



Cooperation in Crisis? An Analysis of Cross-Border Intermunicipal Relations in the Detroit-Windsor Region

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Borders and Cities 2
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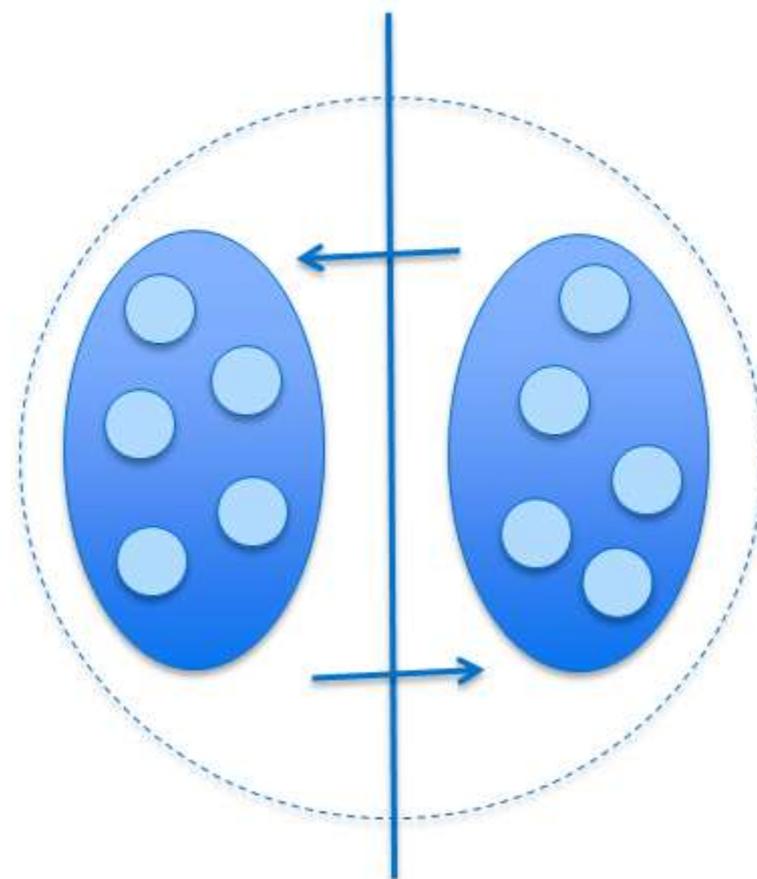
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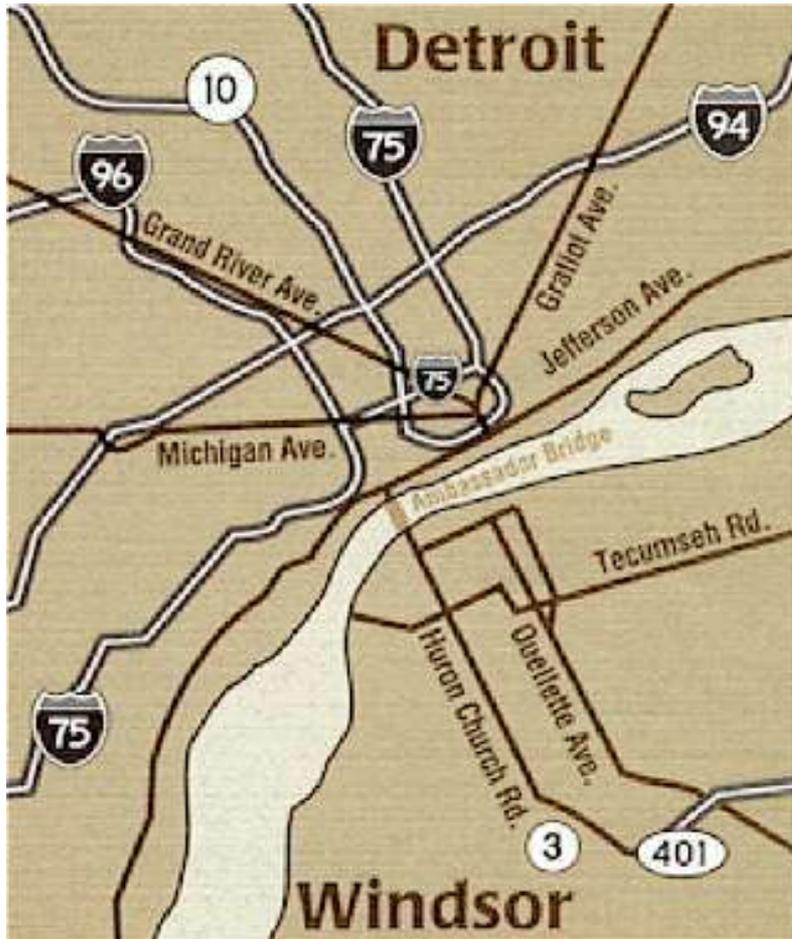
Metro Co-Op (2010-2012)

