

*The role of the Cross-border co-operation mechanism in improving the performance  
of local groups and catalyzing regional economic integration*

دور آلية التعاون عبر الحدود في رفع أداء الجماعات المحلية وتحفيز مسار التكامل الاقتصادي الجهوي

*JADLA Mohamed Mossadek*<sup>1,\*</sup>, *LAGGOUNE Djelloul*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Phd Student in International Political Economy, Algiers University 3, Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, Department of International Studies, Laboratory of Studies and Research in International Relations (Algeria)

[jadla.mohamed.mossadek@univ-alger3.dz](mailto:jadla.mohamed.mossadek@univ-alger3.dz)

<sup>2</sup> Senior Lecturer A, Algiers University 3, Faculty of Political Science and international relations, Department of international Studies, Laboratory of Studies and Research in International Relations (Algeria)

[laggoune.djelloul@univ-alger3.dz](mailto:laggoune.djelloul@univ-alger3.dz)

Received: 11 / 05 / 2021

Accepted: 16 / 07 / 2021

Published: 20 / 07 / 2021

**Abstract:**

The cross-border co-operation mechanism helps express the total collaborative efforts embodied by co-operation between neighboring regional groups in a border region that contains two or more regions.

This mechanism depends on the roles of non-state actors, and specifically local groups, pertaining to stimulating the building and strengthening of regional economic blocs.

The objective of this research paper is to shed light on the role of the cross-border co-operation mechanism in enhancing the performance of local groups in tackling the challenges that countries face in border regions. And that is done by highlighting its dimensions and locating them in the process of building regional economic integration.

**Keywords:** cross-border co-operation; local groups; border regions; regional economic integration.

**ملخص**

تعتبر آلية التعاون عبر الحدود عن مجموع الجهود التي يجسدها التعاون متعدد المجالات على مستوى الأقاليم الحدودية التي تشترك فيها دولتان أو أكثر، وذلك انطلاقا من أدوار "الفواعل دون-الدول" وعلى وجه التحديد "الجماعات المحلية". وانطلاقا من ذلك تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية لتسليط الضوء على دور هذه الآلية في الرفع من أداء الجماعات المحلية في إطار السعي لمواجهة التحديات التي تواجهها الدول في المناطق الحدودية وذلك من خلال تبيان انعكاسات أبعادها ومكانتها في مسارات الاندماج الاقتصادي الجهوي .  
**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التعاون عبر الحدود، الجماعات المحلية، المناطق الحدودية، الاندماج الاقتصادي الجهوي.

\*Corresponding Author.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The European Union is considered to be one of the most powerful economic poles in the world which leaves no room for doubt about the success of the European integration experiment. Among the most prominent mechanisms that have contributed to the European edifice is the establishment of "cross-border co-operation networks" across multiple countries, thus forming "sub-systems" that have their own special system. This mechanism is based on the autonomy of "local groups" when it comes to building their economic policies in the context of "above-national regional space". This course of co-operation is determined in accordance with the characteristics of the border regions within a specific framework that has its own "unique legal, economic, and social attributes."

According to the above, it should be noted that the path of "regional integration" must be a multidimensional one. The role of "decentralized co-operation" among local communities, particularly those geographically contiguous and separated only by inter-state borders, is not overlooked.

Undoubtedly, creating a framework for cross-border co-operation is a pragmatic approach that is capable of achieving a "Win – Win formula" and ridding local border communities of central authoritarianism and the consequences of security closures. Rather, it contributes to the direct combating of vulnerabilities. Generating wealth, and engaging in a unique development path that is consistent their traits.

Based on what was previously mentioned, we pose the following question:

**To what extent does the cross-border co-operation mechanism contribute to raising the performance of local groups and catalyzing regional economic integration?**

We also pose the following sub-questions:

- What is the meaning of cross-border co-operation?
- How does the cross-border co-operation mechanism contribute to raising the performance of local groups?
- How can cross-border co-operation be a starting point in building strong regional economic integration models ?

### **1. What Is Trans-border Co-operation?**

#### **1.1. The Emergence Of The Trans-Border Co-Operation:**

The first trans-border conference took place in 1958 between Germany and Austria under the name: "Euregio" (PERKMAN, 2014) which is the genesis of the name that was later applied to all European trans-border groupings in Europe "Euroregions". (Olivier, 2006)

Soon after, it was announced that a space for cross-border co-operation named "Basiliensis" was established in a border region common to France, Switzerland, and West Germany at that time; the purpose of the space was to unite efforts for the economic and political development of the territories, and this heralded the launch of the co-operative route that includes the majority of the central and western European border regions. (Abels, 2019)

The Franco-German model is considered to be the first reference for trans-border cooperation for other European Union member states. It has ended a long era of territorial disputes; it has steadily flourished to encompass various political, economic, social, environmental, and even military fields. (République française, 2019, p. 3)

What helped this model succeed is the vastness of the regional border shared by the countries; they are separated by a borderline of more than 450 km in length; as well as the economic dynamic that characterizes the region as a pivotal mining and industrial pole in the European continent.

