

ANALYSIS OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AS THE WAY OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF UKRAINE

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Abstract:

The article deals with the problems of cross-border cooperation of Ukraine with neighboring countries. It also highlights problems of functioning of Euroregions. On the basis of analysis, proposals concerning improvement of cross-border cooperation are given.

Key words: cross-border cooperation, integration, Ukraine, regions

Involvement of economy of Ukraine in the global economic system, as shown in the bigravity model of integration of Ukraine, supposes two alternatives: European Union and Common Economic Space. However, coming from interests of national economy, taking into consideration level of economic development of EU countries and prospects for the Ukrainian economy, in opinion of many economists, choice should be made in favour of European, and consequently world economic patterns.

Analyzing formation of European Economic Community, and then European Union, we can conclude that this was not simply realization of political will of governments of the states-participants. The European processes of integrations became successful also because, beginning still from times of the Roman agreement which put beginning the European association of coal and steel, they were carried out not only on macro-, but also engulfed mezo- and micro-level. That means for the integration to be successful, it is needed that desire of governments of the states must be supported with connections at the level of their regions by realization of cross-border cooperation and between direct participants of economic processes – enterprises and organizations.

Because of fact that Ukraine now is at the beginning of the eurointegration way, she necessarily must take experience of other European countries which became the members of EU. In particular, it concerns development of cross-border cooperation between contiguous territories of neighbouring countries. Among other reasons which underline actuality of this problem for our state are as follows:

- 19 from 25 regions of Ukraine are boundary. It in its turn specifies on that it is necessary to develop strategy of cross-border cooperation at the level of the state;
- historical traditions of coexistence of people of contiguous territories, economic, cultural and family bonds between them;
- approaching of borders of European Union directly to Ukraine. It means denouncing early made agreements with the countries of East and Central Europe which will turn around for Ukraine with complication of economic connections with them. That is why through cross-border cooperation it seems possible to decrease to some extent negative influence of such events, to adapt national economy to the new terms and engage to the European economic processes;
- tendencies of decentralization of power which suppose transference of powers from a center into regions. It will promote mobility of administrative decisions of local authorities, that in an eventual account will be resulted in the increase of efficiency of the use of local resources on the basis of joint efforts;
- realization of joint venture projects on the basis of local resources and opportunities;
- development of other forms of collaboration. It means realization of general cultural, educational, social and other projects, gaining positive experience in this sphere;
- exchange of experience in the sphere of state administration;

- opportunities of the use of resources of European Union, designed for development of cross - border cooperation, resolving of urgent problems of local communities.

Many domestic and foreign scientists were engaged in the problems of development of cross-border collaboration. But because of new phase and terms of development of relations between European Union and Ukraine, this scientific problem has put new tasks before researchers.

One of the features of modern world and, in particular, European integration processes became development of cross-border cooperation. "European framework convention on cross-border cooperation of territorial communities and authorities" (1980) defines cross-border cooperation as any actions, directed on strengthening and deepening of good-neighbourly relations between territorial communities or authorities, which are held under jurisdiction of two or more states, and concluding to that of necessary agreements or achieving arrangements"[5]. According to another approach, a cross-border (boundary) collaboration can be defined as a complex of forms and instruments co-operations between partners, which carry out co-operation in the spheres of industry, agriculture, transport and communications, recreation and protection of environment, carry on trade activities, are investors and recipients of capitals, and also implement other forms of mutually beneficial socio-economic partnership on geographically near territories [9].

To our opinion, the drawback of the resulted definitions is absence of accenting of attention on that territories of the neighbouring states must be contiguous, otherwise advantage of collaboration is lost above other types of international cooperation. That is why it is possible to give the following determination of this concept: a cross-border cooperation is an aggregate of forms and methods of collaboration between contiguous territories two or more states in cultural, social, scientific and other economic spheres, which takes place at the level of governments and societies and is based on historical traditions, international division of labour, specialization and cooperation.

Such collaboration was founded in the middle of twentieth century in the countries of Western Europe. Ukraine was attached to such processes in 1993 by creation of Carpathian Euroregion.

The basic tasks of cross-border-cooperation are as follows:

- stimulation of increase of mutual trade volumes, development and support of economic, cultural and humanitarian connections between boundary regions;
- saving of historical cultural legacy;
- creation and effective development of socio-economic infrastructure in boundary regions;
- creation of terms of the simplified regime of crossing of commodities through a custom border, improvement of a transport infrastructure, bonded warehouses, terminals;
- increase of efficiency of the use of production and social base of boundary territories;
- creation of conditions for co-operation of the systems of warning and liquidation of consequences of extraordinary situations of contiguous boundary territories;
- increase of efficiency of the use of local resources;
- working out problems of development of boundary territories on the basis of joint efforts;
- other measures, directed on activation of integration processes on m z - and micro-level.

