

István Süli-Zakar Roundtable



„Active scepticism or passive enthusiasm?”

Impacts of EU enlargements on cross-border co-operations

Europe a Century after the End of the First
World War (1918-2018)

István Süli-Zakar Roundtable: Could cross-
border co-operation between European
States the way to refund the European
Order after the First World War?

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Can we draw parallels between the attitudes to EU integration and to local and regional cross-border co-operations in Europe?

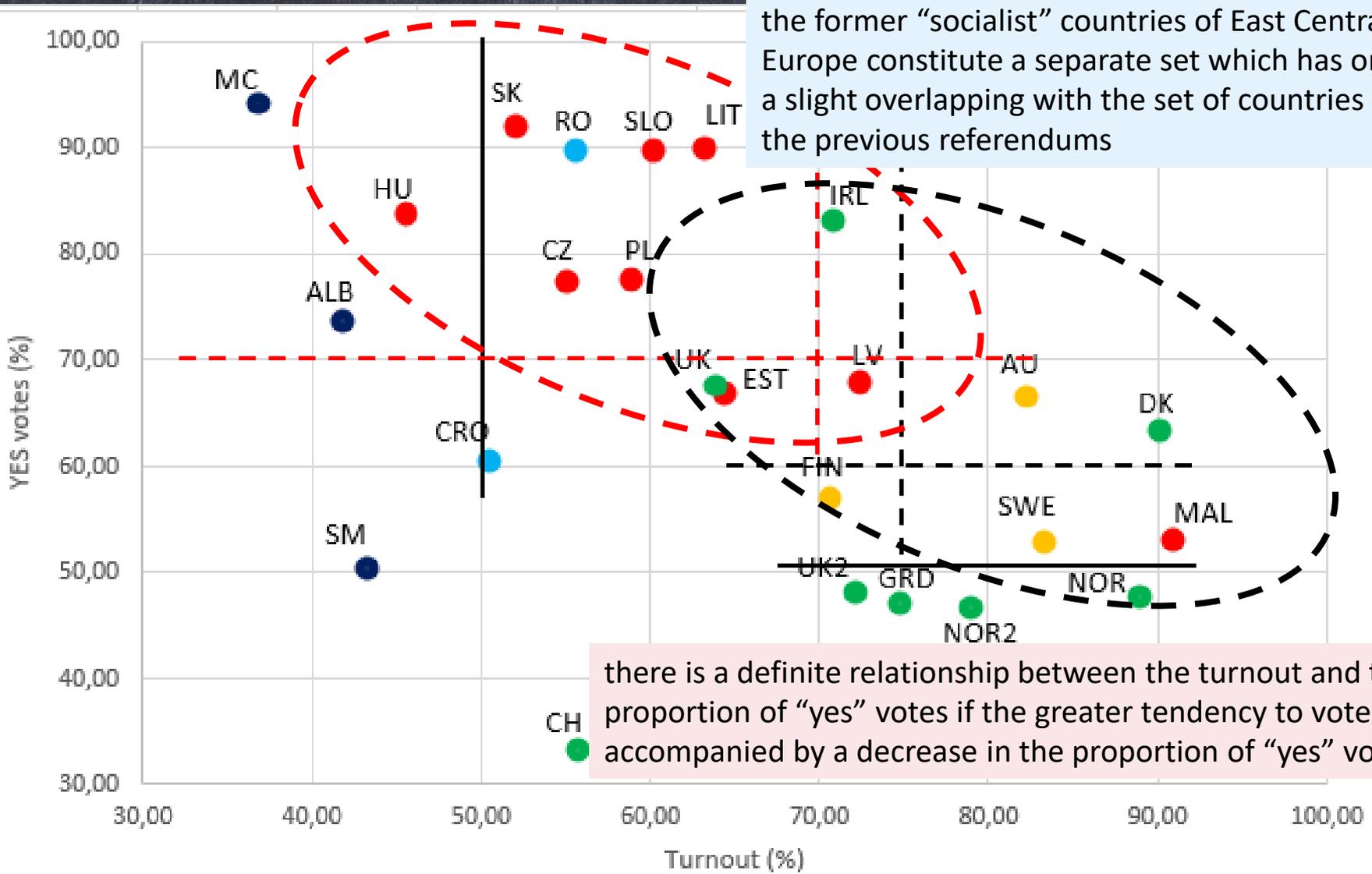
Or, rather, are these the cross-border co-operations that strengthen the EU integration?

