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TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF CROSS-BORDER TOURISM REGIONS

W STRONĘ TYPOLOGII TRANSGRANICZNYCH REGIONÓW TURYSTYCZNYCH

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Streszczenie. Autor przygląda się roli granic z perspektywy analizy przestrzennej zjawisk turystycznych. W obecnych czasach międzynarodowe granice są mało ważne dla przepływu turystycznego i często kojarzone są jedynie z przekraczaniem granicy i danymi statystycznymi. Niniejszy artykuł poświęcony jest analizie transgranicznych regionów turystycznych i transgranicznych aglomeracji miejskich, będących obecnie w centrum uwagi studiów nad organizacją przestrzeni. Korzystając z różnych typologii przestrzeni transgranicznej opracować można instrumenty służące analizie turystyki transgranicznej. Autor dochodzi do wniosku, że na podaż i popyt turystyczny w rejonach transgranicznych wpływ mają nie tylko atrakcje turystyczne, ale również organizacja przestrzeni. Nawet mur berliński może stać się ważną atrakcją turystyczną, jak to się stało w przypadku zjednoczonego Berlina, który obecnie czerpie znaczne wpływy z dawnej granicy dzielącej miasto na pół. Organizacja przestrzeni jest czynnikiem pozwalającym oddzielić czynność turystyczną od nieturystycznej, zgodnie z oficjalną definicją turystyki. Autor niniejszej publikacji proponuje własną typologię turystki regionów transgranicznych jako podstawę do dalszych badań ilościowych dotyczących wpływu zagospodarowania przestrzennego regionu na jego turystykę.

Key words: cross-border cities, cross-border regions, spatial analysis, tourism.
Słowa kluczowe: analiza przestrzenna, miasta przygraniczne, region transgraniczny, turystyka.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an international phenomenon with more than 1 billion tourist arrivals worldwide. However, international borders alone are less important in this flow, often associated only with the process of border crossing.

The role and importance of cross-border regions has been the focus of scientific research for a long ago. The regional policy of the European Union has a wide set of instruments for these special – often peripheral and underdeveloped – areas. ‘Tourist region’ models appeared in tourism geography literature when mass tourism became important in the long period of peace after World War II. However, only a few models of cross-border tourist regions are known, and surprisingly most of them are based on North American experience. We comprehensively apply a spatial structure point of view to get insight into the tourism flow and thereby we consider given spatial structures (borders, urban patterns) and analyse their impact on tourism over this grid. A tourism-based approach would also be possible with a starting point of tourism destination and its attractiveness, but our goal is different, as we offer an

improved typology of cross-border space. At this phase of a long-term research, the theoretical framework should be delimited with first empirical evidence and possible tourism impact, but without detailed case studies. Once a widely accepted typology has been created, thorough analysis of local data will become possible.

After World War II, the closed borders of Central and Eastern Europe hindered the development of spatial structures inside national borders. At the same time, Western European border areas developed organically, and urban centres shaped cross-border agglomerations. The most sound example is the French-Belgian Lille cross-border metropolis. After the political changes of the early 1990 s, common socio-economic interest-based cross-border cooperation has become possible in Eastern Europe. This process is encouraged by the EU through its regional (INTERREG, ESPON) and urban (URBAN, URBACT) programmes. Analysis of cross-border agglomerations is one of the main axes of modern regional research.

In the second part of this paper the theoretical background of cross-border tourist regions with particular interest in Więckowski's typology is presented. In the third part, the authors focus on the typology of cross-border urban areas and develop theoretical background of their possible touristic functions. Finally, different models are compared and the results summarized.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines tourism as "the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes" (World Tourism Organization 1995). According to the estimates of the WTO, only 17% of tourist arrivals are international, though this number is over 1 billion (IPK International 2013). This definition is criticized for a number of reasons. First, people participating in tourism are visitors; only visitors spending at least one night at their destination are tourists (otherwise they are excursionists). The other main point is the exclusion of frequent forms of tourism such as, typically, visits to enjoy attractions in residential settlements and shopping tourism. The latter will be noted later on in the text, in relation to the link between urban areas and the usual environment.

