

Melinda Benczi¹¹

Sustainable cross-border cooperation? A case-study on the role of national minorities ¹²

Cross-border cooperation within the European Union is a cornerstone of regional integration, fostering collaboration and solidarity among Member States. This article explores the role of national minorities, specifically in the Romanian-Hungarian border region, as contributors to the territorial impact and sustainability of cross-border projects. While existing research highlights their potential as bridge builders, this study critically assesses the tools used for measuring impact and sustainability in cross-border initiatives, uncovering a gap in acknowledging the role of national minorities. Through a case study of Romanian-Hungarian INTERREG projects between 2007-2020, this article sheds light on the nuanced relationship between national minorities and cross-border engagement. It underscores the need for further research, policy considerations, and emphasises that by harnessing the bridge-building potential of national minorities, they could be one of the guarantees for the cross-border projects' enduring results as well as collaboration, strengthening regional unity and prosperity in the European Union.

Key words: territorial development, cross-border cooperation, national minorities, impact evaluation

JEL code: JEL-code: H79

<https://doi.org/10.32976/stratfuz.2023.37>

Introduction

Cross-border cooperation stands as one of the main pillars of European Union (EU) integration, fostering collaboration and solidarity among Member States (Archick 2021). Rooted in the EU's fundamental principles of unity and cohesion, this cooperation transcends geographical boundaries (Scott 2016), enabling nations to jointly address common challenges and capitalise on shared opportunities (Adrot et al. 2018). With the aim of promoting peaceful coexistence (Gorzela 2016), economic growth (Zabelina 2019), and social progress (Grix 2001), cross-border cooperation facilitates the harmonization of policies (Göllner 2014), the exchange of best practices (Glinos 2011), and the optimization of resources across diverse regions (Guo 2005).

Consequently, ensuring the sustainability of cross-border cooperation becomes of paramount importance (Ivanov & Rotanova 2019). Sustainable cross-border cooperation is generally understood to refer to collaborative initiatives, projects, or agreements between neighbouring regions or countries from two or more sides of a state border aimed at achieving mutual benefits while taking into account the social, economic, environmental, and cultural dimensions of development (Khmeleva et al. 2022). It involves fostering lasting partnerships that promote long-term stability, resilience, and equitable growth, ensuring that the needs of present generations are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Mensah 2019). Put in other words, sustainable cross-border collaboration not only guarantees the continuity of joint initiatives but also reinforces the resilience and adaptability (Korhonen et al. 2021) of interconnected regions to evolving challenges. By embracing a long-term perspective, sustainable cross-border projects can effectively address complex issues such

¹¹ Analyst of CESCO, Researcher of the UPS-CESCO Research Group of Cross-Border Cooperation, PhD-student at University of Sopron

¹² Project no. TKP2021-NKTA-51 has been implemented with the support provided by the Ministry of Innovation and Technology of Hungary from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund, financed under the TKP2021-NKTA funding scheme.

as environmental protection, economic development, and social inclusion, fostering enduring benefits for both participating countries and their citizens (Basboga 2020). Moreover, sustainable cooperation reinforces trust (Koch 2018) and confidence among nations, laying the groundwork for deeper integration and lasting partnerships. By committing to sustainability in cross-border endeavours, the EU would strengthen its collective capacity to tackle global issues, solidifying its position as a beacon of regional cooperation and prosperity on the global stage (Fejes & Soós 2007).

The role of national minorities in cross-border cooperation has already been explored from a theoretical perspective. Research suggests that members of national minorities can act as bridge builders. The report entitled "Dynamics of Integration in the OSCE Area: National Minorities and Bridge Building" claims that members of the national minorities are able to initiate cooperation across state borders by relying on their intercultural knowledge and social capital (ECMI 2016, 10). Thus, their bilingualism and bi-cultural identities enable them to identify issues and areas where joint action across borders can benefit society as a whole (Komac & Vizi 2019, p. 15). National minorities may also play sub-functions, such as promoting the sustainability of cross-border cooperation (Portolés 2015) and ensuring the flow of information, especially due to their proximity to the border.

However, the role of national minorities in cross-border cooperation can, contrary to the above, even be negative with adversary consequences. Research findings point out that it is important not to overestimate the role of national minorities as "the presence of trans-border ethnic groups does not automatically lead to intensified cross-border cooperation" (Klatt 2006, 246). If national minorities cooperate in a way that excludes representatives of other nationalities from joint initiatives, it can lead to economic disparities, divisions within populations, and potentially amplify voices advocating for border revisions, especially in historically conflicted areas. This negative role can hinder cooperation and deepen conflicts (ibid).

