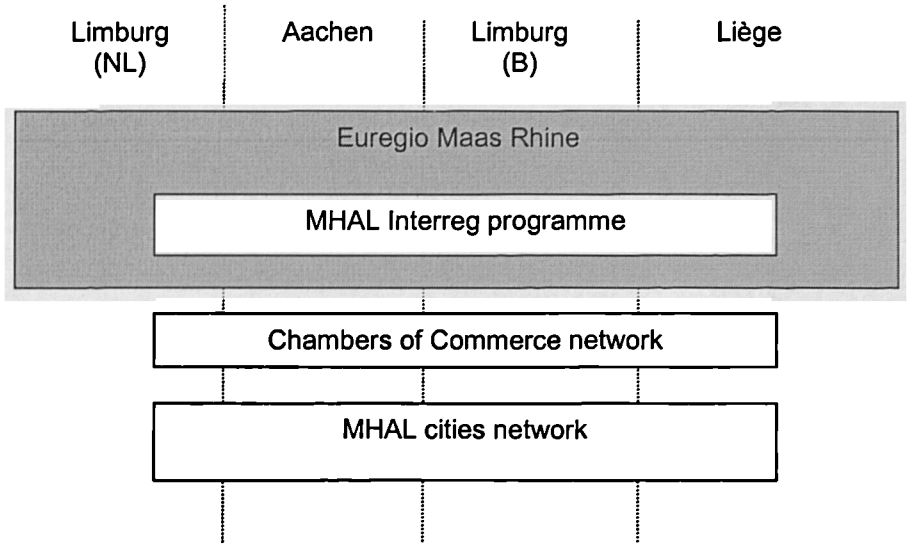
[96] Municipal government officer

the Euregio – and by implication in Interreg – was critical of the council, observing that its advisory status provides little incentive for participation. This appears to be particularly important to the city authorities in the area, which would like to have some greater recognition of their economic and democratic importance in the area from the EMR. On a more general basis though, unless participants have some real influence on the EMR and its activities, the municipal government officer claimed that links with the local level will continue to be weak.

At around the same time as the regional council was established, the local Chambers of Commerce signed their own agreement on collaboration, agreeing to form a common secretariat, provide joint advice and information services and establish a joint web site. The arrangement also involves the exchange of personnel and information.

As in the case of the Transmanche collaboration, the MHAL partnership has broadened in both scope and participation over time. Economic development also emerges as a strong theme in the cross-border activities, along with environmental issues – another overlap with the Transmanche example. However, the MHAL region is significant for its long-standing focus on spatial planning. A theme that has been strongly influenced by events – and partnerships – formed at the national level, although in this instance central government does not participate in regional co-operation. Figure 6.4 below illustrates the web of collaboration networks that exist in the MHAL area, showing the relatively weak vertical links between co-operation at the local and regional levels.

Figure 6.4: The MHAL Co-operation web



Once again, the nature of cross-border partnerships can be seen to be complex, particularly in their relationships with each other. In the MHAL region, the EMR forms a very strong web across the border, although that web has quite weak links with the local level. In contrast to the situation in Kent Nord-Pas de Calais, the Interreg programme takes place within the existing EMR framework, so that the Euregio partnership rather than the Interreg programme dominates cross-border activities. In addition, while the Transmanche Interreg programme is dominated by the activities of local authorities, in the case of the MHAL region, the involvement of local authorities - particularly city authorities - is much less noticeable.

6.3 Unravelling Collaboration and Co-operation in the Case Study Areas

While the previous sections have set out the overall shape and history of cross-border collaboration in the case study areas, the next stage of the exploration is to unravel that collaboration a little further. One of the most crucial questions is about the nature of the collaboration taking place.

Discussions in Chapter Four identified the need to deconstruct and classify collaborative activities in order to better understand the nature of cross-border collaboration. While a number of typologies of cross-border collaboration can be found in the literature, the most fundamental of these is Polenske's (1997) collaboration/co-operation dichotomy. Distinguishing between the joint working of collaboration and the networking information exchange of co-operation, the

distinction provides a starting point for the unravelling of current cross-border activities in the case study areas.

As the distinction between collaboration and co-operation is one of the key elements of the cross-border model developed in Chapter Four, questions about the collaborative joint working and co-operative networking dichotomy were included in the case study interviews. All of the interviewees accepted the basic distinction between the two activities, and were able to find examples of both in their experiences of cross-border collaboration, although one or two hinted that unravelling the two was not necessarily straightforward. One Interreg officer said *"...we do both... projects have to start with collaboration, as you have to work together on the proposal..."*

That aside, the utility of the distinction appears to be further confirmed when examining details of the Interreg projects funded by the Interreg programme in each of the case study areas. As Table 6.2 below illustrates, even short descriptions of projects make it possible to categorise them into either the collaborative joint working or co-operative joint working categories.

Table 6.2: Funded Projects in the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Interreg II programme

Title	Description	Category
Euroregion Historic Towns Association	Creation of a network of towns to exchange experiences in the spatial planning and conservation requirements of heritage	Co-operative networking
Strategy for Air Quality Monitoring in the Transmanche region	Definition and development of a common strategy for air quality monitoring	Collaborative joint working
Development of Geographic Information systems	Integration and harmonisation of databases; improvements of joint information systems on environmental issues.	Co-operative networking

However, while this classification and categorisation is straightforward in the case of the projects mentioned above, a project funded in the MHAL case study area illustrates a difficulty with the approach. Under the tourism and leisure objective of the programme, a project described as a *touristisch-recreatief fietsroutennetwork B/N Limburg*[97] was granted funding in 1996. Although there is no further information about the project, it is difficult to determine whether this is a collaborative joint working project or a co-operative networking project. It seems perfectly possible for

[97] A tourist and leisure cycle network in Belgian and Dutch Limburg.

the creation of a cycle network to be achieved by joint working between organisations, or by the co-ordination of on-going infrastructure developments. This difficulty raises the possibility that there are not one but two elements of cross-border projects that need to be considered. The first element relates to the nature of the project itself – whether it is a single project or a parallel project[98], while the second relates to the management of that project - whether it is joint management or co-ordinated management. In the context of the co-operation/collaboration classification, this suggests that projects sit within a matrix of four possibilities (rather than two) as illustrated in Figure 6.3 below.

Table 6.3: The Cross-border Collaboration-Co-operation Matrix

Project	Project management
Collaboration	Co-operation
Co-operation	Collaboration
Co-operation	Co-operation
Collaboration	Collaboration

This matrix thus demonstrates that – theoretically at least – there are four different categories into which cross-border projects could be classified (reading across the table). For example, a collaborative project with collaborative project management, or a collaborative project which has co-operative management arrangements[99]. Possibilities that create obvious complications in relation to the simple classification of cross-border projects envisaged in Chapter Four. In addition, using such a classification would require a far deeper understanding of each project and the way in which it is managed in order to judge its nature. Unfortunately, this level of information is simply not available in the context of this thesis. The short descriptions of projects available (as illustrated in Table 6.2 above) are inadequate for these purposes, and even if fuller information about current projects were available, as one interviewee, an Interreg officer, observed *"...projects which appear to be transfrontier on paper are not necessarily transfrontier in practice..."*.

Whatever the practical difficulties and limitations of classifying cross-border activities, the principal objective of such classification (as set out in Chapter Four) is to discover whether there are any qualitative or quantitative differences between the

[98] That is to say, a common project which runs in parallel on each side of the border.
[99] Although all not all variations may be possible.

outcomes of the two activities. Ex-post evaluation of the first Interreg programme in Kent Nord-Pas de Calais[100] suggests that there are clear differences between types of projects, with a four stage categorisation of cross-border activities developed as follows:

> *"(i) a single united project which addresses a single problem occurring across the frontier. Such projects will have a single "project" and ideally would have a joint management or implementation team;*
> *(ii) two similar, joint projects which address a common problem occurring on both sides of the border and which have separate management and implementation;*
> *(iii) two separate, unrelated projects addressing a common problem;*
> *(iv) no effective transnational co-operation."*
>
> (Arup, 1995, p.9)

This classification also combines issues relating to the project and the project management, assigning higher value to those projects that are collaborative in both their nature and management. The ordering of projects in this way quite clearly implies that single, jointly managed projects are able to contribute more to the programme of cross-border collaboration – and thus the achievement of integration – than other types of project or cross-border working.

To assess the validity of this approach, and the initial assumption that there are quantitative differences between collaborative joint working and co-operative networking, it is necessary to link individual projects with their impact on integration. Discussions in Chapter Three, exploring the nature of integrated and non-integrated boundaries, concluded that integrated boundaries depend on three things:

1. a high level of cross-border cross-border permeability (low interaction costs)
2. a strategic cross-border or transnational framework; and,
3. the development of mutually beneficial relationships based on a common identity.

Evaluating the contribution of cross-border projects to integration can thus be achieved by measuring projects against these three criteria.

Four projects funded by the second Interreg programme have been selected from each of the case study areas, for analysis within this framework. Half of the projects

[100] While similar evaluation was undertaken in the MHAL case study area, there was no overall categorisation of projects in this way. Projects were only assessed on an individual basis for their *caractère transfrontalier typique du projet* (transfrontier characteristics of the project).

selected appear to be collaborative in nature, based on the information available, and half are co-operative in nature[101]. The analysis is limited to some extent by the amount of information available – particularly in the MHAL case study area, where very little information about successful projects is included in the summary tables produced by the secretariat. The projects chosen for analysis are set out in Table 6.4 below.

Table 6.4: Cross-border projects (Interreg II)

Case study area	Project description
Kent Nord-Pas de Calais	Côte à Côte: joint tourism promotion of Shepway and Boulogne (collaborative joint working)
Kent Nord-Pas de Calais	Information and structures for managing the countryside, developing of understanding of countryside systems and organisations to raise awareness of areas of mutual interest and enable other joint projects (co-operative networking)
Kent Nord-Pas de Calais	Transmanche inward investment marketing programme to promote and increase inward investment (collaborative joint working)
Kent Nord-Pas de Calais	Bureau for the development of trade in Europe to encourage small businesses to explore new opportunities in the tourism industries labour market (co-operative networking).
MHAL	*Touristische recreatief fietsroutennetwork* (tourist and leisure cycle network) (co-operative networking)
MHAL	*Opleiding en training voor het verwerken van kunststoffen* (training for workers in the synthetic materials sector) (collaborative joint working)
MHAL	*Snelbusdienst Hasselt-Maastricht* (Express bus service between Hasselt and Maastricht) (co-operative networking)
MHAL	*Grensoverschrijdende patientenzorg* (cross-border patient care) (collaborative joint working)

Working through the projects in turn, it is possible to draw some conclusions about the contribution of each project to integration, using the criteria set out above. In the case of the Côte à Côte project between Shepway and Boulogne, while the project does not tackle the permeability of the border in a direct way, it does contribute to a cross-border framework by identifying common issues and key resources. In essence, the project treats the two areas as a single tourist destination, marketing the area jointly and making links between the areas by - for example - providing reciprocal tourist information services about the other side. The main contribution of the project however, is the development of a mutually beneficial economic relationship, building on the resources of both areas to attract tourists to both locations.

[101] Following the discussions above, the evaluation is based only on the project themselves, and does not include any evaluation of project management.

The more co-operative project related to countryside issues - focussing on the exchange of experience through seminars and reports - has fewer direct impacts on integration. The project does not tackle any tangible issues of permeability or interaction costs, although it does facilitate the exchange of professional ideas and policy traditions between England and France. The project also appears to form a starting point for further work on countryside issues by providing a baseline for future projects.

The Transmanche inward investment strategy project – similar to the Côte à Côte project in its joint promotion of the region, has a more obvious impact. In essence the project involves the preparation of joint publicity materials for inward investors seeking new sites, and active marketing campaigns in a number of areas (i.e. Japan and North America). While the project itself does not tackle interaction costs or permeability issues, it does attempt to build a joint approach to inward investment and marketing the area as a single region. In this way the project contributes to the development of a cross-border framework – although tensions over economic development issues means that the project is unlikely to generate a very close relationship between the two sides.

Finally for the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais partnership, the Bureau for the development of trade in Europe is essentially a mechanism for information exchange between the two countries, a one-stop shop for small businesses requiring information about working in Europe. Although the project is essentially co-operative in nature, it does tackle barriers to cross-border business and thus help to increase permeability of the border. However, the project does not appear to contribute to integration through the development of a cross-border framework, or the development of mutually beneficial relationships. The results of the evaluation of these four Kent Nord-Pas de Calais projects is set out in Table 6.5 below.

Table 6.5: The contribution of Transmanche cross-border projects to integration

	Cross-border projects			
Integration criteria	Cote à Cote tourism	Countryside	Inward Investment	Trade Bureau
Permeability	✗	✓	✗	✓
Cross-border framework	✓	✗	✓	✗
Mutual relationship/ Common identity	✓	✗	✗	✗

Examining the four projects from the MHAL region, reveals a slightly different pattern of cross-border integration. In the first instance, the creation of a cross-border cycle network is, very clearly, a direct attempt to increase the permeability of the border by co-ordinating infrastructure networks. Without further information about the project, it is impossible to say whether the linking of regional cycle networks has any strategic value, although if it is part of a larger infrastructure network then it would clearly have an impact on the creation of cross-border framework.

This is also the case for the training project set out in Table 6.4. While the project clearly tackles interaction costs relating to education and training standards, possibly enhancing the mobility of labour between the regions, it is not clear whether it has any wider impact on the creation and maintenance of a mutually beneficial relationship. The creation of a direct cross-border – and express – bus service on the other hand has a much clearer outcome. It increases the permeability of the border by making it easier for individuals to move across it – and implies some co-ordination of wider public transport networks. Although the project has no other significant impact on integration, it might be argued that as a joint venture between bus companies, it is helping to create mutually beneficial relationships between local businesses and strengthening economic links.

Finally, the last project selected for the MHAL region is probably the most interesting. The provision of cross-border patient care as a pilot project, attempts to overcome the situation in which patients only a few kilometres from a specialist centres across the border, are forced to travel to facilities in their own country, even when those facilities are much further away. The project is a complex one, requiring the co-ordination and consent of government bodies, insurance companies, and health care institutions. However, it also seems a logical extension of other integrative activities in other policy areas. Once again, while as a pilot scheme the project does not seem to contribute to a cross-border framework of any kind, it does suggest the beginnings of a mutually beneficial relationship between the regions on health service issues.

A summary table of the MHAL projects in relation to the integration criteria is set out below.

Table 6.6: The contribution of MHAL cross-border projects to integration

	Cross-border projects			
Integration criteria	Cycle network	Worker training	Bus service	Patient care
Permeability	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cross-border framework	?	✗	✓	✗
Mutual relationship/ Common identity	?	✗	?	✓

6.4 Unravelling the Co-operation Collaboration and Integration Web

The analysis of these eight projects in the case study areas reveals that while the contributions to integration vary – all of the projects examined make some contribution to the integration of the border. In the context of the Interreg programme, with its criteria for the transnationality[102] of projects, this is not altogether surprising. What is surprising however, is the difference between MHAL projects and Transmanche projects. In the MHAL region the four projects examined are characterised by their active approach to the permeability of the border. This is not the case in the Transmanche case study area, where only the last project - the Bureau for the development of trade in Europe – makes any active contribution to reducing barriers; a difference which may be linked to the nature of maritime and territorial borders. It is also worth noting that while the project owners in the Transmanche programme were drawn exclusively from the public sector, the MHAL projects covered a wider range of partners, including a number from the private sector.

In terms of the difference between projects involving collaborative joint working, and those involving co-operative networking, results from the case study areas appear to confirm assertions made in Chapter Four. While the difference between collaborative joint working and co-operative networking is not in doubt, the issue in question is whether those activities have different outcomes. In both the Transmanche and MHAL case study areas, collaborative projects appear to have a wider impact on integration processes than co-operative projects. This is particularly true in the MHAL region, where the projects examined illustrate the ability of collaborative joint working in particular to develop a strategic or cross-border framework. Co-operative projects on the other hand appear to be better at tackling the permeability of the border and reducing interaction costs through the co-

[102] That is to say, that the project has a demonstrable impact on both sides of the border.

ordination of infrastructure, educational standards or information. These observations appear to confirm the association of collaborative joint working and co-operative networking with different outcomes: collaboration with the development of mutually beneficial relationships and cross-border frameworks, co-ordination with the reduction of interaction costs and the increasing permeability of the border.

However, these results also show that both co-operative networking and collaborative joint working are capable of delivering positive results which actively promote integration across national borders. The third assumption underlying the cross-border collaboration model set out in Chapter Four – that only collaborative activities can create the conditions necessary for permeability and integration – thus appears to be flawed. The emphasis given by the Commission - and the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Interreg I evaluation team - to the management style of each project does however, suggests that there are qualitative differences between projects which are managed jointly and projects which are managed in parallel. This difference seems to hinge on the contribution that joint management itself makes to the process of integration across borders. Although there is no tangible evidence to examine to confirm this assertion, comments from interviewees including Interreg and local government officers, indicate that the way that organisations and institutions work together is as much an objective of cross-border collaboration as the elimination of cross-border barriers. As one local government officer commented *"...that was the problem with Interreg I* (in Kent)*, it was about funding rather than partnerships ... but it's the partnership that is the important bit, as it helps to build something for the future..."*. The convergence of ideas, working practices and professional approaches is itself a mechanism for promoting integration – dismantling the interaction costs which are caused by friction between different systems. Working together does not necessarily mean that attitudes and systems become the same, but it does help to eliminate areas of direct conflict. It is this feature of *collaborative joint working* that distinguishes it from co-operative networking, and explains the Commission's support for projects that involve joint management.

The final assumption underlying the model of cross-border collaboration set out in Chapter Four, concerns the development of cross-border collaboration over time. It is assumed – based on the typologies and accounts of cross-border collaboration set out in the literature – that cross-border collaboration changes over time, becoming more complex as the partnership develops. Evidence from the case study

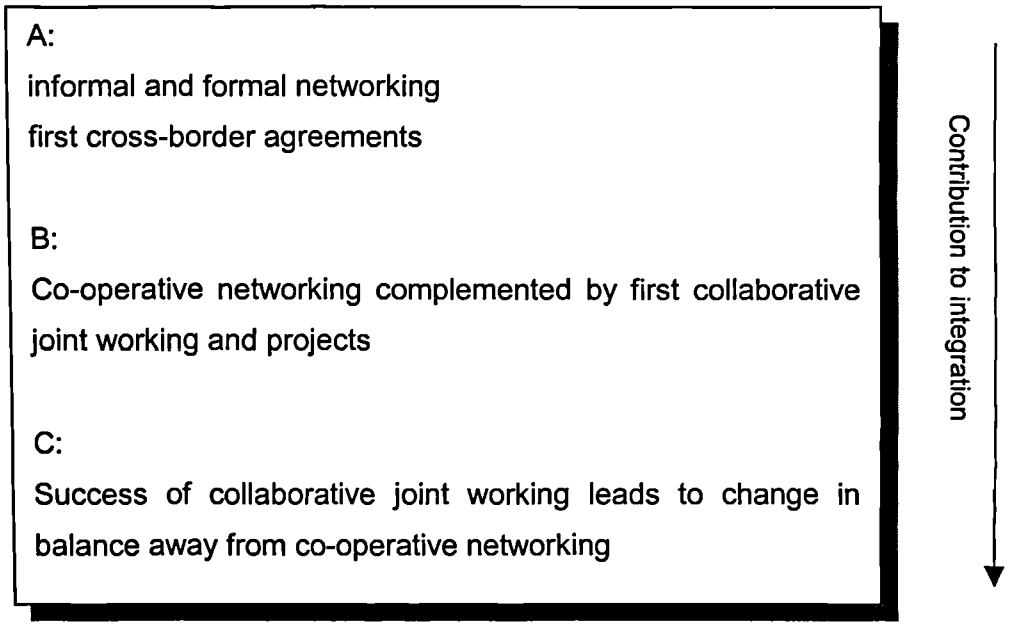
areas certainly seems to support such a claim. One of the interviewees, an Interreg officer, observed that the nature of cross-border partnerships changes with experience. Where partners have worked together before - since the first Interreg programme say - they know each other quite well, and are able to work together in a collaborative manner. On the other hand – as the Interreg officer pointed out – new partnerships, where organisations are working together for the first time, have to begin gently exchanging information and learning about each others working practices, aims and objectives. This observation however, raises another issue in relation to the analysis of cross-border collaboration. By illuminating the difference in the way that new and established partnerships work together, this interviewee highlights the difference between cross-border collaboration as a whole, and cross-border collaboration in its constituent parts. Taken to its logical conclusion, this means that the experiences of individual actors must also be taken into account in the assessment of the characteristics and development of cross-border partnerships.

Undertaking such analysis is not possible in the context of this thesis, where the focus of the research is on cross-border programmes as a whole rather than the particularities of individual cross-border projects and partnerships. However, this is quite clearly an important issue in the study of cross-border collaboration, as it highlights the significance of the individual elements making up the overall programme. Returning to the question about the development of cross-border collaboration over time, and the cross-border collaboration model, thus requires re-examination of the history of collaboration in each of the case study areas.

6.5 Testing the Cross-border Collaboration Model

The objective of this part of the thesis is not only to examine the assertion that cross-border collaboration becomes more complex over time, but also to test the model of cross-border collaboration against the realities of cross-border collaboration in the case study areas.

Figure 4.4: A Model of Cross-Border Collaboration



As discussed above, evidence from the case study areas has confirmed the validity of three of the assumptions underlying the cross-border collaboration model. The third assumption however – that only collaborative activities can create the conditions necessary for permeability and integration – was successfully demolished. This development obviously has an impact on the overall shape of the cross-border collaboration model, although for the purposes of this investigation, no adjustments have been made. It is thus the original model – as set out in Chapter Four and replicated above - which is the subject of the testing here. Once again, the analysis begins first by examining the development of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais partnership, and comparing the different phases of development with the phases of the model.

6.5.1 Kent Nord-Pas de Calais

Beginning with the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais partnership, it seems quite clear that the first phase of the cross-border partnership – in line with the model's A phase – was characterised by some tentative and informal networking, and a number of cross-border agreements, principally the Joint Accord signed in 1987.

Once the partnership between Kent County Council and the Conseil Regional du Nord-Pas de Calais was formalised, the partnership began a process of developing

a transfrontier programme setting out priorities for action within the cross-border region. Quite clearly the preparation of the TDP and the first Interreg submission document required intensive joint working between key actors including the regional authorities and the respective central government representatives. However, as observed earlier, one of the major criticisms of the first Interreg programme was that the majority of projects were characterised by separate rather than joint working. As Arup (1995) observed, the Herne Bay Leisure Centre – comprising a swimming pool complex and cinema – was only loosely linked with regeneration projects in Wimereux, and was justly criticised. In addition, the evaluation of the first Interreg programme revealed that only 22% of projects could be classified as single projects with joint management structures. This conclusion appears to confirm the movement of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais partnership into the second phase – the B phase - of the model.

The next phase of the partnership – from 1994/5 onwards, seems to be an extension of the first Interreg programme. Involving the development of other partnerships – deepening and extending in the case of the Euroregion, the cross-border network and linkages. A number of local government officers confirmed that the second Interreg programme has stimulated more joint projects, more collaborative projects, although examining the list of approved projects suggests that the vast majority of the 29 projects approved by November 1997, were still co-operative networking types of projects. A shift towards more joint projects though is to be expected following the acknowledged criticisms of the first programme. However, another feature of the second Interreg programme has been the development and approval of projects from a wider range of organisations. While in the first programme only one project was led by a non-governmental organisation (Arup, 1995), in the second programme Universities, voluntary sector organisations and even private sector firms have been putting projects forward. As mentioned above, the development of new partnerships - while strengthening of the cross-border *network as a whole* – will necessarily mean that the projects developed are more co-operative in nature. Building networks, exchanging and co-ordinating information and best practice, are co-operative precursors to collaborative joint working.