There is also a wide range of motivations among tourists, contradistinguishing several forms of tourism. Within strictly defined border regions and considering border functions (if not barrier, at least filtering)[1], the range is narrower[2] and depending on the models, we will restrict analysed forms of tourism (e.g. in the case of urban areas, we do not consider agritourism or nautical tourism). From our above-mentioned spatial structure point of view, definition of border regions by Schmitt-Egner and Brunn (1998) is the most determinant: "the border region is a spatial part and a regional system, completed by the border and its characteristics".

A couple of studies entertained the relationship of border and tourism (see e.g. Matznetter 1979, Timothy 1995, Wachowiak 2006, Caccomo 2007), considering mainly two topics shopping tourism (see the cases of Butler and Timothy 1995, Ohsawa 1999, Banfi et al. 2005) and cross-

[1] For border functions see Hansen (1983), Ratti and Reichman (1993).

[2] Hardi explains functional differences between border regions and transborder regions by the openness of the border and its cross-border functions. See Hardi (2000) and Hardi (2001).

-border national parks, while Gelbman and Timothy (2011) focused in particular on exclaves. These papers analyse the tourism infrastructure and tourism flow, but do not contribute to a deeper analysis of cross-border tourism areas and their possible typology. Our paper would be a first attempt to integrate the scattered results in this field.

Matznetter's (1979) pioneer work was the first to enlighten the fundamentals of the spatial structure relationship between borders and tourism. In his paper, he distinguished three cases: (a) tourist region far away from border line, (b) tourist region directly on the border without continuity (and tourism) on the other side of the border, (c) two tourist areas adjoin or fuse on the border (Fig. 1). This typology neglects the fact whether tourist regions are influenced by their border zone location or not.

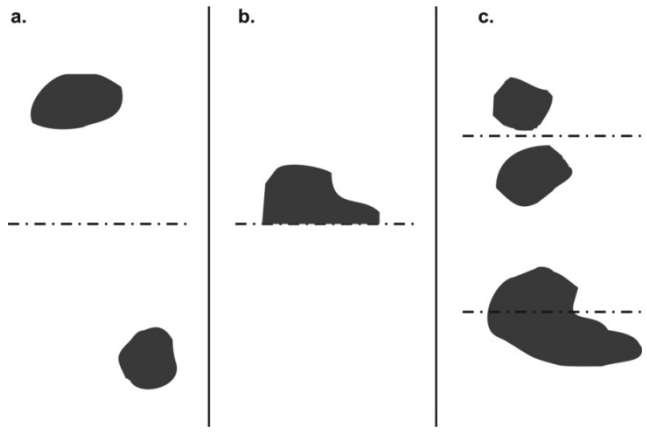

Fig. 1. Borders and tourism areas
Source: Matznetter (1979).

THE TYPOLOGY OF WIĘCKOWSKI

Więckowski (2011) distinguishes 5 types of cross-border regions existing in Central Europe (Fig. 2):

1. Cross-border tourist region of protected areas.
2. Ski cross-border tourist region.
3. Transit cross-border tourist region.
4. Cross-border tourist region of border towns.
5. Multifunctional cross-border tourist region.

1. Cross-border tourist region of protected areas

National parks are important – if not leading – attractions in a country. If countries are separated by natural borders (mountains or rivers), nature reserve areas can very often be found (see the original examples of Tatra Mountains, Pieniny Mountains, and Karkonosze Mountains in Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, but also Šumava Mountains in the Czech Republic/Austria or Aggtelek Mountains in Hungary/Slovakia.

2. Ski cross-border tourist region

Connected mountain ski resorts are the elements of this type of region. Ski facilities should act as transboundary connections (however it is very rare that ski-lifts cross the borderline and function as a means of transport). Common operation and/or promotion of resorts are important.

Besides Więckowski' example of Zwardoń-Skalite (Poland-Slovakia), we can find many examples in the Alps between France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and Austria.