Is it EU integration that generates more cross-border co-operations?

Are the border regions in the “passive and pessimistic” countries are less active in building cross-border relations?

Is it possible that border regions in the „active and enthusiastic” countries are more likely to participate in cross-border co-operations?

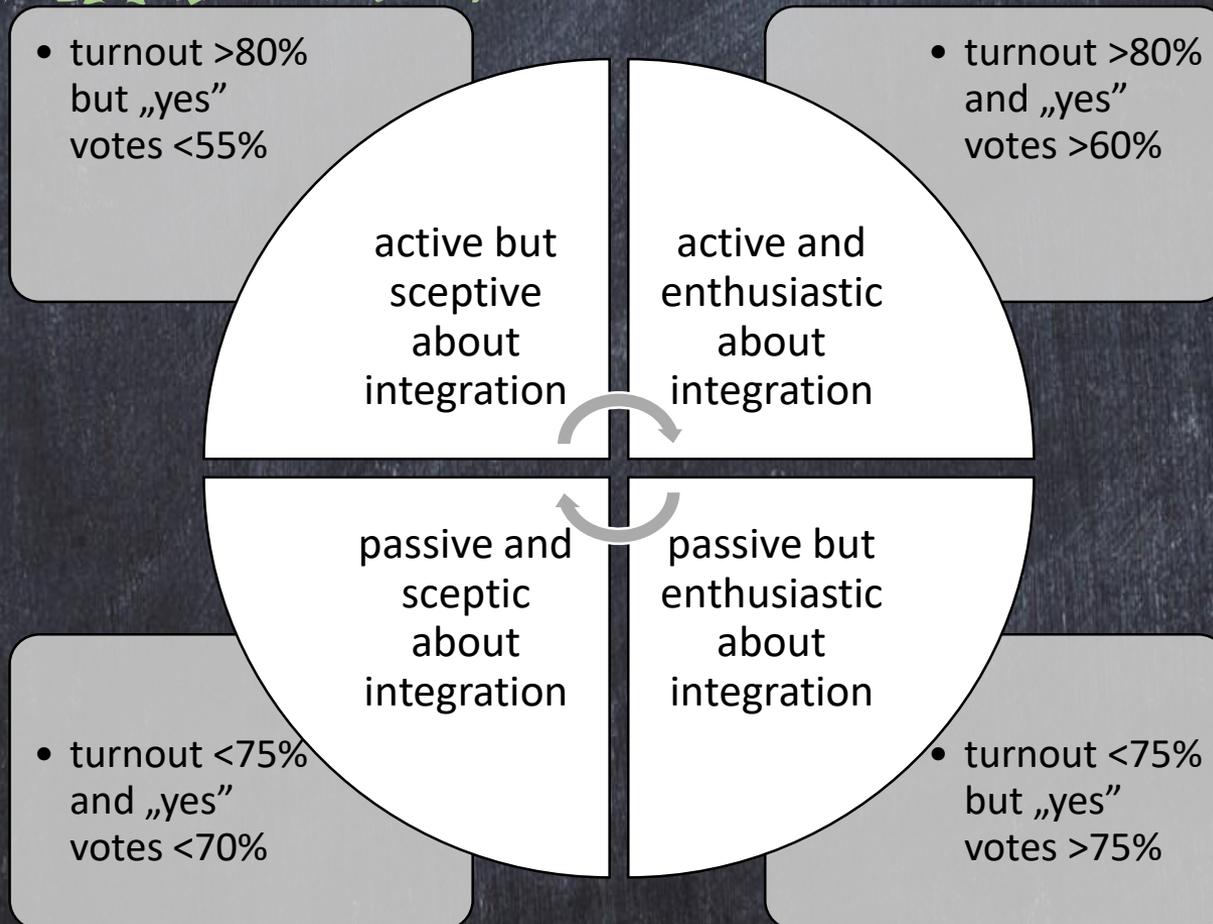
Results of the referendums on accession as reflected by the turnout and the proportion of “yes” votes