However, while a third phase in the development of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais cross-Channel working can be identified, it is difficult to link it with the third phase of the cross-border collaboration model. As the development of Interreg II has inspired

many new cross-border links, it is difficult to make any rigorous evaluation of the overall balance in the cross-border activities. It is almost certainly true that *established* partnerships at this time have shifted away from co-operative networking and towards collaborative joint working. However, this cannot be confirmed for the cross-Channel programme as a whole, due to the number of very different (and newly established) partnerships that have emerged.

An additional characteristic of recent activities in the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais partnership has been the widening scope of issues and policy areas that are being addressed. As the range of activities broadens from economic development and tourism projects, to cross-border walking routes, air pollution and biodiversity projects, a wider range of organisations are being drawn into cross-border collaboration. The result is an inter-related broadening and deepening of cross-border activities.

It would appear then that the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais partnership is yet to move into a phase of cross-border collaboration dominated by collaborative joint working – or the final phase of the model. While some of the individual partnerships within the overall programme may have done so – what is clear is that the individual partnerships between organisations develop at different speeds. Thus, while the experiences of Kent Nord-Pas de Calais appear to confirm the general development of both a broader and deeper cross-border collaboration, they do not fit neatly into the model of cross-border collaboration being tested. While there is a good fit between the early phases of the partnership and the first two phases of the model, the correspondence with the later phases of the model is less clear.

6.5.2 MHAL

As described earlier in the chapter, the development of the MHAL partnership has taken a different path to that of the Transmanche case study region. However, despite the subsequent differences it is clear that like Kent Nord-Pas de Calais, the beginnings of the MHAL partnership were based on informal links between the constituent regions. These links later developed into a formal relationship when the Euregio Maas Rhine was established in 1976. Characteristics which again fit with phase A of the cross-border collaboration model under examination.

Unlike the Transmanche partnership, the next phase of the MHAL co-operation is not linked to the development of the Interreg programme. Instead, the partnership developed its own cross-border action programme, and began working on spatial planning issues amongst other things. This phase of the partnership is quite clearly the beginning of collaborative joint working and the development of joint projects. Although with no further information about the projects carried out at this time, it is difficult to say whether they were collaborative or co-operative in nature. Nevertheless, the general shift from an ad hoc partnership to a more structured programme of cross-border working does seem to fit into the second phase of the cross-border collaboration model.

Given the longer tradition of cross-border working in the MHAL region, the progression into the first Interreg programme had a less dramatic impact on the cross-border partnership than it seemed to in the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais example. As a result, it is difficult to see this as a discrete phase in the development of the MHAL cross-border collaboration. Instead, the Interreg programmes in both the first and second funding periods appear to be a gradual and gentle extension of the development of collaborative partnerships in the area. An extension that involved a widening and deepening of both cross-border partnerships and cross-border activities.

As seen above, while there are undoubtedly collaborative activities going on within the frameworks provided by the EMR and Interreg, there are also co-operative projects between the areas. From the account of the MHAL partnership given earlier on, it seems clear that the partnership has progressed from the activities associated with the first cross-border strategy. What is not clear however, is just how far they have progressed, and whether there has been an overall shift towards collaboration as the third phase of the model implies. None of the interviewees claimed that this was the case, and certainly their views suggested that progress may not have been as smooth on the ground as it appears from the outside.

The situation thus appears to be akin to that found in the Transmanche region: that while the cross-border partnership has certainly matured in the type of activities projects undertaken, it is not possible to detect an overall shift away from co-operation toward collaboration. It thus remains to be seen whether such a shift will become apparent in the future.

6.6 Conclusions

In terms of the model and its underlying assumptions, evidence from the case study areas confirms the basic difference between collaboration and co-operation, although the application of these 'types' was not always straightforward. Analysis of different types of project however, confirmed that these two types of activity make different contributions to integration across the border. However, the results did not confirm the assertion that only collaborative activities can create the conditions necessary for permeability and integration, thus calling into question the element of the model related to integration. In fact, the results demonstrated that both collaboration and co-operative projects are required if integration is to be achieved, as the different nature of the projects means that they are able to tackle different issues.

While it is not possible to take the testing of the model much further as it is not possible to look into future developments in the case study areas, a number of general comments can be made about its validity. First, the general movement from less ambitious networking projects to collaborative joint working over time can be seen in the case study areas, and is confirmed by evidence from the interviewees. Second, the initial shift from informal networking to both collaboration and co-operation through the development of formal agreements can also be seen. However, in both case study areas, the creation of formal permanent cross-border institutions came much earlier in the partnership than the model predicts, although one might want to ask further questions about the nature of a permanent cross-border institution. In addition, the model fails to take into account the stimulation of new partnerships by the success, or even failure, of existing cross-border arrangements. In both case study areas, the middle phase of development from formal agreements to collaborative joint working, has stimulated the creation of new partnerships. This brings with it the likelihood that those partnerships will go through a similar model of development, beginning with tentative links, and progressing to more ambitious activities after time. The result of this proliferation of partnerships is that they confuse the picture in relation to the overall balance of the cross-border collaboration. These observations thus suggest two possible improvements to the model: first, the inclusion of partnership proliferation in the mid-phases, and second, the application of the model to *individual* partnerships rather than overall cross-border relations. Alas there is neither time nor space within the constraints of this work, to make these adjustments and retest the revised model.

Having examined the links between cross-border collaboration and the integration of borders, this chapter has demonstrated the demonstrable impact that cross-border projects can have. Whether through the development of strategic frameworks, the generation of mutually beneficial relationships, or by enhancing the permeability of the border, cross-border projects can and do actively contribute to the integration process. With these conclusions in mind, the focus of the research now shifts from the general impact of cross-border collaboration on integration, to the specific contribution of cross-border spatial planning to the integration process.

Chapter Seven: Cross-border Planning and the Obstacles to Integration

7.0 Introduction

The investigations set out in Chapter Six have concentrated on unravelling cross-border collaboration, its constituent parts and their collective impact on the integration of the border. While answering the majority of the original research questions, the investigations thus far have left two questions unanswered. The first – a central objective of the case study research, and the thesis as a whole – relates to the evaluation of the role of spatial planning in European integration. The second, concerns the obstacles and difficulties of cross-border collaboration. The focus of this final case study chapter is thus the experience - and evaluation - of cross-border planning in each of the case study areas. In unravelling these experiences, the chapter attempts to uncover the key issues and obstacles to cross-border integration. Drawing out not only the operational difficulties of cross-border collaboration, but the broader issues raised by cross-border planning. Before beginning the investigations however, the chapter begins by revisiting the discussions about cross-border spatial planning begun in Chapter Four.

7.1 Cross-Border Spatial Planning

The emergence of a European planning tradition in recent years can be linked to a number of policy imperatives, not least of which is the pursuit of integration and the achievement of social and economic cohesion. According to the Compendium of European Spatial Planning Systems (CEC, 1997a) the rationale underpinning both the ESDP and Interreg IIc is related to four issues:

- the need to maximise the economic potential of the SEM by ensuring that infrastructure gaps and inconsistencies are minimised;
- the need to co-ordinate public investment (particularly the Structural Funds) in order to maximise their impact on competitiveness and disparity;
- the need to make the most of cross-border collaboration in resolving common problems; and,
- the potential of spatial planning to guarantee sustainability and balance economic growth with environmental protection.

Cross-border planning is thus seen as important means of achieving integration, and as Chapter Four sets out – there are at least three objectives for cross-border spatial planning, including:

- the co-ordination of the territorial impacts of sectoral policies at both the macro and micro scales;
- the harmonisation of goals and mechanisms of national planning systems in order to eliminate conflict between them and reduce barriers to free movement of business and investment;
- the integration of planning systems at the micro level in order to further integration of the border region.

Examining these characteristics - and those of integrated boundaries – in the context of spatial planning suggests, theoretically at least, that cross-border collaboration generally, and cross-border planning in particular, can contribute significantly to the integration of border regions. Because border barriers are seen as having a geographical dimension – that is to say that they effect the economic and therefore spatial development of a border region, it follows that the integration process will necessarily have spatial dimension, and cannot only be managed, but furthered, by a system of territorial management or spatial planning. This can be achieved in a number of ways: first, cross-border planning can create a common policy framework within which the partner authorities operate, reducing conflict and promoting both territorial and policy integration. Second, a cross-border spatial perspective offers the opportunity to increase permeability by reducing some of the interaction costs associated with both infrastructure and administrative and planning systems. Finally, cross-border collaboration planning contributes to the development of a common identity by creating – however artificially - the notion of a cross-border space which has its own particular strengths and characteristics. It also helps to create common rewards by identifying areas both territorial and sectoral where there are mutual gains and benefits to be made, and thus illuminates in a strategic and comprehensive way, the benefit to be gained from continuing cross-border collaboration.

Cross-border planning can be seen - through the examples and experiences set out in Chapter Four – as a practical response to the problems experienced in border regions. However, the rationale for cross-border spatial planning set out above appears to ask rather more of this activity than simply problem-solving. Instead, cross-border spatial planning is expected to provide a framework for policy intervention – whether through the structural funds, national development monies or local initiatives – to facilitate cross-border movement of business and investment and to co-ordinate and integrate different planning systems. Finally, in the context of

cross-border collaboration, the contribution that cross-border spatial planning makes to integration can also be evaluated by its impact on the three characteristics of integrated boundaries: permeability, a cross-border or strategic framework and a mutually beneficial relationship (as in Chapter Six).

The subsequent sections of this chapter thus attempt to relate these expectations about cross-border spatial planning with the realities of experiences in the case study areas.

7.3 Cross-border Planning in the Transmanche Region

Despite the relatively short history of the Transmanche partnership, spatial planning has been an ongoing area of interest since the collaboration began in 1987. The Joint Accord included – among other things – a commitment to joint working on strategic planning issues (Arup, 1995). However, as explained in Chapter Six, the original structure and objectives of the Joint Accord have been subsumed and superseded by Interreg and the establishment of the Euroregion. As a result, the majority of cross-border activity in the planning field appears to have been stimulated by Interreg and the inclusion of planning sub-measures in both the first and second Interreg funding periods.

The first Interreg programme, approved in 1992, included a strand related to 'environment and planning' - even though town and country planning measures were not specifically included in the Interreg programme by the Commission until the second funding period. This strand was allocated 35% of total programme funding by the operational programme, although subsequent evaluation revealed that actual spending in this area was 12.3 mecu – just over half of the programme budget, and almost twice as much as the next most popular strategic priority – tourism (GOSE, undated).

44 projects or part projects, were funded under the environment and planning priority, varying from joint studies on common policy issues to the development of a cross-border walking route and the exchange of experiences and expertise (GOSE, undated). Arup's (1994) evaluation of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Interreg programme (on the Kent side only) examined eight of these projects, including:

- town centre improvements in Dover-Calais;

- town centre improvements in Ramsgate/Margate-Dunkerque;
- co-ordinated harbour and seafront management in Shepway and Boulogne;
- the creation of a Euroregional network for environmental regeneration between the Groundwork Trust and Chantier Nature; and,
- coastal management and marine protection (Arup, 1994).

On the face of it, such projects appear to have little in common with the strategic and integrative role envisaged for cross-border planning. However, before dismissing the projects entirely, it seems clear that if funds are made available for planning projects, then the majority of applications will be small-scale locally significant schemes, while large-scale strategic proposals will be fewer in number. Nevertheless, as it is the objective of this thesis to investigate the contribution cross-border planning can make to integration, then cross-border planning in all its forms should be investigated.

In planning terms the town centre and seafront improvement projects offered the most concrete and tangible results as they involved physical development including street paving, traffic calming and tree planting (Arup, 1994). Generally speaking these projects are characterised by their composite nature being made up of many parts some of which are very modest in both their cost and impact. For example, Thanet's town centre management project - concentrated in Margate, Ramsgate and Dunkerque - included the sum of £16,500 for the enhancement of Margate's market place and £100,000 for street paving in King St, Ramsgate (Arup, 1994). The scheme also included renovation grants for property improvement and had economic regeneration and inward investment objectives with the additional benefit of fostering exchanges between planning professionals (Arup, 1994). However, despite the contribution to local regeneration in Dunkerque, Ramsgate and Margate, it is difficult to discern the wider contribution of the scheme to the integration of the border, either through the generation of a strategic framework or the enhancement of border permeability. While the mini projects undoubtedly contribute something, without a wider strategy in which to play a part, they can have little impact on the border. Interestingly perhaps the greatest contribution of this project to integration seems likely to have been the exchange of experience between planning professionals as this fosters greater understanding of practice and helps to reduce the barriers between practitioners on each side of the Channel.

The town centre improvement project in Dover and Calais had similar characteristics, being made up of many parts including the renovation of a listed building, street paving and signposting improvements. In the ex-post evaluation of the project, it was noted that there was a significant mismatch between activities on the English side - concentrated on landscaping, and those on the French side - concentrated on building renovation. The mismatch was all the more significant because the activities fell under different programme objectives, although the evaluation concludes that the projects while separate, did address common problems (Arup, 1994). The conclusion is thus, again, that individually these physical improvements contribute to local development but appear to offer little to the integration of the border. In contrast to the mismatch of Dover-Calais town centre improvement projects, the Shepway and Boulogne harbour management scheme forms a coherent cross-border project aimed at improving the image and environment of the town's harbours. In addressing common problems and common objectives, the project was much more coherent than the town centre improvement projects, although it was criticised in the evaluation as being made up of two projects running in parallel rather than a single joint project (Arup, 1994). Despite the cross-border coherence of the harbour project, again the project appears to offer little to the integration of the border either in the generation of a strategic framework or the reduction of border barriers.

Apart from these physical development schemes, the other environment and planning projects mentioned above had less tangible results. For example, the creation of a cross-border network on environmental regeneration involved 6 mini projects which could be developed for future funding, under Interreg II for example. The projects identified include developing a programme for adult training and exchange, and work on the Euroregional cycle network (Arup, 1994). While these projects were not funded under Interreg I, the ideas behind them off possibility of enhancing border integration by creating cross-border infrastruc... etworks in the case of the cycle project, or by tackling the cultural and educational differences between the two sides in the education and training project. Similarly, the project led by Kent County Council on coastal management and marine protection produced a number of bilingual research documents, a coastal habitat audit and a best practice study (Arup, 1994). Ironically, although these projects did not involve any developments on the ground, they do appear to have more to offer the integration process than the physical improvement projects outlined above. The contribution of the networking and coastal protection projects to integration comes from their co-

ordination of data and information sources and their tendency to analyse the area as a single territorial unit. While this in itself may not create a strategic framework for development in the area, it does provide a starting point for the development of such a framework in the future.

In contrast to the broadly framed and generously funded environment and planning priority of the first Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Interreg programme, the second operational programme is characterised by a more focussed approach, with four objectives and fourteen measures. Strategic development and regional planning thus form one measure within the 'Integrated Region' priority, with a funding allocation of roughly 5% of total funds (GOSE, 1996). This contrasts sharply with the 35% of programme funds allocated to the planning and environment priority in the first Interreg programme. The strategic development and regional planning measure had a number of objectives, including:

- achieving a better understanding of common spatial planning and development issues associated with new cross-border transport infrastructure with a focus on the gateway zones;
- improving the common spatial planning strategy by gaining a better understanding of structural issues allied to social change (economy, unemployment and land use) on both sides of the Channel;
- overcoming the difficulties in the Transmanche regional arising from its peripherality and transit corridor position by:
    1. improving the image of the region as an integrated zone through co-operation and exchanges of experience in spatial planning and development,
    2. responding to common spatial and economic restructuring needs (GOSE, undated)

As with all programming documents, the operational programme sets out a number of envisaged actions and possible projects for each of the measure areas. In the published version of the approved operational programme the envisaged actions include the establishment of a cross-border think-tank on spatial planning issues, exchanges between personnel in different authorities and the completion of joint studies on relevant topics (GOSE, undated). However, in the finalised version of the submission document (i.e. before it was approved by the Commission) the envisaged activities for the strategic development and regional planning measure also included the creation of a Transmanche regional plan (GOSE, 1996). The

reason for this omission will become clearer later in the chapter. However, projects which have come forward and been funded under this measure include:

- Euregion Historic Towns Association – the creation of a network of towns to exchange experiences in the spatial planning and conservation requirements of heritage.
- A new approach to rural economic development - Exchanges of experience between local actors in the rural economy in order to identify new methods for local economic development;
- Co-operation on urban projects and strengthening links between local organisations – setting up a working group to consider urban planning issues through targeted workshops.

In common with the projects discussed in relation to the first Interreg programme, these examples can again be characterised by their small-scale and local - rather than strategic - nature. Once again, the contribution of these cross-border spatial planning activities to integration is rather limited, based only on the movement towards common strategies and frameworks, rather than the achievement of strategic frameworks themselves. It is also noticeable that there is lots of overlap between these 'planning' projects and projects funded under other measures. A list of projects put forward by the KCC planning department in the first and second bidding rounds reveals that none of the eleven projects put forward was submitted under the strategic development and regional planning measure.

As discussed above (in Chapter Six) the development of the Euroregion collaboration between Kent, Nord-Pas de Calais and the three Belgian regions – Brussels Capital, Flanders and Wallonie, has been an important focus for strategic activities in the Transmanche region. Building on bilateral agreements between England and France, and France and Belgium, the Euroregion has included strategic planning and infrastructure as an area of activity since the group was established in 1991. This area forms the focus of the work of one of the five working groups, made up of professional and technical experts from each of the regions. This group – Euroregion Working Group 2 - is subdivided into three sub-groups which focus on the following topic areas:

- planning and urban policy;
- transport;
- planning, housing and living conditions.

To date the sub-groups have been responsible for a number of outputs, including most notably the publication of "A Vision for Euroregion" (Euroregion, undated) around 1994. The vision sets out the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of the territory as a whole, and is designed to act as the first step towards a joint spatial development perspective. However, there has been little progress on this subject to date although the working group has prepared and submitted a project application to the North Western Metropolitan Interreg IIc area, late in 1998. The project is entitled "Space[103]" and covers the area of the Euroregion, with the aim of developing a common strategy and action programme for the five participating regions (Euroregion, 1998). The particular concern of the project proposal is the situation of the Euroregion at the crossroads of several Eurocorridors crossing the NWMA area, transport corridors between Paris, London, the Randstad and the Ruhr (Euroregio, 1998). In line with the framework for transnational spatial planning provided by the ESDP, the project has five elements:

- the organisation of flows of traffic and people;
- environmental planning of the Euroregional territory;
- durable economic development;
- revaluation of the cultural patrimony and tourist development;
- the environment (Euroregion, 1998)

Quite clearly, if and when completed, the Space project will provide a strategic spatial framework for developments and policy interventions in the Euroregion. As such, the project would seem to fulfil all three of the roles expected of cross-border spatial planning as set out earlier in the chapter, although as the project has not yet been completed, it is difficult to evaluate its actual contribution to the integration process.

Reviewing the development of cross-border activities in the Transmanche region reveals a clear shift away from strategic planning between Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais, and a shift towards strategic planning in the Euroregion. Although strategic planning was included in the work programme set out by the 1987 Joint Accord, subsequent cross-border planning activities in the Transmanche context have been overwhelmingly non-strategic in either their spatial or sectoral coverage. Instead, strategic planning activities appear to have been switched to the Euroregional partnership. There may be a number of reasons for this, including the diminished

[103] Spatial planning and Actions in the Corridors of the Euroregion.

autonomy of regional actors – particularly KCC - in the Interreg programme due to the increasing role of French and British central government. KCC attaches great importance to its strategic planning function, and given the difficulties of strategic planning between the coastal districts - which are the focus of the Interreg programme - it seems only natural that the creation of the Euroregion should become the focus of Kent's strategic cross-border planning activities.

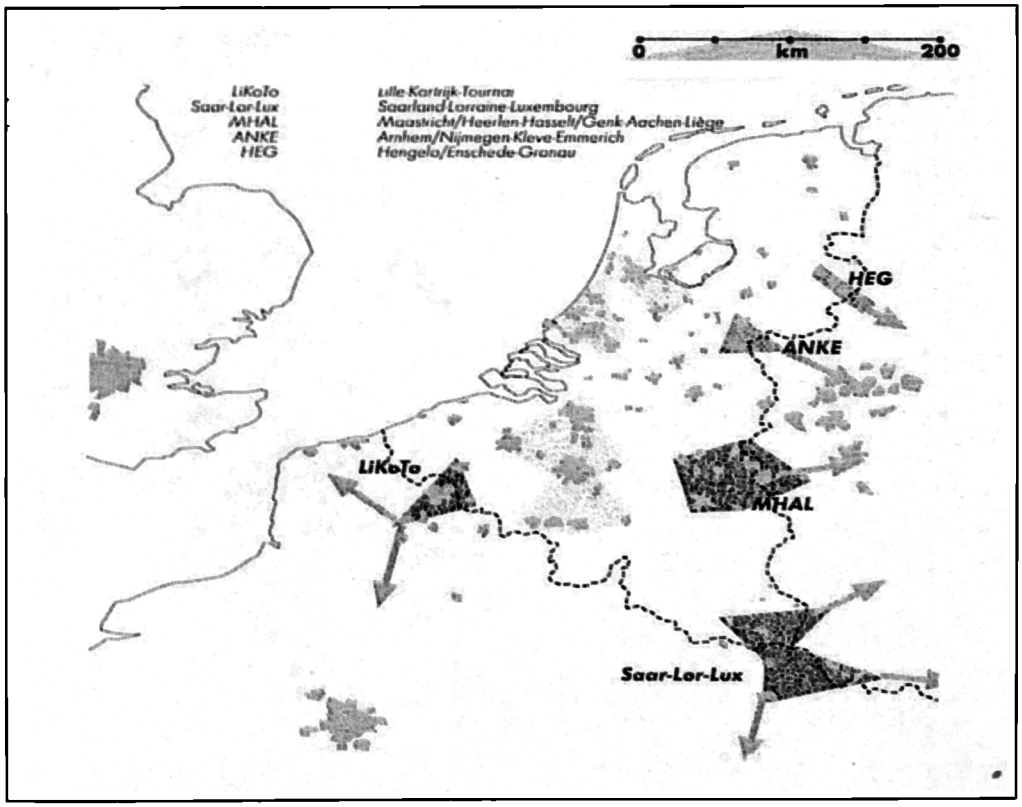
7.4 Cross-border Planning in the MHAL region

The close cultural, historical and political links between Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany have created a strong interest and tradition in cross-border planning over the last twenty years. At the national level, the Benelux countries have had a long-standing commitment to co-operate on important policy issues, including spatial planning. The first concrete action on cross-border spatial planning was taken in 1986 with the preparation of the First Global Structural Outline for Benelux, a strategic spatial perspective for the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg (Benelux Economic Union, 1996). In 1994, the ministers responsible for regional planning in the Netherlands, Luxembourg and the three Belgian regions decided to prepare a Second Structural Outline, in response to a number of external developments, including deepening European integration (Benelux Economic Union, 1996). In contrast to the first Structural Outline which covered only the three Benelux countries, the second – "Benelux^{+}" – looks beyond the Benelux territory to adjoining regions. The recognition of – amongst other things – the importance of cross-border urban networks linking Benelux with its neighbours. Three large cross-border urban networks are identified by the Outline, including that formed by the cities of Maastricht/Heerlen-Hasselt/Genk-Aachen-Liège (Benelux Economic Union, 1996) as illustrated in figure 7.1 overleaf.

The significance of the Structural Outline for European, and cross-border, integration is four-fold. First, it establishes a common development framework to which the Benelux ministers responsible for spatial planning have committed themselves. This not only means that the partners are committed to implement the Outline through national and regional planning policy (Benelux Economic Union, 1996), but it also means that there is a common policy framework within which those partners operate. This framework is built on three main principles: sustainability and spatial quality, diversity and cohesion (Secrétariat général Union économique

Benelux, 1996). The result is a mechanism through which the territorial development priorities and policies of the Benelux countries are integrated, and conflicts between the systems diminished. Second, it highlights and actively supports the possibility of cross-border spatial planning at the local level, illuminating those areas – like the MHAL region – where territorial and development integration would be appropriate. Thirdly, it emphasises the identity of the Benelux area as a single territorial unit, and illuminates the joint benefits of continuing cross-border planning. Finally, the Second Structural Outline - through its exploration of transport and mobility issues – actively attempts to enhance the permeability of the borders within the territory. The co-ordination of transport networks is itself an active attempt to overcome the interaction costs associated with mismatched infrastructure – in line with the objectives of cross-border projects examined in Chapter Six. For example, the cross-border networks identified in the plan (and illustrated below) are also identified as having important infrastructure and gateway functions, which are not only related to transport, but also have implications for the surrounding rural areas and the formation of a chain of cities, urban intersections and networks (Secrétariat général Union économique Benelux, 1996).