1. To what extent do municipalities cooperate within borders?
2. To what extent do municipalities cooperate across borders?
3. How does the strength and intensity of these horizontal relationships affect vertical/multilevel governance relationships and capacity to shape policy?

Detroit-Windsor, Luxembourg, Lille



The Detroit-Windsor Puzzle



- It is the largest cross-border metropolitan area on the Canada-US border;
- Close relationship between Canadian and American governments;
- Promising theoretical context;
- **But weak cross-border institutional integration;**
- **And weak *interregional* cooperation.**

A Proliferation of Cross-Border Linkages, but...

Interlocal (bi-lateral)

Mutual aid agreements

Joint events: sports, festivals

Detroit-Windsor Tunnel Corporation

University Exchange Agreement

Interregional (multilateral/regional)

TranslinkD (DRCC, Windsor-Essex)

Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

NVest

Lower Detroit River Conservation Vision

International (led by sr. gov'ts)

Great Lakes Commission/IJC

Detroit River International Crossing Study

Ontario-Michigan Declaration of Partnership and MOU on Cooperation

Ontario-Michigan MOU on Trade

Council of Great Lakes Governors

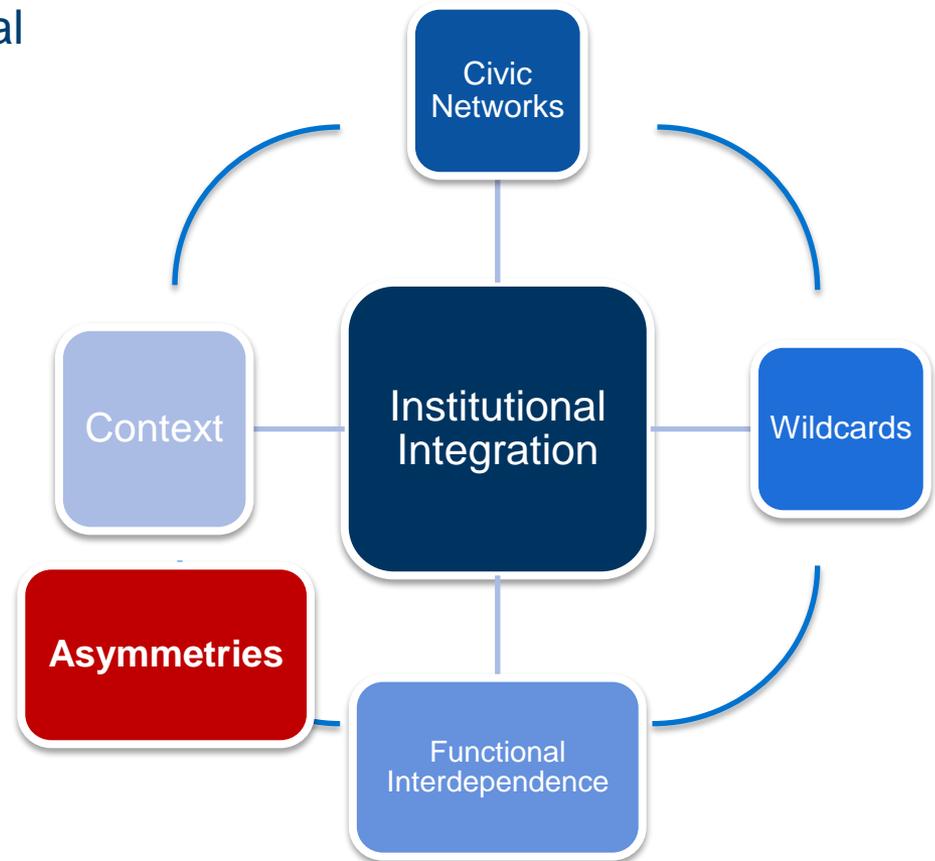
Ontario-Michigan Border Transportation Partnership