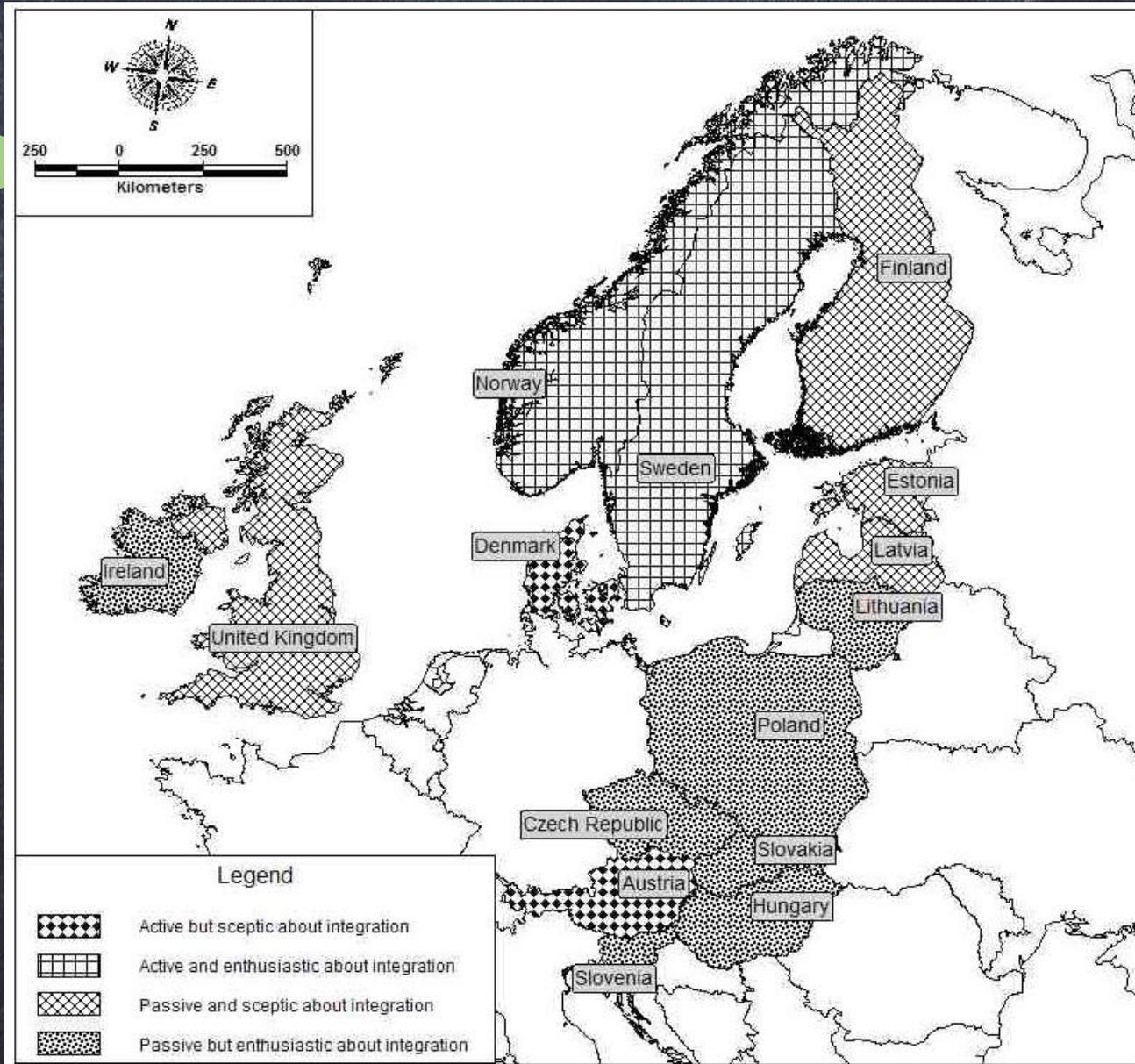
the former “socialist” countries of East Central Europe constitute a separate set which has only a slight overlapping with the set of countries of the previous referendums

there is a definite relationship between the turnout and the proportion of “yes” votes if the greater tendency to vote is accompanied by a decrease in the proportion of “yes” votes

Approach to integration in the Member States: varying attitudes



Groups of new Member States based on the ratio of turnout and „yes” votes in the accession



Integration and cross-border co-operation forms



PERIOD	RELATIONS	
	internal	external
early	sister cities	funds
middle	bi- and trilateral co-operations	experience exchanges
late	euroregions	EU membership

