CASE STUDIES OF CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION IN EUROPEAN TOURISM – PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CROSS-BORDER REGION ROMANIAN BUCOVINA/CHERNIVTSI REGION

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Abstract:
The article focuses on success factors and management models in destination management for cross-border co-operation in tourism. The method is based on literature research, case-studies in European cross-border-regions and descriptive.

Key words: concept of imaginary geography; destination management; cross-border areas and tourism, stakeholder management; collaboration, networking and partnerships in tourism; competitiveness of destinations, international and cross-cultural strategic management

JEL classification: A12, P40, P48, Z32, Z33

1. INTRODUCTION

The article focuses on conclusions of international conferences held between 2010 and 2013 in Germany, as well as published papers, scientific literature and analyses on the subject of cross-border co-operation.

The author spotlights case-studies of European cross-border tourist destinations in the last decade, mostly funded by the European Union. The article inquiries into success factors and management models in destination management. The method is based on literature research and descriptive. The object is to afford the reader a deeper understanding of the necessity of co-ordination in destination management through communication. Jointly managed and EU-funded cross-border tourist destinations can attract more visitors, thus strengthening Europe as a travel destination in a global context.

In Germany, most tourism scientists are united in the German Society of Tourism Science (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Tourismuswissenschaft DGT e.V.) or in the Working Group on Tourism Research in the German Society of Geography (Arbeitskreis Tourismusforschung in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Geographie (DGfG) e.V./AKFTG). The German Society of Geography (DGfG e.V.) is a member organisation of the International Geographical Union (IGU) and forms the biggest commission within the IGU, namely the commission on tourism, leisure and global change. Both scientific organisations publish regularly: the DGT in its "Schriften zu Tourismus und Freizeit" (papers on tourism and leisure), published by Erich Schmidt Verlag, and the Working Group on Tourism Research in the German Society of Geography in its "Studien zur Freizeit- und Tourismusforschung" (studies on leisure and tourism research), published by MetaGIS-Systems, Mannheim.

The results of the "Competence Forum Cross-Border Co-operation in Tourism", held on 11-12 October 2010 in Bayerisch Eisenstein (Germany) and Zelezná Ruda (Czech Republic), were published in the 18th edition of the journal of the German Society of Tourism Science (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Tourismuswissenschaft DGT e.V.) in May 2014. The volume also contains case-

studies of border regions inquiring into patterns of cross-border co-operation in order to make Europe more competitive internationally in a global context (see Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014). Since 2011 the German Society of Geography also focusses regularly on these themes, one of the highlights was the 44th annual conference of the working group on "leisure and tourism geography" of the German Society of Geography (Arbeitskreis Tourismusforschung in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Geographie (DGfG) e.V./AKFTG) in Constance (Konstanz) in May 2013 (see Gronau, 2011; Kagermeier & Saarinen, 2012 and Thimm, 2013).

From these volumes the interested reader can obtain a great deal of information and a good overview of the following subjects and theories:

- **Cross-border tourist destinations and inter-culturality** (Scheffer, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014, pp. 25-36, referring to Hall, 1990; Hofstede & Bond 1988; Hofstede, 2002, 2006; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997; Thomas et al., 2003; Thiem, 1994)
- **The current state of research on the relationship between political borders and tourism** (see Wachowiak, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014, pp. 37-58, referring notably to Matznetter, 1979; Timothy, 1995, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002; Timothy & Butler, 1995; Bramwell & Lane, 2000; UNWTO, 2005; Pezolli, 1997; Butler,1996 and Scott, 1995)
- **Case studies and cross-border co-operation in Europe**, promoted, specifically in terms of tourism, through unitary EU programs such as ENVIREG, INTERREG or Leader (see Wachowiak, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 37-56; Pechlaner & Jochmann & Nord-horn & Zacher, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 59-72), e.g. the *Alpine region* (Siegrist, 2013. In: Thimm, 2013: pp. 157-166), *Lake Constance Area* (see Thimm, 2013. In: Thimm, 2013: pp. 145-156; Thimm, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 73-92; and Pahl-Humbert, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 193-202), *Bavaria-Bohemia (Bayerischer Wald – Sumava)* (see Troeger-Weiß & Grotheer , 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 175-190; Pechlaner & Jochmann & Nordhorn & Zacher, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 59-72), transboundary interconnectedness of the *UNESCO heritage sites of Český Krumlov and Regensburg* (see Zigmundova, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 251-270)
- **Internal strategic organisational destination management criteria for future success** (see Frys, 2011. In Gronau, 2011: pp. 135-153, see Rehage, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 93-118; referring to Crouch, 2007; European Tourism Research Institute, 2005; Hales, 2006; Jamal & Jamrozy, 2006; UNWTO, 2007; Enright & Newton, 2004; Vanhove, 2005 and Crouch, 2007), **innovation** (see Rehage, 2014, referring to Page, 2007) **and management styles of cross-border destinations** (See Thimm, 2012. In: Kagermeier & Saarinen, 2012: pp. 105-120, instancing *Lake Constance* (Germany, Switzerland and Austria*), Upper Rhine* (Germany, France and Switzerland) and *the Catlins*/New Zealand.
- **Quality development in transboundary areas – the basis for enhancing competencies in destination management** [see Müller, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 163-174, e.g. *"Q for you" (Saas-Fee/Switzerland)*, Service-Initiative *Southern Black-Forest* (Germany), *quality offensive Bavaria*/"Qualitätsoffensive Bayern" (Germany), *Q Plus Kleinwalsertal* (Austria), *Enjoy Switzerland* (CH)]
- **Factors of success for enhancing the spectrum of tourism products and themes** by cross-border co-operation in tourism (see Bühler, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 203-214; and Steiner, 2014. In: Pechlaner & Jochmann, 2014: pp. 271-280), e.g. the case-study of the Danube scenic route *"Road of Emperors and Kings" through Bavaria, Czech Republic and Austria*.