Great Lakes Information Partnership

Theorizing Intermunicipal Cooperation Across International Borders

What influences cooperation between local authorities across borders?

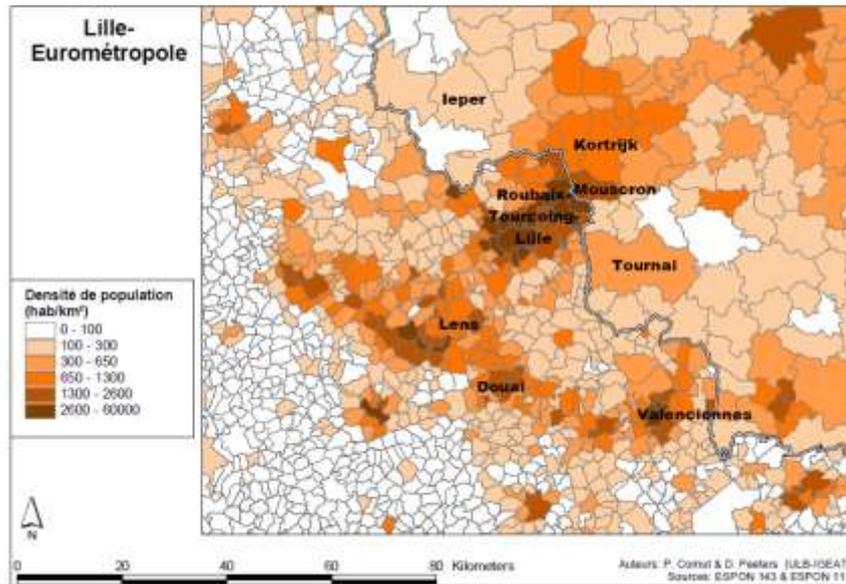
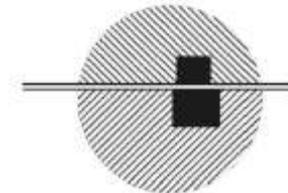
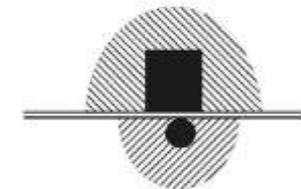
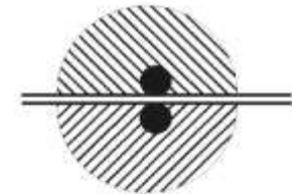
- Geographical preconditions
- Interdependencies
- Symmetries and asymmetries
- Cultural linkages
- Civic networks and leadership
- Intergovernmental context