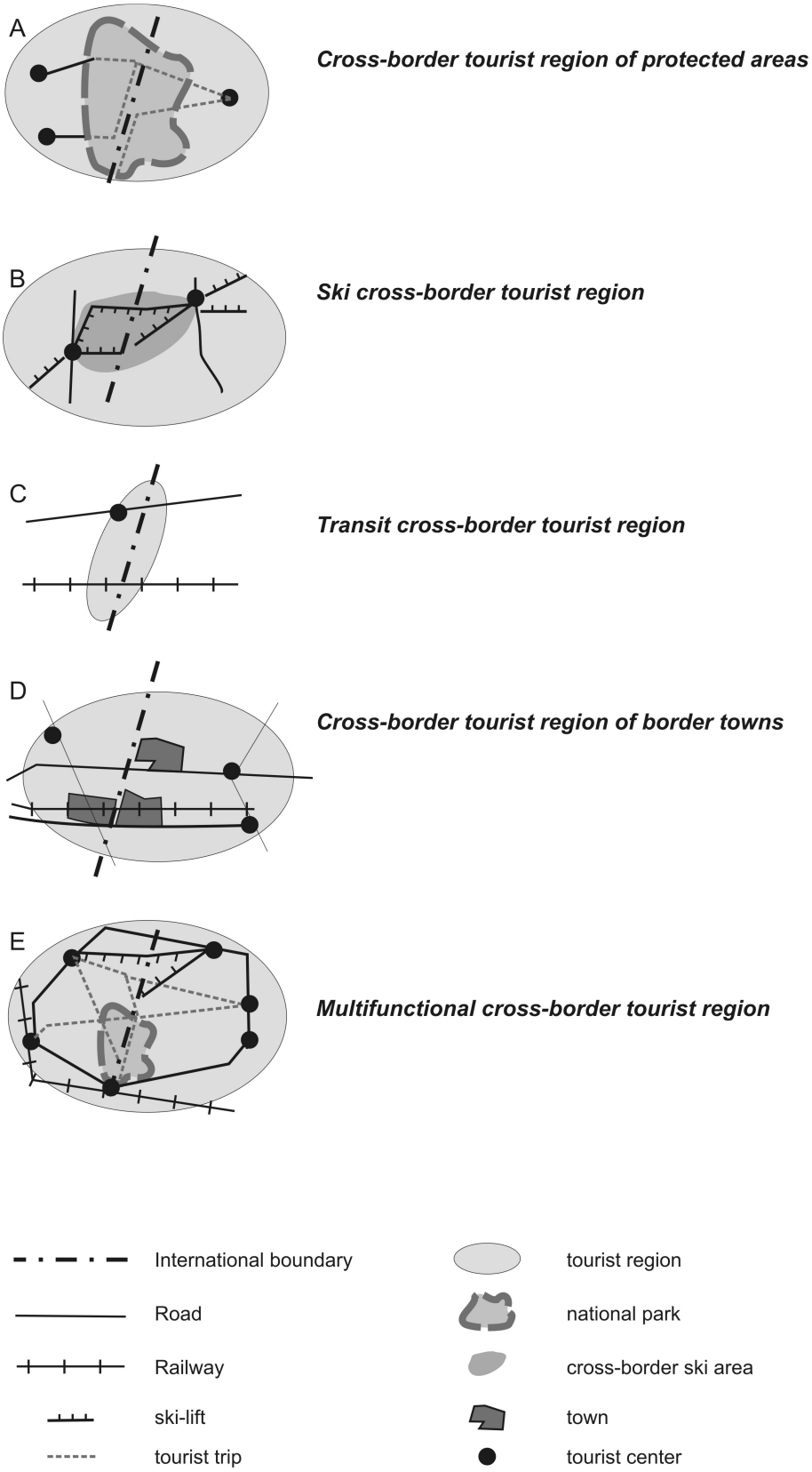

Fig. 2. Main types of cross-border tourism regions by Więckowski
Source: Więckowski (2011).