2. APPROACHES TO DESTINATION MANAGEMENT OF CROSS-BORDER REGIONS

Frys (2011) examines cross-border tourism projects between France (the Wallonia and Lorraine regions), Luxembourg and Germany (Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland). She summarises the following potentials and barriers for EU-cross-border destinations:

Potentials	Barriers
Vanished barrier effects of national boundaries in line with the European unification process	Problems of understanding because of differences in languages, mentalities, traditions and habits among the resident population
Possibilities for the ratification of legally binding cooperative agreements between municipal, local and regional authorities beyond national boundaries in accordance with to the Karlsruhe Treaty of 1996	Oftentimes historically causal reservations beyond the boundary
	Often inadequate transportation infrastructure, inadequate connection to inter-regional European transportation system and inadequate transnational public transit
Common history and roots as basis for co-operation	Peripheral position relative to the respective national states, structural weakness and weak economic power relative to the respective national standard, lack of funding
Often high density of existing cross-border institutions, bodies and working groups with an institutional basis	Differences in economic power between the different sub-regions and low integration of the population in rural border regions
Full support for the idea of a "European region" by policymakers in the different parts of the region; initiation and support for many cooperative projects	Different interests and national orientations among the cooperating partners and competitive thinking beyond the boundary area
Contribution to international understanding and Europeanisation in the course of cross-border co-operations	Political-administrative divergences between national sub-regions and resulting differences in administrative structures and organisational forms between the co-operating institutions and differences in their responsibilities
Financial incentives through structural policy economic development schemes	
Voluntary action and partnership as fundamental principles in cross-border co-operation	High fluctuation of stakeholders, especially in the political and administrative sectors
Cultural diversity in mutual contacts between different nationalities as complementary tourism- relevant attracti-veness	Cross-border activities as possible reason for recklessly individual profiling, political attitudes of the project-executing organisation and sympathy as decision criterions for the evaluation and approval of eligible projects
Plurality and cultural diversity of tourism stakeholders	
High importance of tourism as economic component of the tertiary sector for - from the national point-of view unfavourably situated - outskirts regions	Lack of common bodies with enough decision-making and coercive power for the implementation of a sustainable cross-border policy
Often a multitude of local cross-border relationships and mutual inter-regional projects in different sectors as example and basis for tourist co-operation	The subsidiary principle in tourism on the EU level and no interregional co-ordinated tourism policy
	Complexity and strict regulation of EU structural funds directives, even with regard to cross-border co-operation
Exchange of information and know-how between co-operating partners in existing local collaborations	Discontinuities in cross-border co-operation due to temporal finance modalities
Intensified multi-lingual education in schools in the boundary regions and often cross-border consumer behaviour of inhabitants of the boundary regionsLittle practical knowledge in cross-border co-operation in areas outside of these border-zone areas	Little practical knowledge in cross-border co-operation in areas outside of these border-zone areas
	Lack of institutional framework on a cross-national level and no basis for intra-regional co-operation between national states
	Differences or rather lack of information and co-ordination between initiatives at a small scale and European/regional activities; lack of a co-ordinated information policy with a centralised database based on possibilities for further integration involvement of regional stakeholders
	Often, lack of a distinctive tourist profile for destination marketing as a unique cross-border region for tourists
	In many cases, lack of a conclusive overall strategy for cross-border tourism and mutual cross-border tourism marketing
	Insufficient identification of the inhabitants with the cross-border region, i.e. the "mental border" of the border-zone population

Figure 1. Potentials and barriers of tourism co-operations in cross-border EU-destinations
(see Frys, 2011, pp.138-139).

