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Regional Studies Association Panel  
„Understanding and promoting territorial cohesion –  
addressing the challenges of the Green Paper“

# *Transnational cooperation and territorial cohesion*

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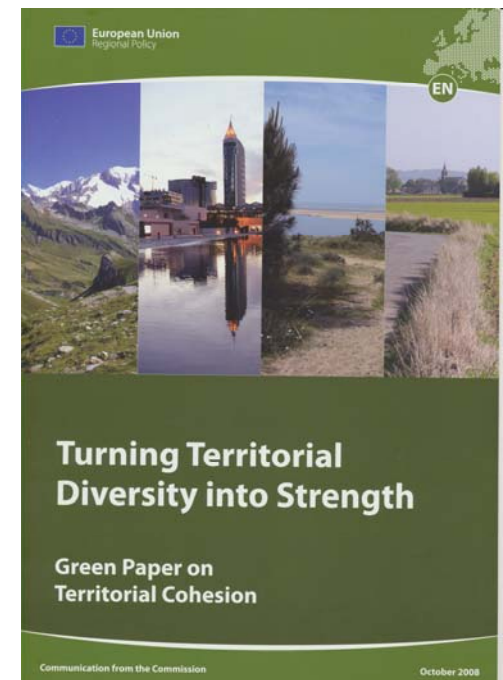
## Overview

- Territorial cooperation in the Territorial Agenda and in the Green Paper
- Understanding the effects of transnational territorial cooperation
- Reflections on possible future directions for transnational territorial cooperation in Europe



# Territorial cooperation in the TAEU and the GP

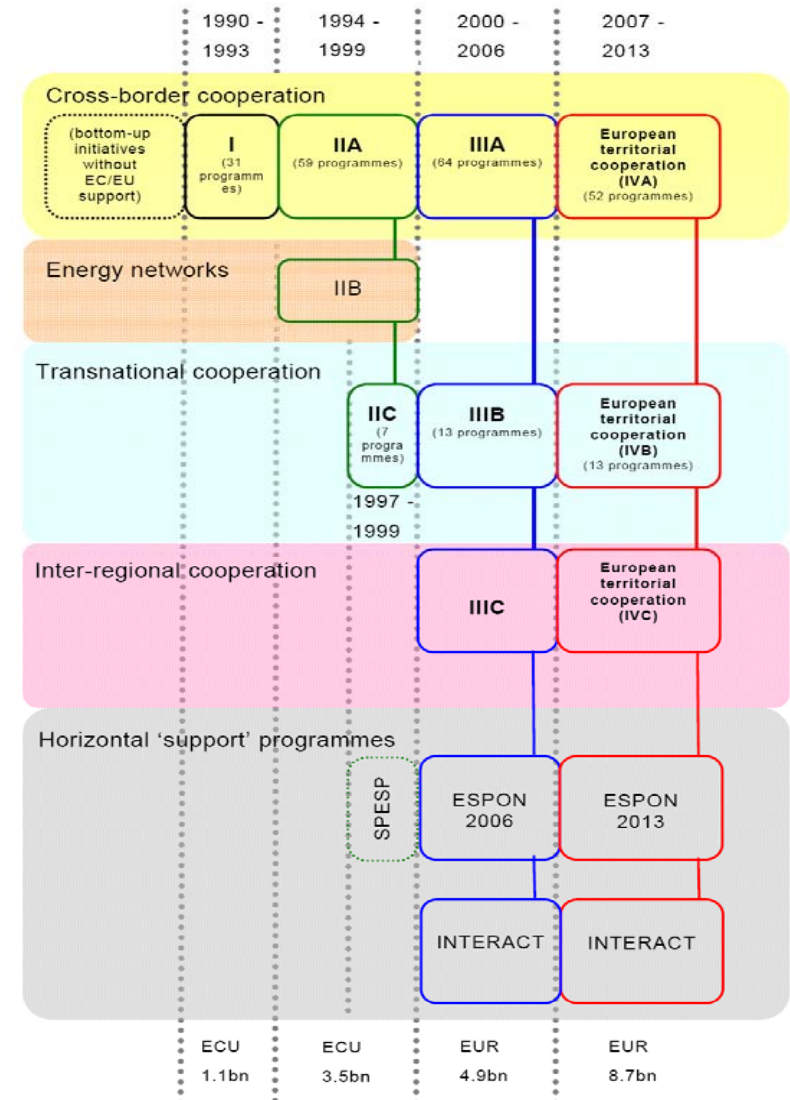
- The “Territorial Agenda of the European Union” (2007)
  - “We ask the European Commission to support us in developing interregional, crossborder and transnational cooperation as an effective instrument for territorial cohesion” (para 35)
  - Emphasis on territorial governance
- The “Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion”(2008)
  - Concentration, connectivity and cooperation
  - Consultation questions: Role of the Commission in encouraging and supporting territorial cooperation? A need for new forms of territorial cooperation? A need for new legislative and management tools to facilitate cooperation?





