

Cross-border cooperation. The Euroregions

This book was completed thanks to the joint efforts of twelve authors from the Department of European Studies of the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the establishment of Political Geography Unit in Political Geography and Regional Studies Department of the University of Łódź, and the Institute of European Studies of the Jagiellonian University. The book has been devoted to the most efficient form of cross-border cooperation – Euroregions. The authors review their achievements, experience, benefits, and deficiencies. They write about the genesis and development of cross-border cooperation of the most interesting, in their opinion, Euroregions, as well as about instruments, which the European Union offers to them.

The book opens the text of Marek Sobczyński entitled *The history of institutionalizing of European cross-border cooperation and development of the idea of Euroregions*. The author carefully examines the stages of the emergence of cross-border cooperation, reminding that it preceded the European integration process, which is now it taking place under the aegis of the European Union. At the end of the text Sobczyński notes that in recent years the local cross-border integration process has already extended beyond the borders of Europe. It can be observed in Asia and in South America.

Aleksandra Nacewska-Twardowska examines the principles of functioning of the Euroregions and describes their evolution as a result of historical turmoil. She stresses the fact that regions in Europe have been brought together despite being once the consistent economic, historical, cultural or language entities – divided and becoming parts of neighbouring countries, which sometimes are antagonized. Developing cooperation within the framework of the border regions has been aimed at mitigating the negative effects of the existence of borders. Further the author discusses the rationale, legal basis and objectives

of the regional cooperation in Europe, analyzes history of regional cooperation in Poland and describes the emergence and functioning of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.

Stefan Kałuski in the text entitled *Critical notes on the Euroregions* focuses on ambiguous and sometimes even controversial ways to create the Euroregions. The controversy appears most commonly in relation to issues such as: the size of the territory of the Euroregion and its components in different countries; delimitation of its borders; internal differentiation and division of the Euroregion, including the role of the State border, as well as the role of Euroregions as remote areas.

In the following chapters are given examples of Euroregions in which cross-border cooperation has reached the most interesting forms. These are the chapters: Katarzyna Leśniewska's *Euroregion Øresund as an example of the Danish-Swedish cross-border cooperation*, Krzysztof Strzałka's *Euroregion Tyrol – South Tyrol / Alto Adige – Trentino*, Ryszard Żelichowski's *Euroregion Ems-Dollart as an example of the German-Dutch cross-border cooperation*, Anna Klimek's *Euroregions Pro Europa Viadrina and Spree-Neisse-Bóbr. Their functioning and the importance for the development of the Middle Oder*. Wojciech Frączek's *Euroregion Silesia. The specifics of the area and examples of cross-border activities*, Tomasz Figlus's *Euroregion Glacensis as an example of Czech-Polish cross-border cooperation*, and Agata Kozakow's *Białowieża Forest Euroregion – questions on the implementation of the idea of the Euroregion*.

The last two texts are not directly dedicated to the Euroregions. Krzysztof Koźbiał's study entitled *The International Lake Constance Conference as an example of cross-border cooperation* analyses the forms of cooperation of regions located around Lake Constance: Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and nearby Liechtenstein.

Łukasz Morawski writes about the biggest common cross-border ecological problem – electric and electronic waste.

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