While these theoretical insights have been examined in various contexts, their evidence-based application to the Romanian-Hungarian case is still somewhat missing, there are mostly only assumption such as that the presence of these minority communities, characterised by their unique cultural identities and historical ties, represent a vital force in enhancing the resilience and effectiveness of cross-border initiatives (e.g. Gualini 2003, Perkmann & Sum 2002, Adrot et al. 2018). In policy debates it is sometimes mentioned (e.g. Knoll 2009) that their involvement not only adds a layer of diversity and richness to these projects but also fosters a deeper connection between neighbouring regions, thus amplifying the positive outcomes.

This study aims to assess the extent in which the engagement of Romanians living in Hungarian border counties and Hungarians living in Romanian border counties translates to INTERREG projects. Thus, the focal objective of this article is twofold: first, to critically examine the existing tools used for measuring impact and sustainability in cross-border cooperation initiatives to see whether the addition of a new viewpoint is needed; and second, to see to what extent can the role the national minorities played in the INTERREG projects be tapped into with territorial analytical tools. By undertaking this dual exploration through the case-study of the Romanian-Hungarian INTERREG projects between 2007-2020, the impact and sustainability of cross-border initiatives will be better understood, enabling policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders to make informed decisions and advance the cause of regional collaboration and development within the European Union.

Methodology

In order to provide an as well-rounded assessment as possible, the present analysis relies on a series of methods and data input. First of all, based on the literature it maps out some of the most often used methods for measuring the impact and sustainability of cross-border cooperation in order to see what roles the national minorities have been assigned or whether there is a potential gap that could be filled. Then a case-study was built on the Romanian-Hungarian INTERREG

projects between 2007-2020 through the analysis of statistical data collected by the national statistical offices of the two countries and the respective counties.

Secondly, to analyse the cross-border projects implemented in the examined border region between 2007 and 2020 within the framework of the INTERREG Hungary-Romania Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes the official EU database of keep.eu was used¹³. In total, 564 projects were analysed in detail, the vast majority (455) of which come from the period 2007–2013, and 109 from the period 2014–2020. After the database was downloaded and filtered for the relevant periods, each project was analysed in several ways. Some analyses were quantitative focusing primarily on the costs of the projects, their thematical focus and, to shed light on the territoriality of the projects, the location of their partners; while others were more qualitative in nature (e.g. when analysing the project description for signs of assigning any role to the national minorities). In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the regional context, maps were created to visualise the collected and interpreted territorial data.

Measuring the impact and sustainability of cross-border projects

The European Commission's commitment to policy evaluation has significantly intensified, particularly within the context of EU Cohesion Policy, where substantial public funds are allocated to mitigate regional disparities. This heightened emphasis stems from the imperative need to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of these policies. To address this need, a plethora of models, methods, and tools have been proposed to assess the cross-border projects. Table 1 summarises the most often used methods measuring impact and sustainability of cross-border projects for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers seeking to align their evaluation strategy with the specific needs of such initiatives.

1. Table: Critical summary of the most often used methods measuring the impact and sustainability of cross-border projects (Own collection and edition)

Method	Advantages	Limitations	Sources
Cost-benefit analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables the analysis of the economic viability of cross-border projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May overlook non-monetary aspects of impact, such as social factors Assigning monetary values to intangible outcomes can be challenging and subjective (biases) Does not take the territorial aspect into consideration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glachant & Khalfallah 2011 Boadway 2006
The social return on investment methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expands the assessment beyond financial outcomes to include social and environmental value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relies on stakeholder input and subjective valuations, which can lead to varying interpretations of impact The participatory nature can be time-consuming and resource-intensive, limiting its scalability for larger projects Does not take the territorial aspect into consideration 	Pathak & Dattani 2014
The sustainable development goals framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers a universal standard for assessing the impact of projects in line with global sustainability objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The broad scope makes it difficult to pinpoint the contributions to the goals Focusing on goal alignment may overlook unique regional challenges and context-specific impacts Does not take the territorial aspect into consideration 	Griggs et al. 2014
The social network analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides insights into stakeholder collaborations in and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires substantial data collection and specialised expertise in network analysis It does not directly measure project outcomes; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dörny & Decoville 2016

¹³ The data was downloaded on 6 March, 2022.