The Franco-German co-operation experiment was credited with the establishment of joint organizations and institutions, which reflected positively on the European economic integration. (Désir & Roth, 2015) For example, in 1963, the Franco-German office for youth (OFAJ) was established; and in 1975, an agreement was announced between the Franco-German-Swiss Governments on the unification of policies, attitudes, and governmental activities in various fields. This exceptional path of cross-border co-operation between France and Germany culminated in the signing of the "Co-operation and Integration treaty" (Franco-German Treaty of Aachen, 2021) between the two countries, also known as "the Treaty of Aix-la Chappelle". (Traité d'Aix-la-Chapelle sur la coopération et l'intégration franco-allemandes) on 22 January 2019 between the French President "Emmanuel Macron" and German "Chancellor Angela Merkel".

The French president expressed that this treaty is considered to be the foundation of a true rapprochement era, complementary to the "1963 Elysee treaty" (Riegert, 2013) that established the era of reconciliation. The terms of this joint agreement included the reinforcement of Franco-German co-operation in a multitude of fields: politics, military, economy, ecology, culture, and inter-regional co-operation between the two countries.

## **1.2. The Concept Of Trans-Border Co-Operation:**

Trans-border co-operation is defined as co-operation that aims towards the strengthening and development of contiguous relations between regional groups or the local authorities of two or more states. Its basic principle is establishing contractual relations in border regions so that common solutions can be found for common problems. (Anderson, 2000, pp. 201-202)

According to the label, it is clear that cross-border co-operation refers to the path of trans-national relations, which represents the form of bilateral and multilateral collective regulation, which includes the sum of trade, economic, financial, social, and political interactions; which may be a natural course; but it is often an organized framework through regional exchange network, or through organizational structures which according to the concept of solidarity economy operate in correspondence to "behavioral logic". Or they can be understandings that are translated by bilateral or multilateral agreements that define co-operation frameworks, their fields, their scope, and time frame according to incremental staging. (Székely, 2007, pp. 408-409)

Within the framework of cross-border co-operation, various parties work in favor of public interest and mutual benefit. This calls for high levels of "transparency, trust, and understanding" between the various parties. The advantage of such co-operative path is mutual agreement, which inhibits competition, and seeks to achieve mutual benefit for the various parties involved in this process.

It is noteworthy that "cross-border co-operation" and other concepts are similar and overlap. "co-operation for border development", we find that the latter refers to the total national efforts undertaken by each state to develop its border regions (within its territory) and that is in correspondence to the needs they perceive and in accordance with its "security and economic approach", and often based on its budgets; Which limits it to strengthening infrastructure by creating job opportunities and promoting stability in these areas. The motive behind this process is based on security and it reflects the understandings of geographically neighboring countries, especially in regards to combating poverty, parallel trade, and unorganized crime in particular with smuggling being the primary target. (Reitel, 2011)

We also find the concept of "Decentralized co-operation" to closely related to the concept of cross-border co-operation, but we find that many researchers classify the latter as an aspect of the former.

Decentralized co-operation generally refers to mechanisms that stimulate local community-level development initiatives by coordinating partnership ventures with their foreign counterparts, and that is by combining the "private sector, civil society, and professional organizations ."

"Decentralized co-operation" aims towards achieving an elevated governance of local communities that responds to the demands of the population and contributes to the adoption of new management methods and attaining the ability to respond to their needs without the need for the allocation and the support of central government agencies. (Székely, 2007, p. 410)

The concept of "Decentralized co-operation" remains flexible, bending according to the will (Constitution) and direction of each country. The difference between it and cross-border co-operation remains in that it does not need to be limited to geographically contiguous local communities; it does not require exchange networks or platform endorsement or sub-national coordination for co-operation. "Decentralized co-operation" is often based on partnerships and agreements and does not require states to be geographically contiguous. (Nganje, 2015, pp. 3-6)

### **1.3. Using Cross-border Co-operation as a Mechanism to Achieve Regional Integration:**

Since the **1990s**, the regional integration path has been characterized with its growth in countries in the southern hemisphere; the emergence of cross-regional co-operation platforms has been an active contributor in pushing countries to adopt a more open approach towards integration.

The problem of weak infrastructures, poor public servers, poverty, and growing manifestations of parallel economy; have driven many countries to join regional blocs and to launch cross-border co-operation initiatives even if in limited forms .