Geographical Preconditions

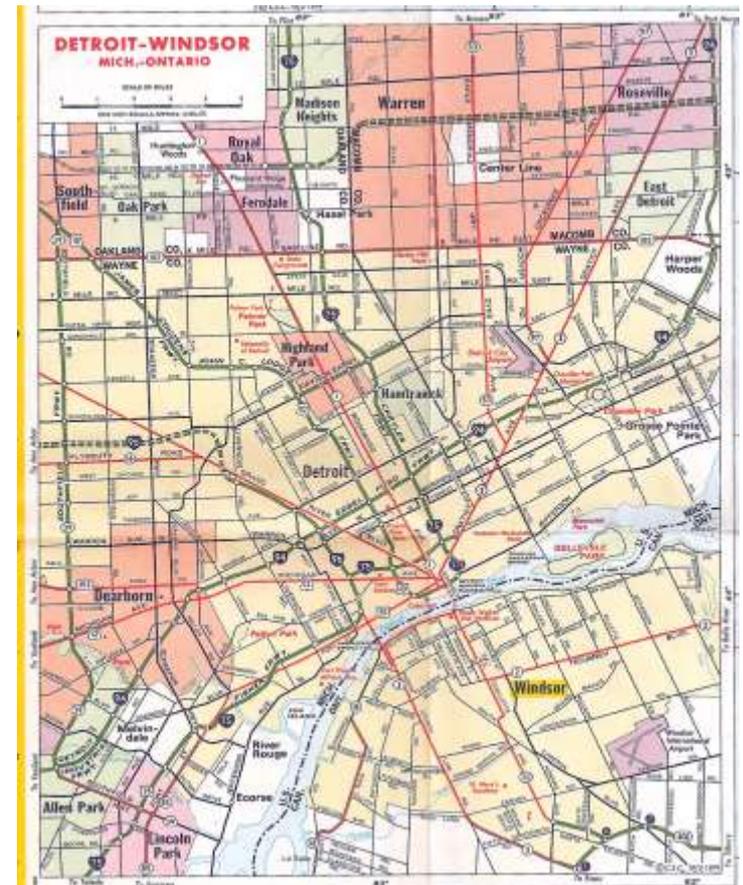
The size, scale and location, relationship to the border, and fragmentation of territorial authorities can determine:

- Who potential partners will be;
- Balances of power and centers of gravity;
- Significance of the region to senior levels of government;
- The number of players.



Geographical Preconditions : Detroit-Windsor

- Detroit dwarfs Windsor;
- There are more American actors/local authorities;
- Because of its location the region is significant to both federal governments.



The attitudes and actions of senior levels of government can influence the propensity of local actors to cooperate. Cross-border municipalities may be more likely to cooperate when:

- Relationships between senior levels of government are harmonious and productive;
- Senior levels of government “empower” their local/regional counterparts – i.e. are “decentralization friendly” (Perkmann, 2003);
- Senior levels of government specifically incentivize and support regional cross-border institutional integration.

Intergovernmental Context: Detroit-Windsor

Intergovernmental relations

“Let no one seek to devalue the achievements of our friendship by glossing over its occasional difficulties. It is true that, as is not uncommon among lifelong friends, we have sometimes had serious differences of opinion, misunderstood each other, struggled against each other’s competing ambitions. Long ago we even fought each other, usually in relation to the very boundary which this book illuminates. *The true nature of our international relationship, however, is revealed by the fact that it is defined not by our differences, but by our capacity and eagerness to resolve them*” (Trudeau, 1976; emphasis added).

Empowerment

Detroit = Home Rule; Windsor = “creature of the province”

Different approaches to decentralization with respect to local jurisdictions and state involvement in municipal affairs (particularly by the federal government).

Incentives and Support

No parallel to EU support such as Structural Funds, INTERREG, etc.

Focus on border regions by senior levels of government has centered on *trade/transportation, security and the environment*. Regional development is not significant on either US or Canadian federal or provincial policy agendas.

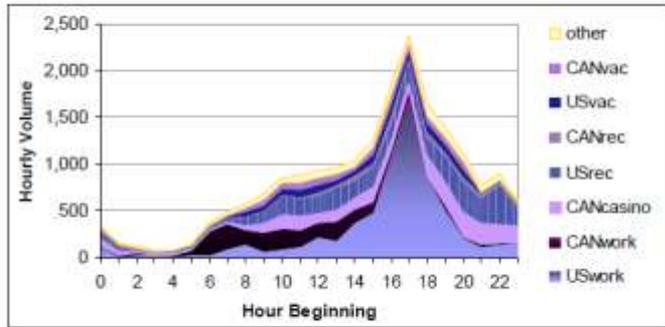
Socio-economic linkages and functional integration can define the region and create incentives for cooperation. Cross-border regions are linked by:

