

Why does the practice of spatial planning follow **national standards**?

Why are there **blank areas** on territorial plans of borderlands?

Why are not **development interventions communicated** with neighbours from the other side of the border?

Why could not the tools of **ITI and CLLD** spread in cross-border context in the EU?

How could **integrated use of resources and joint development activities** be improved in border areas?

How could the **internal cohesion** of neighbouring borderlands be ensured?

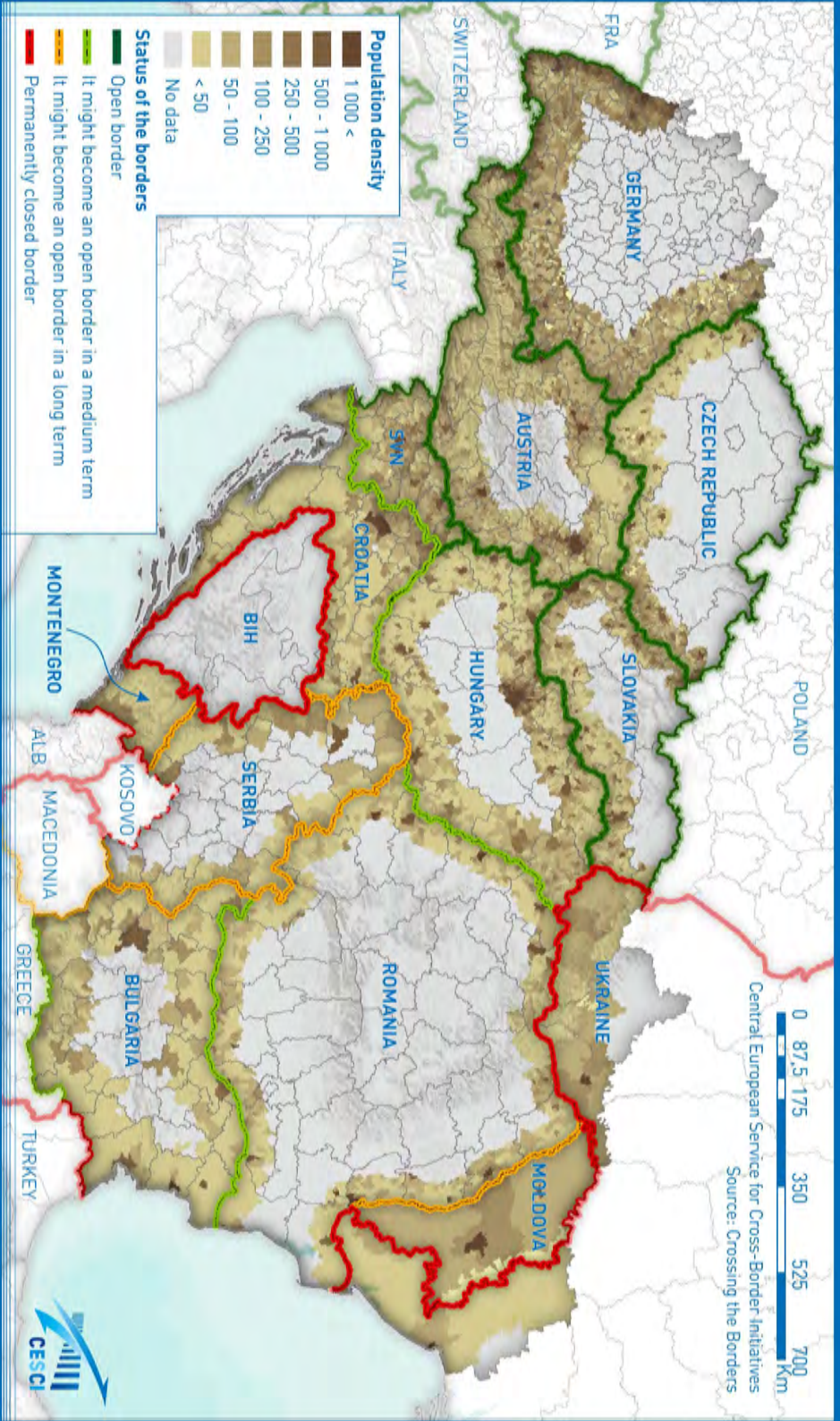
**CESCI's new, cohesion-based planning methodology** provides an answer to these questions.

Cross-border development activities of 5 EGTCs and 1 county as well as the intervention logic of the Danube Transnational Programme have so far been built on this new methodology.