Frys concedes that weak points in co-operative projects have been found, but in view of the trend towards regionalisation and the growing importance of cross-border destinations on an EU level, concludes that EU funds should be used for these cross-border projects (see Frys, 2011, p.152).

In a 2013 case study, Bernhäusl & Gronau examine the applicability of the conceptual model of regional identity as a motivating factor for co-operation within the management context. In 2001, the "Balkans Peace Parks" project was founded in York, Great Britain, and in 2004 it was registered as a non-profit non-governmental organisation. The aim was to promote co-operation on a local level in the Prokletije Mountains, which run through the countries of Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro.
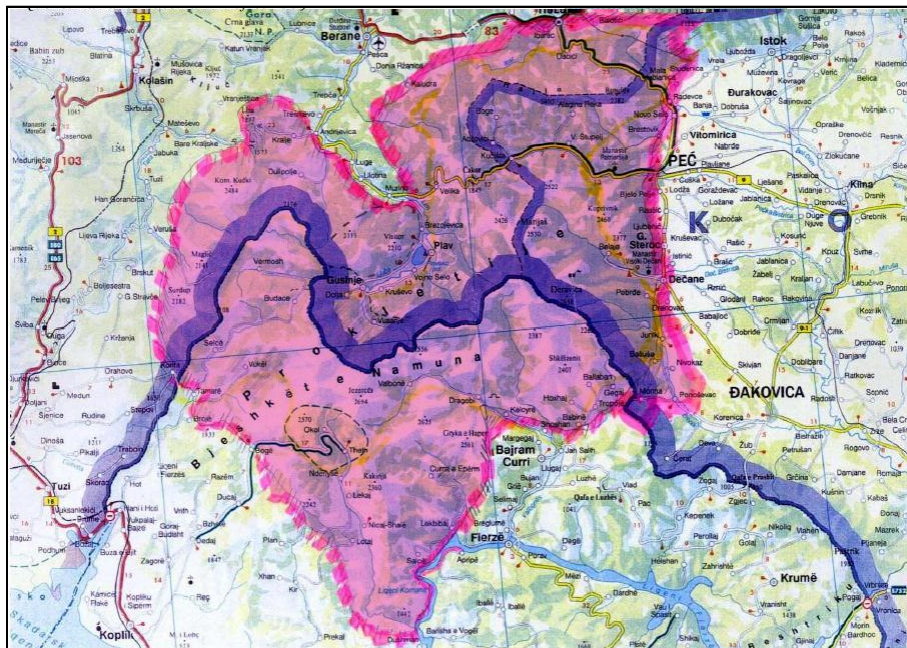
Figure 2. Map of the planned "Balkans Peace Park" 2009
(Bernhäusl & Gronau, 2013, p. 139).

Bernhäusl & Gronau 2013 characterise the "Balkans Peace Park" as an "imaginary space", because the area it covers (about 3,000 square kilometres) was artificially created from rural landscapes in the three countries mentioned above. Since 2009, the area belonging to Montenegro has served as a national reserve, the "Prokletije National Park".

The researchers examined whether there is a common regional identity among the local inhabitants or not. They could only find a regional identity within the following areas

- „Prokletije" in Montenegro (in English: enchanted mountains),
- „Alpet sqhiptare" (Kosovo, Albania),
- „Beshkët e Nëmuna" (Kosovo, Albanien),
- „Rugova" (Kosovo).