3. Transit cross-border tourist region

These regions are located along roads and railroads that pass the international border. The existence of this type of tourist region is based on a continuous flow of people who need different products and services (e.g. hotels, motels, restaurants, currency exchange points, fuel stations and recreational areas). In the Schengen zone, their role is less important, but price differences and good connectivity with the nearest city can help these regions survive (e.g. Cieszyn on the Polish-Czech border, Zgorzelec-Görlitz or Słubice-Frankfurt on the Polish-German border; and Chyżne-Trstena on the Polish-Slovak border)[3]. The twin city of Strasbourg-Kehl (France-Germany) or Irun-Hendaye (Spain-France) are also a good example.

4. Cross-border tourist region of border towns

In this type, a border separates towns. Border towns can be attractive for tourists due to their location, transit facilities (similar to transit cross-border regions), and their heritage attractions. They attract tourists from other parts of the neighbouring countries and from abroad (see later typology of cross-border agglomerations). If one can find natural tourist attractions in their vicinity (sea, mountains), they are more attractive (see the example of Świnoujście-Ahlbeck on the Polish--German border, but also Tornio-Haparanda on the Finnish-Swedish border).

5. Multifunctional cross-border tourist region

This type covers a larger area and has a wide range of tourist attractions and infrastructure. The original examples of Więckowski are the same as for cross-border tourist region of protected areas.

Więckowski (2011) emphasizes the functional construction of this typology; categories are based on tourism functions. A series of better and geographically widespread examples can be shown, but the main critique is about the overlapping types (same examples of type 2 and 5; equivocal types of 4 and 5). While in the first two categories functions are clear, purely transit regions are very rare. It seems to be an additional function instead of a main one; if we consider the necessity of spending one night in a destination to become a tourist, this category turns out to be problematic (it is a tourism region, but not tourist region). Type 4 is inordinately general; a more detailed analysis will be given in the following section through the typology of cross-border urban areas (where the simple fact of border location as an attraction will be also detailed).

THE TYPOLOGY OF CROSS-BORDER URBAN AREAS AND APPLICATIONS FOR THEIR TOURISM FLOWS

In the frame of the ESPON programme, the general characterization of urban areas was developed. Knowledge of these elements is necessary to understand the cross-border phenomena. As the work progressed, definitions and limitations were changed. The following ones mirror the clearest versions from different stages of the programme.

Basically, a city is a densely populated node with a true urban landscape and a historical core. Therefore, researchers have approached those characteristics by considering at first all the

[3] Więckowski also mentions the Barwinek-Komarno crossing point that does not exist anymore, one on the Polish-Slovakian border, the other on the Hungarian-Slovakian border.

municipalities (NUTS 5 level) with more than 650 inhabitants/km^2. Then all the contiguous municipalities with this threshold of density were added to define central or morphological urban areas.

However, in some cases, municipalities have a true urban character but do not reach the level of 650 inhabitants/km^2, due, for instance, to specific delimitation of the municipality (a large part of the territory is occupied by a lake, mountains or forests). Therefore, all the municipalities with more than 20.000 inhabitants have also been taken into consideration.

In some other cases, very densely populated municipalities are in fact very small isolated entities with only a few thousand inhabitants: therefore, we have not considered municipalities or sets of contiguous municipalities not reaching the 20.000 inhabitants threshold, even if they meet the density criteria.

In some cases, sets of contiguous municipalities, each reaching the 650 inhabitants/km^2 and/or the 20.000 inhabitants threshold, form a very large area, which is in fact structured by different nodes, each with a clear identity, this being the case in some large conurbations. Different cities have been identified, but only when the different nodes are clearly identified as such at the upper levels of the urban hierarchy in the national studies of the urban networks. The limits between these contiguous cities are then based on the limits between their labour pools, if available (ESPON Project 1.4.3. 2006).