- Commuting patterns;
- Market forces and trade flows;
- Regional innovation systems and clusters;
- Common sets of interests and resources;
- Common infrastructure;
- Labour markets

Interdependencies : Detroit-Windsor

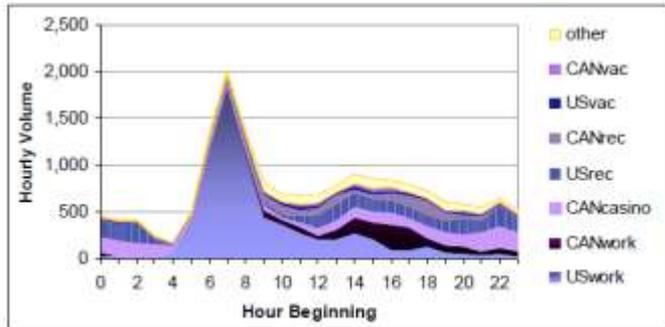
Exhibit 4.9: Hourly Traffic Profile for Detroit River Crossings by Direction, September 2004

A. To Canada



Shared infrastructure (DRIC, 2007)

B. To US



Commuting and labor (DRIC, 2005)



Center of the North American auto industry and cluster

A common sense of belonging, of shared norms and a sense of community can ease cooperation. These can be based on:

- Linguistic, ethnic, or religious similarities;
- Similar political cultures;
- Specific regional identities;
- Shared experiences and values;

Also significant to this determinant is the degree to which the region is characterized by a “culture of cooperation” (Lefevre, 2004)

Culture and Community: Detroit-Windsor

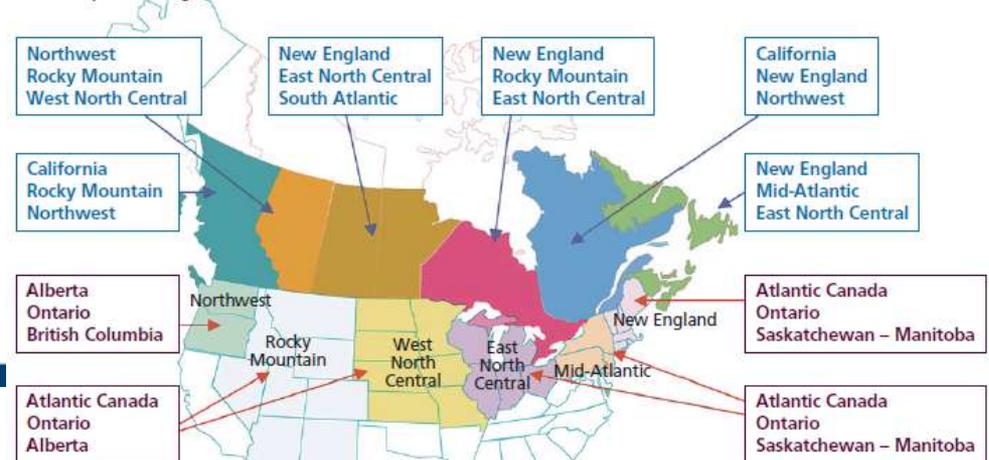
Culture and community are similar on either side of the US-Canadian border in this region. There are many similarities beyond historical and linguistic dimensions:

- Media exposure: A study conducted among college students in Windsor and Detroit indicated that there was a highly similar borderland personal value system, and because respondents lived in the same media-cultural environments, there was a strong acculturation process (Surlin and Berlin, 2000).
- “Cross-border areas in and around the Great Lakes share commonalities in socio-cultural values and ideological communities, but not so much a common identity” (Canada PRI, 2005)



Figure 5. Socio-Cultural Values

Closest Top Three Regions In Terms of Socio-Cultural Value



Local networks, leadership and policy communities organized or deployed at the regional scale are important agents of cross-border coordination. These have also been described as symbolic regimes (Clarke, 2004) or political clout (Brunet-Jailly, 2005).

These can be assessed using the:

- Prevalence of cross-border initiatives and association (cross-border institutional thickness) and associational interaction;
- Visibility and influence of civic entrepreneurs and leading organizations;
- Scalar orientation of dialogue and action towards the region.