Method	Advantages	Limitations	Sources
	influence over cross-border projects	the analysis may not capture qualitative aspects of impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not take the territorial aspect into consideration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knoke & Yang 2019
The theory of change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a comprehensive and logical framework to understand the causal relationships between project activities and outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May require extensive input from stakeholders and a deep understanding of complex interventions Highly dependent on accurate assumptions about how change occurs, which can be challenging to predict Does not take the territorial aspect into consideration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gunitsky 2013 Grove 1988
TEQUILA method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It benefits from balanced elements like regional sensibility and policy intensity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not consider territorial cooperation as a primary evaluation dimension Cannot be used for ex-post evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camagni 2020 Abrahams 2014
EATIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excels in emphasizing a participatory and bottom-up approach to evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks a holistic territorial analytic view Overlooks important dimensions like territorial governance and urban network arrangements 	Fischer et al. 2015
STEMA method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It heavily relies on a wide range of statistical analyses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily focuses on socioeconomic and environmental analysis, making it less suitable for evaluating territorial cooperation Lacks a comprehensive evaluation procedure 	Prezioso 2020
TARGET_TIA method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designed to assess the territorial impacts of cross-border cooperation programmes Allows for the inclusion of tailor-made dimensions and components 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not yet tested in practice 	Medeiros 2020

Source: Own compilation

Assessing tools for measuring cross-border initiative impact and sustainability reveals various pros and cons. Cost-Benefit Analysis aids economic viability assessment but overlooks non-monetary aspects and lacks a territorial dimension. The social return on investment expands the assessment but relies on subjective valuations and is resource-intensive, without a territorial focus. The sustainable development goals framework aligns projects with global sustainability objectives but might miss regional nuances and lacks a territorial perspective. Social network analysis provides stakeholder insights but requires substantial data and does not measure project outcomes or address territorial aspects. The theory of change offers a comprehensive framework but needs extensive stakeholder input and does not consider the territorial dimension. Consequently, each tool has some shortcomings that turn them less than ideal for the purposes of the present study.

However, regarding the TARGET_TIA methods, there was a vocalised need for further research “on this very specific thematic of relating TIA procedures with CBC programmes, in order to contribute to a higher efficiency and effectiveness of the EU financed projects, programmes and policies” (Medeiros 2015, 112), it is only logical to attempt to broaden the list of potential tools of analysis by proposing solutions to measure the role of a specific group of stakeholders (in the present case-study the national minorities) in the advancement of cross-border cooperation. This approach is justified by the geographic pattern of ethnic communities in the analysed border area: their role in the implementation of the CBC programme should not be underestimated.

The Hungarian-Romanian border area

The Hungarian-Romanian border section, spanning 443 kilometers, serves as a historical and geopolitical crossroads within Europe. Historically, this border has witnessed frequent changes and disputes, with its origins rooted in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (Sallai 2021). Its location as both an internal and external border often led to conflicts, impacting the lives of the diverse nationalities inhabiting the region.

In the early 21st century, the border underwent a transformation, marked by efforts at reconciliation and cross-border cooperation (Czimre 2018). Both Hungary and Romania joined NATO and the European Union, fostering new opportunities for collaboration and development in this previously contentious region (Deica 2006; Gasparini & Del Bianco 2011). Despite these positive developments, challenges remain, particularly concerning border controls due to Romania's delayed Schengen accession, which has periodically strained relations along the border (Hajdú & Rác, 2020).

The Hungarian-Romanian border region is characterised by an intricate ethnic diversity, shaped by historical legacies. Notably, the Romanian side is home to a substantial Hungarian minority, ranging from 5.1% in Timiș to 34.5% in Satu Mare, with certain settlements like Cherechiu having up to 94% Hungarian population. Conversely, the Hungarian side hosts a smaller Romanian minority, constituting 0.1% to 1.4% of the population across various counties, but Romanian communities are notably prevalent in certain settlements like Méhkerék (78.2%) and Bedő (48.7%). It is assumed that ethnic relations similarly to other parts of Europe (see for example Klatt 2006) in the Hungarian-Romanian border region also play a multifaceted role in cross-border cooperation efforts. Minority organizations and cultural exchanges have fostered social connectivity between communities on both sides of the border. Town-twinning agreements, numbering 144 in total, demonstrate a strong willingness for local-level cooperation. While there's an assumption that ethnic ties extend to project-level cooperation, this has not been explicitly tested. Despite evidence of joint cultural events and activities promoting cross-border cooperation, the exact extent to which national minorities contributed to INTERREG projects between 2007 and 2020 remains a question.

Case-study of the INTERREG cross-border projects between 2007-2020

The case-study focusing on the Romanian-Hungarian INTERREG projects between 2007 and 2020, specifically exploring the role of national minorities in cross-border cooperation, holds significant potential for improving the current methodology of measuring the impact of cross-border projects and consequently enhancing sustainability through its ability to propose new aspects that could be taken into consideration. Albeit admittedly, a case-study is not enough to generalise a new model, it can be enough to inspire further research in the topic. Arguably, the Romanian-Hungarian border section is a suitable choice for the case-study for several reasons. Firstly, it has a significant population identifying as national minorities on both sides of the border (Waterbury 2017). Secondly, the cross-border cooperation at this borderland has already some history, but it is not as developed as in western states where the role of minorities might be more difficult to unravel (Toca 2012).