The morphological urban area (MUA) is the above-defined city. The continuity may be checked on the on-line maps of Geoportal, Google Earth or ViaMichelin. The large conurbations are split into its urban knots (i.e. separated urban zones) only if they have clear individual identity and they are morphologically separated. This approach allows comparison of cities by economic and functional aspects.

The *functional urban area* (FUA) is the manpower basin of the above-defined morphological urban area (MUA). The first estimation of FUAs has been prepared in the ESPON 1.1.1 project (Nordregio (2005):, and it was corrected in the ESPON 1.4.3 project. The final definition of the FUA is the following:

– FUA population over 50.000 inhabitants and urban core with more than 15.000 inhabitants (i.e. excludes those artificially large “urban” areas with minor urban core).
– or FUA population more than 0.5% of national population and urban core with more than 15.000 inhabitants (i.e. in less populated countries smaller FUAs were taken into account).
– smaller FUAs were included if they had at least local importance in transport, knowledge or decision-making functions or regional importance in administrative, tourism or industrial functions (ESPON Project 1.4.3. 2006).

Since delimitation, the population of MUAs and FUAs has classified cities (Groupe de Travail Parlementaire Franco-Belge, 2006). The following categories were enrolled:

– MEGA: > 1 million inhabitants (FUA),
– metropolis: > 500 thousand inhabitants (FUA),
– poli-metropolis: large conurbation, two MEGAs with centres at least 60 km from each other (adjoin or separated by a smaller city) *or* one MEGA and a smaller city at least 30 km from each other,

– large city: > 250 thousand inhabitants (FUA),
– medium city: > 150 thousand inhabitants (FUA),
– small city: > 50 thousand inhabitants (FUA).

We can group the earlier classified cities – if they are in border regions – by their size and relation to the national border. Large cities are marked by square, medium and small cities by circle, FUAs by hatching. The symbol for a national border is a double line.

During the analysis we use as our base two forms of tourism:

a) "local" tourism: this type of flows identifies mainly shopping tourism;
b) "long distance" tourism: this type of tourist flows arrives from long distance (mainly from abroad) with cultural interest or to engage in passive tourism.

Other types of tourism (e.g. culinary, wellness or medical tourism) could be analysed in this context, but here we focus only on these types.

Type 1: twin-cities, generally quite small, sometimes a former single city, cut by a border, each with their own FUA even if some transborder commuting is present (Fig. 3). The most known example is Görlitz-Zgorzelec on the German-Polish border.

In the case of twin cities we can discover „local" and the „long distance" tourism. Local tourism is often realised in the form of shopping tourism when prices of goods and services of the two neighbouring countries are different. Shopping tourism turns towards lower prices; it is unidirectional if a significant price gap between the two sides of borders is present. The flow of tourists can be bidirectional if relative prices of products are significantly different. Important services accessible only in either of the towns also attract visitors (e.g. sport centres).

International long-distance visitors may be interested only in border crossing or led by curiosity, in comparing lives on the two sides of the border. Cultural attractions of the twin city can also be a goal for the flow of tourists.

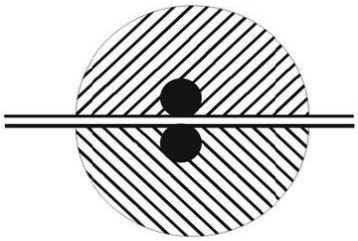

Fig. 3. Twin cities
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

Type 2: a metropolis or large city, with a morphological area extending across the border into the neighbouring country, through suburban areas or small cities, included in the FUA of the main city (Fig. 4). Typical examples: Basel (Switzerland) – Saint-Louis (France) – Lörrach (Germany) or Geneva (Switzerland) – Annemasse (France). The key question of the cooperation is the common network of cross-border public transport. In case of not-local organisations (e.g. a national railway company), the responsibility for these systems may be tricky in legal terms. Sometimes part of a large city's infrastructure is located in the neighbouring country (for example Basel – Saint-Louis). Ideally, this type of metropolises should be managed by a cross-border urban management community.