Figure 7.1 The cross-border urban networks of Benelux+



source: Secrétariat général Union économique Benelux, 1996.

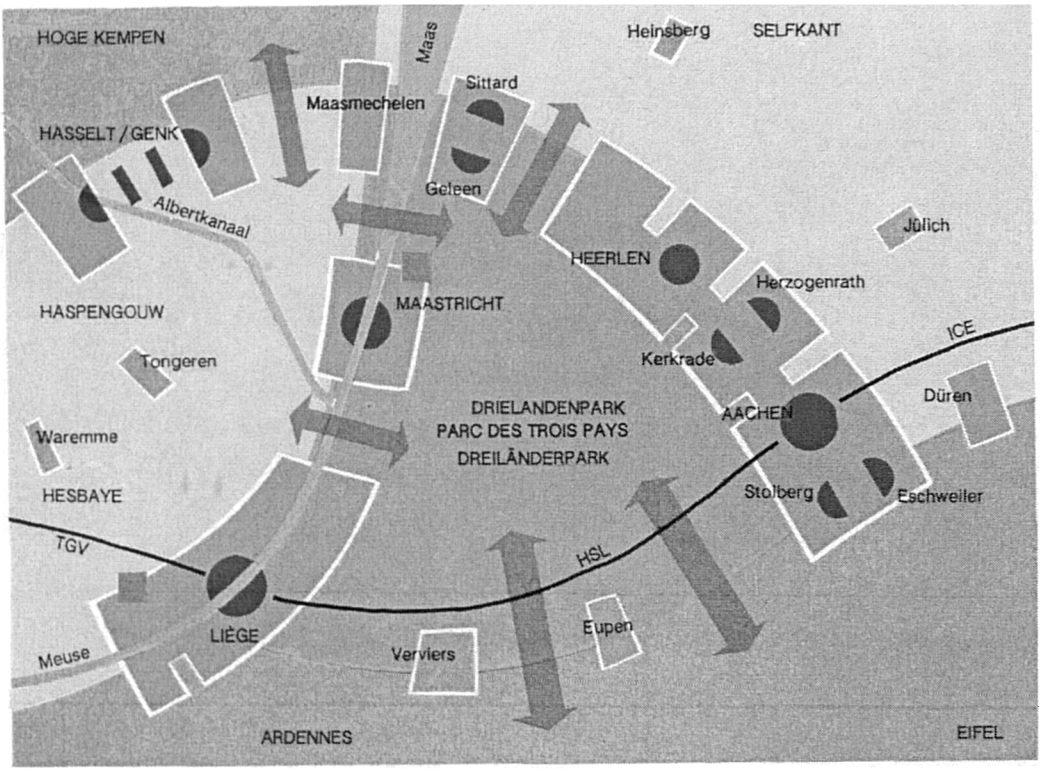
National level activities have also been important in stimulating regional level cross-border planning in the MHAL region. As explained in Chapter Six, the decision to develop a cross-border spatial perspective for the area is directly linked to the publication of the Fourth Report on Spatial Development by the Dutch Ministry of Planning (Corvers, 1998). In December 1989 the ministers responsible for spatial *planning in Wallonia, Flanders and the* Netherlands signed a declaration of intent to prepare a spatial development perspective for the MHAL area (Commission internationale de coordination, 1993). Work then began on the perspective – covering the urban network formed by the six cities of Maastricht, Aachen, Hasselt-Heerlen, Genk and Liège – although the minister responsible for spatial planning in Nord-Rhine Westphalia did not join the partnership until 1990 (Commission internationale de coordination, 1993). Initial efforts concentrated on the development of the project proposal and the establishment of a suitable group of participating actors at the regional and city levels. The resulting project and steering groups then began to pursue the objective of preparing a common perspective for the area, with both political and financial support from a national level. However, support at the local regional level was less forthcoming, particularly from the Euregio, which at that time (early in the 1990s) was growing in importance following the foundation of the stichting and the operation of the Interreg programme. According to one interviewee, a municipal government officer, the Euregio was not very pleased about the MHAL project, as it saw it as a threat to their existence.

Despite the tensions, the MHAL perspective was completed in 1993, setting out a commonly supported spatial vision for the whole area. The vision is illustrated in a single diagram shown in figure 7.2 below, which demonstrates the key principles of the document - reinforcing the external position, improving the internal structure and raising quality (Commission internationale de coordination, 1993). In order to realise these objectives the perspective sets out a number of strategic projects, including actions in each of the priority areas: transport, rural, urban and environment. In some cases the project are based on very specific development proposals; for example, the perspective includes the development of a 100 hectare *"Technoparc transfrontalier*[104] *Aix-la-Chappelle/Heerlen"* straddling the border between Germany and the Netherlands (Commission Internationale de Co-ordination, 1993). The development, 60 ha of which is located in Germany and 40% in the Netherlands,

[104] Cross-border technology park.

was set out in an agreement between the communes of Aix de la Chappelle and Heerlen. Although the basis for this project was a local agreement, its inclusion in the MHAL perspective has given it significance in the MHAL region as a whole; as a result, the perspective notes *'...les autorités régionales sont responsables de l'intégration de ce projet dans leurs plans régionaux respectifs...*[105] (Commission Internationale de Co-ordination, 1993, p.38).

Figure 7.2 The MHAL Spatial Vision



source: Commission Internationale de Co-ordination, 1993.

Perhaps the most interesting element of the perspective is that – like the ESDP – it was prepared entirely on a consensual basis. As a result, and due to the inevitable competitiveness between the regions over certain key development and investment opportunities, there are a number of unresolved issues. These include priorities for investment in infrastructure projects, particularly in relation to regional airports. However, as a provincial government officer pointed out, the most important objective was to produce a strategy that everyone would support - and by implication implement - rather than to resolve every issue.

[105] ... The regional authorities are responsible for including this project into their respective regional plans...

Following the preparation of the perspective by the MHAL project group, the participating authorities organised a consultation procedure for the plan in their respective areas. Once all of the comments and observations about the plan had been submitted and analysed – a process that took about one year – the Steering Committee made some advisory revisions to the perspective. The project and the project groups were both then wound-up[106]. The expectation at that time (1996) was that the implementation of the perspective could be handled by the EMR with its enhanced status and improved structure. An expectation that seemed reasonable given that the EMR had already adopted the perspective as the basis for its second Interreg programme. However, without ongoing support from the MHAL project group, little of a concrete nature has been achieved, although the lack of a legal basis for the plan has not prevented it from being reflected in regional planning documents[107]. The autonomy of authorities at the local level means that the perspective has not always been followed by their plans. One interviewee, an Interreg officer, ascribes this problem to the inability of authorities – particularly at the local level – to think and work at a broader cross-border scale. Another felt that the lack of take-up at the local level was related to the tensions between local and provincial government, and the democratic deficit of EMR structures.

In relation to the integration criteria set out at the beginning of the chapter, both the Benelux+ Structural Outline and the MHAL spatial development perspective have made a significant contribution to integration. First, by creating a common development framework these plans offer the opportunity to reduce conflict and tension between the different systems. In addition these documents also help to create the feeling of a common identity, by identifying areas of common strength and weakness. An identity that several interviewees emphasised as an important part of the collaboration and – ultimately - integration process.

Finally, such plans illuminate the mutual gains and benefits that can accrue as a result of ongoing cross-border collaboration. Not least of which – as one interviewee observed - is the political bargaining power that results from collaboration. The formation of a strategic grouping across national borders provides a much enhanced profile and bargaining position with both national governments and the European Commission. A standing which can only be strengthened further by the preparation of a cross-border spatial plan.

[106] Provincial government officer.
[107] Provincial government officer.

Comments from interviewees in Kent add further weight to the significance of a cross-border plan, particularly in the context of Interreg and cross-border collaboration. These comments related to a criticism of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Interreg programme as having "... *no vision* ... " and " ... *no overall direction* ... ", a deficiency which reduces the overall impact of the projects as they are not co-ordinated in any way. This was not a criticism found among the MHAL interviewees, where as noted above, the MHAL perspective forms the basis for the second Interreg programme.

Aside from the very specific projects developing cross-border spatial perspectives covering the MHAL region, Interreg projects have also been undertaken in this area. However it is not possible to comment on these, as none had been approved at the time information was collected from the programme secretariat. In contrast to the Transmanche partnership however, the regions do routinely consult each other in both plan-making and decision-making processes under the provision of various national planning agreements.

7.5 The Issues and Obstacles to Cross-Border Planning

The sections above set out, in some detail, the experiences of cross-border planning in both of the case study areas. While many of the projects discussed have been successful in their own right, their contribution to the integration process has not always been maximised for a number of reasons. Similarly, the exploration of cross-border planning in practice has revealed a number of issues surrounding cross-border planning. The following sections attempt to explore these areas in more detail, setting out - where appropriate - the additional implication of these issues for the integration of border regions.

7.5.1 The Mismatch between Tiers of Government and Planning Functions

Perhaps one of the most obvious and intractable problems to emerge from the case studies is the issue of the differing competences of participating authorities in spatial planning matters. This is particularly noticeable in the Transmanche partnership, where there is a significant mismatch between the two regional authorities, both in terms of their scale, and the scope of their planning powers. While on the French

side, the regional authority has jurisdiction over the whole of the collaborating territory, on the English side it is only the decentralised arm of central government in the form of the Government Office for the South East which has similar geographical coverage, although Kent forms only part of its area. Kent County Council – the closest equivalent to the Conseil Régional in terms of democratic status and administrative functions – no longer has complete jurisdiction over the geographical area of Kent because recent local government reorganisation has introduced unitary authorities in the north of the county, replacing the two tier district council-county council structure found elsewhere, with a single tier of government.

In addition to the complications of local government in the UK, there is the additional problem of the mismatch between the planning functions of the two 'regional' authorities - there is no regional tier of *government* in the UK at present, although there are a number of quasi governmental regional *institutions*[108]. While Kent County Council has a strategic plan-making function on the English side, under the French planning system spatial plan-making is concentrated at the very lowest level of government – the communes – of which there are some 36,000 across the country (CEC, 1994b). While this mismatch between the planning functions of the two regional authorities make it difficult to develop a cross-border spatial plan for the Transmanche area, the focus of the Interreg programme on the coastal areas introduces another difficulty: scale. Both French communes and English districts have spatial planning functions that include the preparation of land-use plans. However, because of the limited scale of these areas in relation to both the maritime border area and the Transmanche area, these authorities are also unable to make any progress towards a cross-border spatial plan for three reasons. First, they do not have the competence to work at a regional level. Second, as small territorial units it is difficult for them to take a strategic perspective when their primary concern is local development. Finally, even if districts and communes were able to work together on a cross-border spatial plan, evidence from the interviewees reveals little interest in doing so. One interviewee – local government planning officer – commented that he didn't see any value in cross-border planning, despite the fact that his authority had received funds for planning projects during the first Interreg programme. Cross-border planning was thus dismissed as a nice strategic idea, but not something he - or his authority - was interested in, particularly with the difficulties of working across twenty miles of sea. Such comments reveal a conceptual

[108] See discussion in Chapter Five.

difference between localised planning projects which communes and districts are happy to work on, and the development of a cross-border spatial perspective, which local level authorities are less interested in.

The issue of mismatching competence is also evident in the MHAL region, where both the preparation of the Benelux Structural Outline and the MHAL perspective has been dominated by state actors at the highest level. These actors included the minister for spatial planning in the Netherlands, and the ministers for spatial planning in Wallonia, Flanders, and Nord-Rhine Westphalia. The Netherlands is particularly noticeable in this respect as *national* government provided the original impetus for the MHAL project, even though it was ultimately managed by Dutch provincial government. While this has not brought with it the logistical difficulties of cross-border planning in the Transmanche region, it does raise the question of whether the MHAL project could have been achieved without either the impetus – or involvement of Dutch national government.

7.5.2 Economic Development and the Collaboration Competitiveness Paradox

As discussed in Chapter Two, the pursuit of competitiveness has become an important element of both economic and regional policy in the European Union. While development in border regions appears to be predicated upon cross-border collaboration, the pursuit of regional competitiveness requires regions of all types to *compete* with neighbouring regions. The result appears to be a tension between the benefits of collaboration on the one hand, and the need to compete on the other hand. This tension is clear in both of the case study areas, although the experiences are quite different, as the following observations demonstrate.

In Kent Nord-Pas de Calais both sides set out their intentions to co-operate on economic development issues through the Joint Accord and the Interreg programme. However, in practice little has been achieved because of competition between the two regions. Interviewees on both sides of the Channel confessed that economic development issues are the hardest of all to deal with for this very reason, with the result that few economic development projects have come forward.

Interestingly though, interviewees in the most peripheral areas did not subscribe to this view, saying that there was little competition with their cross-Channel partners. They felt instead that there was a genuine mutuality in their relationship, and that both sides could benefit much more from working together than they could from competing with each other. Such mutuality was also evident in the MHAL partnership, where although there is great opportunity for competition – particularly in relation to inward investment – the partners in the partnership appear to have come to an understanding about their respective strengths and weaknesses. As one interviewee - a provincial government officer - put it *"...everywhere has its own possibilities, and they should not compete for investments because at the end, wherever it goes it will have benefit for the whole of the (cross-border) area..."*

Despite the generally cosy relationship portrayed in the MHAL partnership, the experiences of the MHAL project reveal some deep-rooted tensions between the partners over economic development issues. As noted earlier, the perspective was developed on an entirely consensual basis, and both the steering and working groups found that there were a small number of issues that could not be resolved. These included the future development of regional infrastructure - such as airports – where partners were unable to agree which of the existing airports should be the focus for new investment. Quite clearly, it is difficult for officials to agree to sacrifice development in their own area in favour of development in another, particularly as *elected* authorities are expected to pursue the development interests of their own territories.

The barrier to comprehensive cross-border planning formed by the tensions between collaboration and competition mean, inevitably that both the scope of a cross-border plan, and its contribution to integration will be compromised. However, as the MHAL project also demonstrates it is possible to go a very long way in the preparation of a cross-border spatial plan if you are willing to set aside the difficult issues and concentrate on the common ground.

7.5.3 Tensions between Government Tiers

Further to the tensions between the Transmanche partners over economic issues, in-depth interviews with key actors on both sides of the Channel revealed some considerable tension between the tiers of government involved in the cross-border

collaboration. In both regions this is related to the fact that although the principal actors are found at the regional level, the programme is actually concentrated in the coastal zone, focusing on five departéments and six English districts. The result is a tension between the coastal authorities who feel the effects of the border very strongly, but are unimpressed by the strategies of the regional authorities in relation to their border problems. The danger of this issue is that were a cross-border spatial plan to emerge from the collaboration process, without the active support of the lowest levels of government and their help in its implementation, the project would be likely to fail.

As in the Transmanche example, cross-border collaboration in the MHAL region is shaped and managed in the most part by the provincial or regional authorities, particularly in relation to Interreg, the Euregio Maas Rhine and cross-border planning agreements. While this may provide a suitable strategic framework for cross-border collaboration, it overlooks the presence and importance of the Maastricht, Aachen, Hasselt, Genk and Liège city authorities. Although these authorities have their own collaborative grouping working on urban renewal issues and other common themes, the structure of the Euregion Maas Rhine makes it difficult for them to bring those issues to the higher level or influence the activities of the cross-border stichting. Because of this tension – and because it is the lower tier of authorities that develop the detailed and legally binding land use plans in the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium generally speaking, city authorities in particular may see little or no reason to consider or implement the recommendations of this cross-border perspective. Again, a direct threat to the success of the plan and any contribution it might make to the process of integration.

7.5.4 The Scale of Cross-Border Spatial Planning

The issue of scale in cross-border planning is an important one for two reasons: first the Commission and the ESDP suggest that one of the benefits of cross-border spatial planning is that it enables authorities to tackle issues at the scale at which they are happening. In which case, the cross-border partnerships fostered and funded by the Interreg programme may not be the most appropriate scale for cross-border plan-making. This seems to be particularly pertinent to the Kent case, where neighbouring East Sussex is also involved in a cross-Channel Interreg programme – and Kent is already participating in the larger Euroregion grouping. The question

that thus emerges is if cross-border planning is to take place, which of these groupings should take on the task. As it happens, it seems clear that if any progress is to be made on cross-Channel planning, then it is likely to be led by the Euroregion.

The second reason for examining the scale at which cross-border spatial planning takes place, is that it has a profound effect on the number of actors who are needed to participate in and support the resulting plan. The main difficulty with the MHAL perspective is that while it covers the whole of the EMR area, the fact that it was prepared at the provincial level means that its linkages to local municipalities is relatively weak. On the other hand, as we have already seen, if a cross-border perspective were to be prepared at a local level, it would lose some of its strategic impact. Quite clearly then a balance has to be struck in the preparation of cross-border documents between the need for a strategic overview, and the need for implementation. It may be that this issue could be resolved by preparing plans in a vertically as well as horizontally integrated way, so that local authorities are able to contribute in a meaningful way.

7.5.5 The Non Statutory Status of the Plan

Although the MHAL plan was developed with the full co-operation of the relevant authorities and national government, because it is not legislated for in any of the state planning legislature, it has a non-statutory basis, making it entirely voluntary. Although this does not appear to be a problem with the ESDP which has a similar status, there are two important differences in the MHAL case. Firstly, the plan was not part of an on-going policy or working group programme, so now that the project is finished there is no on-going development or promotion of the plan. Secondly, unlike the ESDP where the ministers involved in preparing it have some capacity to help it trickle down the policy pipeline into lower tiers of government, the provincial governments involved in the MHAL project do not have the same capacity to impose or encourage the adoption of the plan's principles. The lack of ongoing support for the plan is a major problem, and is likely to adversely affect its future implementation. This also highlights the need for successful cross-border spatial planning to be part of a long-term and ongoing activity. In this sense, the experiences of the MHAL region would suggest that the normal practice of sharing information about planning with neighbouring authorities are also important. The

simple reason for this being that ongoing cross-border planning as part of normal planning activity can contribute significantly to the generation of mutually beneficial relationships and the micro-integration of the planning systems through constant interaction.

In addition to the difficulties of implementing a non-statutory plan, there is the problem of the transparency and validity of the plan preparation process. One of the main characteristics of European planning systems is the requirement to involve the public in both the plan-making and decision-making processes. Since the groups developing both the MHAL and Benelux+ Structural Outline were ad-hoc working groups representing a number of authorities, they do not appear to have had the full-force of the democratic process behind them, particularly as the role of the public in the preparation of these documents is unclear. There was widespread public consultation in relation to both the MHAL plan and the Structural Outline, however, while the MHAL plan was amended in light of the public comments, it is difficult to assess the impact of this consultation given the apparent opacity of the decision-making process. This observation also raises a general question about *who* is doing the planning in these situations. As it seems unlikely that bodies such as the EMR will ever acquire cross-border planning powers, then the preparation of cross-border strategies in the field of spatial planning will inevitably involve consensual and committee based decision-making. Cross-border plans are thus unlikely to ever become 'legalised' and subject to the same procedural requirements as other land use plans. This inevitably means that while the presence of a cross-border strategy may provide enormous potential to promote integration, unless it is also a statutory plan of some kind, then it the achievement of that potential is at best optimistic, and at worst very unlikely.

7.6 Conclusions

The practice of cross-border spatial planning in each of the case study areas has revealed a number of key issues in relation to integration. First, that while local level planning projects can make some contribution to the integration of the border, if those projects are part of a wider strategic framework then theoretically at least, they can have a wider impact on the border. Second, that much of the value and difficulty of cross-border plan-making comes from strategic level. Locally significant cycle networks or townscape improvements may be useful contributions to the joint

development of the region, but alone, the contribution of these projects to integration will be minimal.

Apart from the nature of the cross-border planning taking place, a number of the issues to emerge related to the participants in the cross-border planning process, (*who* is doing it), and the competence of those participants to act on various issues. Where the partnerships are exclusive - as in the case of the EMR - or where there are issues of power and autonomy to be expressed, then tensions between the actors - particularly tiers of government can undermine the outcome of any cross-border planning project.

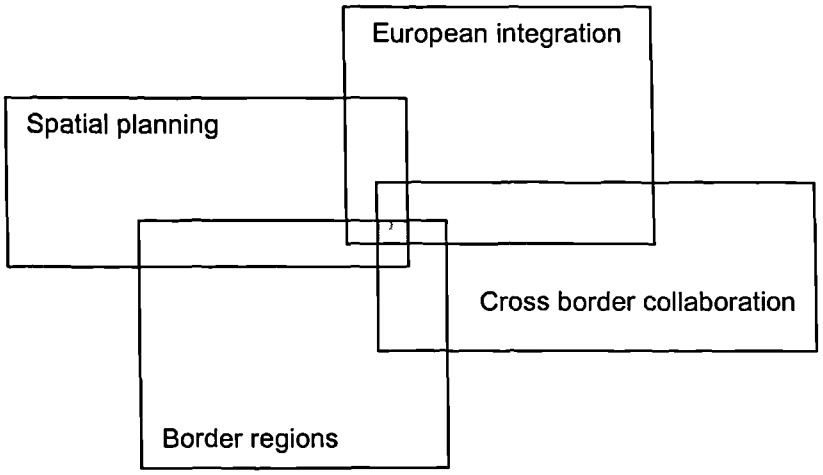
Together these observations suggest that while cross-border spatial planning can - and does - offer opportunities to achieve integration, there are a number of practical difficulties and issues which can and do affect the actual contribution that cross-border planning makes to the integration of the borders in which it takes place.

Chapter Eight:
Learning the Lessons

8.0 Introduction

The central objective of this thesis was to investigate the relationship between European integration, spatial planning and border regions and answer the general question *what can cross border collaboration - and spatial planning - tell us about the prospects for European integration?* Approaching this question required investigation of four research strands: border regions, European integration, spatial planning and cross border collaboration. Strands which have run throughout the course of the research, and can be seen to overlap and interact with each other as illustrated in Figure 8.1 below.

Figure 8.1 The Interaction of the Research Themes



Within the umbrella of central thesis objective, the research framework focussed its attention on the individual research strands (illustrated above) through the following objectives:

- to explore the characteristics of European border regions;
- to explore the definition, characteristics and mechanisms of European integration;
- to investigate the nature of cross border collaboration from a theoretical perspective; and,
- to explore the nature of cross border collaboration in practice.

The results of these explorations are represented in the following sections. However, the focus of this final chapter is not on the research strands themselves, but rather on the overlap between them, a small area of the research shown with

shading on the figure above. This area represents the area where the links between cross-border spatial planning and European integration can be evaluated through the experiences of the case study border regions. The objective of this chapter is thus to set out the results of these investigations, to link the general with the specific, and to draw some final conclusions about the relationship between European integration, spatial planning and border regions.

Before turning attention to this central task, the chapter begins by revisiting the cross border collaboration and border region strands of the thesis. These sections thus provide further support for the subsequent sections by teasing out the lessons that can be learned from the border regions about planning for an integrated Europe. There are three main elements in the discussion here. First are the general and theoretical links between spatial planning, borders and integration. The second element relates to the experiences of the case study areas and the conclusions that can be drawn from cross-border spatial planning in practice. Finally, the chapter examines the issues and obstacles to cross-border spatial planning encountered in the case studies, so as to draw out the negative lessons.