The Romanian-Hungarian border cooperation, initiated in 1996 and continuing uninterrupted, initially marked a significant shift from historical tension to cooperation between the two nations. However, there are differing opinions on whether it truly fostered closer ties and historical reconciliation (Salat 2009, 347). The EU-funded Phare CBC Fund, with a budget of 62 million EUR from 1996 to 2003, aimed to consolidate links between cross-border communities (Csoka 2018, 98) but predominantly focused on infrastructure development and environmental protection, neglecting projects directly benefiting national minorities or economic development. Subsequently, the 2007-2013 program, following Romania's EU accession, prioritized convergence, regional competitiveness, and European territorial cooperation (Feier and

Bădulescu 2016), allocating 275,179,861 EUR for joint sustainable development and social and economic cohesion. The 2014-2020 period continued to support border area cooperation, with a total budget of 202,134,399 EUR, supplemented by national co-financing. It included six priority axes focusing on social inclusion, environmental protection, employment, infrastructure, climate adaptation, and public administration. Throughout these phases, the goal was to reduce segregation effects and leverage the border region's territorial potential.

One of the ways to assess the role of national minorities in the INTERREG project is to look at the territorial distribution of the project partners (which often correlates with the location where the given project is implemented) and check for any correlation with ethnic ratios or the existence of twin cities. It is often observed that a higher number of project partners signifies a more active and dynamic engagement in cross-border activities. In the context of the Romanian-Hungarian border region, this principle appears to hold true to some degree.

Firstly, as seen in the data, the municipalities situated directly along or very close to the border tend to have a higher chance to have a project partner. This is especially the case on the northern part of the Romanian side as more than 40% of the municipalities with at least one project partner are located between Satu Mare and Oradea regardless of the fact that geographically this area only constitutes less than one third of the whole border section. At the same time, this is the territory where the Hungarian minority population is more significant. This pattern can be linked to the assumption that national minorities often act as catalysts for cross-border initiatives. As pointed out above based on the literature review, their unique position, straddling the border and possessing intercultural knowledge, allows them to identify shared challenges and opportunities that transcend national boundaries. Consequently, it seems that the regions with a more substantial minority presence are more likely to actively engage in cross-border projects, leading to a greater number of project partners. However, this pattern should be cautiously interpreted because from the data it is unknown whether a given involved partner organisation belongs to the ethnic Hungarian, Romanian or mixed community.

Figure 1 shows, it is evident that the aggregated number of project partners in larger cities, particularly the county seats, is notably higher. This can be explained by several factors. Larger cities tend to have a more extensive and diverse population, which naturally results in a more vibrant cultural, economic, and institutional life. Additionally, urban centers often serve as hubs for various sectors, including education, commerce, and governance. These cities not only attract a wide range of organizations, including local governments, educational institutions, businesses, and civil society groups, to participate in cross-border projects but also serve as centers for national minorities. For instance, cities like Oradea have their own universities teaching in native languages, providing educational opportunities and cultural enrichment for the Hungarian minority population. It seems that the higher population density and economic activity in urban areas create a fertile ground for collaboration, leading to an increased number of project partners.

Secondly, it is worth briefly analysing the correlation between the location of project partners and the network of twin cities that have sprung up along this border, serving as symbolic bridges between two nations and their respective minority populations because these twinning arrangements are often built on shared traditions, cultural exchanges, and economic partnerships. On the map below the twin city network was placed beside the map of the project partners to see whether there is a shared pattern. On the Hungarian side, 59% of the twin cities from the analysed region had at least one project partner in one of the INTERREG projects between 2007 and 2020. On the Romanian side this ratio is a bit lower, 54%, which might indicate that where there is a larger minority group the dependency on formalised relations – such as the twin cities – might be somewhat lower as the actors could also capitalise on their more extensive informal networks. It is also worth mentioning that 47% of the twin relations with at least one project partner were formed between a Hungarian city and a Romanian city where the ratio of the Hungarian minority is at least one third of the whole population.