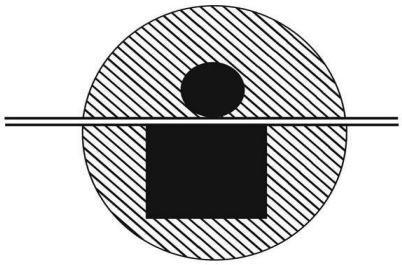

Fig. 4. A metropolis or large city, with a morphological area extending across the border
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

In this case local tourism does not exist. According to the definition of the World Tourism Organisation visitors must leave their usual environment (domicile and workplace). The same Functional Urban Area is situated around the main city and around the small one; the border space is not divided into two different FUAs so potential visitors do not leave their usual environment.

Long-distance tourism appears in type 2. The most popular points of destination of international tourism area large cities as they offer many attractions and famous sights and are definitely better marketed. A long-distance visitor can be in transit through a small city on the way to a large city. If a visitor arrives directly in a large city, the small cities have much less chance to be visited. Tourism flow from the main city to the small city exists only if the small city's attraction is so telling that international tourists are determined to visit it.It happens occasionally that attractions offered by a small city are that compelling. However, in case of transit regions (in Więckowski's definition), attractions of the large city generate tourism in the small one.

Type 3: a metropolis or large city with a contiguity in the neighbouring country to smaller cities with their own FUA or sending quite few commuters to the main city in the other country (Fig. 5). This variant reduces the necessity for a common management community (except for the transport and technical networks). Generally, the small city benefits from the proximity of the services of the large city. The best example is Strasbourg-Kehl.

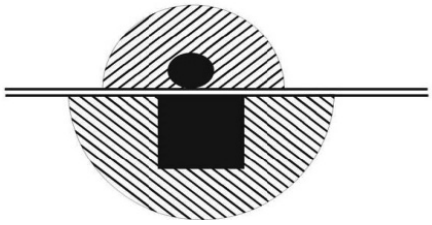

Fig. 5. A metropolis or large city, with contiguity in the neighbour country to smaller cities
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

In this case, the presence of the border is so conspicuous, that it is able to cut off the FUA of the large city/metropolis. The two different FUAs assure analysis of local tourism. Shopping tourism may be important as a product of the strong barrier function of the border. Long-distance cross-border tourism depends on local attractions and the level of common networks (public transport). Low level of common network may partly block tourism. If there is no common transport network between the large city and a small city on the other side of the border, the flow of international tourism/long-distance tourism is weak: who will rent a car to go shopping or to see some secondary attractions on the other side of the border?

Type 4: a small transborder urban area with a quite well-integrated common commuting basin. Because of the smaller size, management problems are not as serious as in Type 2 (Fig. 6). For example: Esch-sur-Alzette (Luxemburg) – Audun-le-Tiche (France) or Longwy (France) – Pétange (Luxemburg) – Aubange (Belgium).

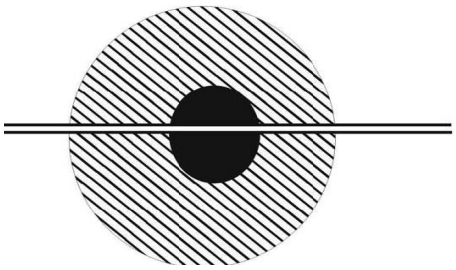

Fig. 6. A small transborder urban area with a quite well integrated common commuting basin
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

In this case, in the lack of different FUAs, local tourism does not exist per se. In the border area price levels are usually almost identical, with only some specific goods (e.g. fuel) being attractive to shoppers from across the border. If there are various attractions in the area, all are visited; tourists generally do not know in which country they are (unless the currency is different). The flow of international tourism is free and easy and may concern each part of the border area.