Although the researchers could find a common sense of identity for an "enchanted mountains region" in each sub-region, there was no shared understanding, no common name or brand because of the different languages in the various sub-regions. Since 2006, there has been a growing number of projects within this imagined "Balkan Peace Park", e.g. the „Peaks of the Balkans"– a co-operation between Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo initiated by the German GIZ (Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit) to improve security on the unofficial hiking trails in the border areas of the neighboring countries and projects for environmental protection, e.g. the Environmental Centre Valbona. In their conclusion, Bernhäusl & Gronau consider whether an external creation of imagined spaces lead to stronger regional identity in the understanding of Weichhardt (1990, p. 20) that regional identity is "a cognitive-emotional representation of parts of spaces in processes of awareness of an individual, respectively a collective assessment of a group" (see the same, cited by Bernhäusl & Gronau, 2013, p. 142). They could discern no regional identity within the awareness of the locals, no stronger endogenous identity as a result of the external projects, but a growing exogenous identity among the project partners. In this context they spoke of the "imagined Balkans region peace park" as a "co-operation incubator" which stimulates co-operation through the external creation of a regional identity. Even today, many projects are realised under the umbrella of "Balkans Peace Park", see www.balkanspeacepark.org.

Thimm (2013, p. 145) describes the concept of imagined geography and related approaches in German and English literature. Mental images, formed during childhood, are persistent when it comes to perceiving destinations and nations. Based on the Lake Constance case study, she explains the resulting effects and implications of this concept. Lake Constance is a border region of Germany, Austria and Switzerland.
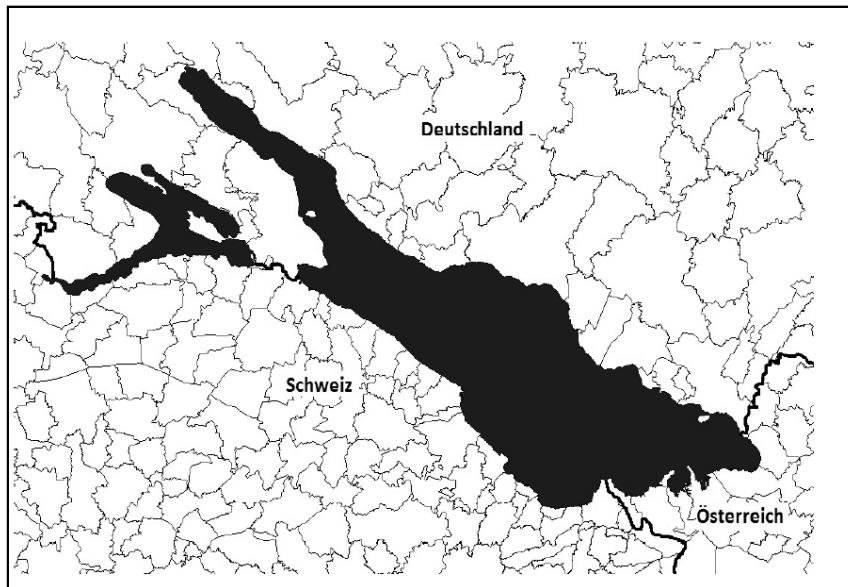
Figure 3. Lake Constance as a border region and international destination
(Thimm, 2011, p. 122).

In her comparison of the cross-border destination management models between Lake Constance, Upper Rhine and the Catlins, Thimm 2012 and 2014 states that − with its *management model of paradigm-based flexibility*, Lake Constance complies with the requirements of strategic management to a greater extent than the destinations of Upper Rhine and the Catlins (see Thimm, 2012, p. 119).

Rehage 2014 compiles theories and concepts from academic literature which are derived from books and articles on destination management; cross-border areas and tourism, stakeholder management; collaboration, networking and partnerships in tourism; competitiveness in destinations as well as international and cross-cultural strategic management (see Rehage, 2014, pp. 94ff.). Based on her study of the literature, she summarises twelve internal strategic destination management criteria which should help to identify managerial shortcomings. This "12 criteria framework" was tested on a heterogeneous case study of the Lake Constance border-region which is cited as a best-practice example not only by Thimm (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014), but also by Beritelli & Scherer, 2014 and Pahl-Humbert, 2014.