Civic Capital: Detroit-Windsor

Lots of space for regional policy interaction around issues of the environment, water quality, infrastructure management, economic development, social policy, downtown revitalization, collaborative events...

...but little interaction at the *regional* level.



WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY PARK
TECHTOWN
WHERE MINDS AND MEANS CONNECT



United Way
for Southeastern Michigan



Congruence of local governments and local conditions can make cross-border cooperation easier. Some important areas of symmetry are:

- Institutional and political processes;
- Development history, industrialization and sectoral development;
- Standards of living and social conditions;
- Resources;
- Power

Symmetries and Asymmetries: Detroit-Windsor

“Symmetries”

- Symbiotic economies and economic development centered on the auto industry and logistics;
- Equal dependence on border mobility for prosperity;
- But this leads to common challenges due to industrial collapse and job losses;
- Cultural and linguistic similarities.

“Asymmetries”

- Differences in local political structures;
- Differences in national and state/provincial policies in education, healthcare, etc.;
- Different territorial arrangement of socio-economic conditions i.e. poverty and urban blight.
- The Detroit regional economy and metro region is much larger;
- Detroit is the largest city in Michigan, Windsor is 9th largest in Ontario

A Detroit-Windsor Puzzle?

How does this case compare to others? Is this weak institutional integration really a puzzle?

Literature seems to argue cross-border cooperation in North America is typically weaker and 'different':

force. However, although governments and economic development corporations keep strong ties across the border, integration rarely surpasses the level of technical commission. Governance attempts concentrate on improving common border infrastructure and ways to make (physical) crossing easier. The harmonisation of policies and the set-up of common institutions with real governance power are not seriously discussed.

OECD, 2006: 187

Clarke, 2004:19

The growth of coalitions and networks at the regional and subnational level to encourage cross-border cooperation in North America characterizes this “bottom-up” approach in the seeming absence of top-down structures and rules. North American subnational coalitions and partnerships are more likely to be sector-specific, networked, coalitional ties than more formal cross-border governance institutions. (Clarke, 2004)

Based on stronger private sector involvement, weak governmental support, low profile, fragmented authority. But how does this play out in the Detroit-Windsor case?

Invisible Institutional Integration?

Formalized meetings and coordination between actors can be difficult for outsiders to perceive – day-to-day cooperation is less visible when it's not through a cross-border structure.



Do we undervalue coordination relative to partnerships that result in the creation of (autonomous) authorities?

The participation and impact of municipalities can be obscured in international partnerships.

Dominant Civic Networks?

Previous research has shown that civic networks can stand in for and replace intergovernmental networks (Nelles, 2009, 2010).

This might be relevant since research on North American cross-border relationships has shown a greater role for private sector actors.

Is this a factor in Detroit-Windsor?



Close Intergovernmental Context as a Barrier?

Senior levels of government can also dominate cross-border debates:

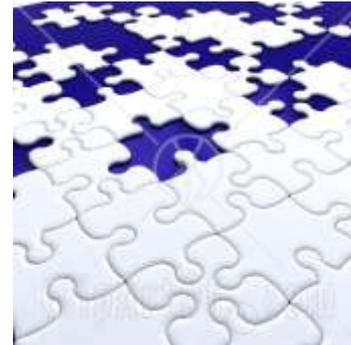
- Mobility has historically been an international rather than a regional focus;
- Environmental concerns fall under historical intergovernmental accords with little attention to local actors (i.e. International Joint Commission);
- Security policies after 9/11 impact regional integration leaving little scope for local agency (i.e. enhanced drivers licenses)

And they can shape incentives against cross-border cooperation:

- Programs can encourage the development of internal networks (at the expense of external?)

Native Patterns of Regionalism and Cooperation

What are the implications of different patterns of intermunicipal cooperation on either side of the border?



9/11 impact on border security and trade



Brought local governments and actors together to re-establish and secure mobility of goods and people.

Financial crisis and auto sector restructuring



Thank You

Questions and comments are welcome!

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