Type 5: a metropolis or a large city, with its FUA extending into the neighbouring country, possibly with a scattered network of secondary centres (Fig. 7). The large urban region around Luxemburg is a good example, with its FUA spreading into Belgium, France, and Germany, with secondary centres like Arlon in Belgium andsometimes morphologically cross-border areas of Type 4 (Longwy-Pétange-Aubange; Esch-sur-Alzette – Audun-le-Tiche). At least two main questions of transnational interactions arise: accessibility of the large city (workforce) and the improvement of the education system of the workforce supplier country.

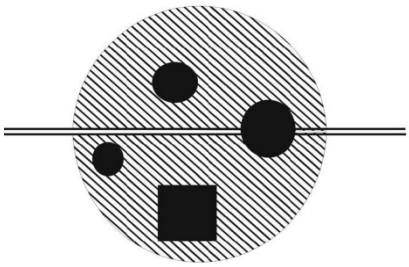

Fig. 7. A metropolis or a large city, with its FUA extending into the neighbour country
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

A larger scale of geographical scope distinguishes this type from type 4, thereby the wider focus puts forth new flows and governing forces; however local problems and possible examples are the same.

Analysis of local tourism is not possible because of the existence of the same FUA (this case reminds us of type 4). Long-distance tourists with a destination in the area arrive into the large city/metropolis. The tourism flow is strong into the large city. This flow will extend to the small cities if they have special attractions.

Type 6: two metropolises or large cities, on each side of the border, with tangential MUAs, for example, Heerlen (Netherlands) and Aachen (Germany) (Fig. 8). If any cross-border technical cooperation is necessary, it is organised on a higher (regional or national) territorial (administrative) level, as FUAs are not or not very well integrated. On the other hand, a relatively high, comparable importance of the cities on both sides of the border can spur them on to create a common promotion strategy and a common image.

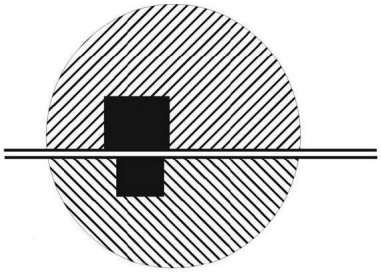

Fig. 8. Two metropolises or large cities, on each side of the border
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

The tangential FUAs assure the interpretation of local tourism. In the case of local tourism, shopping tourism may be important. Whenever there is a common tourism marketing strategy, tourists in one country will also visit the other city; if not, it will be accidental. Similar size of the cities, small geographical distance between them, the cities' vicinity and the location in different countries has a double effect. Large cities recognise the advantages of acting together and launch common tourism management schemes and city marketing strategies for both cities to complement each other. In this case not only the two cities, but also the whole cross-border region can benefit from the positive effect of long-distance tourism. Moreover, a common tourism destination management organisation is a good instrument to increase the role of tourism in the cross-border region. If a joint promotion scheme is not in place, tourism will be accidental on one or the other side of the border.

Type 7: two or more metropolises or large cities, on each side of the border, with tangential FUAs (Fig. 9). This is a variant of Type 6 with a larger distance between the cities; the typical example is Wien-Bratislava (as their FUAs stretch to the border line, against type 8).

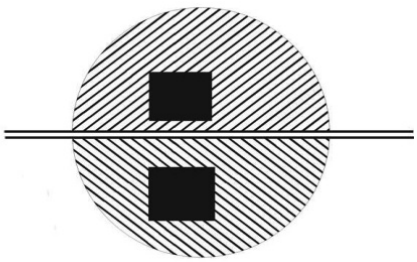

Fig. 9. Two or more metropolises or large cities on each side of the border, with tangential FUAs
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

In this case the metropolises themselves are attractions for national or nearby tourists. Generally, in the frame of local tourism, tourists visit only one large city/metropolis; they do not cross the border. The participants of long distance-tourism (e.g. Chinese, Japanese and American

tourists) may visit two cities one after the other. This phenomenon is related to spatial cognition and perceived destination image.

Type 8: a transborder FUA type without contiguity; the case with metropolises or large cities quite close to each other (about 50 km) and possibly cooperating across the border, but without contiguity between their FUAs; for example Hasselt-Genk, Maastricht, Aachen and Liege, or Hasselt-Genk and Eindhoven. If there is any cooperation (see contact structure, for example MAHHL or Interreg networks), contact is occasional (Fig. 10).

