Cross-border metropolitan integration in Europe

Dr. Christophe Sohn, Dr. Olivier Walther
CEPS/INSTEAD, Luxembourg

Dr. Bernard Reitel
Université de Haute-Alsace, France
I. Introduction

Metropolisation and the redefinition of the prerogatives of States

- The State: from a top-down regulatory authority to a partner and mediator

- The EU and the construction of an economic system of regulation (Scharpf 1999)
- A new room for manoeuvre to a large number of actors (Jessop 2004)

→ The emergence of a multi-level governance (Hooghe 1996)

The transformation of borders in Europe

- Change of functions: from a limit of sovereignty to an interface (Foucher 2000)
- New border regimes initiated by the EU (O'Dowd 2002)

→ An opportunity for cities to exploit the border differentials (functional integration)
→ An opportunity to multiply cooperation projects (institutional integration)
I. Introduction

The particular case of cross-border metropolitan regions

A geographic object that combines the commutator function (metropolis) with a limit/interface (border)

Overall objective

To evaluate the nature and intensity of integration of cross-border metropolitan regions from both a functional and an institutional point of view
Questions

1. What articulation between functional and institutional integration processes?

2. How to explain the nature and the level of institutional integration?

3. More specifically, what is the role played by the border? Constraint or opportunity?

Hypotheses

1. No automatic link between a strong functional integration and the level of metropolitan cooperation that occurs

2. It is not the cross-border institutional context that takes first importance, but the political organisation of the metropolitan centre and the strategies of its actors

3. The interest to cooperate is favored by the presence of a cross-border urban area

→ The capitalization of experiences over time can contribute to the development of cross-border cooperation projects
**II. Conceptual and methodological framework**

**Spatial integration** expresses the “level of interaction within and between areas as well as the willingness to cooperate” (Grasland et al. 1999).

**Functional and institutional integration**

A mismatch between functional urban territories and the institutional structure of cooperation (Saez, Leresche, Bassand 1997; Jouve, Lefèvre 2002)

- Analysis of interactions between areas: commuting flows
- Analysis of interactions between actors: cooperation projects

Source: Grasland et al. 1999. Study programme on European spatial planning
II. Conceptual and methodological framework

**Horizontal axis: a functional gradient**

Separation → Interaction (Ratti, Reichman, 1993)

1. Border = strict barrier
2. Cross-border metropolitan area
3. Polarisation of secondary urban centres

→ Analysis of commuting flows

**Vertical axis: an institutional gradient**

Ignorance → Cooperation (Martinez, 1994)

A. No relations (co-existence)
B. Regular contacts (interdependence)
C. Institutionalized structure of governance (integration)

→ Analysis of cross-border governance projects
III. Results

1. Functional integration

Evidence of a cross-border metropolitan area

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>805'000 (45%)</td>
<td>123'500 (country), 50'000 (City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basel</td>
<td>890'000 (40%)</td>
<td>46'000 (Canton)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geneva</td>
<td>741'000 (34%)</td>
<td>46'500 (ETB in 2000)</td>
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Proportion of commuters working in the urban area >16% of the active population
**III. Results**

2. Institutional integration

**Luxembourg**: No cross-border metropolitan cooperation but only local (PED) or inter-regional initiatives (Greater Region)

**Basel and Geneva**: Cooperation projects built to cope with the functional scale of the metropolisation

ATB/ETB, Metrobasel (Basel)

Projet d’agglomération franco-valdo-genevois (Geneva)
III. Results

3. Functional vs institutional integration

Luxembourg

No cooperation area adapted to the current scale of the functional metropolis has yet come to fruition

Basel and Geneva

Strong institutional metropolitan integration process
Development of strategic vision and spatial planning
Operational projects are forthcoming
Why is there no cross-border metropolitan governance in Luxembourg?

Despite strong functional integration and institutional differences that tend to be lowered (UE), the metropolitan scale is not really in the political agenda.

This singular situation results from:

- the preponderant role of the State and its wish to regulate the border differentials which are the origin of the country’s prosperity

- the institutional fragmentation of the territory (116 municipalities, no Urban Area)

→ A “state-metropolis” rather than a “city-state”
Why is the cross-border metropolitan governance stronger in Basel and Geneva?

III. Results

- Presence of Swiss cantons with strong competences at local scale
- Opportunity to benefit from federal financial support
- History of cross-border cooperation projects that converges on the metropolitan scale
- Existence of cross-border urban areas

Source: ARE
Confirmation of the hypotheses

1. There does not necessarily have to be a reciprocal link between the intensity of the socio-economic interactions and the extent of the cooperation

2. The strategies of the metropolitan actors are more important than border differentials when it comes to explain the level of institutional integration

3. The border as a constraint for urban development can positively influence the willingness to cooperate

→ Capitalization of experiences and exchanges play a crucial role in developing a metropolitan governance project
Cross-border metropolitan areas as paradoxical spaces

On the one hand, borders constitute a resource for metropolitan development of the urban centres due to fiscal and regulatory differentials (niche policy…)

On the other hand, the functional integration of cross-border areas tends toward a levelling-up of those differentials

In face of this paradox, there are various attitudes

Luxembourg’s state invests the regional and the local scales for cooperation, whereas it ignores the metropolitan scale in order to preserve its control over its border private means

Basel and Geneva have acknowledged that their territory of reference is now the metropolitan area and they have integrated their periphery in order to better regulate the development of the metropolitan area and its counter-effects
The border as a source of new opportunities

The economic advantages are quite obvious.

But also:

• The border situation enables the (local) authorities to hope for increased autonomy

• Original forms of governance (wide flexibility of legal and regulatory framework)

• International character of the metropolitan centre, cultural diversity, attraction of firms and skilled workforce

A generalisation on the European scale would be illusory given the multiplicity of specific cases.
IV. Conclusion

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http://metrolux.ceps.lu/

Christophe.Sohn@ceps.lu, Olivier.Walther@ceps.lu, Bernard.Reitel@uha.fr

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