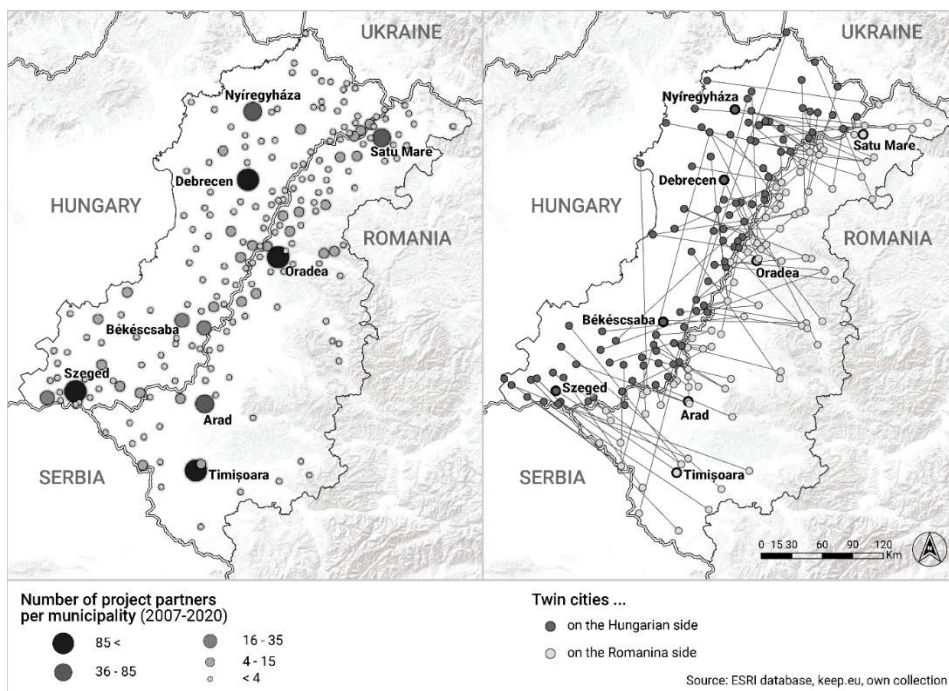


Figure 1: The territorial distribution of the project partners and the twin cities in the analysed period and area

Source: Own compilation, edited by Viktória János, CESC

Further aspects that can be telling are the size of the projects in terms of their budget and the involvement of the nationalities as partners (see Map 2). To analyse this, a more zoomed-in approach was taken in order to avoid the skewing of the data. Thus, the most relevant theme of the two analysed programme period was taken – namely, the “Community integration and common identity” – to see whether there was any link between the size of the projects’ aggregated budget and the ratio of the national minorities.

Figure 2 illustrates that in both countries, the municipalities succeeding to apply for the highest ERDF contribution were not necessarily the municipalities with the highest ethnic minority population. Nyíregyháza, Debrecen and Szentes on the Hungarian side won 4 922 604 EUR, while their Romanian population was 0,25%, 0,35% and 0,14% respectively compared to other municipalities in the analysed territory with much higher ratios such as Méhkerék (78,21%), Bedő (48,75%) or Kétegyháza (27,57%). At the same time, it has to be noted that there were 7 project partners involved altogether from these municipalities too. On the Romanian side the municipalities with the biggest aggregated ERDF funding (5 960 953 EUR) were Satu Mare, Oradea and Dumbrăvița, which had 34,6%, 23,7% and 14,3% Hungarian population respectively. Similarly, to the Hungarian side, here also the municipalities with the highest ratio of Hungarian minorities from the project partner database, such as Cherechiu (94,04%), Sălacea (92,79%) and Buduslău (92,08%) did not apply for the highest budget, but still had 6 project partners which is somewhat remarkable if their total population of 7 359 people is also considered.