8.1 Unravelling Borders and Boundaries

8.1.1. Characteristics and Stereotypes

The starting point for the investigations into the nature of European border regions was, naturally, a comprehensive literature review. While this revealed a plethora of material related to boundaries and borders, it also revealed a strong tendency to rely on historical definitions and characterisations. The stereotypical definition of border regions as sub-national areas whose economic and social life is significantly altered by proximity to an international boundary raised as many questions as it answered, and revealed a link to neo-classical economic theory. This theory – which emphasises the depressive economic effects of the tariff and non-tariff barriers located at the border, and the market distortions created by boundaries – thus supported a view of border regions as poor and economically lagging. A view which when combined with the geographic peripherality of (all) borders, produced a very bleak and usually unsubstantiated characterisation of borders as: poor, under-developed, peripheral, with lower levels of GDP and higher levels of unemployment than average.

The claims were investigated in two ways. First, through a general comparison of border regions and non-border regions with the claims made about them (discussed in Chapter Three); and second through the case study research, where the border region stereotypes were again put to the test. Somewhat surprisingly, the results demonstrated the validity of some of the border region claims, particularly those related to GDP and income levels. Claims about unemployment levels being higher than average in border regions could not be confirmed however. Nevertheless, examination of the regions in the case study areas, also demonstrated that - apart from one or two minor exceptions - the regions did bear some resemblance to the border region stereotype presented in the literature.

8.1.2 Border Barriers and Integration

While the explorations of the characteristics of border regions highlighted their association with tariff and non-tariff barriers, consideration of the integration question began the exploration of the links between barriers, borders and the integration process. Work by Westlund (1997) highlighted the link between the permeability of a boundary and the interaction costs associated with crossing it. A model of these costs arranged into groups according to the time-scales required to change them (geography very very slow, financial issues rapid) proved helpful not only in moving towards an understanding of the characteristics of integrated boundaries, but also in assessing the permeability of the borders in the two case study areas. Unsurprisingly, the maritime boundary present in the Transmanche region was found to be much less permeable than the territorial borders of the MHAL region, although many of the interaction costs identified with the Transmanche border did not relate directly to its maritime nature, but instead stemmed from other differences such as time zones and the standards governing basic infrastructure such as roads, rail and power.

The crucial task here was to arrive at some understanding of the nature of an integrated boundary as opposed to the non-integrated one most people are interested in, so that it would be possible to evaluate what impact, if any, cross border collaboration and cross-border spatial planning were having on the permeability and integration of the borders. However, permeability - or a low level of interaction costs - was not the only defining characteristic of an integrated boundary.

It was also argued that integration depended on relationships of trust and mutual reward, and the presence of strategic policy frameworks across the border.

8.2 Characterising Cross Border Collaboration

Together, the knowledge gleaned about the nature of borders and their associated barriers set out the context for the next research question regarding cross border collaboration in both theory and practice; an activity universally supported and promoted, particularly by the European Commission, as a means of tackling common problems, generating development benefits and, naturally, helping to achieve integration. The emergence of the Interreg community initiative in 1990, and its extension into transnational spatial planning issues in 1996 has not only offered support to the development of cross-border partnerships, but is also encouraging those partnerships to undertake cross-border spatial planning. The emergence of this specific cross-border planning tool, is part of a wider shift in European policy, away from the stand-alone regional policy towards a more horizontally and vertically integrated spatial policy.

Unravelling the terminology of cross-border activities however, provided little in the way of an analytical framework for assessing the contribution of cross border collaboration to integration. The main difficulty stemmed from the fact that while there are many terms describing methods of joint working (collaboration, co-operation, partnership and networking) none of them do any more than simply describe *how* things are done. The crucial deficiency appeared to be the failure to distinguish between *types* of cross border collaboration and to link them with different *outcomes*. Without a framework for classifying cross-border activities, it would not be possible to make any generalisable observations about cross border collaboration in the case study areas. Polenske's collaboration/co-operation dichotomy – while problematic – did however provide such a framework which, when combined with other observations about the 'best' types of cross-border activity produced a useful framework for assessing the contribution of individual cross-border projects to the integration of the boundary.

8.3 Spatial Planning and Integration: Lessons from the Border Regions

8.3.1 The Contribution of Cross-Border Spatial Planning to Integration

Looking back to the discussions in Chapters Two and Four about the role of both spatial planning and cross-border spatial planning in the integration process revealed a number of expectations including:

- the co-ordination of the territorial impacts of sectoral policies at both the macro and micro scales;
- the harmonisation of goals and mechanisms of national planning systems in order to eliminate conflict between them and reduce barriers to the free movement of business and investment;
- the integration of planning systems at the micro level in order to further integration of the border region.

As a strategic activity, cross-border spatial planning and the preparation of joint development plans can contribute to integration in a number of ways. First, the creation of the plan, although not necessarily leading directly to spatial integration which depends more on implementation, requires some integration between policy-makers, politicians and their respective planning systems. Merely completing the process of preparing a joint plan will illuminate areas of agreement and disagreement, making the subsequent process of joint policy development and implementation easier. Second, as a common strategy representing the cross-border area as a single unit, such a plan can be seen as both a symbolic expression of spatial integration, and a mechanism for working towards it.

Finally, cross-border strategies provide an unparallelled opportunity to integrate policies, territories and planning systems through the co-ordination of sectoral policies and regional funding. Where a cross-border plan exists, it sets out the way to achieve spatial integration by identifying opportunities, barriers to and priorities for future development. As a result a cross-border plan can be used as the basis for other cross-border strategies including Interreg. Although a cross-border plan is not a prerequisite for achieving integration, the experiences of both the MHAL and Transmanche areas demonstrate their value. While the MHAL perspective was used as the basis of the second Interreg programme in the MHAL area, setting out the issues that the programme needed to address and the priorities for projects, the absence of an overall vision or direction was a major criticism of the Transmanche Interreg programme.

8.3.2 Obstacles to Achieving Integration

While it is clear that cross-border spatial planning *can* have a considerable integrative impact in a cross-border area, it is also clear that this contribution is significantly diminished as a result of a number of issues.

First, as seen in the two case study areas, one of the key issues in cross-border planning is the mismatch between partnership authorities and their respective competences, particularly in spatial planning matters. As the Euroregion observed (Euroregion, 1998) the issue of competence is the starting point for *all* cross-border activities that the partnership undertakes. Where competences do not exist on one or other side of the border, then the ability to develop strategic framework documents is virtually impossible; a problem that is graphically illustrated by the fact that while the coastal authorities are the focus for Interreg activities in the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais programme, they are more interested in local issues that strategic ones and would in any case be unable to pursue a strategic cross-border plan due to their level of competence in relation to planning.

The question of who is doing what further highlights issues surrounding power and democracy. While governance structures can generally be seen to be transferring responsibilities away from the public sector, there are a number of problematic questions to answer about the democratic nature of cross-border institutions. In the MHAL region, the issue of democracy has resonance for two reasons. First, with a *private* organisation responsible for the operation of the Interreg programme and other cross-border activities, this raises an interesting question about the way that this quasi-governmental body fits into existing governance structures, and its accountability. Second, it raises further issues about competence, and the implications for existing governance structures of the ceding of both power and polic-making activities to these cross-border partnerships.

The third issue to materialise relates to the sophisticated nature of spatial planning as a policy mechanism. Unlike other policy disciplines which focus on sectoral issues, as a *spatial* mechanism, planning is necessarily broader and more complex in its operations and aspirations. As a result of this sophistication, it is clear that for cross-border spatial planning to *take place,* participating authorities must have a certain level of cultural and professional understanding and *trust.* Cross-border planning thus relies on the pre-existence of links between the partners, and on

ongoing support for planning projects. For cross-border planning to really achieve integration it needs to happen as part of a long-term and on-going process, rather than a one-off project, although these are undoubtedly useful.

8.4 Final Conclusions

Throughout the course of this research a number of different research activities have been undertaken in pursuit of the question *what can cross-border spatial planning tell us about the prospects for European integration?* The results, set out in the preceding seven chapters have examined both the theory and the practice of cross border collaboration in order to unravel the links between cross-border collaboration, spatial planning and European integration. As we have seen, these links are complex. While cross-border planning is a much more robust mechanism for promoting integration than straightforward cross border collaboration, there are many factors which conspire to reduce the impact of spatial planning activities, including the following:

- the incompatabilities of governance structures and competences;
- the difficulty of maintaining transparent decision-making and accountability in non-elected structures;
- tensions between tiers of government participating in cross-border activities;
- the integration/compatability pre-condition;
- the competition-collaboration paradox; and
- the scale and status of cross-border plans.

On the positive side, cross-border spatial planning can be seen as a crucial mechanism for delivering European integration for the following reasons:

- the ability to co-ordinate physical developments in cross-border regions, creating single units of territorial space;
- the ability to co-ordinate the policy approaches and priorities of participating organisations thus diminishing conflict between systems at both the macro and micro scales;
- the practical value of cross-border spatial planning as a response to cross-border problems such as air pollution, and the changing scale of economic activities;

- the ability of cross-border spatial plans to add value to local level projects by co-ordinating them within a larger development framework;
- the diminution of cultural and professional barriers that results from working together; and,
- the stability that cross-border planning as an on-going and long-term activity gives to short-term funding programmes and partnerships.

In short, despite the difficulties, spatial planning in general and cross-border spatial planning in particular can make a significant contribution to the economic, social and territorial integration of Europe's regions.

Bibliography

Bibliography

Alderman, N., and M. Charlton, 1995, A New Classification of European Regions, *9th European Colloquium on Theoretical and Quantitative Geography*, Belgium.

Alexander, E. R., 1995, *How organisations act together. Inter-organisational co-ordination in theory and practice.* Luxembourg: Gordon & Breach.

Allen, J., and C. Hamnett, 1995, *A Shrinking World. Global Unevenness & Inequality.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Altzinger, W., and Maier, 1996, Cross-border development in the Vienna Bratislava Region: A review. *European Regional Science Association Conference*, Zürich.

Amin, A., and Thrift, 1995, *Globalisation, Institutions and Regional Development in Europe.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Anderson, M. (editor), 1983, *Frontier Regions in Western Europe.* London: Frank Cass.

Anderson, M., 1996a, *Frontiers.* London: Polity Press

Anderson, M., 1996b, The Frontiers of Europe, *in: Boundaries and Identities: The Eastern Frontier of the European Union*, M. Anderson, and E. Bort (editors). Edinburgh: International Social Sciences Institute.

Anderson, M., 1996c, The Political Science of Frontiers, *in*: *Boundaries in Functional Transition. European and North American Perspectives*, Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning. Berlin: Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning: 27-40

Anderson, M., and E. Bort (editors), 1996, *Boundaries & Identities: The Eastern Frontier of the European Union.* Edinburgh: International Social Sciences Institute.

Arup, 1995, *Intermediate Evaluation of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Transfrontier programme (Interreg) Joint Final Report.* Maidstone GOSE.

Arup, 1994, *Intermediate Evaluation of the Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Transfrontier programme (Interreg) Final Report.* Maidstone: GOSE.

Batey, P. W. J., and R. Cappellin (editors), 1993, *Regional Networks, Border Regions and European Integration.* London: Pion Ltd.

Batten, N., and P. Nijkamp, 1990, Barriers to Communication and Spatial Interaction. Annals of Regional Science 24:233-236.

Benelux Economic Union, 1996, *Room For Co-operation. Summary. Second Structural Outline for Benelux.* Brussels: Benelux Economic Union General Secretariat.

Bennett, R. J., 1997, Administrative Systems and Economic Spaces, *Regional Studies* vol. 31. No. 3, pp. 323-336.

Blatter, J., 1996, Political Co-operation in cross-border regions: two explanatory approaches. ERSA, Zurich.

Bort, E., 1997, MittelEuropa: a Difficult Frontier, European Research Colloquium, The University of Liverpool.

Brown, C., 1997, Two Heads are Better than One: Why Border Regions Collaborate, *European Regional Science Association Summer Institute,* Are-Meraker.

Brown, C., 1997, On the Edge: A New Approach to Understanding Border Regions. *Regions: the Newsletter of the Regional Studies Association,* 207:vi-viii.

Brown, C., and M. Cäniels, 1997, Border Regions in Europe: Exploring the Myth & Mystery, *Regional Studies Association, Regional Frontiers Conference,* Frankfurt (Oder).

Brown, C., S. Dühr, T. Fischer, J. Pilgrim, A. Kennard, D. Konstadakopulos, V. Nadin, S. Cooper, M. Taylor & D. Shaw, 1999, *Study of the Role and Operation of Transnational Management Structures in Achieving Effective Implementation of Transnational, Cross-border and Inter-regional programmes: Final Report,* University of the West of England, Bristol.

Cappellin, R., 1992, The European Internal Market and the Internationalisation of Small & Medium Size Enterprises. *Built Environment* 16(1):69-84.

Cecchini, P., 1988, *The European Challenge. 1992. The Benefits of a Single Market. Aldershot*: Wildwood House.

Chambers of Commerce & Industry, 1998, *Euregio.* Aachen: Chambers of Commerce & Industry.

Chisholm, M., 1995, *Britain on the Edge of Europe.* London: Routledge.

Church, A., and P. Reid, 1995, Transfrontier Co-operation, Spatial Development Strategies and the Emergence of a New Scale of Regulation: The Anglo-French Border. *Regional Studies* 29(3):297-316.

Church, A., and P. Reid, 1996, Urban Power, International Networks and Competition: The Example of Cross-border Co-operation. *Urban Studies* 33(8):1297-1318.

Church, A., and P. Reid, 1997, Deepening and Widening? From border co-operation to a major regional grouping across the Channel. *Regional Studies Association, Regional Frontiers Conference*, Frankfurt (Oder).

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1991a, *Europe 2000.* Luxembourg: EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1991b, *The Regions in the 1990's. Fourth Periodic Report on the Social and Economic Situation and Development of the Regions of the Community.* Luxembourg: EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1992, *From Single Market to European Union.* Luxembourg: EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1993, *A Portrait of the Regions, volumes 1-3.* Luxembourg: EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1994a, *Competitiveness & Competition: trends in the regions*. Luxembourg: EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1994b, *Europe 2000+. Co-operation for European Territorial Development*, Luxembourg, EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1994c, *Interregional and Cross-border Co-operation in Europe. "Proceedings of the Conference on Interregional Co-operation Regions in Partnership"*, Brussels 14-15 December 1992. Luxembourg: European Commission.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1995, *Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund 1994-99*. Luxembourg: EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1996a, *Regio: Regional Databank, Description of Contents*. Luxembourg: EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1996b, *European Union: Regional Policy and Cohesion*, InfoRegio News, Newsletter No. 26.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1997a, *The EU Compendium of spatial planning systems and policies*. Luxembourg, EURO-OP.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC), 1997b, *Practical Guide to Cross-border Co-operation*. Luxembourg, EURO-OP.

Commission Internationale de coordination, 1993, *MHAL. Résumé. Perspective de developpement spatial projet,* Maastricht: Province du Limbourg

Committee on Spatial Development (CSD) 1997, *The European Spatial Development Perspective. First Official Draft*. Luxembourg, EURO-OP.

Committee on Spatial Development (CSD), 1998, *The European Spatial Development Perspective. Complete Draft*. Luxembourg: EURO-OP.

Committee of the Regions (CoR), 1998, *Opinion on the Cross-Frontier and International Co-operation between local authorities*.

Cooke, P., 1995, *The Rise of the Rustbelt*, UCL Press: London.

Corvers, F., 1997, Of border regions and the potential of technology transfer to promote regional development, *ERSA*, Are/Meraker.

Council of Europe, 1993, *The Challenges facing European Society with the Approach of the year 2000. Transborder Co-operation within sustainable regional/spatial planning in Central Europe*. Europe Regional Planning no. 55. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Press.

Cram, L., 1996, Integration Theory and the study of European policy process, in: *European Union Power and Policy-making,* J. Richardson (editor). London: Routledge, pp. 40-58.

Department of the Environment (DoE), 1993, *Integrated Planning and the Granting of Permits in the EC*. London: HMSO.

Deutsch, K., 1972, Attaining and maintaining integration, in: *European Integration. Selected readings,* M. Hodges (editor). Hammondsworth: Penguin, pp 103-123.

Di Tella, G., 1982, The Economics of the Frontier. In: *Economics in the Long View, Vol. 1. Modes & Methodology* G. Di Tella, and C. P. Kindelberger (editors). pp. 210-227. New York: New York University Press.

Dunford, M., 1993, Regional Disparities in the European Community. Evidence from the Regio Databank. *Regional Studies* 27(8):727-743.

Dunford, M., 1994, Winners and Losers: The New Map of Economic Inequality in the European Union. *European Urban & Regional Studies* 1(2):95-114.

Dunford, M., and G. Kafkalis, 1992, *Cities and Regions in the New Europe. The Global-Local Interplay and Spatial Development Strategies.* London: Belhaven Press.

East Kent Initiative (EKI), 1995, *Protocol Co-operation Agreement. Presented in the Framework of the Interreg 2 programme.* Kent: East Kent Initiative.

England, K. V. L., 1993, Suburban Pink Collar Ghettoes. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 83(2):243-271.

Eskelinen, H., and F. Snickars (editors), 1995, *Competitive European Peripheries.* Berlin: Springer.

Euroregion, 1998, *Spatial planning and Actions in the Corridors of the Euroregion (SPACE).* Project proposal working document.

Euroregion, undated, *A Vision for the Euroregion. Towards a Policy Framework, the first steps.* Kent: Euroregion.

Euroregion, 1995, *Statistical Digest of the Euroregion.* Brussels: Euroregion

Euregio Maas Rijn, 1995, *Europa Concret.* Maastricht: Stichting Euregio Maas Rijn.

Euregio Maas Rijn, 1996, *Report Annuel 1995. Interreg I.* Maastrich: EMR.

Euregio Maas Rhine, undated, *Interreg.* Maastricht: EMR.

Evans, R., and A. Harding, 1997, Regionalisation, Regional Institutions and Economic Development. *Policy & Politics* 25(1):19-30.

Florida, R., 1995, Towards the learning region, *Futures,* 27(5) pp 527-536.

van Geenhuizen, M., B. van der Knaap, and P. Nijkamp, 1996, Transborder European Networking: Shifts in Corporate Strategy? *European Planning Studies* 4(6):671-682, N.

Giaoutzi, Suarez-Villa and Stratigea, 1992, Territorial and border barriers in Information and Communications Networks: a Conceptual Exploration. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Social Geografie* 83(2):93-104.

Gibbins, R.,1996, Meaning and Significance of the Canadian-American border. *In: Boundaries in Functional Transition. European and North American Perspectives,*

Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning. Berlin: Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning: 227-238.

Gonzalez, M., and J. Montalvo, 1992, SEM Cohesion and Regional Policy. *Regional Studies* 26(4):416-419.

Gordijn, H., 1996, Differences in Potential Employment Growth in European (Border) Regions, *ERSA, Zurich*, Switzerland.

Government Office for the South East (GOSE), 1996, *Interreg II: Kent/Nord-Pas de Calais Programme 1995-1999. Joint Submission Document.* Guildford: GOSE.

Government Office for the South East (GOSE), undated**a**, *Interreg I. Transfrontier Co-operation Programme. Kent Nord-Pas de Calais. Report for Period 1991-1994.* Kent: GOSE.

Government Office for the South East (GOSE), undated**b**, *Interreg II Nord-Pas de Calais/Kent Operational Programme 1995-1999.* Kent: GOSE.

Haas, E., 1972, International Integration: The European and the Universal Process, in: *European Integration. Selected readings,* M. Hodges (editor). Hammondsworth: Penguin, pp 91-107.

Haefliger, C., 1993, New Dimensions in European Regional and Spatial planning: Experiences with transboundary co-operation in Western and Eastern Europe, in: in: *The Challenges facing European society with the approach of the year 2000. Transboundary Co-operation within sustainable regional and spatial planning in Central Europe,* CEMAT, Council of Europe Press.

Hallin, G., and A. Malmberg, 1996, Attraction, Competition and Regional Development in Europe, *Urban & Regional Studies Conference,* Exeter.

Hansen, N., 1977, Border Regions: A Critique of Spatial Theory and a European Case Study. *Annals of Regional Science* 11:1-4.

Hansen, N., 1977, The Economic Development of Border Regions. *Growth & Change* 8:2-8.

Hansen, N., 1982, International Co-operation in Border Regions. An Overview and Research Agenda. *International Regional Science Review* 8: 255-270.

Hansen, N., 1997, Development in Peripheral Regions, *ERSA Summer Institute* Are/Meraker.

Healey, P., 1997, *Collaborative Planning. Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies. London:* Macmillan.

Herzog, L. A., 1991, "International Boundary Cities: The Debate on Transfrontier Planning in Two Border Regions". *Natural Resources Journal* 31:587-608.

Houthaeve, R., 1996, Spatial planning in Flanders. Looking for strengths through its regional approach, in: *Regional Development Strategies. A European Perspective.* Alden, J., and P. Boland (editors). London: Jessica Kingsley.
Industrie und Handelskammer zu Aachen, 1998, http://www.aachen.ink.de/Statisk

Jacobs, B., 1997, Networks, Partnerships and European Union Regional Economic Development Initiatives in the West Midlands. *Policy & Politics* 25(1):39-50.

Jacquemin, A. and L. R. Pench (editors), 1997, *Europe Competing in the Global Economy.* London: Edward Elgar.

Keating, and Loughlin (editors), 1997, *The Political Economy of Regionalism.* London: Frank Cass.

Kent County Council (KCC) 1996, *Rapport. Kent in Europe: Issue I.* Maidstone: Kent County Council.

Kent Forums, 1998, *Kent Competitiveness Report 1998. Summary.* Kent: Kent Forums.

Klemençiç, V., and M. Bufon, 1994, Cultural Elements of Integration and transformation of border regions. The case of Slovenia. *Political Geography* 13:73-83.

Kockel, U., 1991, *Regions, Borders & European Integration.* Liverpool: The University of Liverpool.

Kockel, U., 1997, *Ethnic Boundaries and Frontiers*, European Research Colloquium, The University of Liverpool.

Krätke, S., 1996a, Where East Meets West: prospects for the German-Polish border region, *European Urban & Regional Studies* Conference, Exeter.

Krätke, S., 1996b, Where East meets West: the German-Polish Border Region in Transformation. *European Planning Studies* 4(6):647-669.

Krätke, S., 1997, Regional Integration or Fragmentation? The German-Polish Border Region in a New Europe. *Regional Studies Association Regional Frontiers Conference*, Frankfurt (Oder).

Labrianidis, L., 1996, The External Borders of the EU are abolished, the borders within a Member State remain, *First European Urban & Regional Studies Conference*, Exeter.

LACE, 1990a, *Business Co-operation and Development in Border Regions.* Gronau: Association of European Border Regions.

LACE, 1990b, *Citizen's Europe: The Case of Border Regions.* Gronau: Association of European Border Regions.

LACE, 1990c, *Infrastructure and Planning in Cross-Border Regions.* Gronau: Association of European Border Regions.

LACE, 1991, *Cross-Border Co-operation in Practice: Institutional Aspects of Cross-Border Co-operation.* Gronau: Association of European Border Regions.

Laffan, B., 1992, *Integration and Co-operation in Europe.* London: Routledge.
Leonardi, R., 1995, *Convergence, Cohesion & Integration in the European Union.* New York: St Martin's Press.

Lipietz, 1993, Social Europe, Legitimate Europe: the inner and outer boundaries of Europe. *Environment & Planning D: Society & Space* 11:501-512.

Loughlin, J., and B. Guy Peters, 1997, State traditions, Administrative Reform and Regionalisation in: Keating & Loughlin (eds.) *The Political Economy of Regionalism.* Frank Cass: London, pp 41-62.

Luker, R., and P. Townroe, 1996, Preparing for the Single Market, *First European Urban & Regional Studies Conference*, Exeter.

Mackay, R., 1992, 1992 and relations with the EEC. In: *Regional Development in the 1990's. The British Isles in Transition,* Townroe and Martin, (editors). London: Jessica Kingsley.

Maillat, D., 1996, Transborder Regions. Members of the EC and non-member countries. *Built Environment* 16(1):38-51.

Martin, S., 1996, Impacts of Closer European Integration on Local Regeneration Strategies in the UK, *First European Urban & Regional Studies Conference*, Exeter.

Martinez, O., 1996, Border People and their Cultural Roles: The case of the US Mexican Borderlands. In *Boundaries in Functional Transition. European and North American Perspectives, Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning.* Berlin: Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning: 193-196.