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## Internal border regions in the Danube Region, 2011



## About Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives (CESCI)

CESCI was founded in 2009 by private persons to help lighten borders in the Central European region and to stimulate, as well as professionally support cross-border cooperation. With its over 50 members, the association pursues its activities in the following 4 fields to reach the above mentioned goals:

- in the field of border studies, as well as the specific border regions, scientific research is conducted, and the association also partakes in the international scientific life, publishes papers, as well as organises conferences, seminars and realises research projects;
- it effectuates cross-border integral strategic plans, takes part in EU programming and develops its own methodology accordingly;
- the association prepares, develops and supports cross-border institutions;

- it also functions as a mediator between actors at different levels in order to help develop cross-border cooperation initiatives; consequently, within this framework, it presents opinion on policy papers, conducts dissemination activities (e.g. brochures, films, events, workshops), partakes in the work of EU-level professional networks, and provides information and council to local participants.

A significant part of the association's activities is made up by public utility tasks. Business activity mainly consists of programming and planning, as well as institutional development.

Members of CESCI are primarily municipalities at different levels which take an interest in cross-border cooperation, but also private persons and professional organisations (including the MOT itself). From a geographical point of view, most of its members are Hungarian, but Slovak, Romanian, Serbian and French entities have also joined the association.



Our references

In the heart of the new planning methodology three forms of cohesion can be found. Unlike previous practices, CESC's approach focuses on the current state-of-play of territorial, economic and social cohesion of the border area and identifies the necessary interventions and responses for challenges against a stronger cohesion across the borders. The process includes geographical analyses, regional statistics, GIS, interviews and fieldwork activities, and it takes all data management specialities and spatial characteristics of border regions into consideration.

**TERRITORIAL CAPITAL**

Since the developments should be built on the territorial capital of the border region we endeavour to integrate local knowledge in every possible way: we make interviews with local leaders and relevant institutions, major employers and leading actors of the civil sector. We unfold the endogenous resources (territorial assets) and development barriers in both border regions and put them in the centre of the strategy, in their mutual inter-relations.

**INTEGRATED CROSS-BORDER STRATEGY**

As a result of the cohesion analysis, an integrated cross-border strategy can be drafted with a focus on challenges in the field of cross-border cohesion of the region.

Integrating characteristics of the strategy can be identified from several aspects. On the one hand, the strategy considers the cross-border territory as a coherent entity. On the other hand, it creates integrated and inter-dependent intervention packages in order to facilitate cross-sectorial developments. Finally, the strategy also contains an overall picture of the available financial resources at national, transnational, and EU level and also outside the EU.

**Cross-border entity**

**Integrated and inter-dependent intervention packages**

**Financial resources**

The cohesion analysis developed for answering the needs of border areas is an innovative version of the traditional situation analyses. Its analytical structure builds upon the three main pillars (territorial, economic, social) of cohesion. The analysis aims at detecting the factors hindering and enhancing these three forms of cohesion across the border. It is very important to highlight that the methodology followed cannot be compared to contemporary territorial analyses because its logic does not come from the requirements of a sectorial approach, consequently, it does not treat several issues known from other practices.

**COHESION CHALLENGES / STRATEGIC RESPONSES**

The results of the cohesion analysis are controlled through the inquiry of all relevant strategic and policy documents from EU, national, regional and local levels defining the frameworks for development activities and drawing the fundable frames of planning. The interventions are built on a challenge and response method where the interventions are drafted as responses to the challenges are formulated during the cohesion analysis on the internal territorial, economic and social cohesion of the given region.



<p><b>The main mission of the new methodology is to facilitate the development of a common territorial identity and the common use of the region's assets.</b></p>	
<p>Forest and seminatural areas in the Danube Region</p>	<p>Cohesion analysis considers the particular region in a wider context. We do not only examine the internal spatial relations but we also refer to the main trends and development orientations outlined by the changes of the last decade. The analysis contains a wide range of examinations on landscape and environmental factors; characteristics and spatial/functional arrangement of urban network; status of the borders; existing cooperation and their governance frames.</p>
<p>Regional differences in GDP per capita in the DR</p>	<p>The economic analysis focuses on cohesion (i.e. the common and complementary economic endowments of both sides of the border) instead of the traditional approach based on sectorial taxonomy. All relevant economic sectors are to be analysed with traditional methods, however the assessment logic is different by emphasising the fields of economic cohesion of the cross-border region. We analyse the general picture of the economy as well as the existing economic infrastructure.</p>
<p>Regional differences in net migration in the DR</p>	<p>The third pillar of the cohesion analysis is the social one. The success of cross-border strategies is fundamentally determined by the way local actors are involved in its implementation. This part of the analysis concentrates on the factors influencing the social interconnectedness of the border area. The research covers the following aspects: demographic characteristics, migration; social differences; labour market, education and employment; interethnic and cultural relations.</p>
	<p><b>territorial cohesion</b></p> <p><b>economic cohesion</b></p> <p><b>social cohesion</b></p>