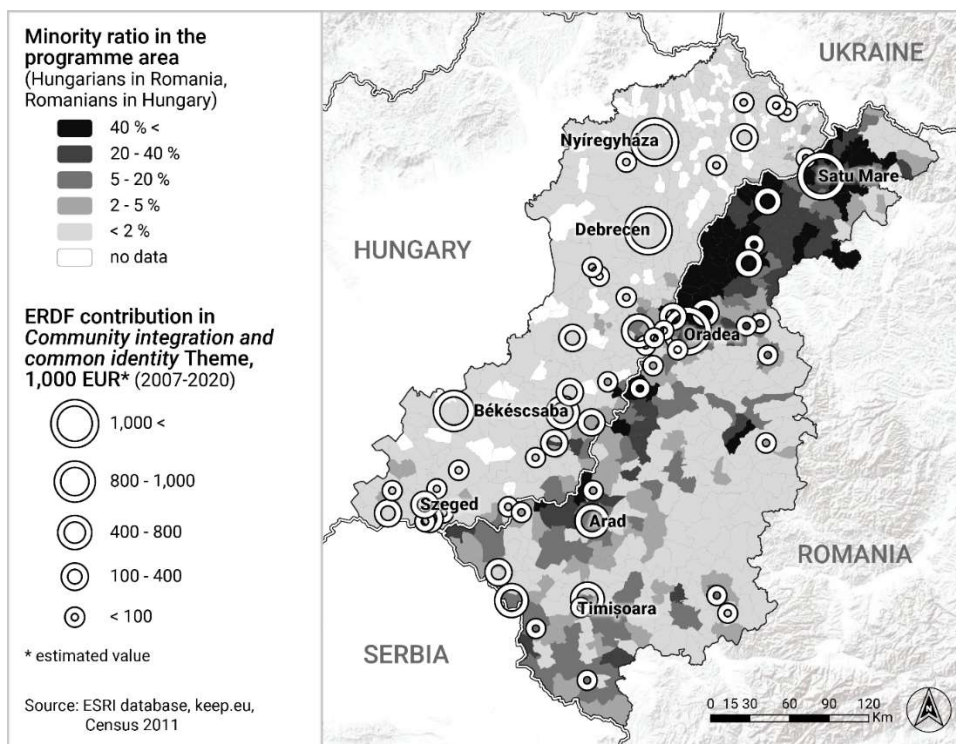


Figure 2: Minority ratio in the programme area combined with the size of the project budget in Community integration and common identity Theme
Source: Own compilation, edited by Viktória János, CESC

While the map clearly illustrates the spatial distribution of ethnic minorities and the aggregated allocation of resources in community integration and common identity, there is no clear correlation between the two. The divergence between ethnic ratios and project budgets raises essential questions for both the programme and the national organisations responsible for this priority. It prompts inquiries into the effectiveness of resource allocation mechanisms and the extent to which community development initiatives are attuned to the specific needs and aspirations of ethnic minority populations.

Regarding the topics under the above-mentioned priority area, the project description of all the 564 Hungary-Romania INTERREG projects realised between 2007-2020 were analysed to identify those which explicitly mention or assign any role to the national minorities. All in all, 10 such projects were found which delved deeply into matters concerning national minorities, accounting for a budget of 10,3 million EUR, which constitutes only 2,1% of the aggregated budget of the projects implemented. Based on their content, these projects can be categorised into two main areas: identity-related projects and educational initiatives. Identity-focused projects primarily aimed to bolster the cultural identity of Hungarians in Romania and Romanians in Hungary achieving this through various means, such as conferences, traditional events, theatre performances, and art and crafts camps. Some projects concentrated on promoting cultural traditions and resources through workshops on ceramics, pottery, and wooden crafts.

Education-focused projects often involved multiple educational institutions in collaborative efforts to organise teacher exchanges, seminars, and conferences. These initiatives aimed to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and the development of specialised educational programs. For instance, one project, "LearnByArt," fostered knowledge transfer and implemented specialised educational programs across partner institutions. Culture played a pivotal role in

these projects, serving as a bridge to connect people from both sides of the border, aligning with the idea that culture can strengthen cross-border cooperation while avoiding conflict-sensitive topics.

From the analysis of these closely examined projects, it becomes evident that these initiatives have mentioned a total of 15 different settlements where project activities were planned. Interestingly, the majority of these projects converge within the middle part of the border region, spanning between Debrecen and Oradea, and their respective hinterlands. This concentration is noteworthy as it occurs despite the fact that these are not the cities with the most striking ethnic ratios (in Debrecen the Romanian population is only 0.35% and in Oradea the Hungarian population accounts for 23%). However, in Oradea's case the significance of this concentration can be attributed to the cultural center that the city represents for the Hungarian minority in Romania. Moreover, the comparable sizes and complementary functions of these two settlements and their hinterlands likely also contribute to the extensive cooperation observed in this region, underscoring the multifaceted dynamics shaping cross-border collaboration.

Conclusion

This article has delved into the intricate world of cross-border cooperation, emphasizing the significance of sustainability in promoting harmonious relations, economic growth, and social progress among neighbouring regions. The exploration of INTERREG cross-border projects realised between 2007-2020 along the Romanian-Hungarian border region using theoretical and practical tools of territorial analysis has expanded our understanding on the potential link between the national minorities and their participation in these projects.

The findings of this study suggest that national minorities, particularly the Hungarian minority in Romania probably due to their larger ratio, play a multifaceted role in cross-border cooperation. Their unique position stemming from possessing intercultural knowledge and social capital, allows them to identify common challenges and opportunities that transcend national boundaries. Their involvement can lead to increased project engagement and foster social connectivity, thus enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of cross-border initiatives.

The analysis of cross-border projects along the Romanian-Hungarian border region revealed a nuanced relationship between national minorities and project engagement. While there is a notable correlation between the presence of national minorities and a higher number of project partners, suggesting their role as catalysts for cross-border initiatives, the size of project budgets does not consistently align with the proportion of minority populations. This indicates that project engagement is influenced by various factors beyond just ethnic demographics. Moreover, only a limited number of projects explicitly mention or assign roles to national minorities, and when they do, they primarily focusing on identity-related and educational initiatives.