Matzner, E. 1993, Introductory Statement, in: *The Challenges facing European society with the approach of the year 2000. Transboundary Co-operation within sustainable regional and spatial planning in Central Europe,* CEMAT, Council of Europe Press.

Mayes, D., 1994 Round Table Discussion The future research agenda, in: *Economic & Political Integration in Europe. Internal Dynamics and Global Context.* S. Bulmer & A. Scott (editors). Oxford: Blackwell.

Morales, R., and C. Quandt, 1992, The New Regionalism: Developing Countries & Regional Collaborative Competition. *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research* 16:3.

Murdoch, J., 1995, Actor-Networks and the evolution of economic forms: combining description and explanation in theories of regulation, flexible specialisation and networks. *Environment & Planning A*: 27:731-757.

Nadin, V., 1995, The European Union and Spatial Planning, *RTPI West Midlands Branch Conference*, Aston.

Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency, 1996, *A Year in Review 1995.* The Hague: NFIA.

Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency, 1995, *A Year in Review 1994.* The Hague: NFIA.

Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency, 1994, *A Year in Review 1993.* The Hague: NFIA.

Nijkamp, P., 1993a, Border Regions and Infrastructure Networks in the European integration process. *Environment & Planning C: Government & Policy* 11(4):421-446.

Nijkamp, P., 1993b, Preface. *In*: Ratti & Reichmann (editors) *Theory and Practice of Transborder Co-operation.* Basel & Frankfurt: Helbing & Lichtenhahn.

Nijkamp, P., P. Rietveld, and I. Salomon, 1990, Barriers in Spatial Interactions and Communications. *Annals of Regional Science* 24(4):237-252.

Nugent, N., 1995, *The Government & Politics of the European Union.* 3rd ed. London: Macmillan.

O'Dowd, L., J. Corrigan, and T. Moore, 1995, Borders, National Sovereignty & European Integration: The British-Irish Case. *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research* 19(2):272-285.

Perkmann, M. 1997, The politics of regional co-operation. New regional geo-economic strategies and the building of transnational pseudo territories. *Regional Studies Association, Regional Frontiers Conference,* Frankfurt (Oder).

Pinder, J., 1972, Positive and Negative Integration: Some Problems of Economic Union in the EEC, in: *European Integration. Selected readings,* M. Hodges (editor). Hammondsworth: Penguin, pp 124-50.

Polenske, K., 1997, Competition, Collaboration and Co-operation: An Uneasy Triangle in Networks of Firms and Regions, unpublished.

Pounds, N., 1972, *Political Geography.* (2nd ed.) New York: McGraw Hill.

Provincie Limburg, 1997, *Limburg, een province in Europa*, Maastricht: Provincie Limburg.

Ratti, R., 1993, Spatial and Economic Effects of Frontiers. *In:* Ratti & Reichmann (editors) 1993, *Theory and Practice of Transborder Co-operation.* Basel & Frankfurt: Helbing & Lichtenhahn.

Ratti, R., and S. Reichmann (editors), 1993, *Theory and Practice of Transborder Co-operation.* Basel & Frankfurt: Helbing & Lichtenhahn.

Reid, P., and A. Church, 1996, Local Economic Development and Transfrontier Co-operation. A New Scale of Regulation or passing phase?, *1st European Urban and Regional Studies Conference*, Exeter.

Richardson, J. (editor), 1996, *European Union. Power and Policy Making.* London: Routledge.

Rosamund, B., 2000, *Theories of European Integration.* London: Macmillan.

Rumley, D., and J. V. Minghi, 1991, *The Geography of Border Landscapes.* London: Routledge.

Scott, J. et al. (editors), 1996, *Border Regions in Functional Transition: European & North American Perspectives on Transboundary Interaction.* Berlin: Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning.

Scott, J., 1997, Promoting Transboundary Regionalism on the German-Polish border: some preliminary observations, *Regional Studies Association, Regional Frontiers Conference,* Frankfurt (Oder).

Schoenberger, E., 1991, The Corporate Interview as a Research Method in Economic Geography. *Professional Geographer* 43:180-189.

Secrétariat général Union économique Benelux, 1996, *Espace de Coopération Deuxième Esquisse de Structure Benelux.* Brussels: Union économique Benelux.

Service d'Étude en Géographie Economique Fondamentale et Appliquée de l'Université de Liège (SEGEFA) Undated, *Euregion Meuse Rhin. Europa Concret.* Liège: SEGEFA.

Sinclair, M., and S. J. Page, 1993, The Euroregion: A New Framework for Tourism and Regional Development, Regional Studies 27(5): 475-483

Shotton, R., 1997, Cross-border collaboration and the INTERREG programmes: past and present. *ERSA Summer Institute*, Are/Meraker

Starie, P., 1999, Globalisation, the State and European Integration, *Journal of European Area Studies,* vol. 7(1), pp 39-53.

Strassoldo, R.,1982, Frontier Regions: Future Collaboration or Conflict? *West European Politics* 5:122-135.

Strassoldo, R., and G. Delli Zotti (editors) 1982, *Co-operation and Conflict in Border Areas.* Milan: Angeli.

Svensson, B., 1996, Territoriality and Interdependence in Transborder Development – the Euro-Arctic example, *ERSA,* Zurich, Switzerland.

Van der Welde, M., 1997, Borders: Dividing and Uniting: The nature of borders versus the nature of the enclosed region. *ERSA Summer Institute*, Are/Meraker.

Wallace, W., 1990, *The Transformation of Western Europe.* London: Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Westlund, H., 1997, Opportunities and Obstacles in Nordic cross-border co-operation: The Mid-Nordic Case. *ERSA Summer Institute*, Are/Meraker.

Williams, R. H., 1996, *EU Spatial Policy and Planning*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Yin, 1994, *Case Study Research. Design & Methods.* Second ed. London: Sage Publications.

Zanen, M., 1996, Endogenous Development in two industrial districts of Catalunia: a network approach, *First European Urban & Regional Studies Conference*, Exeter.

Zonneveld, W., & A. Faludi, 1997, Vanishing Borders: the Second Benelux Structural Outline: Introduction, *Built Environment,* vol. 23 no. 1, pp 5-13.

Appendices

Case Study Interviewees

Kent Nord-Pas de Calais

Mike Bodkin	European Planning Officer, Kent County Council
Mark Dowling	South East Tourist Board
Daniel Fauquet	Agence d'Urbanisme et de Développement Economique. Boulogne-sur-Mer
John Foster	Shepway District Council
Jonathan Harris	East Kent Initiative
Trevor Herron	Chief Planning Officer, Thanet District Council
Nathalie Mandaron	International Relations Officer, Communauté Urbaine de Dunkerque
Henry Marchant	Government Office for the South East
Stefan Verin	Interreg project officer, France
Ian White	Business and Economic Development Manager (Research & Development) Kent TEC

MHAL

Drs. M. van Ginderen	MHAL project group member, Zuid Limburg Provincial Government
Drs. GMC Hermans	Maastricht City Authority, Algemeen Adviseur
Drs. J. Maatjens	Interreg programme officer, Zuid Limburg Provincial Government

Papers

Four papers, written and published during the course of the thesis are appended here. The papers are appended in their published form, and in chronological order.

1997 On the Edge: A New Approach to Understanding Border Regions, pp vi-viii, in: *Regions: the Newsletter of the Regional Studies Association*, February, No. 207

1997 Two Heads are Better than One: Why Border Regions Collaborate, 18 pages, *European Regional Science Association Summer Institute*, Åre-Meråker, Sweden and Norway, June 15-19th.

(with Marjolein Cäniels)

1997 Border Regions in Europe: Exploring the Myth & Mystery, 12 pages, *Regional Studies Association, Regional Frontiers Conference*, Frankfurt (Oder), Germany. September 20th-23rd

1999 Planning for an integrated Europe: Lessons from the border regions pp 16-21, in *North* (the Journal of Nordregio) Volume 10, No. 1 April 1999.

On the Edge: a New Approach to Understanding Border Regions

Caroline Brown, Department of Civic Design
University of Liverpool

Introduction

Borders are, undoubtedly, one of the most important features of the European Union (EU). Whether produced by accidents of geography, history or politics, they are significant because they delimit the administrative, fiscal and political competences of both the EU and the member states. Within Europe, interest in border regions has risen dramatically over recent years, particularly with the move towards greater European integration. Despite this interest, conceptions of border regions remain rooted in a tradition preoccupied with (inter)national borders, geographic peripherality and economic under-development. It is the intention of this paper to challenge this tradition and present a new approach to understanding Europe's border regions.

The Border Definition

Essentially an arbitrary line in space, borders denote the spatial limits of an organisation or authority's competences. Usually, this is taken to mean the extent of a government's powers and the delimitation of a nation-state, but it can apply equally well to other institutions, including local government and public authorities. A hierarchy of border types can thus be identified (see Figure 1) ranging from the supranational to the local.

Borders and boundaries are thus a familiar feature of all territories, and yet most discussion of border regions relates only to sub-national areas whose social and economic life is significantly altered by proximity to an *international* boundary[1].

This distinction is curious because it is based on the assumption that (inter)national borders are qualitatively different to other types of border, and only international borders affect regions adjacent to them. However, none of the general theories about borders suggest that this is the case. In fact, Christaller, Lösch[2] and Batten & Nijkamp[3] show that it is the nature of the border as a barrier which creates discontinuities in market networks, price gradients and service provision. This suggests that *any* border which acts as a barrier will have an effect on the regions adjacent to it.

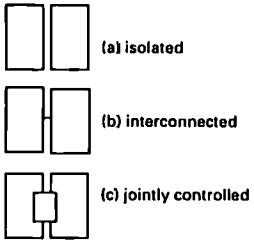
Borders in the Single Europe

The creation of a Single European Market has brought about many radical changes to the national borders within Europe. As customs and tariff barriers have been disappearing, the nature of national borders has been changing. There is now freer movement of people, goods and capital across the internal borders of the EU and EEA[4], while the administrative, judicial and political

Figure 1: Hierarchy of border types

supranational (external EU borders)
national (EU member states)
regional
sub-regional
local

Figure 2: (Giaoutzi 1993)



systems of the member states remain separated. The result is that as national borders have become more permeable, the distinction between them and other types of border has become much less clear. If one accepts this, then it is no longer possible to define border regions in relation to international boundaries. How then, should the definition of border regions be approached?

The theories about borders as barriers suggest that the degree to which a region is affected relates to the 'nature' of the border and the way that it functions. So, where tariff barriers are high, border effects are greatest and the region more significantly affected. The key to understanding and defining border regions can, therefore, be related to the nature of the border and the integration shown across it. Looking at border regions in this way helps us distinguish between regions which are significantly affected by the presence of a border and those which are not. A distinction which is useful when trying to unravel the mysteries of the European integration process.

An Alternative Approach

Giaoutzi, Suarez-Villa & Stratigea (1993)[5] have put forward a typology of border regions based on networks and network barriers. They conceptualise boundary barriers in three basic forms: isolated, interconnected and jointly controlled (see Figure 2), arguing that the influence of the border depends not on its character (national, regional, etc.) but on the links across it. This provides a useful way of distinguishing between borders of the same type.

All borders represent some kind of discontinuity simply because the administrative, cultural and economic context will never be exactly the same

on either side of a boundary. What is important is the degree to which those variables differ, since the size of the discontinuity determines the significance of the border as a barrier.

Using Giaoutzi *et al.*'s typology as a starting point, it may be possible to construct a conceptual framework based on an integration continuum. A continuum against which individual regions can be evaluated. With complete integration at one end and non-integration at the other, regions can be assessed on the basis of a number of factors including: economic parity, lingual and cultural affinity, co-operation, collaboration and the presence of tariff barriers. Although any region (which is by definition, bounded) could be considered, most would display high degrees of integration and could not be regarded as true border regions[6].

Distinctions between regions can thus be made on the basis of the integrated-ness of the border. Comparison of regional and national borders with similar levels of integration may also be possible. For instance, the boundary between the Flemish and Walloon regions of Belgium represents a distinct lingual, cultural and administrative division which might be considered less integrated than the national border between the Flemish region and the Netherlands. Similarly, the borders of Wales and Scotland with England are good examples of national boundaries which do not fit into the conventional model of non-integration, and which despite some cultural differences have economic parity and a common currency.

Conclusion

The conceptual framework for understanding border regions outlined in this paper provides an alternative to the anachronistic theories based on international boundaries and geographic peripherality. Border regions are dynamic, especially in the context of an integrating Europe, and require an approach which reflects that dynamism. Using measures of integration to evaluate and categorise border regions does just that, since it recognises change over time. The challenge will be to develop this approach further and construct a comprehensive typology of Europe's border regions.

References:

1. See: M. Anderson (ed.), 1983, 'Frontier Regions in Western Europe', Frank Cass, London, and Cappellin & Batey, 1993, 'Regional Networks, Border Regions & European Integration', Pion Ltd, London.
2. N. Hansen, 1997, 'The Economic Development of Border Regions', *Growth and Change*, vol.8, pp.2–8.
3. D. Batten & P. Nijkamp, 1990, 'Editorial: Barriers to Communication and Spatial Interaction', *Annals of Regional Science*, vol.24, pp.233–236.
4. European Economic Area.
5. In Ratti & Reichmann, 1993, 'The Theory and Practice of Transborder Co-operation', Helbing & Lichtenhahn, Basel & Frankfurt am Main.
6. Significantly affected by the presence of a border or boundary.

Caroline Brown holds a CASE award from the Economic and Social Research Council with support from Chesterton Consulting.

ERSA Summer Institute
Åre-Meråker June 15-19th, 1997.

Caroline Brown
Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool,
Liverpool L69 3BX, United Kingdom.
email <biene@liv.ac.uk>

Two heads are better than one: why border regions collaborate.

Abstract

Since the launch of the Interreg initiative in 1990, cross-border collaboration has almost become standard practice for Europe's border regions. However, despite at least three decades of networking and partnership, there has been no systematic evaluation of European regional development programmes. With the proliferation of partnerships supported by national and supra-national authorities, the message appears to be that all collaboration is beneficial, even though collaboration merely describes *how* rather than *what* is done. So, if the benefits of partnership are not at all clear or proven, then why do border regions collaborate?

Addressing this question, the aim of this paper is to untangle the reasons behind cross-border collaboration in Europe's border regions. Beginning with the theoretical perspective, the paper examines both the local and the global motivations for collaboration between authorities. Set against this, the final part of the paper links theory with reality by investigating the partnership between Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais, and uncovering the 'real' reasons why border regions collaborate.

This work is supported by a CASE award from the Economic & Social Research Council in conjunction with Chesterton Consulting.

Chesterton

1.0 Introduction

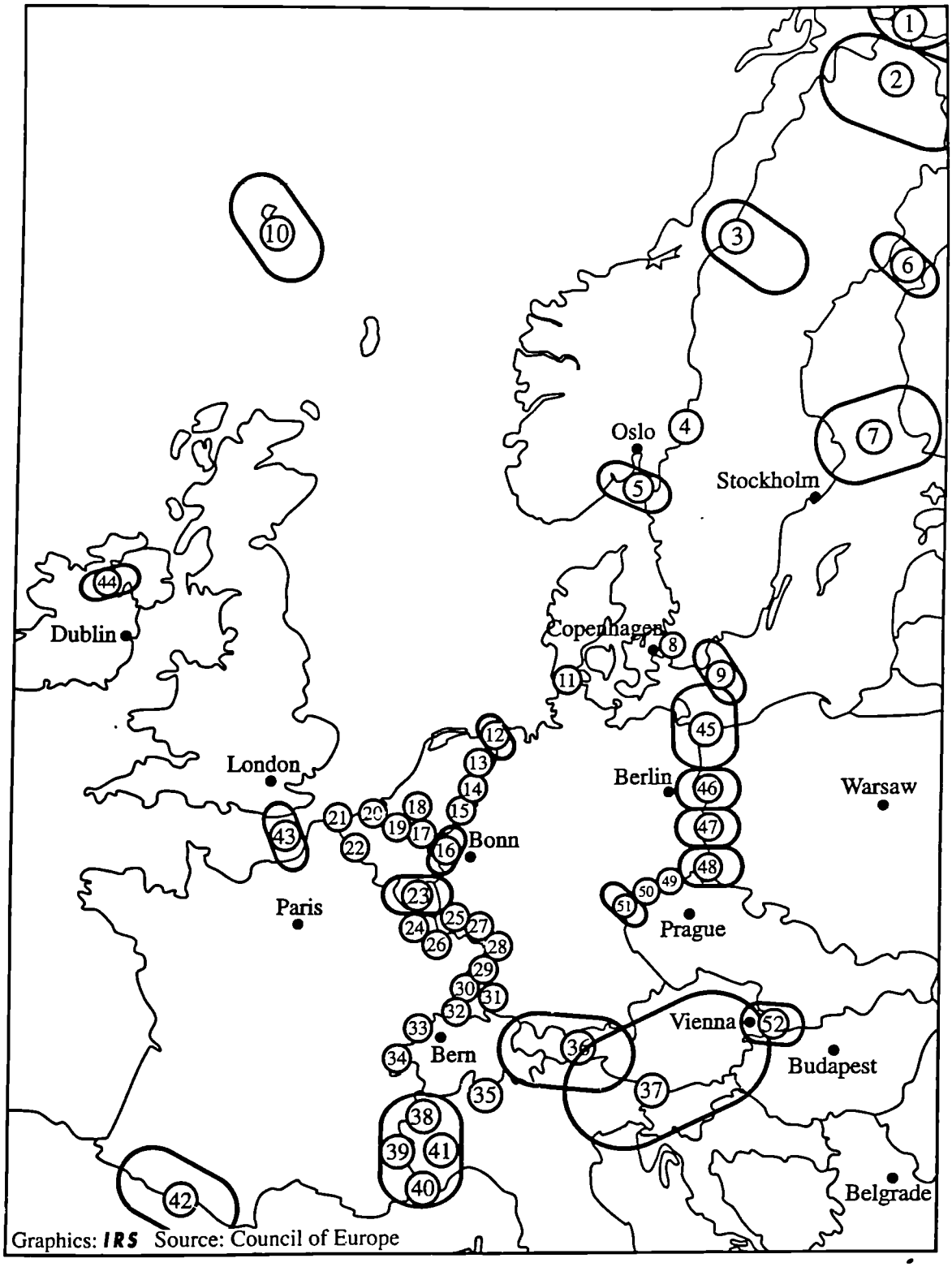
Cross-border collaboration has become almost standard practice for Europe's border regions, as Figure 1 illustrates. Compiled in 1995, the map is already out of date because the second Interreg[1] programme has brought collaboration and funding to many more border regions and groups of regions. Since its launch in 1990, Interreg has remained the single largest Community Initiative, devoting 2.9 billion ECU between 1994 and 1999 (EC, 1994) to help border regions overcome the problems associated with their special status. However, despite widespread promotion and several decades of collaboration in practice, there has been little evaluation of the impact of collaboration on the development of border regions. So why do border regions collaborate, if partnership is no guarantee of results?

This question - "why?" - has received little attention in the burgeoning literature on borders and frontiers. Instead, the preoccupation has been with how collaboration is undertaken and what it involves, even though the content and delivery of joint actions will - necessarily - be determined by the motives of the participating actors. Like all policy and decision-making, collaboration is the result of a complex interaction of social, political and economic phenomena. Since such phenomena operate on the supra-national as well as the local and regional scales, it is important to consider all of the factors influencing collaboration in general, and cross-border collaboration in particular. The paper thus begins by considering large-scale influences on collaboration, including: the European Union, regional autonomy and the network economy. Attention is then turned to more localised phenomena before considering, finally, the realities of the Kent - Nord-Pas de Calais partnership.

---

[1] operating in the funding period 1994-1999. Interreg is specifically devoted to helping border regions by funding joint projects which have demonstrable benefits on both sides of the border.

Figure 1: Euroregions, Interregional Working Groups and other Border Region Associations in Europe (as of December 1995).



source: IRS, 1996, p. 87.

2.0 The European Union and the Network Economy

Collaboration, networking and partnerships[2] have, over the last few years, become the mainstay of almost all policy responses throughout Europe. From the nation-state to the neighbourhood, co-operation between partners seems to have become a ubiquitous, but infinitely flexible, strategy for promoting development and overcoming problems. This emergence of collaboration as a policy cure-all can be linked to two large-scale phenomena: the European Union and the network economy.

2.1 The EU and European Policy

As one of the most important institutions in the world, the European Union affects every aspect of life, politics and governance in the modern Europe. While the name (EEC, EC & EU) and the numbers (6, 9, 12, 15) may have changed, the achievement of economic and social cohesion has been a central aim since the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The emphasis has thus (in line with the integrationist model upon which the EU is predicated) been on economic integration through political co-operation and supra-national authority (Anderson, 1996).

The presence of both cohesion and integration as on-going themes within the EU has, quite clearly, contributed to deepening political co-operation between the member states. At the same time, the pursuit of integrationism has, necessarily, required the promotion of co-operation and collaboration for the simple reason that they are an intrinsic part of any formal integration process[3] (Laffan, 1992). It is thus easy to see how, as the influence of the European Union has grown, the integrationist and collaborative ideas at the heart of the EU have also become increasingly influential.

---

[2] although these terms may be defined in different ways, they are treated here as interchangeable, describing the joint actions of two or more actors in pursuit of common objectives.

[3] the deliberate actions of policy makers to make and adjust rules and establish common institutions.

The general acceptance of integration and collaboration, and the prospect of an integrated Europe is particularly significant for border regions. As Anderson (1996) and others have observed, the vision of a future Europe has become one in which national borders become no more significant than administrative boundaries, and member states melt seamlessly into a single territory. In line with this vision, the creation of the Single European Market (SEM) in 1992 linked (inter)national borders with the process of integration by emphasising the need to dismantle the tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. Since most of those barriers manifest themselves at the borders of member states, then the need to collaborate across borders becomes particularly important if the obstacles to integration are to be successfully dismantled. Together, this produces the paradoxical situation in which borders appear to have no role in the future of the EU, and yet they are also seen as holding the key to the integrationist dream. As Bort (1997) put it, cross-border collaboration is the cornerstone of the European integration project.

While it is easy enough to see the links between European integration and cross-border collaboration, Blatter (1996) argues that the spill-over of a continental integrationist idea is enough in itself to inspire cross-border activities. As evidence for this, he points not only to the mushrooming of cross-border region building that paralleled the development of the Single European Market and the North American Free Trade Agreements, but also to particular projects including the American-Canadian project, "Cascadia". This initiative, on the border between the states of Washington, Oregon and British Columbia, has resulted in the creation of a powerful and innovative political actor stimulated by the continental debate about economic integration.

European support for collaboration is not confined merely to the general championing of economic integration and social cohesion. Instead, the Commission[4] has put partnership at the heart of its own policies and programmes, in order to make cohesion and integration a reality. With close

[4] the European Commission.

objectives of the EU itself, it is also influenced by the prevailing characterisation of border regions as problem areas. Much of the literature on the subject of borders and border regions concentrates on the problems that such areas suffer. Peripherality, economic underdevelopment and poor accessibility are often given as characteristics of border regions (see: LACE, 1990 a, b & c), even when the evidence for such claims is rather flimsy. Such portrayals, whether deliberately manipulative or not, seem to be sending the same message: all border regions are problem areas which deserve help and funding.

The influence of Europe on cross-border collaboration is thus, rather more complex than might first appear. It is not simply that borders are the barriers to integration in Europe, or that co-operation and partnership have become popular policy mechanisms; it is much more than that. It is about the whole structure and language of the European Union and the way that it reinforces, and is reinforced by, the experiences of the borders themselves.

2.2 The Network Economy

As the European Union has changed and developed over the last forty years, so too has the economy. Globalisation, localisation, flexible specialisation and the rise of post-Fordism have together produced a new economic and industrial order: the network economy. Characteristics of this new order include the dominance of the network as the mechanism through which advantage is achieved, and a spatial dynamic no longer rooted in the nation-state or the region. Globalising trans-national corporations have thus begun to decentralise and regionalise activities such as research & development (Morales & Quandt, 1992), while clusters of businesses work together for mutual advantage and synergy. Whatever the issue, whatever the objective, networking is seen as holding the key to economic success.