The European experiment was an inspiration for many southern countries that have solved their border differences and conflicts and set out on the path of cross-border co-operation, which later set the foundation for regional integration that has yielded numerous successes. There are many examples of this qualitative progress in the southern world, which previously struggled with crises and wars that were primarily caused by borders. (Lucile, 2020)

Among these examples :

- Central American Integration System (**SICA**).
- West African Economic and Monetary Union (**UEOMA**).
- Economic Community of West African States (**CEDEAO**).

These experiments in Central America and West Africa reflect a new trend that normalizes positive relations between states. This approach reflects the growing conviction that co-operation based on the "Win – Win equation" is possible, and that this co-operation does not conflict with the sovereignty of these states. The initiation of this co-operation must also be **vertical and horizontal**. The state takes precedence over the process and local groups are among the most prominent processes. They have an important role when it comes to reinforcing this co-operation and instilling it. (Medina & Diallo, 2020, pp. 5-7)

The importance of this role stems from two key elements:

**A. Geographical proximity:** which is usually an extension of the same natural characteristics and a common space for resources and wealth.

**B. The quality of the ethno-demographic convergence and cultural convergence:** which are often prevalent in the various border regions between states; which creates a catalyst for cooperation. (Makkonen, Williams, Mitze, & Weidenfeld, 2018, pp. 1964-1965)

By referring to the role of cross-border co-operation in reinforcing regional integration, we find that the European cross-border co-operation experiment which appeared in the **1940s** has contributed significantly to the success of the European integration and this was through "neighboring spaces" which have steadily increased in number and expanded from Central and Western Europe to Eastern Europe, which also was one of the most "popular" and "beneficial" tools for contiguous cross-border co-operation. (Cross-border cooperation in the EU, 2015)

Cross-border co-operation was therefore considered a necessary path to be pursued in promoting European regional integration. Multilateralism and the areas of this co-operation have contributed to the adoption of unique forms of special legal regulations for cross-border spaces. Thus, special funding frameworks have been developed.

Cross-border co-operation was one of the three European regional co-operation areas financed by the "Interreg program". (Lucile, 2020) The European Union is depending on this form of co-operation to make the "*Schengen*" area experiment a success and reduce the negative effects of border conflicts.

In regards to the experiment in Central America, we can find indicators of the path of integration that also include Latin America. "Coordination and co-operation concerning border conflicts" was the basis for building regional blocs in the region.

The publication of the first draft of this was in the journal "*Integración Latino americana*" (Integration in Latin America) in 1986, in an article under the title: "*La Frontera Como factor de Integración*" (Lucile, 2020, p. 11) (Borders are a factor for integration). This approach has reinforced the results of studies published in 1973 on the region's three cross-border watersheds: "the Gulf of Honduras", "the Gulf of Fonseca", and "the San Juan River". As well as the governments of "Honduras", "Guatemala", and "El Salvador" signing agreements on their common border space in **1976**, known as "*Trifino*". (Lucile, 2020, p. 12)

After that, the first cross-border co-operation agreement between the governments of "Costa Rica" and "Panama" was signed in **1979**. In the following years, trans-border co-operation and regional integration have stalled in the Central and Southern parts of the South American continent, due to diplomatic impasse and conflicts between several countries in the region. But, the need for mutual dependence has been stronger than the motives for conflict. The mechanism for cross-border co-operation has been re-activated through "*the development of border spaces agreement*" that took place in **1988** and the "*sustainable border development document in central America*" in **1995**. (Holley, 1998, pp. 93-100)

## **2. The Role Of Cross-Border Co-Operation In Raising The Performance Of Local Groups:**

### **2.1. What are local groups?**

Also known as "local communities", "regional groups", or "territorial groups". (Qu'est-ce qu'une collectivité territoriale ou collectivité locale ?, s.d.) It is a designation largely used by the Francophone legal and management schools. It generally depicts a form of administrative regulation that represents geo-administrative units within state territory and the organization through agencies and establishments that operate in a relatively autonomous framework. The

ratios and areas in which they are autonomous may differ depending on the country. They are usually self-sufficient and financially independent. Also, they are mostly run by elected councils exercising their regulatory authority according to the laws of each country.<sup>23</sup> (Qu'est-ce qu'une collectivité territoriale ou collectivité locale ?, s.d.)

An example for local groups is:

**Algeria :** Both states and municipalities form the regional groups in correspondence with what is stated in the Algerian Constitution, with municipalities being the basal group. The law has guaranteed them a legal standing distinct from the state. Constitutional recognition is fundamental for the independence of these entities but within the limit and oversight of the central authority, and under the supervision of the state and law enforcement unit.

