
The effectiveness and impact of the received EU funds on Vojvodina region (Serbia) regional development, as well as on the EU members neighboring countries cooperation

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Abstract

The present paper discusses the results of a research project that aimed to determine the intensity of the use of INTERREG IIIA and IPA (2007-2013) funds in Vojvodina/Serbia as the border region in external border of EU, and to define its spatial differentiation on the basis of numbers of applications, and the amount of financial aid. The main objective was to define how these subsidies affect the development of local communities, and to analyze the situation of the undeveloped or underdeveloped communities when facing pre-financing problems during the application period: why underdeveloped border municipalities have no financial support, as well as how to help these municipalities or settlements in the future. In the 2007–2013 programming period, development resources were available to Serbia in two components of the IPA programme (Transition Assistance and Institution Building; Cross-Border Co-operation). These funds were at disposal not only to Vojvodina, but to Serbia and its neighbours as well, within cross-border programmes, while they also enabled development projects inside the country. This programme has been of greater importance to Vojvodina, since it is bordering with Croatia, and even with Bosnia and Herzegovina on a shorter border section, thus the implementation of IPA CBC programmes could have started.

The paper also presents spatial characteristics and examples of prosperous cross-border networks (Serbia-Hungary, Serbia-Croatia and Serbia-Romania) of interested partners: what position have and what is the weight of the border settlements in the network of cooperation in vertical and horizontal sense.

As a conclusion we can say that although substantial sums were invested from the above mentioned resources into the economy of Vojvodina for its development, the main indicator – the GDP – has been increasing only slightly, while these projects have no effects on decreasing unemployment. In the overall economic situation, unemployment is primarily decreased by emigration, in which Vojvodina Hungarians take part at a rate above the average compared to their headcount, thus decreasing the economic power of the community through emigration.

Keywords: external borders, EU fund effectiveness, Vojvodina, cross border cooperation

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