Networks have been recognised since the early 1980's as an important organising principle for interaction between companies (van Geenhuizen *et al.*,

1996). As business has moved away from sectoral growth towards flexible production, the result has been the emergence of the networked firm (Hansen, 1983). Of course if it works in business, then it must also work in government, and much attention has been paid to the role of networking in the development of a region. Generally speaking, the emulation of modern business techniques by government (on any scale) is assumed to be positive as it gives access to the same benefits that businesses enjoy. These include the ability to tap into collective intelligence in and beyond the scope of the region (Dunford & Kafkalis, 1992), reduced transaction costs and economies of scale achieved through resource-sharing (Church & Reid, 1996). However, the use of the term "network" (in the regional context) does not simply refer to the relationships between key actors, but also includes physical, infrastructural and communications networks. Bearing this in mind, it is possible to see why networks have become both a *sine qua non* for regional development, and an explanation for the differences in regional performance (Zanen, 1996).

Networks[7] are important in two respects: first, for meeting the physical and infrastructural requirements of a competitive region, and second for creating a supportive economic space for competitive business. While the need for physical infrastructure is obvious, supporting space is an abstract idea explained by Svensson (1996) as the product of strategic relations with, and between, public institutions. This helps businesses to succeed by providing them with a positive economic atmosphere in which to innovate and encouraging them to look for common interests and opportunities. Without those relationships, links and supporting spaces, development will - as Zanen (1996) puts it - "...be missing...".

Borders are as much barriers within the network paradigm as they are within the integrationist one, with the result that cross-border collaboration is again

[7] The term "network" does not only imply the co-ordination of actors and activities in a contiguous geographical areas. In fact, one of the most notable European networks - The Four Motors - was formed between geographically distant (but economically similar) city-regions, and this form of networking is increasingly common across Europe.

collaboration as the guiding principle in the operation of the Structural Funds (EC, 1996), the emphasis on co-operation has been particularly noticeable over the last decade. In that time, we have seen not only the Single European Act, the Single European Market and the Maastricht Treaty, but a plethora of Community Initiatives based on co-operation and partnership (Jacobs, 1997). Interreg, Atlantis, Recite, Ouverture and Ecos[5] may be tackling different types of problem in different types of region, but they all have one thing in common: they are relying on co-operation to achieve their aims.

The fact that partnership is at the heart of current EU policies, must have an impact on the activities of local and regional government, for the simple reason that access to European funding requires co-operation and partnership in both the preparation of submission documents and in the delivery of projects and programmes. As Martin (1996) observes, the availability of funding is a major impetus to the European activities of local authorities[6] and this is as true for border regions as anywhere else. Indeed, as the Interreg programme is the largest of all the Community Initiatives, then there would appear to be a very large incentive for border regions to collaborate. However, the relationship between the activities of border regions and the EU is not all one way. In fact, it would be much more accurate to say that while the availability of funding encourages cross-border collaboration, the institutions undertaking that collaboration play an important part in ensuring that funding for collaboration *is* provided by the EU (Krätke, 1996).

Lobbying the Commission to introduce new policy programmes, extend eligibility criteria in favour of a particular (type of) area, is something that many regions and groups of regions, including the borders and their cross-border institutions, have employed to their advantage. While such lobbying is usually very explicit, in the case of the border regions there has also been - I would argue - a much more subtle approach. Although the rationale for financial support of cross-border collaboration is partly drawn from the integrationist

[5] all examples of Community Initiatives and programmes funded by the European Union.
[6] based on local authorities in the UK.

widely promoted. However, while integrationism provides only one real reason for borders to collaborate (the achievement of integration), the network paradigm provides at least two. First, where collaboration addresses physical networks, it can be used to fill in the missing development by co-ordinating road and rail infrastructure (LACE, 1990b) or harmonising utility networks. Second, there is an expectation that border regions which co-operate and integrate will be more sympathetic to the nature of modern business (Hansen, 1983) and thus more supportive to successful enterprise. This characteristic is vital to the competitiveness of border regions given the prevailing view of such areas as economically underdeveloped and lagging.

Another valuable feature of collaboration in the network economy is the creation of synergy and dynamism. This is seen as beneficial because it increases interdependence with other regions, embedding the area into a wider economic sphere. For border regions that have suffered due to the difficulties of core-periphery and transnational relations, cross-border collaboration would seem to be particularly worthwhile. Increasing interdependence allows border regions to be integrated into larger regional systems, where connections with other regions become more and more important (Zanen, 1996). As that happens, Cappellin & Batey argue (1993), collaboration will allow border regions to represent a transnational meso-region with enough synergy and dynamism to compete successfully against other meso-regions. Competitiveness, synergy and interdependence thus seem to be the main motivations for cross-border collaboration in the network economy.

3.0 Power, Autonomy & Regional Identity

Putting the integrationist and network economy paradigms to one side, other factors influencing cross-border collaboration can be discerned relating to the nature and role of the region. Subsidiarity, the principle enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty, is widely regarded as having shifted the balance of power away from the nation-state and towards the region. A shift, it can be argued, that has led to a greater feeling and expression of autonomy amongst regional

authorities than ever before. Having the right to determine issues at the regional and local level has been particularly empowering for border authorities, although it has not always eased the relationship between core and periphery. Cross-border issues may be regional ones[8], but if they involve transnational negotiations then they are also the stuff of foreign policy, international relations and governments. That is not to say, however, that such matters will be considered important enough for government action. Indeed, Hansen (1983) argues that a lack of interest (or reluctance) at the national level is one of the reasons why border authorities utilise cross-border strategies. Engaging in collaboration thus becomes a means of asserting regional identity and challenging the inequity of a core-periphery relationship (Blatter, 1996). Of course if EU funding is available for collaborative initiatives, then such assertions are doubly rewarding.

In parallel with the expression of autonomy as a motive for collaboration, a new cultural dynamic is also emerging in Europe. As the role of the nation-state has diminished, regions have been looking for niches in which to (re)create distinctive identities and gain competitive advantage. To some extent this has been expressed in the rise of nationalist and separatist movements in Europe. However, Strassoldo (1983) sees cross-border collaboration as a function of ethnic regionalism, and the expression of a minority's demand for self-government and autonomy. Interestingly though, where separatism seems to be based on an existing and historic ethnicity, cross-border relations are creating a new one of their own. Bort (1997) cites the example of the tripartite French-German-Swiss alliance around Basel where locals have not one, but two identities[9]. Because the alliance is based on mutual co-operation and understanding, there appears to be no conflict between a local regional identity and a transnational regional identity. The ability to create, express and maintain new cultural identities through cross-border collaboration not only provides an incentive for the creation and continuation of collaboration, but

[8] which under the subsidiarity principle ought to be dealt with at the regional level.
[9] one belonging to the "local" region and one to the "transnational" region.

also, argues Bort (1997) holds the key to the success of the European integration project.

4.0 Pragmatism & Politics in Practice

While the influence of the European Union, integrationism and the networked economy has provided considerable support for cross-border collaboration generally, events at the local or regional level are no less significant. Political will, a shared desire to work together and a specific problem or project may all be crucial to the development of a collaborative relationship, regardless of the wider context.

Blatter (1996) sees cross-border collaboration as a specific problem-solving strategy developed by interested and willing regional actors. Although such actors are not isolated from the processes of European integration or the network economy, it is local need that is seen as the driving force; a practical response to a real-life situation. While such pragmatism may be unromantic, there are examples of cross-border collaboration that began with a specific issue. Discussions over water pollution in the Rhine and the development of the Channel Tunnel are both good examples of problem-solving requiring - and inspiring - collaboration across borders. However, while it may be a single issue that begins the collaborative process, it is likely to be a myriad of local and regional problems that keeps the process going. Economic development, infrastructure provision, joint labour markets and the co-ordination of environmental policy and protection; as long as there is a cross-border issue to deal with, collaboration is likely to continue.

In a similarly pragmatic vein, Martin (1996) describes the formation of networks and alliances as having three main purposes: the exchange of information and experience; the lobbying of the European Commission (and others); and, the procurement of funding for joint projects. This model also emphasises the practical benefits of collaboration, suggesting that border regions may not only be responding to problems but taking a strategic view of collaboration in

relation to future opportunities. Although it is difficult to identify partnerships based purely on information exchange, it is not unusual for partnerships to be set up with the sole intention of lobbying the Commission and/or obtaining funds. The Euroregion alliance between Kent, Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels and the Nord-Pas de Calais is a good example of such a grouping. Although it has undertaken some joint projects, it receives no funding and exists largely to lobby the Commission and national governments on regional policy issues. Indeed it is quite conceivable that the Euroregion was involved in the development of Interreg IIc, a programme phase devoted specifically to spatial planning on a transnational scale. A similar group has also been developed along the Channel coasts of England and France. The Transmanche Metropole, as it is known, is made up of various city authorities, and while it might not have obtained EU funding yet, there is little doubt that the group is already looking forward to the review of EU Structural Funds, and the next (Interreg) funding period.

However, it is not just funding and lobbying that inspire collaboration between border regions. Power and politics are also important, as Svensson (1996) points out in relation to the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. Collaboration here, he argues, is being used as a political strategy for handling the changing relations between East and West. Quite clearly, an ongoing relationship at the sharp edge can help to stabilise a political situation in the long-term. However, there is a danger that in such cases collaboration becomes inter-governmental rather than local, depriving the border region of real involvement or benefit. This is certainly true of the Irish situation, where collaboration between the Republic and the North has been handled by Westminster and Dublin[10] rather than the border authorities themselves. The result has been criticism of the relationship, and a questioning of its relevance to the Irish border. Collaboration may have an important role to play in international and regional politics, but collaboration based on politics alone will achieve little real benefit for the border region.

---

[10] in other words, between the national governments of the Irish Republic and the United Kingdom.

5.0 Collaboration in Action: The Case of Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais[11]

As a physical infrastructure project, the construction and opening of the Channel Tunnel is probably the most tangible expression of European integration that currently exists. The tunnel, an engineering feat by any standards, not only links England and France physically but also links the countries through the Joint Accord and Interreg partnership between Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais. Although there have been historic links between Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais, relations have never been close. The question thus remains: why are they participating in a collaborative cross-border relationship?

To begin with, the partnership was little more than a localised policy response to a large infrastructure project announced by the respective governments in 1987. This response was soon formalised into a more comprehensive - but similarly pragmatic - strategy for joint action when the two sides signed a Joint Accord. The principal objective of the Accord was to maximise the local benefits of both the Channel Tunnel and the Single European Market (Church & Reid, 1996), revealing a specific problem-solving strand in the relationship as well as a mutual desire to tackle common issues.

Although the authorities had agreed a number of policy areas on which to collaborate, without substantial sources of funding, progress was limited. However, once the Interreg programme had been launched in 1990, Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais took advantage of their existing relationship to lobby for funds. Justifying their case on the basis that the tunnel constituted a terrestrial link[12], the Transmanche case was eventually successful, and a grant of 22 million ECU was awarded for a programme of joint projects (Arup, 1994). In

[11] Also known as the Transmanche partnership.
[12] The first Interreg programme was open only to land borders, hence the importance of the terrestrial link.

keeping with the objectives of the Joint Accord, three main aims were set out for the Transmanche Interreg programme:

- the preparation of measures intended to derive maximum benefit from the creation of the SEM and mitigate the potentially negative effects of the Channel Tunnel and TGV;
- the development of activities connected with tourism and economic development; and,
- the provision of facilities for co-operation and exchange at official level.

(Arup, 1994, p.1-2.)

These objectives illuminate not only the priorities of the first Interreg programme between Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais, but also the reasons for the collaboration itself. First, the exchange of information and experience; second, the procurement of funding and resources; and third, the need to address common problems. In addition, as part of the Euroregion, Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais also began to take on a strategic and lobbying role, thus fitting neatly into the model of collaboration described by Martin (1996) and discussed above[13]. The reasons for collaboration between Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais might thus be summarised as: mainly pragmatic and partly strategic.

While it is easy to identify pragmatism and strategy as themes within the Transmanche collaboration, it is difficult to pin down the contribution of other factors. European integration is an obvious influence given the references to the Single European Market, but how significant are global processes and economic restructuring? The difficulty is, of course, that it is impossible to separate the local effects from the global processes. So, although the Transmanche partnership can be seen to respond to local issues, in reality it is responding to issues resulting from economic restructuring and globalisation. It is doubtful though, that the two sides have adopted a collaborative approach in order to fit in with the paradigm of the network economy.

[13] in Section 4.0

Examining the Transmanche partnership from this theoretical perspective provides some clues about the reason why the two sides collaborate. However, in an attempt to uncover the "real" reasons for the collaboration, I have recently undertaken a number of in-depth interviews with key actors in the Kent area. The reasons given for the collaboration have (predictably) varied, including the desire to tackle joint problems, to share experiences and to maintain a strategic position in Europe. One thing has however, become very clear: Kent is collaborating because it is getting something out if it - projects, jobs, funds. There is nothing altruistic about the arrangement, it is based on money, on results. Without the money, opinion is divided about whether co-operation will or will not continue. As one interviewee said, "...we came into it for the money and we're still in it for the money..." That said, the result of the collaboration has been a growth in mutual understanding and a realisation of just what opportunities there are for the two sides to work together.

The result of all this, is that the reasons for collaboration between Kent and the Nord-Pas de Calais appear to be both simple and complex. Local issues may seem to be the reason for projects based on tourism and port improvement, but as those issues have been influenced by large-scale economic forces, then the local impetus becomes a global one. The local and the global thus become difficult to disentangle, and both are significant influences in the Transmanche collaboration. The availability of money is also an important motivational factor, and yet collaboration began at a time when there was no funding of any kind. Paradoxically, while the relationship is based on a desire to work together to tackle large-scale issues (the SEM and the Channel Tunnel), the commitment to collaborate seems only to last as long as the current funding programme. And yet, despite all of that, both parties are involved in the politics and strategy of the Euroregion, lobbying and manoeuvring in order to create and maintain a regional identity in the integrating Europe. The "real" reasons for collaboration are thus much more closely related to the theoretical reasons than would first appear.

6.0 Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to unpack and unravel both the theoretical and the real reasons for collaboration between border regions. The rise of the European Union and the integrationist idea; the network economy and its lessons for government; pragmatics, politics and practice; each of these themes has been examined in relation to its influence on cross-border collaboration in general, and the Transmanche case in particular. However, as the preceding discussion of the Kent - Nord-Pas de Calais case has shown, the division between theory and reality is not at all clear cut.

Of course, border regions collaborate for many different reasons; some of them linked to general issues and influences and some of them linked to local issues. General themes and trends - in Europe, in government and in economics - are influencing activities at the local level, so that it is no longer possible to separate the local from the global. Motives can and do change however, so that collaborations begun on the strength of one issue move quite naturally into lobbying for funds, devising a long term economic strategy or preparing a joint spatial plan. This change and continuation occurs because - by and large - cross-border collaboration gets results, creating synergy and dynamism and enabling border regions to become more competitive and successful. Whatever the reason for the collaboration, one thing will always be true: two heads are better than one.

Bibliography

M. Anderson, 1996, Frontiers, Polity Press, London.

Arup Economics & Planning, 1994, Intermediate Evaluation of the Kent/Nord-Pas de Calais Transfrontier Programme (Interreg), Government Office for the South East, Maidstone.

J. Blatter, 1996, 'Political Co-operation in Cross-border Regions; two explanatory approaches', ERSA 36th European Congress, Zurich, Switzerland.

E. Bort, 1997, 'Mittel Europa. A Difficult Frontier', paper presented to the European Research Colloquium, University of Liverpool, 5th March.

R. Cappellin & PWJ Batey, 1993, Regional Networks, Border Regions and European Integration, Pion Ltd, London.

A. Church & P. Reid, 1996, 'Urban Power, International Networks and Competition. The Example of Cross-border Co-operation', Urban Studies vol. 33 no. 8, pp 1297-1318.

Council of Europe, 1993, The Challenges facing European Society with the approach of the year 2000. Transborder Co-operation within sustainable regional/spatial planning in central Europe, Council of Europe Press, Strasbourg.

M. Dunford & G. Kafkalis, 1992, Cities and Regions in the New Europe, Belhaven Press, London.

European Commission, 1994, Competitiveness & Cohesion: trends in the Regions, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

European Commission, 1996, Structural Funds & Cohesion Fund 1994-99 Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

M. van Geenhuizen, B. van der Knaap & P. Nijkamp, 1996, 'Transborder European Networking: Shifts in Corporate Strategy', European Planning Studies vol. 4 no. 6, pp 671-682.

N. Hansen, 1983, 'International Co-operation in Border Regions: An Overview & Research Agenda', International Regional Science Review, vol. 8 no. 3, pp255-70.

Institute for Regional Development & Structural Planning (IRS), 1996, Border Regions in Functional Transition. European & North American Perspectives, IRS, Erkner.

B. Jacobs, 1997, 'Networks, Partnerships and European Union Regional Economic Development Initiatives in the West Midlands', Policy & Politics vol. 25 no. 1, pp 39-50.

S. Krätke, 1996, 'Where East Meets West: The German-Polish Border Region in Transformation', European Planning Studies vol. 4 no. 6, pp 647-669.

LACE (Linkage Assistance and Co-operations for the European Border Regions) 1990(a), Business Co-operation and Development in Border Regions, AEBR (Association of European Border Regions), Gronau.

LACE 1990(b), Infrastructure and Planning in Cross-border Regions, AEBR, Gronau.

LACE 1990(c), Institutional Aspects of Cross-border Co-operation, AEBR, Gronau.

B. Laffan, 1992, Integration and Co-operation in Europe, Routledge, London.

S. Martin, 1996 'Impacts of Closer European Integration on Local Regeneration Strategies in the UK', paper presented to the European Urban and Regional Studies Conference, Exeter, UK.

R. Morales & C. Quandt, 1992, 'The New Regionalism: Developing Countries and Regional Collaborative Competition', International Journal of Urban & Regional Research, vol. 16 no. 3, pp462-475.

R. Strassoldo, 1983, 'Frontier Regions: Future Collaboration or Conflict?' in: Anderson, Frontier Regions in Western Europe, Frank Cass, London.

B. Svensson, 1996, 'Territoriality & Interdependence in Transborder Development: The Euro-Arctic Example', paper presented to ERSA 36th European Congress, Zurich, Switzerland.

M. Zanen, 1996, 'Endogenous Development in Two Industrial districts of Catalonia: a network approach', paper presented to the European Urban & Regional Studies Conference, Exeter, UK

Regional Studies Association: Regional Frontiers
Frankfurt (Oder), September 20th - 23rd 1997

Caroline Brown & Marjolein Cäniels
Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool, L69 3BX, UK &
Maastricht Economic Research Institute, The Netherlands

Border Regions in Europe: Exploring the Myth and Mystery

Abstract

Border regions have been receiving lots of research attention over the last few years, stimulated by the development of the European Union and the prospects for integration. However, while theories and studies of border regions abound, conceptions of them remain rooted in a tradition preoccupied with geographic peripherality and economic underdevelopment. Such characterisations appear to be based on qualitative, rather than quantitative, observations, and a conviction that border regions can be treated as a single, distinct group.

The aim of this paper is to put the claims and theories about border regions to the empirical test. Using data from the Regio databank, the paper compares rhetoric with reality, and tries to unravel the myth and mystery surrounding border regions. Taking an unashamedly quantitative stand, economic indicators are assembled for regions in a number of European countries. Comparisons are then made between specific claims found in the literature and the empirical 'facts' in order to discover whether - amongst other things - the assertion that border regions have lower income per capita and higher unemployment rates than other regions in their countries is justified. The results suggest that although this is undoubtedly the case for some border regions, "peripheral, poor and underdeveloped" does not stand up well as a general rule. Statistical comparisons of border and non-border regions also reveal the difficulty of treating all border regions as a distinct group, or population.

Border regions are one of the most important features of the European Union, but they are also one of the most complex and diverse. This paper attempts to reflect that complexity and diversity by challenging some of the most common conceptions about border regions and presenting a few alternatives.

Caroline Brown is supported by a CASE award from the Economic and Social Research Council in conjunction with Chesterton Consulting

1.0 Introduction

Historically, culturally, economically, politically - borders are one of the most important features of the European Union, with internal borders alone stretching for more than 15,000 km[1]. While in the past they have divided state from state, nation from nation, now - in an integrating Europe - borders symbolise the contiguity of the member states and the possibilities of a single Europe.

The deeply paradoxical nature of borders - the fact that they both join and divide territories, acting as points of contact and separation - is constantly (re)emphasised by the movement towards social, economic and territorial cohesion. Each time the EU takes another step towards integration - from the Treaty of Rome[2] in 1957 to the drafting of the European Spatial Development Perspective[3] in 1997 - borders are brought into sharp focus as a reminder of the persisting non-integration. Borders are central to the vision of an integrated Europe because that vision is predicated on the diminution, possibly even elimination, of borders as significant (economic) features.

Within this paradigm of integrationism, borders and border regions have become the focus of much research and policy-making in recent years. After Cecchini's identification of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade (Cecchini, 1989) and the preparations for a Single European Market (SEM), it was inevitable that a policy programme for border regions would be developed. Interreg, a Community Initiative intended *'...to prepare border areas for a Community without internal frontiers...*" (EC, 1994a, p.16) was launched in 1990. In addition to this explicitly integrationist objective, the programme aims to develop cross-border collaboration and help internal and external frontier regions "*...to overcome the specific problems arising from their comparatively isolated position...*" (ibid., p.16). Such is the support for helping border regions, that the Interreg initiative is now in its second funding period, commanding more resources than any other single initiative[4]. Clearly, borders and border regions are extremely important in the future development of the European Union.

1.1 The Emergence of a Tradition

While European integrationism has focused attention on border regions, it has also shaped the contemporary view of borders in Europe. With an emphasis on removing barriers and reducing disparity, the endless reworking of the border as both barrier and periphery has created a view of border regions as doubly disadvantaged: peripheral and poor. And yet the core of Europe - the focus of Europe's economic and political power - is also a place of borders, boundaries and frontiers. Why is it then that is it the negative rather than the positive characteristics of border regions that seem to prevail?

Clearly the integrationist dream provides some of the answer, although as the dream has developed it has become entwined with academic theories about international boundaries. Christaller and Lösch are undoubtedly at the root of almost all ideas about borders as barriers and peripheries thanks to their ideas about economic space. In Christaller's model the presence of a border or boundary distorts the regular pattern of central places and their hinterlands by cutting up spatially complementary regions (Hansen, 1977). For Lösch, on the other hand, the existence of frontiers creates gaps in the market network, discouraging industries from settling near to a border due to the depressed economy and the difficulties of overcoming other barriers including that of defence (Hansen, 1997). It is certainly true - as many studies have shown - that where borders also represent barriers, economic development is suppressed and networks fail to develop. It is unsurprising then, that more contemporary discussions of the border region

[1] based on figures for the EUR 12 and EFTA countries in: EC, 1994b.

[2] with its' emphasis on the achievement of economic and social cohesion.

[3] a document that sets out a shared vision of the EU territory as a whole, promoting harmonious and balanced development, and seeking a better balance between competition and co-operation (EC, 1997).

[4] the budget for Interreg between 1994 and 1999 is 2.3 billion ECU, compared to 1.4 billion for programmes on Employment, Rural Development and Industrial Change (EC, 199b, p. 189)

still cite separation of the market from its hinterland as a reason for the depressed nature of border economies[5]. However, given the development of the Single European Market with its five freedoms[6] and the mosaic of trade agreements and free trade areas across Europe, such separations must surely be the exception rather than the rule.

Economic depression at the edges of nation-states is also linked to the defensive role that frontiers (rather than borders) had in the past. With centres of power and decision-making strategically distanced from frontiers, it is unsurprising that border regions should feel peripheral, after all that is what a boundary represents; the periphery. As national peripheries however, border regions do suffer from their position at the extremities of national infrastructure networks (Labrianidis, 1996; Nijkamp, 1993); although whether that also makes them isolated is difficult to say. While at one level border *are* peripheral, in a Europe of the regions where blue bananas, golden triangles and bunches of grapes are overtaking national geographies the cry of peripherality is much harder to hear.