The elected councils of these states and municipalities exercise their powers under the supervision of state agents that represent the central authority and reserve the right to exert their own managerial powers. (Moussaoui & Arabi, 2017, pp. 124-125)

**Morocco:** The Moroccan constitution depicts regional groups, as "the actors, workers, regional, rural, and urban units" that fall within the common legal framework, are autonomous, and financially independent. (العمالة والاقليم رافعة للتنمية الاجتماعية بالوسط القروي، بلا تاريخ)

**Tunisia:** The Tunisian constitution considers "decentralization" to be the basis of its local authority, whereby "decentralization" is embodied in local groups consisting of "municipalities, districts, and provinces" that have been granted administrative, financial, and legal autonomy. These groups are also given the power to be autonomous, and additionally having powers that are shared between them and the central authority. They are also subject to being monitored as to the legality of their work. (اللامركزية في تونس، بلا تاريخ)

**France:** The regional groups are considered to be a part of public law, they partake in specific tasks and fields ordered by the state; they are the same as local groups. The French legislature has disclosed that regional groups make decisions based upon their fields of expertise. They are independently run by elected councils, have private assets, and are granted legal autonomy. They have limited administrative authorities according to French law. As per the French Constitutional Council's announcement in **1979**, the capacities of the parliament are limited under "*the principle of freedom of administration of regional groups*". This constitutional declaration has elaborated that this principle ensures that no regional group exercises its authorities over another.

According to "article **72** of the French constitution" the types of regional groups are:

- *Municipalities (communes)*
- *Regions (régions)*
- *Communities of special status (collectivités à statut particulier)*
- *Overseas communities (collectivités d'outre-mer)* (L'administration territoriale de l'état, s.d.) (FAVOREU, 2002)

It should be noted that this kind of local community-based system is not universal. For example, in federal countries we find different systems that are usually affiliated with the so-called "*local government*". (STEYTLER, 2005, p. 7)

In the United States of America, for instance, we find local governments. States are largely autonomous and their systems and organization techniques are defined by them in an independent manner. Even their judicial system is completely independent and is based on the legislation in each state. Only specific issues call for the intervention of the federal and central government.

By referring to the American local governance system, we find that states often determine their own governance systems when it comes to their "provinces, towns, and municipal entities". We also find "municipal and city councils" as well as a mix of independent local governments and legal entities. Local governance in America is decided in accordance with the characteristics of regions making it difficult to find a fixed model across states. As it stands, local government institutions are autonomous and are allowed to exercise their power to take measures and make decisions freely . (STEYTLER, 2005, pp. 11-12)

In Germany, each state has its own governance framework and system. The levels and frameworks of local governance systems are only partially similar to the rest of the states. Making it so that we find states that have "city states", "independent cities", "regions or destinations", "administrative areas or directorates", "federal municipalities", "townships", and "rural towns". The grounds for local governance systems are economic, social, as well as historical. However, each local government unit freely exercises its jurisdiction over its geographical territory. (Courger, 2008-2009, pp. 6-7)

In regards to local governance across the globe, the concepts "centralization" and "decentralization" must be broached. These two concepts reflect the philosophy behind state political systems concerning the regulation of their interests at local unit level and the relations of central authorities with state actors at the local level. It is decided based on "centralization" or "decentralization", or a combination of both. How independent local government state actors are, which are often local groups and their fields of expertise and the extent of their powers.

**A– Centralization:** It refers to the limiting of governmental powers under a single authority, allowing it to have jurisdiction above all that has to do with administrative positions through its representatives. It can also be defined as the concentration of all authority under a single body or entity. It is thus a method of aggregating governmental powers under a single administration, body, or a limited number of governors. And, from this we can derive that centralization means that power is confined to the highest authority allowing it to be the only one making decisions without the intervention of lower authorities. (Tsoutsos, 1950, p. 275)

**B – Decentralization:** centralization caused the government to exceed regular governmental activities, placing a heavy burden on its central authority. This naturally brought about decentralization. in order to pass new laws that regulate new projects, which lightens the load on the central authority. Although, it cannot be completely decentralized. It must have a mix of both. As it stands, there are many definitions for the concept of decentralization, (Tsoutsos, 1950, p. 278) the following are some of them :

*Kreitner* has revealed that it means "Delegating all, or some senior management authorities to lower positions in business organizations".

*William* defines it as "The flexibility of governmental subordination, so that departments that manage government affairs are not linked, and exercise their powers depending on their authority. Ensuring that the administrative functions of the organization are accomplished in a non-conflicting manner and do not go against the objective of the organization". (UNDP with government of germany, 1999, pp. 23-24)

*Both Mc Gin and Welch* defined it as "transferring power from a higher level to a lower one". (UNDP with government of germany, 1999, p. 24)

It is also known as "Entrusting the power of decision-making, and giving orders and instructions to subordinates in junior administrative positions within the administrative system".

According to the aforementioned, we can derive that decentralization is one of the administrative systems that involve numerous subordinates in the administrative management process, and that is by transferring decision-making powers to lower administrative positions.