Further research should develop territorial assessment methods to measure the different aspects of national minorities, while future policy considerations should explore ways to harness the potential of national minorities in cross-border collaboration when designing, implementing, and evaluating such projects. Whereas some of the findings of this study is not yet conclusive, they set several directions that open the door to further research with different tools and perspectives to better dissect the topic.

In conclusion, in harnessing the bridge-building capabilities of national minorities, one of the cornerstones could be unveiled to secure the sustained success of cross-border projects. The very existence of these communities could become a guarantee to nurture and develop the results of the different cross-border project.

References

- ABRAHAM, G. (2014). What “is” territorial cohesion? What does it “do”? Essentialist versus pragmatic approaches to using concepts. *European Planning Studies*, 22(10), 2134-2155.
- ADROT, A., FIEDRICH, F., LOTTER, A., MÜNZBERG, T., RIGAUD, E., WIENS, M., ... & SCHULTMANN, F. (2018). Challenges in establishing cross-border resilience. *Urban Disaster Resilience and Security: Addressing Risks in Societies*, 429-457.
- ADROT, A., FIEDRICH, F., LOTTER, A., MÜNZBERG, T., RIGAUD, E., WIENS, M., & SCHULTMANN, F. (2018). Challenges in establishing cross-border resilience. *Urban Disaster Resilience and Security: Addressing Risks in Societies*, 429-457.
- ARCHICK, K. (2021). The European Union: ongoing challenges and future prospects. *Current Politics and Economics of Europe*, 32(1), 105-150.
- BASBOGA, K. (2020). The role of open borders and cross-border cooperation in regional growth across Europe. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 7(1), 532-549.
- BOADWAY, R. (2006). Principles of cost-benefit analysis. *Public Policy Review*, 2(1), 1-44.
- CAMAGNI, R. (2020). The pioneering quantitative model for TIA: TEQUILA. *Territorial impact assessment*, 27-54.
- CSOKA, G-E. (2018): The Cross Border Cooperation between Romania and Hungary. Published in: Proceedings of the 9th International Conference of Doctoral Students and Young Researchers, 6(1).
- CZIMRE, K. (2018). Recovery or Discovery? Models and Motives of Cross-border Cooperation along the Eastern Border of Hungary after 1989-1990. *EuroTimes*, 26, 97-112.
- DEICA, P. (2006). Frontierele statale ale României - cadru pentru euroregiuni. *GeoPolitica*. 4(20).
- DÖRRY, S., & DECOVILLE, A. (2016). Governance and transportation policy networks in the cross-border metropolitan region of Luxembourg: A social network analysis. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 23(1), 69-85.
- ECMI. (2016). ECMI Report. Dynamics of integration in the OSCE area: National minorities and bridge building (European Academy Bolzano/Bozen). Flensburg.
- FEIER, F-C. (2011): The cross-border cooperation programme Romania-Hungary. An important instrument in ensuring the territorial cohesion and durable development of the border area. *Emerging Markets Economics and Business. Contributions of Young Researchers Proceedings of the 4th Conference of Doctoral Students in Economic Sciences*.
- FEIER, F-C., BADULESCU, A. (2016): The HU-RO Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013: Insights Related to the Effectiveness of Using the European Funds. *Oradea Journal of Business and Economics*. 1. 47-57.
- FEJES, Zs., SOÓS, E. (2007): A határon átnyúló együttműködések intézményesültsége Magyarországon I. *Európai Tükör*, 7(8), 104-121.
- FISCHER, T. B., SYKES, O., GORE, T., MAROT, N., GOLOBIČ, M., PINHO, P., ... & PERDICOULIS, A. (2015). Territorial impact assessment of European draft directives—the emergence of a new policy assessment instrument. *European Planning Studies*, 23(3), 433-451.
- GASPARINI, A., & DEL BIANCO, D. (2011). Strategies and Euroregions for Cross-Border Cooperation in Balkan and Danube European Countries. An analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Institute of International, Sociology of Gorizia.
- GLACHANT, J. M., & KHALFALLAH, H. (2011). Identifying Benefits and Allocating Costs for European Cross-Border Infrastructure Projects.
- GLINOS, I. A. (2011). Cross-border collaboration. *Cross-border health care in the European Union*, 217.
- GÖLLNER, R. T. (2014). Cross-Border Cooperation and Euro-regional Structures. Considerations on European Territoriality, Integration and Identity.