The cumulative effect of European integrationism and these view of border regions, has been the development, the evolution, of a border region characterisation based on two themes. The first concentrates on the economic profile of the border and the negative effects that it has on markets and networks. The second theme revolves around the geography of borders, emphasising their economic and political peripherality and a lack of infrastructure. The result is a composite view of European border regions, that relies on general descriptions: economically lagging, underdeveloped and culturally obsolete[7] for example, sprinkled liberally with assertions: border regions in Europe have higher unemployment rates and lower income than other regions, they have low agricultural productivity and poor infrastructure provision.

There are two main problems with this view of Europe's border regions. First, it treats border regions as if they are a distinct group displaying a number of common characteristics, and second, it fails to provide any real evidence for the claims that are made. Rumley & Minghi may claim that per capita income is likely to be lower in border regions (1991, p.6) but neither they, nor Peter Nijkamp (1993), provide any hard evidence for the observation. Without it, it is difficult to ascertain whether these assertions are still true hold true for the borders of an integrating Europe, or whether it is more myth than substance. There is only one way to find out.

2.0 Beginning the Exploration

The interest in regional disparity and classification has produced a useful body of work in which to search for clues about the 'true' nature of borders and border regions. As a starting point for our exploration, four very different regional analyses were assembled and examined in relation to European border regions. Although there are some limitations to such an approach, particularly in relation to the spatial level of analysis[8], as the results show, regional analyses can, and do, reveal things about border regions.

In order to provide a consistent interpretation of these secondary sources, border regions have been defined as *all* Nuts II and III regions which contain areas eligible for Community support under the second Interreg programme[9]. This pragmatic approach may ignore the important (but vexed) question of defining and delimiting border regions, but as the purpose of the Interreg programme is to help border

[5] see for instance: Batten & Nijkamp, 1990; Labrianidis, 1996; LACE, 1990b; and, Nijkamp, 1993.
[6] freedom to move capital, good, services, people and information around the Community.
[7] see: Eskelinen & Snickars, 1990 and Clement, 1996.
[8] as most "general" investigations rely on data at the Nuts II level, the exact character of border regions (more accurately described at the Nuts III level) is harder to discern because of the noise of other (non-border) regions in the Nuts II grouping.
[9] the eligible areas are set out in the Annex to: EC, 1994a.

regions overcome the specific problems associated with their relatively isolated position (EC, 1994a), then it seems safe to assume that regions which are eligible for the Interreg programme are in fact areas whose economic life is significantly affected by proximity to an international frontier[10].

2.1 GDP and Unemployment in the borders

The European Commission is probably the most assiduous assessor of the state of regions, with its Periodic Reports on the social and economic cohesion of the Union[11]. Within these reports, the Commission produces tables ranking all European Regions on the basis of their GDP and unemployment levels. Figure One shows part of such a table.

Figure One: Table of European Regions ranked according to GDP (1989-91)

Regions of the Community ranked according to their level of GDP per head[1]

Rank	Region		GDP/head in PPS average (89-90-91) EUR12=100	Unemployment rate average (91-92-93)	Population 1991 Total (in millions)	Population 1991 cumulative share (%)
1	Thüringen	(D)	30 0	139 3	2.6	0 8
2	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	(D)	33.0	158 8	1 9	1 3
3	Sachsen	(D)	33.0	125 9	4.8	2.7
4	Alentejo	(P)	33 9	85 1	0.5	2.9
5	Sachsen-Anhalt	(D)	35.0	145 3	2.9	3 7
6	Voreio Aigaio	(GR)	35 2	100.8	0 2	3.8
7	Brandenburg	(D)	36.0	129 4	2.6	4.5
8	Ipeiros	(GR)	36 2	111.1	0 3	4.6
9	Guadeloupe	(F)	39.0	250 5	0 4	4 7
10	Centro	(P)	39 6	28 3	1 7	5.2
11	Dytiki Ellada	(GR)	40 8	98 8	0 7	5 4
12	Anatoliki Make, Thraki	(GR)	43 3	61 1	0 6	5.6
13	Ionia Nisia	(GR)	43 7	44 7	0 2	5 6

Source: EC, 1994b, p.192

Assuming that border and non-border regions are equal in their diversity[12], we would expect to see between four and five border regions appearing in each decile of the table[13]. However, as literature and theory predict lower GDP and higher unemployment levels in border regions (Nijkamp, 1993 & Clement, 1996), our alternative hypothesis predicts rather more than five border regions in the top ten of each table. In fact, examination of the tables in both the Fourth and the Fifth Periodic Reports (EC, 1991 & 1994a) reveals that:

- nine out of ten of the poorest regions (1986-88) were border regions;
- seven out of ten of the poorest regions 1989-91 were border regions;
- four out of ten of the regions with the highest unemployment levels (1988-90) were border regions; and,
- three out of ten of the regions with the highest levels of unemployment (1991-93).

The results in the GDP tables thus appear to confirm the predicted dominance of border regions among Europe's poorest regions. However, the figures on unemployment are much less conclusive, with fewer border regions than expected appearing in the top decile.

Widening the field of vision to include the top and bottom twenty rankings in each table, merely confirms these preliminary observations about GDP and unemployment in relation to border regions. However, as Table One illustrates, the rankings also reveal a rather more complex picture than the claims about low GDP and high unemployment suggest.

[10] the definition of a border region as set out by Anderson (1983) and Hansen (1977).

[11] see: EC, 1991 and 1994b.

[12] that is to say, that they come from the same population and there are no significant differences between them.

[13] as 80 of the 171 regions in Fourth Periodic Report and 86 of the 179 regions in the Fifth Periodic Report are border regions.

Table One: Incidence and Expected Incidence of Border Regions in Rankings of GDP and Unemployment Levels

Rankings	observed	expected	observed	expected	
	GDP 86-88		GDP 89-91		
top 10	9	4.6	7	4.8	poorest
top 20	16	9.2	13	9.6	⇩
bottom 10	4	4.6	3	4.8	⇩
bottom 20	14	9.2	9	9.6	richest
	Unemployment 88-90		Unemployment 91-93		
top 10	4	4.6	3	4.8	highest
top 20	10	9.2	6	9.6	⇩
bottom 10	7	4.6	7	4.8	⇩
bottom 20	8	9.2	12	9.6	lowest

As we expect, the ranking for the regions with low GDP are dominated by border regions, in line with the observations of Nijkamp (1993) and Clement (1996). Rankings at the other end of the spectrum, however, refuse to confirm the logical corollary of the border region as a low GDP area. If border regions are associated with low GDP, then we would expect to see very few border regions featuring amongst those with the highest levels of GDP. In fact, in the Fourth Periodic Report (GDP 1986-88), we see that fourteen of the twenty richest regions are border regions, and that Groningen - one of the Dutch border regions - has the highest level of GDP in the whole of Europe. The border region - GDP relationship is thus not quite so straightforward.

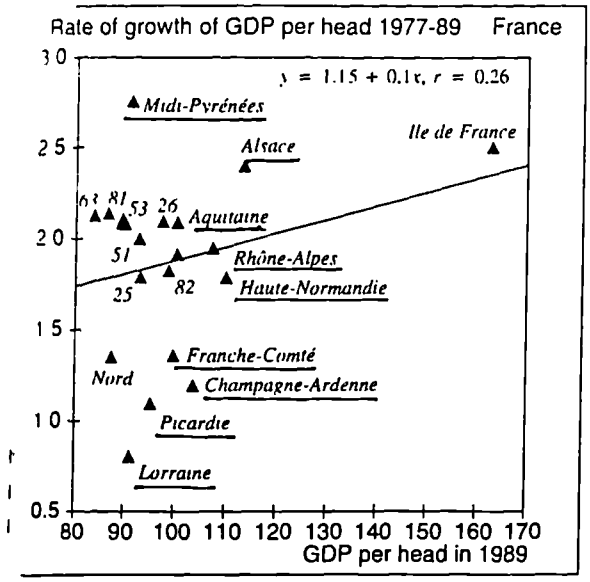
In terms of the unemployment question, as we have already seen, evidence from the ranked tables refuses to confirm the claim that border regions tend to have higher unemployment levels (than their national counterparts). Of course, examining data from the whole of Europe does not permit country by country analysis, but nevertheless the fact that border regions *dominate* the ten areas with the lowest unemployment rates must cast some doubt on the assertion.

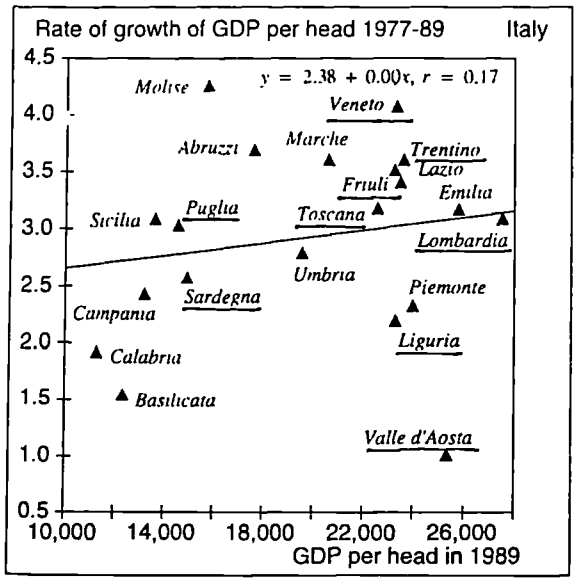
While the tables in the Fourth and Fifth Periodic Reports on economic and social cohesion give us some clues about the "performance" of border regions, they also give us the chance to examine whether that performance has changed over time. Although we do not yet have figures for 'before' and 'after' the creation of the Single European Market[14], Table One does suggest some very slight improvement in the position of border regions. A move away from the 'top' deciles of both GDP and unemployment can be seen, along with a rise in the number of border regions with the very lowest levels of unemployment in Europe. However, as this time period also sees the inclusion of the new German Länder - with their very recognisable problems - it is difficult to unravel how much of this change is a general improvement rather than an implied increment produced by the inclusion of regions with very poor indicators.

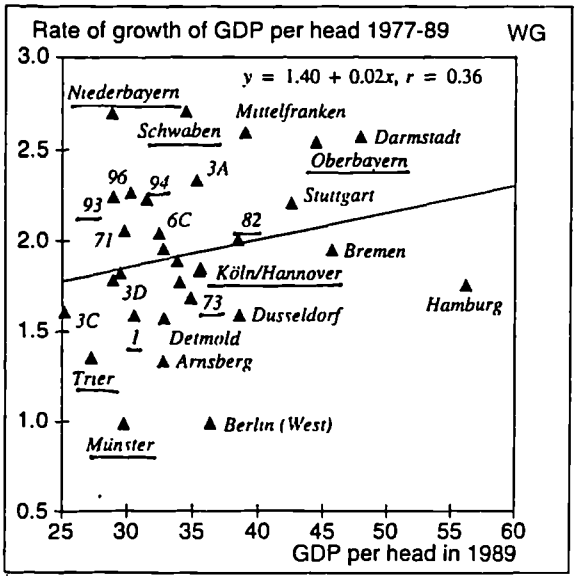
Mick Dunford has also undertaken an analysis of regional disparities in the European Community using figures from the Regio Databank (Dunford, 1993). As part of this study, Dunford examined regional growth and inequality for the period 1977 to 1989. Although this was not undertaken with border regions in mind, the resulting graphs (shown in Figure Two) allow us to distinguish rates of growth in border regions from those in non-border regions.

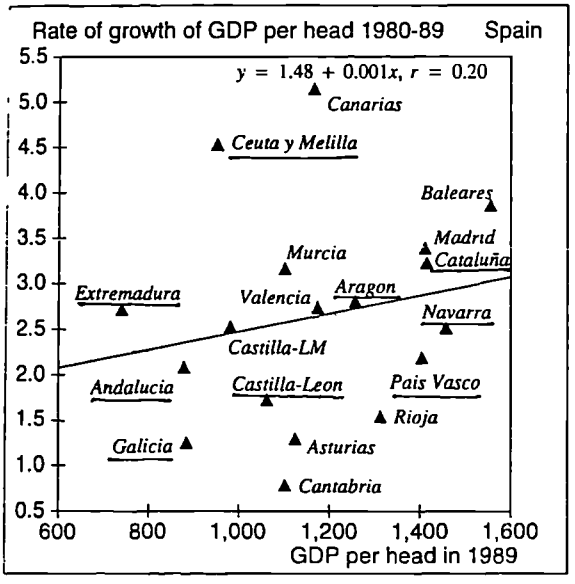
[14] a development which would seem to have particular significance for border as it has involved the dismantling of tariff (and non-tariff) barriers which, economic theory tells us, are responsible for distorting economic space and depressing the development of the border region.

Figure Two: Regional Growth and Inequality in France, Italy, Spain and West Germany 1997 - 1989









N.B. Border Regions are distinguished by underlining

Source: Dunford, 1993, p.737

It would appear from the graphs that in each of the countries examined, border regions (at the Nuts II level) feature amongst both the poorest and richest areas, and display a range of growth rates. Compare for instance, Cataluna and Extramadura in Spain, or Valle d'Aosta and Puglia in Italy, all of them are border areas and each with very different levels of GDP and economic growth. Although it is not possible to draw any specific conclusions about these graphs, the diversity evident among the border regions shown, does suggest that general claims of economic underdevelopment seem to be misplaced and that border regions are rather more varied that is often implied.

2.2 Regional Classifications

In a very different piece of work using the Regio databank, Alderman & Charlton's 1995 paper presents a new classification of European Regions based on cluster analysis (Alderman & Charlton, 1995). The main question that the authors try to answer is whether it is possible to produce a meaningful classification that transcends national boundaries and stereotypes. After some experimentation with variables and kernel densities, Alderman & Charlton produce a classification based on twelve clusters which, they feel, successfully describes regional types across Europe. Given that "border" also appears to describe a particular type of region, comparing the two would seem to be useful in this exploration of the nature of border regions.

Table Two: A New Classification of European Regions

Cluster	Description	Key indicators	Regions	Border Regions
1	Economically growing	high GDP change	30	7
2	Low growth, Central	low GDP, central	24	11
3	Urbanised Industrial	high GDP, industrial	17	4
4	Stable, Rural, Mixed Economy	low GDP change, rural, mixed	10	5
5	Rapid Growth Service Economy	high GDP growth, services	21	9
6	Successful Manuf.	low unempl, high GDP, central	6	3
7	Industrial Heartland	high GDP, industrial	7	5
8	Declining Peripheral Industrial	low GDP, (high unempl)	14	5
9	Major Growing Urban Area	high pop. growth, non agricultural	16	7
10	Stable Agric Periphery	low unempl, peripheral	7	7
11	Declining Agric Periphery	low pop dens., peripheral	6	3
12	Growing Periphery with structural problems	low GDP, high GDP growth	9	5

Source: Alderman & Charlton, 1995.

Highlighting the border regions that occur within each cluster grouping, reveals a good spread of borders in each regional type, as shown in Table Two. However, the cluster descriptions would lead us to think - if our conceptions about border regions are correct - that few border regions would fit into clusters 3, 6 and 7 and lots of border regions would appear in clusters 4, 10 and 11. It is perhaps a little surprising to find that almost all of the "Industrial Heartland" cluster (no. 7) is made up of border regions, and that half of the "Successful Manufacturing" regions (cluster 6) are also border areas. On the other hand, the 100% saturation of cluster 10 "Stable Agricultural Periphery" is not at all surprising if we think of border regions as agricultural, peripheral and poor, although the two other clusters fitting this model (11 & 4) each only manage a 50% presence of border regions.

Of all of the information examined so far, this rigorous statistical classification of regions on the basis of a number of economic indicators seems to provide the best evidence for rejecting a stereotypical view of border regions and adopting a more dynamic and diverse one.

2.3 Border Dynamism

The immense interest in regional dynamics and disparities is not merely confined to the academic and policy-making world. Businesses, particularly inward investors, are also interested in the trajectories of European regions. As a result, guides offering information on the attractiveness of different regions have been produced to help inward investors make their decisions. In a discussion of these and other works, Hallin & Malmberg (1996) examine the 1993 Empirica report[15] which offers investors an explicit guide to the regions of Europe. The report differentiates investor priorities into three areas, and provides listings of 'top' regions, as shown in Table Three.

Table Three: Regions identified as most attractive for inward investors by the 1993 Empirica Report

Rank	Manufacturing	Distribution	Communications
1	Ireland	Limburg (NL)	Zurich
2	Andalusia	Limburg(B)	Oberbayern
3	Norte	Navarra	Ile de France
4	Lorraine	Champagne-Ardennes	Lombardia
5	Basse Normandie	Lombardia	Emilia Romagna
6	Overijssel	Zeeland	Hannover
7	Basilicata	Franche-Comté	Noord Holland
8	Puglia	Emilia Romagna	Piemonte
9	Canarias	Hannover	Geneve
10	Highlands & Islands	Veneto	Darmstadt

Note: border regions are shown by underlining

Source: Hallin & Malmberg, 1996

As Table Three illustrates, a high proportion of the regions presented as attractive investment locations are border regions. Even without the underlying methodology to illuminate the results, of border regions really are poor, peripheral and underdeveloped, then it seems unlikely that they would be attractive to any type of investor. On the other hand, if border regions are dynamic, innovative and outward looking, it might explain why they are on Empirica's list.

3.0 Looking more closely

One of the main objectives of this paper is to compare the specific claims made about border regions with the numeric facts[16]. Doing so requires the assembly of economic indicators for regions at the Nuts III level[17] for as many countries as possible. Unfortunately however, the data available (to us) was confined to six countries: the UK, Germany, Belgium, Spain, France and the Netherlands, of which both the UK and Germany presented various problems[18], resulting in their exclusion. For the remaining four countries a profile of border and non-border regions was developed on the basis of the nine different variables set out in Table Four.

[15] Empirica, 1993, Zukunftstandsorte in Westeuropa. Ein Regionalfuhrer fur Investoren in EG und EFTA Wirtschafts und socialwissenschaftlichen Forschungs und Beratungsgesellschaft mbH, Bonn.

[16] it should be noted that the comparisons made here are based on the descriptive statistics for each variable (except for unemployment), as full data arrays were not available when compiling this paper.

[17] Nuts III is the level at which the European Commission defines border regions ('*...all areas along the internal and external land borders of the Community delineated at ...Nuts III...*' (EC, 1994a, p.36)).

[18] as the UK has so few areas eligible as border regions, and as the data for Germany were so difficult to manipulate given the partial inclusion of the New Länder.

Table Four: Variables used in Nuts III analysis of Border and Non-Border Regions

Variable Name	Description
GDPCAP (1991)	Level of GDP per capita in 1991
GDPEMP (1990)	Level of GDP per employee, 1982-90
GE (1982-90)	Growth rate of employment (1000 persons) 1982-90
GQ (1982-91	Average annual growth rate of GDP per capita 1982-91
GY (1982-90)	Average annual growth rate of GDP per employee 1982-90
ACDEN (1991)	Active population (1000 persons) per square km
GA (1986-91)	Average annual growth rate of active population 1986-91
GAD (1991)	Average annual growth rate of active population per km sq.
UN (1991)	Unemployment rate (%)

NB. All GDP variables in PPP ECU of 1990, using nation-wide price deflators

Beginning with unemployment and the claims that border regions have higher unemployment rates in their national contexts (Clement, 1995; Nijkamp, 1993), the within country statistics reveal that while in Spain and Belgium the average level of unemployment was slightly higher in border regions, in France and the Netherlands, unemployment levels are actually lower in the border areas.

Table Five: Average Unemployment Level (1991)

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	7.91	6.71	7.37
Spain	18.07	14.36	15.46
France	8.375	8.534	8.49
Netherlands	7.15	7.35	7.29

In addition, Maillat's other claim that border regions have above (national) average unemployment rates (Maillat, 1990, p.39) can also be challenged. Comparing individuals values with national averages shows that border regions are no more likely to have higher than averages unemployment rates than any other region. In fact, as Table Six shows, border regions in all of the countries bar Spain, are actually less likely to have an above average unemployment rate than their non-border counterparts.

Table Six: Percentage of Regions with above Average Unemployment Rate (1991)

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	50	52	44
Spain	50	36	40
France	45	50	46
Netherlands	33	43	40
All countries	45	42	43

With regard to the question of income, as there was no data available (to us) on levels of income in Nuts III regions, GDP has been used as an alternative indicator. The question is thus whether border regions really do have lower income levels per capita than other regions in their countries (Clement, 1995; Nijkamp, 1993; and, Rumley & Minghi, 1991). Looking at the data, the answer seems to be yes, as in all four countries average GDP per capita is higher in non-border regions than in border regions, even though the differences are quite small.

Table Seven: Average Level of GDP per capita (1991)

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	13.24	14.14	13.66
Spain	10.14	10.73	10.55
France	14.14	14.51	14.41
Netherlands	13.89	14.48	14.27
All countries	13.08	13.61	13.43

Putting these very specific claims to one side, the next question is whether the variables can lend any credence to Peter Nijkamp's assertion that '*...the current regional economic profile of European frontier regions is far from favourable. They have in general poor economic performance...*' (Nijkamp, 1993, p.435). In terms of employment growth (1982-90), the evidence from the dataset shows that border regions in France and the Netherlands has a higher average growth rate than their national non-border counterparts, while in Spain and Belgium the reverse is true.

Table Eight: Average Growth in Employment (1982-90)

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	0.008	0.009	0.008
Spain	0.009	0.014	0.012
France	0.024	-0.002	0.005
Netherlands	0.005	0.044	0.046
All countries	0.021	0.011	0.014

Figures for the density of the active population - an indicator of economic opportunity - reveal lower average figures for border regions in all of the countries studied. Not only that, but the differences between the groups (except in Spain) is quite marked, as Table Nine demonstrates.

Table Nine: Average Density of Active Population

	Border Regions	Non-border regions	All regions
Belgium	0.1228	0.2537	0.1837
Spain	0.0348	0.0428	0.0404
France	0.0508	0.3307	0.2562
Netherlands	0.1599	0.2666	0.2283
All countries	0.0898	0.2447	0.1919

It would seem then - on the basis of these four countries, and in accordance with Nijkamp's views - that border regions do not have a terribly good economic profile. However, as the figures also demonstrate, the disadvantage to border regions is actually quite slight.

While the evidence from the individual variables has provided clues about the validity of specific claims about border regions, it also reveals something of the nature of border regions as a group. Standard deviation values for each of the variables give some feel as to the homogeneity of the regional groupings, indicating in all instances, that border regions are a more homogeneous group than non-border regions[19]. That is not to say that border regions *are* a homogeneous group, merely that they are less heterogeneous than non-border regions.

A more reliable assessment of the statistical similarity of border and non-border regions is provided by the F-test analysis of variance, which examines the ratio of variance in two samples. The null hypothesis in

[19] as all standard deviation values for border region groupings are smaller than those for non-border regions.

this instance is that the border and non-border samples are drawn from the same parent population, so any differences between them are explained by chance.

Table Ten: F-test analysis of Variance

	F value	significant at 95%
GDPCAP (1991)	2.527	✓
GDPEMP (1990)	6.495	✓
GE (1982-90)	1.413	×
GQ (1982-91	0.895	×
GY (1982-90)	1.886	✓
ACDEN (1991)	122.4	✓
GA (1986-91)	1.487	×
GAD (1991)	1.487	×
UN (1991)	2.02	✓

As the results in Table Ten show, for four of the variables, the null hypothesis - that the samples come from the same population - could not be rejected at the 95% level. Interestingly though, for those variables where there are confirmed differences in the samples, the F values add weight to the GDP and unemployment issues discussed earlier, confirming that the lower level of GDP in border regions is statistically significant.