Organisational Set-up	Human Resources Management	Tasks, Roles & Responsibilities	Stakeholder Management	Linkages	Tourism Strategy & Planning
• Organic Bureaucracy • Holistic, integrated management approach • Boundary-less organisation • Chain of command • Learning organisation • Adaptive management • Good governance principles	• Training, education & development • Involvement & empowerment • Knowledge & skills • Incentives & social events • Motivation • Rewards & compensation • Variation & Challenge	• Co-ordination & activities • Core business definitions • Tasks distribution • Leadership & advocacy • Supervision • Decision-making process	• Views of stakeholders • Co-ordination • Identification of stakeholders • Understanding of stakeholders` claims • Communication with stakeholders • Community ofstakeholders	• Establishment of a relationship • Benefits of Co-operation • Challenges of Co-operation • Cross-border partnerships • Maintenance of relations • Possible declaration of relations	• Destination development strategy • Assessment of current situation (SWOT) • Common vision • Strategic objectives • Participative goal setting • Collaborative planning
Marketing Settings	Innovation	Spirit	Research & Knowledge Exchange	Resource Management	Control & Monitor
• Image & common identity based on USPs	• Definition of innovation • Organisational	• Organisational culture • Mutual	• Awareness of trends • Identification of	• Preservation • Caring	• Review processes & control results

• Distinctive positioning • Umbrella brand/theme • Marketing strategy • Customer orientation • Marketing activities in co-operation • Marketing tools • Marketing message	structure, HR & planning approaches as stimulators • Need for innovation (e.g. product, market & mgmt. innovations) • New technologies • Continuous improvement	relationships • Group emphasis, care & trust • Values, principles & management practices • Cultural backgrounds • Shared interests & co-operation willingness • Regional identity • Consultative mgmt • Motivation & commitment	competitors • Demand-side research • Supply-side research • Destination research • DMO performance reporting • Information exchange • Share of experiences • "Sharing is power" • "Communities of knowledge"	mentality • Joint/integrated mgmt. • Visitor mgmt • Protective policy formulation • Carrying capacity • Limits of acceptable change • Sustainability principles • Promotion programmes & education • Monitoring impacts	• Changing circumstances • Performance of HR • Learning from mistakes • Delivery of quality • Active listening to consumers • Enhancing the experience • Risks & crisis mgmt. • Comprehensive crisis mgmt. plan

Figure 4. Framework of 12 internal strategic destination management criteria for cross-border destinations
(Rehage, 2014, p. 113).

This framework is suitable for the application in the 5-phases-marketing-management-process (see Freyer, 2015, p. 412) so as to be aware of all necessary steps to market a mutual cross-border region.

3. ISSUES FOR THE CROSS-BORDER REGION BUCOVINA/OBLAST TSCHERNIWZI (ROMANIA/UKRAINE)

When the author in 2012 came with her students from the Baltic College University of Applied Sciences Schwerin for an international field trip and conference to Suceava/Bucovina, the German students for the first time realised that "Mecklenburg-Vorpommern" translated to "Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania". Why is the federal state called "Western" Pomerania although it is situated on the easternmost border of Germany?

Under the Treaty of Szczecin (Stettin) of 15 December, 1995, border municipalities and municipal organizations (Kommunalverbände) formed the "Euro-Region POMERANIA," with the participation of Germany, Poland and Sweden. The Euro-Region POMERANIA was to be the foundation for longlasting cross-border relationships with the aim of promoting balanced development along the boundaries of the three countries, a region comprising Northwestern Poland, Southern Sweden and Northeastern Germany, with an area of more than 49,000 km² and a population of about 3.9 million (see http://www.europa-mv.de/cms2/Europamv_prod/Europamv/de/bilateralezusammenarbeit/Euroregion_Pomerania/index.jsp / 2016-05-16). A look at the website shows a large number of joint projects, including some in the field of tourism. But so far none of the students had ever thought about the historic circumstances of the name and their region.

In 2013, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Bähre&Fergen&Chasovschi evaluated the student field trip and its results in research and teaching. Based on a theoretical planning approach in destination marketing management, the *Romanian* part of Bucovina was to be regarded as a destination at the end of the involvement stage of the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) (see Bähre&Fergen&Chasovschi, 2014, p. 7, with reference to Butler 1980). But this evaluation was compiled only for the Romanian part of the region. Considering the described approaches to destination management and the uniqueness of Bucovina, as a beautiful cultural landscape with a high density of UNESCO heritage sites located in the triangle between the Ukraine, Romania and Moldova, Bucovina has the potential to become a

common European "Bucovina" region, attracting international travellers from all over the world and bringing prosperity to its population in the three countries of Ukraine, Moldova and Romania.

The joint projects which have been realized by YURIY FEDKOVICH CHERNIVTSI NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (oblast Tschernivzi/Chernivtzi region) and "ŞTEFAN CEL MARE" UNIVERSITY of SUCEAVA (Suceava county/Romanian Bucovina), as well as this conference should and could play an important role as milestones for the development of a common European "Bucovina" region, promoting the idea of a strong Europe as an attractive cultural tourism destination.

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