The most widespread form of realization of cross-border collaboration is establishing and functioning of the European regions. The European region is a form of cross-border between territorial communities or local authorities of boundary regions of two or more countries, that have a common border, which is directed on co-ordination of mutual efforts and realization by them the concerted measures in the different spheres of vital functions in accordance with national legislations and norms of international law for resolving general problems and in interests of people which inhabit its territory on opposite sides of state frontier [10]. In accordance with Law of Ukraine „Of cross-border cooperation”, the European region is an organizational form of collaboration of administrative-territorial units of the European states, that is carried out in accordance with bilateral or multilateral agreements about cross-border [1]. At this moment there are more than 150 such regions in the countries of Western, Central and Eastern Europe. In Ukraine there are six such integrative associations: Carpathian (1993), Bug (1995), Lower Danube (1998),

Overhead Prut (in 2000), Dnepr (in 2003), Slobozhanshchyna (2003); work is conducted on creation of euro of regions Donbas and Yaroslavna.

In Ukraine activity of such integration formations of mezo-level is regulated the norms of European framework. convention on cross-border cooperation of territorial communities and authorities (1980), European Charter of local self-government (1985), Declaration about cross-border cooperation in Europe (1989), Law of Ukraine „Of cross-border cooperation (2004), interstate and intergovernmental agreements of Ukraine with other states which concern the questions of collaboration between the boundary regions of Ukraine and territories of contiguous countries.

Financing of the European regions is provided by both the state budget and donors. At the moment projects and programs of cross-border cooperation are financed through the structure of the Euroregions from local budgets, domestic backing funds, and also by international organizations. The major part of financing is provided by EU. Among sponsoring organizations there are also the Canadian International Development Agency, Swiss Agency for Development and Collaboration, Agency for International Development of the USA, Institute „East-West”, and also foundations: Eurasia, Soros', Charles Stewart's, Conrad Adenauer's etc. Also assistance was given by the programs of TACIS CBC and CADSES. Since 2004 financing of the programs of cross-border collaboration is provided according to Neighborhood programs of „Poland-Belorus-Ukraine”, „Slovakia-Hungary-Ukraine”, „Romania-Ukraine”.

A positive sign here is that the question of development is taken under the control of the state by „The state program of cross-border collaboration development on 2007-2010”. Purpose of this program is activation of development of socio-economic, scientific and technical, ecological, cultural and other connections between the participants of cross-border collaboration.

Participating of Ukraine in the Euroregions is instrumental in expansion of mutually beneficial trade and economic collaboration, allows boundary administrative units independently to contact with the European structures for the receipt of technical and financial assistance for realization of projects of cross-border collaboration, facilitates in international integration of the state and decreases negative consequences from an entry of central and eastern European countries. During time of existence of the Euroregions with participation of Ukraine it was realized near 500 projects of cross-border collaboration.

At the same time, analysis of cross-border cooperation and Euroregions allowed to define factors which restrain this development. They are as follows:

- low level of socio-economic development of regions and Ukraine on the whole;
- considerable disproportions in the models of administrative-territorial division of Ukraine and contiguous European states. There is difference in structure and in volume of plenary powers of local authorities;
- problem of legal division of powers and functions between local and central authorities. Besides, it concerns differentiating of plenary powers of local self-government of different administrative-territorial level also (village, settlement, district in town, district, region);
- problem of state support of cross-border collaboration. A methodology and legal basis of elaborating of projects and programs, which are supposed to be financed from the state budget, do not work;
- shortage of financial resources of local and regional budgets;
- low level of cooperating with the European structures, which supervise questions of regional development (Congress of local and regional authorities of Europe, Association of the European boundary regions, Assembly of the European regions);
- strengthening of legal, economic, technical barriers of customs, complicating of procedures of border crossing, which are related to expanding of European Union;
- incompleteness of process of delimitation and demarcation of state boundary of Ukraine;
- lack of information about the results of activity of subjects of cross-border collaboration with participation of Ukraine, and foreign experience;
- low activity of nongovernmental agencies in cross-border collaboration;

- establishing this process by will of authorities when initiative must come from the direct participants of cross-border cooperation;
- low level of development of infrastructure in the boundary regions.

That is why, coming from the results of analysis of cross -border cooperation in Ukraine, the ways of its improvement will be the following:

- development and introduction of state policy of cross-border collaboration;
- involvement of all boundary regions of Ukraine in cross -border cooperation, forming on their basis the new Euroregions;
- elaboration of government programs of economy development of boundary regions;
- implementation of administrative reform which will enable to inculcate the reasonable model of administrative-territorial division of Ukraine and to share power between local and central state bodies leaving more power and financial resources for the first ones;
- introduction of mechanism of state financing of the programs and projects of cross -border collaboration;
- activization of cooperation with the European structures, responsible for regional development;
- simplification of different kinds of barriers and procedures of crossing of state boundary by people, capitals and other resources which concern realization of projects of cross -border collaboration;
- resolving the problems of delimitation and demarcation of state boundary of Ukraine is with other countries;
- activization of informative policy which concerns the questions of cross -border collaboration;
- involvement of public organizations to participating in processes of cross -border cooperation as members of administrative bodies of the Euroregions;
- improvement of infrastructure of cross-border collaboration of boundary regions of Ukraine.

Introduction of these measures, to our opinion, will enable to activate a cross -border cooperation which will be instrumental in realization of eurointegration strategy of our state.

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