3.1 Specks in the eye-glass

Before rushing to make any conclusions about these results and what we can learn from our rather limited dataset, it is necessary to set out the limitations of the analysis. First, the data set is rather a small one, based on only four of the fifteen member states in the European Union. While the sample may be reasonably balanced between large and small, and central and peripheral regions, it is nevertheless quite a small part of the European picture. The second obvious limitation of the dataset is the age of the data - with most figures dating from 1991 or before. While this isn't necessarily a disadvantage, in the context of border regions and the fundamental changes they are undergoing, challenging the proclaimed anachronisms of the border region stereotype does rather depend on having up-to-date information(!) It remains to be seen whether more current data will reinforce the traditional view or explode the myth for ever.

4.0 Conclusions

This paper set out to explore some of the myth and mystery that surrounds contemporary border regions in Europe. Doing so involved comparing specific claims found in the literature with some hard facts in the shape of regional statistics. While none of the claims have been actively disproved, some have been shown to be rather precarious, and probably worth investigating further. However, proving and disproving things was not really the point: what we were trying to do was dismantle some of the stereotypes surrounding border regions. With the continuous movement towards integration in Europe, it is time to start recognising border regions for what they are: an opportunity to integrate rather than an obstacle. The border regions of Europe are not a homogeneous group; they do not all have special problems associated with their status - the only thing they do have in common is that you find them at the edge of member states.

Bibliography

N. Alderman & M. Charlton, 1995, 'A New Classification of European Regions', presented to: 9th European Colloquium on Theoretical and Quantitative Geography, Belgium.

M. Anderson, 1983, Frontier Regions in Western Europe, Frank Cass, London.

D. Batten & P. Nijkamp, 1990, 'Barriers to Communication and Spatial Interaction', Annals of Regional Science, vol. 24, pp. 233-236.

M. Dunford, 1993, 'Regional Disparities in the European Community. Evidence from the Regio databank', Regional Studies, vol. 27 no. 8 pp.727 -743.

P Cecchini, 1989, The European Challenge, 1992. The Benefits of a Single Market, Wildwood House, Aldershot.

M. Chisholm, 1995, On the Edge of Europe, Routledge, London.

N. Clement, 'The Changing Economics of International Borders and Border Regions' pp. 41-52 in IRS, 1996, Border Regions in Functional Transition, European and North American Perspectives, IRS, Berlin.

EC, 1997, European Spatial Development Perspective. First Official Draft, Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning, Noordwijk.

EC, 1994a, Community Structural Funds. A Guide to the Community Initiatives 1994-99, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

EC, 1994b, Competitiveness and Cohesion: trends in the Regions. Fifth Periodic Report on the Social and Economic situation and development of the Regions in the Community, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

EC, 1991, The Regions in the 1990's. Fourth Periodic Report on the Social and Economic situation and development of the Regions in the Community, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

H. Eskelinen & Snickars, 1995, Competitive European Peripheries, Springer, Berlin.

G. Hallin & A. Malmberg, 1996, 'Attraction, Competition and Regional Development in Europe', presented at First Urban and Regional Studies Conference, Exeter.

N. Hansen, 1977, 'The Economic Development of Border Regions' in Growth and Change, vol. 8, pp. 2-8.

L. Labrianidis, 1996, 'The External Border of the EU are abolished, the borders within a Member State remain', First European Urban & Regional Studies Conference, Exeter.

LACE, 1990a, Cross-border co-operation in practice: Citizen's Europe: The Case of Border Regions, Association of European Border Regions, Gronau.

LACE, 1990b, Cross-border co-operation in practice: Business Co-operation and Development in Border Regions, Association of European Border Regions, Gronau

D. Maillat, 1990, 'Transborder Regions, Members of the EC and Non-Member Countries', Built Environment vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 38-51.

P. Nijkamp, 1993, 'Border Regions and Infrastructure Networks in the European Integration Process' Environment and Planning C: Government & Policy, vol. 11 no. 4, pp. 431-446.

Rumley & Minghi, 1991, The Geography of Border Landscapes, Routledge, London.

Planning for an Integrated Europe: Lessons from border regions

At the moment there is still much to be learned about the possibilities and practicalities of cross-border spatial planning and its contribution to integration.

By Caroline Brown*

As the European Spatial Development Perspective under goes the final revisions before its final publication early in 1999, the time is right to reflect on the role of spatial planning in European integration. After fifty years, European integration is no longer confined to economics or the redistributive rationale of regional policy, but now extends into economic regeneration, urban renewal and cross-border collaboration. But while the objectives of the integrationist vision seem clear - a single European market, economic and social cohesion - what integration means in practice is rather less clear. This is particularly true in relation to border regions, where integration is a key theme of European policy interventions. The Interreg initiative promotes cross-border collaboration in order to integrate internal border regions within the single market. And yet the characteristics of an integrated border region are unclear. When is a border not a border? What are the differences between integrated and non-integrated boundaries? And, how can planning contribute to the shift from one to the other?

Within the multi-dimensional and multi-faceted integration process, one of the most significant developments has been the increasing importance of spatial planning and territonal integration. A development linked to the growth in the spatial significance of European Commission policies. Forays into the fields of transport, infrastructure, environmental protection and regional policy are not only an intrinsic part of the integration process - improving the competitiveness of less favoured regions and enhancing quality of life - but are notable for their spatial impacts. The result is an increasing awareness of the spatial dimensions of European policy initiatives, and a growing pressure for the development of a pan-European spatial planning policy.

The recent publication of the European Spatial Development Perspective is the culmination of a ten-year process of policy and initiative building by both the European Commission and the Member States. However, while the ESDP is undoubtedly the pinnacle of European spatial planning policy achievement to date, it should be noted that unlike the other initiatives illustrated in Figure 1, the ESDP is not an official document or policy of the European Community. Instead, produced by inter-governmental consensus, the ESDP is entirely voluntary, enabling "each country to take it forward according to the extent it wishes to take account of European spatial aspects in its national policies" (Ministers responsible for spatial planning 199, p.6)

In the EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems, the emergence of a European spatial planning rationale is linked to four main issues. First, the need to maximise the economic potential of the Single European Market (SEM) by ensuring that infrastructure gaps and inconsistencies are minimised. Second, the need to co-ordinate public investment - particularly the Structural Funds - in order to maximise their impact on competitiveness and disparity. Third, the need to make the most of cross-border collaboration in resolving common problems. And fourth, the potential of spatial planning to guarantee sustainability and balance economic growth with environmental protection. In essence this rationale, which underpins both the ESDP and Interreg IIC requires a European spatial planning policy to do three different things:

co-ordinate the territorial impacts of sectoral policies at both the macro and micro scales in order the further the integration process;

harmonise the goals and mechanisms of national planning systems in order to eliminate conflict between them and reduce the barriers to free movement of business and investment; and

*Centre for Environment and Planning, University of the West of England, email Caroline1.Brown@uwe.ac.uk. This work is supported by the Economic and Social Research Council in conjunction with Chesterton Consulting.

Figure 1. Chronology of developments relating to European Spatial Planning

1988	Reform of the Structural Funds introducing spatial targeting
1989	First informal meeting of the Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning in Nantes
1990	Publication of the Commission's Green Paper on the Urban Environment
1991	Publication of "Europe 2000: Outlook for the Development of the Community's territory - a preliminary overview"
1992	Establishment of Committee on Spatial Development Establishment of Committee of the Regions
1993	Publication of "Europe 2000+ Co-operation for European Territorial Development"
1994	Agreement of the Leipzig principles as the basis for the ESDP by Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning Launch of Interreg II initiative, including spatial planning measures
1996	Launch of Interreg IIc strand on transnational spatial planning
1997	Publication of the first volume of "The EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies" Publication of the "European Spatial Development Perspective, first official draft"

integrate planning systems at the micro level, in order to further integration of the border regions.

In the first instance, the general role of spatial planning in the integration process is linked to several different issues. At the European level it includes the need to co-ordinate the spatial impacts of sectoral policies, and the recognition that territorial co-ordination is imperative if the potential divisiveness of the SEM is to be avoided. In addition, the Compendium notes that the growing importance of European integration is being reflected at nation state level by movement towards strategic planning. This is evident in a number of member states, including Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands. In Denmark there has been a broadening of spatial planning to address much wider issues than those related only to land use, while in the Netherlands, national planning policy helps to co-ordinate sectoral policies.

The second strand of European spatial planning to emerge has been that of trans-national planning and the development of a pan-European planning scale. Within this strand, the ESDP in particular sets out to resolve the discrepancy between the levels at which plans are made and the globalising forces shaping patterns of economic activities (Ministers responsible for spatial planning, 1997). The development of this "shared vision of the European territory as a whole" (Ministers responsible for spatial planning, 1997) has the additional intention of resolving the potential conflicts and fragmentation of territorial development caused by uncoordinated national planning systems. By setting out a pan-European planning framework, with clear principles and objectives - balanced development, sustainability and enhanced competitiveness - the ESDP hopes to foster complementarity and convergence between the different planning systems operating in the member states.

On a more practical basis, the experimental Interreg IIc initiative announced in 1996, actively seeks the harmonisation of national planning systems by requiring them to collaborate. As the ESDP argues, "it is above all at the trans-national level that the integration of the policy aims and options into spatial strategies and action programme can be readily carried out... It is the level at which many spatial issues of a European dimension manifest themselves and where the basis can be found for regional and urban co-operation across national borders." (Ministers responsible for spatial planning 1997, p. 62). In addition, by tackling common issues and the harmonisation of planning systems in practice, trans-national spatial planning also enhances the operation of the single market by reducing the non-tariff barriers associated with the presence of different planning systems. Negotiating unfamiliar planning and consent systems creates costs – and thus barriers to free movement – regulation which may influence the locational decision-making of inward investors.

Integration and harmonisation of national planning systems shifts the focus onto the third strand of European spatial planning policy: micro-integration in border regions. As Europe 2000+ notes, "external and internal cross-border co-operation represents an essential means of integrating and harmonising the European territory" (CEC 1994, p.19). However, although the objectives of such co-operation are clear enough, what is not clear is how spatial planning contributes to the integration of border regions.

Border regions are the apotheosis of non-integration in the European sense because they represent - in both space and time - the

Figure 2. The differing characteristics of regional and national boundaries

Regional Boundaries		National Borders
Possibly	Lingual/cultural difference	yes
No	Different currency	yes
No	Different governance & administrative structures	yes
No	Different legal systems	yes
No	Different spatial planning systems	yes

continued existence of differences between the member states. Because of their special development problems, European border regions have benefited from the Interreg Community Initiative promoting cross-border collaboration since 1990. In addition, since Europe 2000+ identified the role of spatial planning in the integration of border regions, there has been growing interest in cross-border planning. This is reflected not only in the inclusion of spatial planning in the second Interreg programme, but the development of the Interreg IIc strand on transnational spatial planning and the considerable attention given to cross-border planning by the EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies.

However, while the objectives of both Interreg and cross-border spatial planning are quite clearly to "accelerate the integration of internal border regions" (CEC 1994, p.128), it is unclear what an integrated border region looks like in practice, or the point at which non-integrated becomes integrated. Clearly the goal of integration is not to make things the same. Instead, as the definition of integration is to join separate parts together to make a whole, the crucial point seems to be that the individual components should function as part of the whole

SEARCHING FOR THIS CHARacteristic among the hierarchy of border types (supranational, international, regional, sub-regional and local) is the first step to identifying the nature of an integrated border. It seems clear that regional, sub-regional and local boundaries all display the ability to function as part of a whole since they denote the extent of an *administrative jurisdiction* rather than the extent of an *administrative system.* Regional boundaries in particular; recognise and reflect important cultural and even lingual differences between territories, but join (rather than separate) areas with common political, economic, judicial and administrative frameworks. Thus set within a national framework of policy and law, regional boundaries allow regions to be distinct and bounded and yet function as part of the whole.

This ability to join areas with common institutional, administrative and governance structures, is one of the two main characteristics setting regional boundaries apart from international (or non-integrated) borders. The second major characteristic of regional boundaries is their permeability, that is to say, the ease with which they are crossed. For border regions, the presence of tariff and non-tariff barriers (whether related to language, taxation or infrastructure) lies at the root of their difficulty, because the costs of moving across the border suppress (economic) interaction and affect economic performance. An impediment which is not apparent to the same degree at regional boundaries. Translating these characteristics into a typology of regional and international borders, Figure 2 illustrates the differences between these types of boundary.

Of course many examples can be found that do not fit into this typology. In Scandinavia, the lingual and cultural similarities across national borders shift them towards the regional boundary typology, while the federal boundaries between Wallonia and Flanders are more like national borders than regional ones. These anomalies suggest that there is an integration continuum against which all types of borders can be measured.

THE DEGREE OF INTEGRAtion or permeability characterising a boundary is thus determined by the number and type of border barriers present. The principal characteristic of these barriers – as mentioned above – is that negotiating them involves costs; costs which Westlund (1997) describes as interaction costs. Together, barriers and costs determine the permeability of a boundary, and where costs are low, permeability and integration are high. However, as Westlund demonstrates in Figure 3, the potential for changing interaction costs varies greatly. So, while economic factors such as capital transfer and production costs can change over very short periods, the costs associated with geography and distance are rather more difficult to overcome.

In light of both the diversity of these interaction costs, and the potential (or lack of) for changing them, achieving a high level of permeability is a long-term process requiring a mosaic of changes in everything from social attitude to institutional context. And, since interaction costs are an expression of non-integration, reducing these costs holds one of the keys to achieving integration in border regions. Another feature of an integrated border is the ability to function as part of a whole. A characteristic which, in the case of nation-states and their regions, is made possible by the presence of a higher (strategic) tier of government and a national framework for policy administration and law. Deutsch (1972) goes further than this and describes four *conditions of integration* which include the mutual relevance of units to one another (or the ability to function as part of the whole). Deutsch also sets out the need for mutual responsiveness based on a common identity, compatible values and joint rewards. Together, these factors lead to the conclusion that integrated boundaries depend on three things:

1. a high level of cross-border permeability (low interaction costs);
2. a strategic cross-border or transnational framework; and,
3. the development of a mutual relationship based on a common identity.

EXAMINING THESE CHARACteristics in the context of spatial planning suggests (theoretically at least) that cross-border collaboration generally, and cross-border planning in particular, can contribute significantly to the integration of European border regions. Because border barriers have a geographical dimension due to their effect on economic development in border regions, it follows that integration is also a spatial process that can be managed through territorial planning. For example, cross-border planning creates a common policy framework within which the partners operate, reducing conflict and promoting both territorial and policy integration. Similarly, a cross-border spatial perspective offers the opportunity to increase permeability by reducing the interaction costs associated with differences in infrastructure, administration and planning systems. Finally, cross-border planning contributes to the development of a common identity by creating - however artificially - the notion of a single cross-border space. It also helps to create common rewards by identifying areas (both territorial and sectoral) where there are mutual gains to be made; thus illuminating the strategic benefits of continued collaboration.

The links between integration and spatial planning described above, suggest that border regions have much to gain from cross-border spatial planning. The final section of this article explores this notion by examining the experiences of two border areas currently participating in the Interreg II programme.

THE TRANSMANCHE PARTnership between the county of Kent in the Southeast of England and the region of Nord-Pas de Calais in the Northeast of France is notable for the fact that it stretches across the Channel. Culturally, lingually and geographically distinct, the two areas are not natural partners. However the 1986 announcement that a tunnel would be constructed between the two regions (and countries), saw the tentative beginnings of a partnership emerge. Formal links between Kent County Council and the Conseil Regional Nord-Pas de Calais were established early in 1987 with the signing of a Joint Accord. This was followed in the early 1990's with intensive lobbying of the Commission in order to obtain Interreg I funding. Cross-border collaboration is now well established between the two areas, with continued support given by Interreg II.

In planning terms, the two areas have had little reason to consider cross-border planning. However, the Joint Submission Document for the Transmanche Interreg II programme includes measures related to regional planning and strategic development. The measures set out aim to improve understanding of, and co-operation on, common spatial planning and development issues, including urban planning and economic development. Examples of projects falling under this programme theme, include the following:

- a network of towns exchanging spatial planning experiences on heritage and conservation;
- a working group to consider urban planning issues through workshops; and
- the exchange of information in order to identify new economic development strategies for rural areas.

However, despite the inclusion of a Transmanche regional plan as one of the programme outcomes, progress towards spatial planning at regional scale has yet to materialise for a number of reasons:

Figure 3. Interaction costs in border regions (grouped by potential for change)

Rapid				**Slow**
Technical & Logistical	Political & Administrative	Economic Structure	Cultural & Historical	Geographical & Biological
production costs	national & regional rules & regulations	economic development level	language (including computer)	geographical barriers (rivers)
transport costs	customs duty	economic structure	ethnicity	distance
cost of info & info transfer	tariff barriers	educational level	population density	human biology
capital & capital transfer costs	spatial planning system	compatibility and standard of infrastructure	power structure & property rights	time zones
vehicle standards	environmental regulation	religion		

Source: Westlund (1997)

Mismatch between tiers of government and planning functions

The English system of local government, without a regional tier and with a mixture of single and two-tier authorities, makes the Transmanche partnership a rather complicated one. On the English side participants include unitary authorities (single tier), county and district councils (two-tier) and decentralised central government. In France the partnership is a simple arrangement of central, regional and local government. While this mosaic of participants is not necessarily a barrier to collaboration, the mismatch of planning functions between the authorities is a serious difficulty.

While Kent County Council has a strategic plan-making function, under the French planning system, regions (in common with departments and the state) have only a sectoral planning role, concentrating on economic development and public sector investment. In France spatial plan-making is concentrated at the very lowest level of government - the communes.

The resulting mismatch between the planning functions of the two regional authorities makes it difficult to develop a cross-border spatial plan for the Transmanche area. In addition the focus on the coastal areas in the Interreg programme introduces the issue of scale. Both French communes and English districts have spatial planning functions which include the preparation of land use plans. However, because of the limited scale of these areas in relation to both the maritime border area and the Transmanche area, this make progress towards a cross-border spatial plan difficult because they have neither the authority nor the perspective to work at the regional scale.

Tensions over economic development

In addition to the difficulties of plan-making, there is the sensitive issue of economic development. While both sides have set out their intentions to co-operate on economic development, in practice little has been achieved because of the inevitable competition between the two regions. Interviewees on both sides of the Channel confessed that economic issues are the most difficult, with the result that very few economic development projects come forward. This presents a further difficulty for the prospects for a Transmanche regional plan, as it would require some resolution of this issue.

Tensions between government tiers

Further to these tensions between the partners, in-depth interviewing with key actors on both sides revealed tension between the tiers of government involved in the collaboration. In both cases this was related to the fact that although the principal actors are found at the regional level, the programme is actually concentrated in the coastal zone, focusing on five departments and six English districts. The result is a tension between the coastal authorities who feel the effects of the border very strongly, and who question the involvement of regional authorities in their border problems. The danger is that without the active support of the lowest levels of government the implementation of any cross-border spatial plan would be likely to fail.

WHILE THE TRANSMANCHE partnership appears to be relatively successful, its strength and longevity may be affected by the development of other cross-Channel groupings. Of particular note here is the Euroregion, as it covers Kent and Nord-Pas de Calais as well as Wallonia, Flanders and Brussels. The partnership was formed in 1993, and although largely self-financing, funds have been received under Article 10 of the Regional Development Fund in order to publish geographic and statistical profiles. The first publication, "Towards a Policy Framework...the First steps" is cited as an example of formal co-operation on cross-border spatial planning by the EU Compendium on Spatial Planning Systems. The existence of another cross-border group working on spatial planning thus raises the question of whether there is any value in developing a parallel strategy for the smaller Transmanche area.

This issue of scale is an important one. The Commission and the ESDP suggest that one of the benefits of cross-border spatial planning is that it enables authorities to tackle issues at the scale at which they are happening. In which case, cross-border partnerships may not be the most appropriate scale for developing spatial plans. This is particularly relevant in the Kent case, because neighbouring East Sussex is also involved in a cross-Channel Interreg programme - raising the possibility (aside from the Euroregion) of a cross Channel spatial development perspective involving groupings of English counties and French regions. Second, the scale at which cross-border spatial planning takes place has a profound affect on the number of actors who are needed to participate in and support the resulting plan.

THE EUREGIO MAAS RHINE partnership is found at the territorial confluence of Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. As the borders have only been fixed in their present form for around 100 years, the development, language and culture of the area are not clearly delineated along national boundaries. As a result the three language communities have a different geography to that of the three countries. For example the province of Liege is also home to several German speaking communes, who form their own administrative grouping alongside French-speaking Belgians. Together the Euregio Maas Rhine partnership boasts three languages, four provinces and five partners.

Cross border collaboration is well established in the area due to the proximity of Maastricht, Aachen, Liege and a number of other settlements (Hasselt, Genk and Heerlen). This is particularly true in the spatial planning field, where formal mechanisms exist between the neighbouring (provincial) authorities for consultation and notification with regard to plan-making and development proposals. Following the signing of an agreement relating to *amenagement du territoire* in 1989, a working group was set up to develop a spatial development perspective for the MHAL[1] region (Maastricht/Heerlen, Hasselt/Genk, Aachen and Liège.).

As a joint product of work and negotiation by central government, regional (provincial) government and local authorities, the plan sets out priorities for development on a thematic and spatial basis. The plan was completed in 1993, and after the final consultations were concluded, the working group was disbanded and the plan passed onto the partners of the Euregio Maas Rhine for implementation. Discussions with planning officials in the provincial government of Dutch Limburg reveal that very little has been achieved since the publication of the strategy - although it was incorporated into the cross-border planning document for the Benelux countries. Again a number of factors can be identified in relation to these difficulties:

Tensions between tiers of government

As in the Transmanche, cross-border collaboration is shaped and managed in the most part by the provincial or regional authorities. While this may provide a suitable strategic framework for cross-border collaboration, it overlooks the presence and importance of the Maastricht, Aachen, Hasselt, Genk and Liège city authorities. Although these authorities have their own collaboration on urban renewal and other common themes, they feel excluded by the provincial focus of the Euregio Maas Rhine structure. Because of this tension - and because (generally speaking) it is the lower tier of authorities that develops the detailed and legally binding land use plans in the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium, city authorities in particular may see little or no reason to implement the recommendations of this cross-border perspective.

The plan has no statutory status

Although the MHAL plan was developed with the full co-operation of the relevant authorities, because it is not incorporated into any of the national planning legislature it is entirely voluntary. Although this is not necessarily a problem, there are two additional issues affecting the MHAL plan. Firstly, as the plan was a one-off project there is no ongoing development or promotion of the plan, as there is for work carried out by formal cross-border working groups. Secondly, because of the planning systems in the four provinces, the provincial governments involved in the MHAL project have a limited capacity to impose or encourage the adoption of the plan's principles by lower tiers of government

As experience of cross-border planning deepens, and as the first results of transnational spatial planning projects funded under Interreg IIc emerge, strategies for resolving some of these issues may begin to emerge. At the moment there is still much to learn about the possibilities and practicalities of cross-border spatial planning and its contribution to integration. □

References

Commission of the European Communities 1994) *Europe 2000+: Co-operation for European territorial development*, Office for Official Publications, Luxembourg.

Commission of the European Communities 1997 -*The EU Compendium of Spatial planning systems and policies*, Office for Official Publications, Luxembourg.

Deutsch, K. 1972) "Attaining and Maintaining Integration" in: Hodges, M. ed.), *European Integration. Selected Readings*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, pp 108-123.

English Regions Association (1997) *Interreg IIc and the UK: A Comparison of the Objectives of the Operational Programmes*, UWE, Bristol.

Euroregion (1994) *Towards a Policy Framework...the First steps*, Euroregion.

Government Office for the South East (1996) *Interreg II. Kent Nord-Pas de Calais Programme 1995-1999, Joint Submission Document*, GOSE, Guildford.

Ministers responsible for spatial planning (1997) *European Spatial Development Perspective: First Official Draft*, Office for Official Publications, Luxembourg.

Westlund (1997)"Spatial Interaction Costs and their potentials for change: A general approach and its application," in Mid-Scandinavia, "European Regional Science Association Summer Institute" Åre-Meråker.

PHOTO CORELGALLERIA

MORNING ON THE MAAS - the Euroregio Maas-Rhine includes Belgian, German and Dutch territory.