# The objectives of INTERREG cooperation

- Territorial cooperation to achieve EU objectives of social and economic (and territorial) cohesion
- Transnational cooperation (INTERREG IIC and IIIB) linked to European Spatial Development Perspective: Coordination of sector policies with spatial impact
- since 2007 Cohesion Policy focus on EU's Lisbon-Gothenburg agenda: economic competitiveness

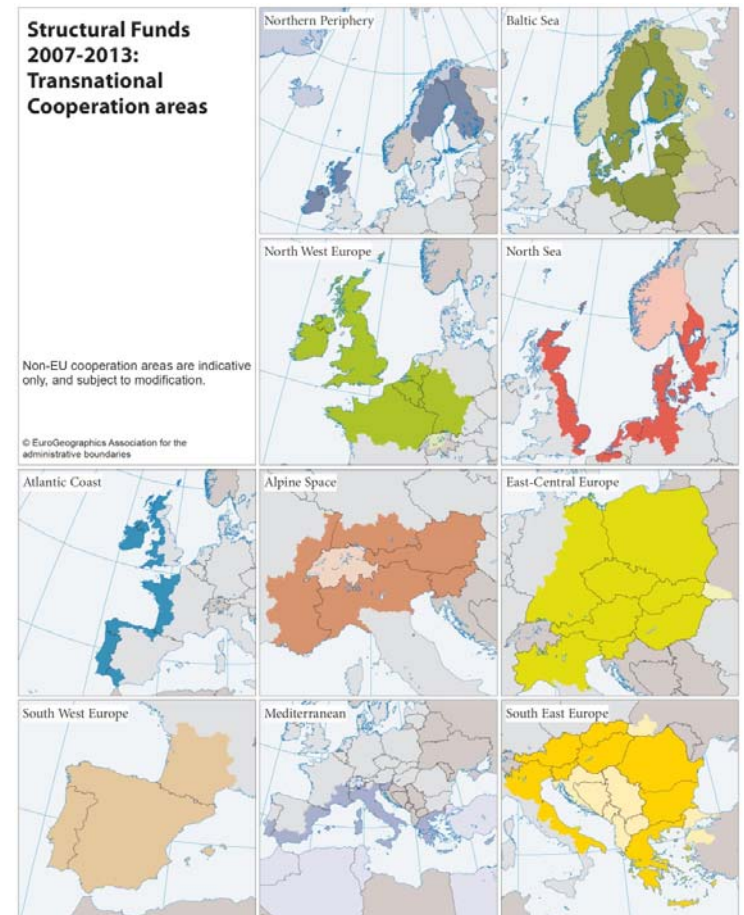


Source: Dühr, Colomb, Nadin (forthcoming 2010): European spatial planning and territorial cooperation. (Routledge)



## The added-value of territorial cooperation

- Challenges of measuring both quantitative (accountability) and qualitative effects (learning)
- Effects of transnational cooperation:
  - engaging local and regional authorities in fields previously reserved for central state actors
  - encouraging the creation of new regional identities, institutions and cross-border governance systems
  - providing incentives to tackle issues that are given low priority in domestic contexts (political and symbolic added value), mobilising financial resources
  - bringing together different types of organisation which do not regularly work together





## Critical factors for transnational cooperation

### ... and for measuring its effects

- Differences in intensity and effectiveness of territorial cooperation across Europe
- Variety in responses due to broad policy objectives and bottom-up project development
- Weak political dimension of transnational cooperation
- Challenges of intergovernmental working, and the lack of appropriate legal and institutional framework conditions at supranational scale
- Formal requirements of the funding programmes, and shortcomings of current monitoring and indicators systems





### Transnational cooperation in a future territorial cohesion policy – some reflections

- Clarification of objectives for EU territorial cooperation
- Discussion of rationale for and appropriate scale of transnational territorial cooperation
- Balancing top-down versus bottom-up approaches
- Future monitoring systems and indicators to meet accountability objectives (territorial integration) as well as measure (qualitative) intensity of cooperation and learning effects
- How to account for differences in cooperation structures and evaluation approaches, and yet allow a comprehensive assessment of the effects of transnational cooperation across Europe?