## **2.2 The Benefits of Partnership Among Local Groups Pertaining To Cross-Border Co-Operation:**

The concept of cross-border co-operation transcends that of partnership among local groups .It represents a manifestation of its highest degrees through it being a path that affects multiple fields and expresses a concept above partnership. Co-operation between local groups that are affiliated with foreign countries is of special nature as the will of these different state actors is to maximize their profits. In the end leading to each party working for the benefit of the other and that is by determining collective goals for the various cross-border co-operation state actors involved and the basis for this co-operation is the "*Win – Win formula*" .

Many politicians, political theorists, and economic ones across the world as well as international organizations have been exposed to the fundamental role of decentralized co-operation among local groups, particularly cross-border co-operation in solving many problems that the population suffers from, especially those living in border regions. Taking into account the outcomes of "*Rio de Janeiro's Sustainable Development Conferences*" or "*Rio+20*" (United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, n.d.), held from **12 to 22 June 2012**, and accepted by the "*2002 Earth Summit*" or what was called "*Rio+10*" in Johannesburg, South Africa, it is necessary to end the current era, one where only **20%** of the world's population benefits from **80%** of the world's resources, as it is unfair and unjust to continue to operate in this manne, it is necessary that local groups formulate and implement policies and approaches in order to achieve sustainable development. Decentralized co-operation has been advocated for through a range of mechanisms, agreements between cities and the establishment of partnerships between communities of different nations also helps with achieving it. (UNRISD's Contribution to Rio+10: The World Summit on Sustainable Development, n.d.)

Based on the above, decentralization has become a facet of parallel diplomacy (*Para diplomacy*) (Hermini, Farabi, Paramasatya, & Sheiffi, 2018, p. 3)and one of the things that promote international co-operation. Co-operation between cities and regions is an ancient practice, and if diplomatic representation is a manifestation of the monopoly and sovereignty of the central state, it still does not deny the possibility of the state using local groups to defend national matters before the international community; (GUTIÉRREZ-CAMPS, 2013, pp. 53-56) and by returning to the subject of borders and it being one of the main issues concerning international relations, cross-border co-operation is a focal point considering it is closely related to governance and sustainable development issues; and is one of the most prominent mechanisms that help raise the performance of local communities (GUTIÉRREZ-CAMPS, 2013).

Sharing experiences concerning these two topics contributes to states overcoming issues related to satisfying their citizens and their needs. The most notable factors that allow the performance enhancement of local groups through cross-border co-operation are the following (Blondel, 2013, pp. 4-7, 11-20, 40-53) :

- Reflecting the efficacy of adopting transparency policies in revealing the reality of local communities and identifying their strong and weak points.
- Considering the fact that cross-border co-operation relies on the importance of state actors and unofficial organizations, the roles of these are deemed to be crucial in regards to regional groups devising effective strategies. These actors and organizations are considered to be partners in governance and play the role of advisory bodies, both directly and indirectly. As well as playing essential oversight roles and thus having a vital position in stimulating governance .
- Sharing experiences has been shown to positively affect the performance of local groups
- The establishment of cross-border institutions that specialize in various areas of co-operation helps increase the efficiency of regional groups through instilling the



principle of functional specialization which is one of the most important elements in effective conduct of local affairs .

- Enhancing the performance of local groups in the field of international co-operation and introducing them to new diplomatic positions, thus maximizing national profits as a whole .
- Negotiation, and coordination mechanisms that are used within the framework of cross-border co-operation among local groups contributes to their improvement in regards to crisis management and the adoption of pragmatic approaches.

### **2.3. The limits of cross-border co-operation among local groups:**

Despite the profits generated through cross-border co-operation, and its significant role as a mechanism for joint co-operation among local state actors that share common borders, there are limits for this co-operation model. Many difficulties hinder the maneuverability of these actors and often limits many cross-border projects due to the absence of legal capacities that would allow them to succeed. Cross-border regions belonging to different political entities whose legitimacy is dependent on different national principles, makes it difficult to achieve peace among multiple angles of cross-border co-operation.

Many projects run into difficulties that stop them from becoming a reality, especially when these projects are situated in areas that cross-state border, creating problems pertaining the laws of those areas. Particularly when there are special legal procedures in order to deal with these occurrences. Cross-border co-operation when established among conflicting local groups is not effective and inevitably clashes with the different administrative functions of these local groups .(Casteigts, 2003)

One of the challenges facing cross-border co-operation is the issue of "administrative oversight over local groups", due to the fact that co-operative structures are often created through the agreement of local groups, which are managed by the elected councils that represent them. and these councils tend to be very independent and function according the principle of free decision-making. However, this differs from one country to another. Due to the oversight of central authorities being directly determined by the state or through their local state-level actors; which limits the influence of local groups and their usefulness to their foreign counterparts within the framework of cross-border co-operation. Political alignment also greatly influences this matter, and that is through political views and party affiliations, the alliances in the upper echelons of the government, as well as the parliament and elected councils of the local groups involved in cross-border co-operation, making it very difficult to escape political influence on the matter. The aforementioned things sometimes have a positive influence on the reinforcement of cross-border co-operation but they also limit it .