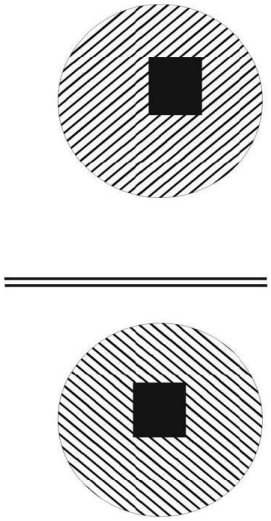

Fig. 10. A transborder FUA type without contiguity
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

Global strategies fall into a competition conflict, because they are far enough from each other to avoid the common use of infrastructure (see the airports of Maastricht and Liège). The cities are large enough to attract investors and activities individually. The huge intellectual (universities) or service (hospital) infrastructure are restricted by national rules, and their willingness for cross-border cooperation is not more significant than with other institutions far away.

In type 8, only organised tourist groups will visit both cities (as a part of their itinerary). Among individual tourists only a few will spend their spare time in both cities. Shopping tourism may be important if the prices are quite different (at least for a larger group of goods or services) between the two countries, as transaction costs are higher due to distance.

Type 9: A "city divided by a border" transborder type: without or with very little contact between the two sides of the border, so without any transborder functionality. It was the case of Berlin before the reunification or with Nicosia today (Fig. 11).

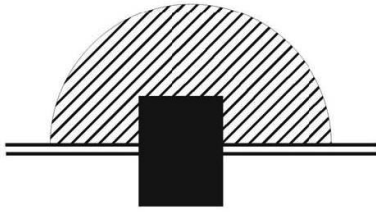

Fig. 11. A transborder FUA type without contiguity
Source: ESPON Project 1.4.3. (2006).

This special geopolitical situation does not favour the flow of local tourism consequently, local tourism is legally impossible. From the point of view of international tourism existence of these cities is a tourist attraction in itself. In some cases, border crossing may be a highly appreciated attraction for an international tourist (mainly when it is prohibited for the local population). The chance to discover differences between the two sides of the border can also have a special appeal for long-distance tourists.

CONCLUSIONS

The two models of cross-border tourism regions can complement each other; while Więckowski has an important focus on nature, the ESPON framework emphasizes urban areas. The typology put forward by Więckowski has overlapping categories (see the example of Görlitz-Zgorzelec in multiple categories) and – in the case of cross-border tourist regions of border towns – it is skeletal. The typology of cross-border urban areas in the ESPON programme offers a possibility to fill in the gap in Więckowski's model. Here, we have presented a detailed typology and proposed basic concepts of tourist flows. As the next steps of this research, reduction of categories, widening the examples and diminishing or eliminating of overlapping situations should be made. After creating a generally accepted typology, quantitative analysis on the effect of different types of regions can be run.

As evidence of the existing typology reveals, cities in cross-border regions have a role not only in the organisation of the space, but also in the organisation of tourism flows. Their direct and indirect role (over the volume of their tourist attractions) depends on their size and their geographical situation relative to the border. Tourism can exist only if there is at least partially free flow of persons across the border.

As we mentioned earlier, the functional urban area (FUA) is the manpower basin of the morphological urban area. If it is common, people living in this area will not leave their usual environment when they move within the FUA, so they are not visitors. An important contribution emerged, as the FUA can be the base for delimitation of tourism. This proposition highlights the difference between personal and community spatial cognition when the FUA is wider for a community of the city than for a single citizen or household.

In tourism, borders, border crossings and different levels of development may be also a tourist attraction (Timothy 1995), even if the starting point of the trip is a small city or a large city. Generally, tourism is not determined by the city size, but influenced (and also not determined) by the attractions of the destination. Some types of tourism do not depend at all on city size (e.g. dental tourism) while others (e.g. classical cultural tourism) are size-influenced.

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