- GORZELAK, G. (2016). Normalizing Polish-German relations: Cross-border cooperation in regional development. In *EU Enlargement, Region Building and Shifting Borders of Inclusion and Exclusion* (pp. 195-205). Routledge.
- GRIGGS, D., SMITH, M. S., ROCKSTRÖM, J., ÖHMAN, M. C., GAFFNEY, O., GLASER, G., ... & SHYAMSUNDAR, P. (2014). An integrated framework for sustainable development goals. *Ecology and society*, 19(4).
- GRIX, J. (2001). Towards a theoretical approach to the study of cross-border cooperation. *Perspectives*, (17), 5-13.
- GROVE, A. (1988). Two modellings for theory change. *Journal of philosophical logic*, 157-170.
- GUALINI, E. (2003). Cross-border governance: Inventing regions in a trans-national multi-level polity. *The Planning Review*, 39(152), 43-52.
- GUNITSKY, S. (2013). Complexity and theories of change in international politics. *International Theory*, 5(1), 35-63.
- GUO, R. (2005). *Cross-border resource management: Theory and Practice* (Vol. 10). Elsevier.
- HAJDÚ, Z., & RÁCZ, Sz. (2020). Államhatár-politikák az Európai Unióban és Magyarországon a globális koronavírus-válság kezdeti időszakában. *Tér és Társadalom*. 34(2), 202–210.
- IVANOV, A. V., & ROTANOVA, I. N. (2019). Cross-border cooperation in the Altai interregion in the 21st century: results and development prospects. In *International Conference on Sustainable Development of Cross-Border Regions: Economic, Social and Security Challenges (ICSDCBR 2019)*, Atlantis Press, 988-992.
- KHMELEVA, G. A., KURNIKOVA, M. V., NEDELKA, E., & TÓTH, B. I. (2022). Determinants of sustainable cross-border cooperation: A structural model for the Hungarian context using the PLS-SEM methodology. *Sustainability*, 14(2), 893.
- KLATT, M. (2006). Regional Cross-Border Cooperation and National Minorities in Border Regions - a Problem or an Opportunity? In O. Žaneta (Ed.), *Expanding borders: Communities and identities* (pp. 239–247). University of Latvia.
- KNOKE, D., & YANG, S. (2019). *Social network analysis*. SAGE publications.
- KNOLL, B. R. (2009). “And who is my neighbor?” Religion and immigration policy attitudes. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 48(2), 313-331.
- KOCH, K. (2018). The spatiality of trust in EU external cross-border cooperation. *European Planning Studies*, 26(3), 591-610.
- KOMAC, M., Vizi, B. (2019). *Bilaterális kisebbségvédelem: A magyar-szlovén kisebbségvédelmi egyezmény háttere és gyakorlata*. L' Harmattan Kiadó, Budapest.
- KORHONEN, J. E., KOSKIVAARA, A., MAKKONEN, T., YAKUSHEVA, N., & MALKAMÄKI, A. (2021). Resilient cross-border regional innovation systems for sustainability? A systematic review of drivers and constraints. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 34(2), 202-221.
- MEDEIROS, E. (2020). TARGET TIA: A complete, flexible and sound territorial impact assessment tool. *Territorial impact assessment*, 9-25.
- MENSAH, J. (2019). Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action: Literature review. *Cogent social sciences*, 5(1).
- PATHAK, P., & DATTANI, P. (2014). Social return on investment: three technical challenges. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 10(2), 91-104.
- PERKMANN, M., & SUM, N. L. (2002). *Globalization, regionalization and cross-border regions: scales, discourses and governance*. In *Globalization, regionalization and cross-border regions* (pp. 3-21). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- PORTOLÉS, J. B. (2015). Cross-border Cooperation and cultural communities in Europe. *CMC Papers*. 3.
- PREZIOSO, M. (2020). STeMA: A sustainable territorial economic/environmental management approach. *Territorial impact assessment*, 55-76.
- SALAT, L. (2009): Román-magyar kapcsolatok. *Budapesti Könyvszemle*. 21(4).

- SALLAI, J. (2021). *Magyarország határai a trianoni döntés előtt és után*. Határrendészeti tanulmányok. 1 (1).
- SCOTT, J. W. (2016). Borders, border studies and EU enlargement. *The Ashgate research companion to border studies*, 123-143.
- TOCA, C. V. (2012). Different territorial levels of Romanian-Hungarian cross-border cooperation.
- WATERBURY, M. A. (2017). National minorities in an era of externalization: Kin-state citizenship, European integration, and ethnic Hungarian minority politics. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 64(5), 228-241.
- ZABELINA, I. A. (2019). Decoupling in environmental and economic development of regions-participants of cross-border cooperation. *Economic and social changes: facts, trends, forecast*, 12(1), 241-255.