The cultural aspect is also a significant factor in hindering it, cultural differences and the slew of problems that follow them stand in the way of cross-border co-operation .

According to the above, the challenges that hamper cross-border co-operation are as follows:

- a) The availability of legislative frameworks and legal capacities that allow the creation of "cross-border institutions" within "cross-state" frameworks in order to achieve cross-border co-operation.
- b) The need to engage in cross-border co-operation among local groups belonging to the same administrative ladder in order to achieve the desired effectiveness and results.
- c) Taking the issue of administrative oversight into account and limiting the extent of its involvement in the process in order to avoid any imbalances that may hinder cross-border co-operation.

- d) Ensuring that cross-border co-operation is protected by legislation in order to guarantee its sustainability and for it to not be influenced by politics .
- e) Using culturally knowledgeable actors in order to achieve harmony and overcome cultural differences and pushing co-operation towards sustainable development paths.

## **II. Results and discussion:**

The following is concluded in light of what was previously mentioned :

- Cross-border cooperation has contributed to the promotion of cooperative approaches and has had a clear impact on ending a long period of border disputes on the European continent. The European experience has inspired many countries around the world.
- The concept of borders underwent many shifts in the agendas of politicians and international theorists. It has previously been one of the most contentious issues. However, the success of the experiments associated with this co-operative model has enabled it to adopt more optimistic and co-operative approaches to this issue.
- Cross-border co-operation promotes regional integration. The benefits of this model according to the "Win – Win formula" pushes for better coordination and giving co-operation and partnership governmental prospects.
- Legal, legislative, and oversight issues can hamper the establishment of cross-border institutions and future projects that extend across the territories of the countries involved in this co-operative course.
- The benefits gained from the cross-border co-operation mechanism contribute to the taming of extremist political tendencies and to transcending problems derived from cultural differences.
- Cross-border co-operation is considered to be a "mechanism" and a "process" and an "objective" all at once, and incorporating it requires the adherence of different "local communities", "local government agencies", and "state actors" to governance principles, transparency being the main one as well as taking into consideration the requirements of sustainable development.
- The success of cross-border co-operation requires a commitment to the harmony between the interest of "local groups" and "the interests of states" to which they belong , and to the indirect involvement of "local state actors" concerning diplomatic matters, ensuring a flexible relationship between the central authorities and local authorities of each country.

Cross-border co-operation contributes to regulating the management of public expenditures by reducing security insurance allocations dedicated to development projects.

Thus, it is considered to be an effective mechanism in combating vulnerabilities and addressing security problems by adopting an innovative approach towards development .

### III. Conclusion:

Adopting the cross-border co-operation mechanism between geographically contiguous countries contributes to achieving great benefits on several levels. The first benefit pertains to raising the performance of local groups and pushing them to engage in generating wealth and attaining development without the constant need of government support. The second benefit is the stimulation of regional integration initiatives by pushing towards the betterment of coordination and maximizing profits. The third benefit is raising the performance and capabilities of local community actors and qualifying them for various positions, including diplomatic ones. The fourth benefit is reducing expenditures on border security, allocating the excess funds to developmental projects, and addressing gaps in development. The fifth benefit is sharing experiences, knowledge, and governance in order to improve upon cross-border co-operation, which helps with the establishment of powerful institutions that can stand in the face of both local or cross-border challenges.

The European experience in cross-border co-operation shows how effective the model truly is, especially since it contributed to building one of the larger economic poles in the world, if not the largest.

### Referrals and references:

1. Abels, G. (2019). *Regional Governance in the EU: Regions and the Future of Europe*. Retrieved Décembre 29, 2020, from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336210327>
2. Anderson, M. (2000). Transborder Co-operation: An Assessment. (L. H.-E. Stålvant, Ed.) *Springer*, 201-216. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-58337-7\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-58337-7_12)
3. Blondel, C. (2013, avril 13 ). La coopération transfrontalière un levier potentiel des réconciliations interethniques en ex-Yougoslavie ? Une approche critique. *Cybergeo : European Journal of Geography*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4000/cybergeo.25881>
4. Casteigts, M. (2003). Enjeux et Limites de la coopération transfrontalière. *Revue d'études et prospective*, 03-05.
5. Courger, C. (2008-2009). *Les villes et pouvoirs locaux, nouveaux acteurs du développement Cas du partenariat entre Munich et Harare*. Bruxelles: Université libre de Bruxelles.
6. *Cross-border cooperation in the EU*. (2015, 9 3). Retrieved 4 3, 2021, from [ec.europa.eu: https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/information/publications/reports/2015/cross-border-cooperation-in-the-eu?fbclid=IwAR1GWIS-CIgSeMckX5r\\_kTQuyGD7sUZH3CuorbKAB1tXvi1jfmvhiykyRUo](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/reports/2015/cross-border-cooperation-in-the-eu?fbclid=IwAR1GWIS-CIgSeMckX5r_kTQuyGD7sUZH3CuorbKAB1tXvi1jfmvhiykyRUo)
7. Désir, H., & Roth, M. (2015). Déclaration de Metz sur la coopération transfrontalière franco-allemande. *La coopération transfrontalière franco-allemande*. Metz.
8. FAVOREU, L. (2002, Mai). *La libre administration des collectivités territoriales est-elle une liberté fondamentale ?* Consulté le 4 18, 2021, sur [conseil-constitutionnel.fr: https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/nouveaux-cahiers-du-conseil-constitutionnel/la-libre-administration-des-collectivites-territoriales-est-elle-une-liberte-fondamentale?fbclid=IwAR1qsha8WDXTgjHj0NXHz621eeDFAv0z1libARcgdX\\_HAvUnZfbkVTufniM](https://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/nouveaux-cahiers-du-conseil-constitutionnel/la-libre-administration-des-collectivites-territoriales-est-elle-une-liberte-fondamentale?fbclid=IwAR1qsha8WDXTgjHj0NXHz621eeDFAv0z1libARcgdX_HAvUnZfbkVTufniM)

9. *Franco-German Treaty of Aachen*. (2021, 4 3). Retrieved from <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/>: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/germany/france-and-germany/franco-german-treaty-of-aachen/?fbclid=IwAR093wbalbZsMeGvzcwJeyj3uB-fZgwJA5rnzL65r7k4Ysg1RgmbLhkVIyA>
10. GUTIÉRREZ-CAMPS, A. (2013). Local Efforts and Global Impacts: A City-Diplomacy Initiative on Decentralisation. *Perspectives*, 21(2), 49-61. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24624545>
11. Hermeni, S., Farabi, N., Paramasatya, S., & Sheiffi, P. (2018). Decentralization in International Relations: A Study of Semarang City's Paradiplomacy. *E3S Web of Conferences*, 73(1). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/20187309016>
12. Holley, M. (1998). Sustainable Development in Central America: Translating Regional Environmental Accords into Domestic Enforcement Action. *Ecology Law Quarterly*, 25(1), 89–119. doi:[www.jstor.org/stable/24113331](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24113331)
13. *L'administration territoriale de l'état*. (s.d.). Consulté le 04 19, 2021, sur [collectivites-locales.gouv.fr/](https://www.collectivites-locales.gouv.fr/): <https://www.collectivites-locales.gouv.fr/institutions/ladministration-territoriale-de-letat?fbclid=IwAR3mHwgQP5wY4IIFB0rfSQsP14UGo2NOcHiVV0X-FGMBPNN50OOZXF9GfM>
14. Lucile, M. e. (2020, Novembre 09). Les coopérations transfrontalières comme outils d'intégration régionale: Analyse croisée dans les suds (Amérique centrale, Afrique de l'Ouest). (S. R. National Committee of Geography of Belgium, Éd.) *Belgeo*, 02-09. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4000/belgeo.43693>
15. Makkonen, T., Williams, A. M., Mitze, T., & Weidenfeld, A. (2018, 7 19). Science and technology cooperation in cross-border regions: a proximity approach with evidence for Northern Europe. 1961-1979. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2018.1500528>
16. Medina, L., & Diallo, M. (2020, 04). Les coopérations transfrontalières comme outils d'intégration régionale : analyse croisée dans les Suds (Amérique centrale, Afrique de l'Ouest). *Belgeo*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4000/belgeo.43693>
17. Moussaoui, K., & Arabi, K. (2017). Le rôle des collectivités territoriales dans le développement local à l'ère des réformes en Algérie. Le cas des communes de Bejaia. *Économie et Solidarités*, 44(1-2), 122–133. doi:<https://doi.org/10.7202/1041608ar>
18. Nganje, F. (2015, November). Decentralized Cooperation and the New Development Cooperation Agenda: What Role for the UN? (R. C. Cooper, Ed.) *United Nations University Centre for Policy Research*. Retrieved from [https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:3321/unu\\_cpr\\_decentralized.pdf](https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:3321/unu_cpr_decentralized.pdf)
19. Olivier, A. (2006, décembre 31). Les eurorégions et l'élargissement. (L. Ladyss, Éd.) Paris, France: Pays édition. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4000/strates.2072>
20. PERKMAN, M. (2014). *Cross-Border Cooperation Structures in Europe: Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future*, Presses Interuniversitaires Europeennes. Brussels: Iva Miranda Pires and Luis Dominguez Castro.
21. *Qu'est-ce qu'une collectivité territoriale ou collectivité locale ?* (s.d.). Consulté le 04 17, 2021, sur [vie-publique.fr/](https://www.vie-publique.fr/): [https://www.vie-publique.fr/fiches/19604-quest-ce-quune-collectivite-territoriale-ou-collectivite-locale?fbclid=IwAR3VjLq81oWLw8aUQnf8x6z9vLQjfxXRb3\\_xWDCVzObRNgKMBIQ6x6JBQo](https://www.vie-publique.fr/fiches/19604-quest-ce-quune-collectivite-territoriale-ou-collectivite-locale?fbclid=IwAR3VjLq81oWLw8aUQnf8x6z9vLQjfxXRb3_xWDCVzObRNgKMBIQ6x6JBQo)

22. Reitel, B. (2011). La frontière internationale, objet sémique, processus multidimensionnel, interface signifiante. *lecture croisée: La tentation des frontières* (pp. 03-07). Paris: Rédac-Bénédicte Tratinjek.
23. République française, P. d. (2019). *France-Allemagne : l'observation transfrontalière au coeur de l'Europe*.
24. Riegert, B. (2013, 1 22). *In brief: What is actually in the Elysee Treaty?* Retrieved 4 3, 2021, from dw.com: [https://www.dw.com/en/in-brief-what-is-actually-in-the-elysee-treaty/a-16520266?fbclid=IwAR3Owj3ARDhOiRav1\\_Rb6jY2X5YACHHuxqu-B3OsfOnIo2c5TbPALg24mo](https://www.dw.com/en/in-brief-what-is-actually-in-the-elysee-treaty/a-16520266?fbclid=IwAR3Owj3ARDhOiRav1_Rb6jY2X5YACHHuxqu-B3OsfOnIo2c5TbPALg24mo)
25. STEYTLER, N. (Ed.). (2005). *The place and role of local government in federal systems*. Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, PO Box 1383.
26. Székely, A. (2007, January). Les enjeux des coopérations transfrontalières. (S. A. G, Éd.) *Határok és Eurorégiók*, 407-415. Récupéré sur [https://www.academia.edu/4052944/Les\\_enjeux\\_des\\_coop%C3%A9rations\\_transfrontali%C3%A8res](https://www.academia.edu/4052944/Les_enjeux_des_coop%C3%A9rations_transfrontali%C3%A8res)
27. *Traité d'Aix-la-Chapelle sur la coopération et l'intégration franco-allemandes*. (s.d.). Consulté le 04 04, 2021, sur France Diplomatie: <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/dossiers-pays/allemande/rerelations-bilaterales/traite-d-aix-la-chapelle-sur-la-cooperation-et-l-integration-franco-allemandes/?fbclid=IwAR0jLs0NbNgVhwnux9OJGyuiic-m3ARKpYVXFxUMh9SuFuuzCSU15jxjQpM>
28. Tsoutsos, A. G. (1950, 1 1). Considérations sur la Centralisation et la Décentralisation. *Progress in Public Administration*, 16(2), 273-281. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/002085235001600204>
29. UNDP with government of germany. (1999, October ). Decentralization:a sampling of definitions.
30. *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20*. (n.d.). Retrieved 04 23 , 2021, from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/rio20>
31. *UNRISD's Contribution to Rio+10: The World Summit on Sustainable Development*. (n.d.). Retrieved 04 23, 2021, from <https://www.unrisd.org/>.

32. العمالة والإقليم رافعة للتنمية الاجتماعية بالوسط القروي. (بلا تاريخ). تاريخ الاسترداد 05 17 2021، من البوابة الوطنية للجماعات الترابية:  
[http://www.pncl.gov.ma/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85/Pages/default.aspx?fbclid=IwAR02KOY3G\\_Ojg3t](http://www.pncl.gov.ma/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85/Pages/default.aspx?fbclid=IwAR02KOY3G_Ojg3t)

33. اللامركزية في تونس. (بلا تاريخ). تاريخ الاسترداد 04 18 2021، من وزارة الشؤون المحلية والبيئة:  
[https://www.estichara.tn/ar/%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%85/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3/?fbclid=IwAR1njilr4-ZpXg6HL\\_zm4qBW1r1wUGIsAo469R7-ss1s9nC76Pk83TBAZ1M](https://www.estichara.tn/ar/%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%85/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3/?fbclid=IwAR1njilr4-ZpXg6HL_zm4qBW1r1wUGIsAo469R7-ss1s9nC76Pk83TBAZ1M)