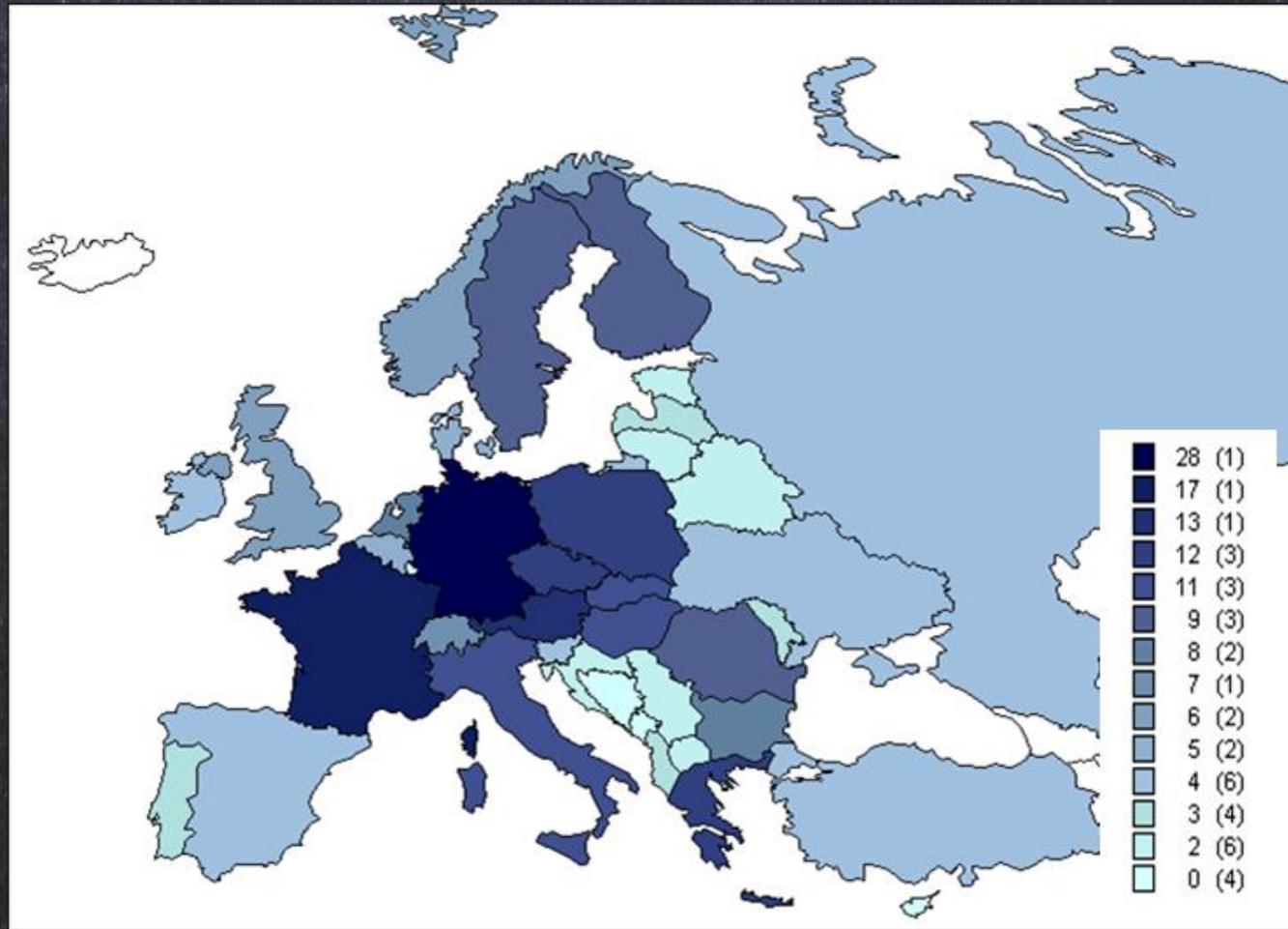
- euroregions constitute areas linked by cross-border co-operations which are based on economic, social, cultural, etc. relations between two or more states and their local and/or regional governments.
- euroregions – similarity with EU integration: high level of institutionalisation

Hypothesis



- For the analysis of the work of euroregions it is indispensable to link the year of the foundation of a euroregion to the EU enlargement waves and the years of accession, especially stressing the changes in the border interpretations and positions.

Participation of the EU countries in euroregional co-operations (as of 2005)

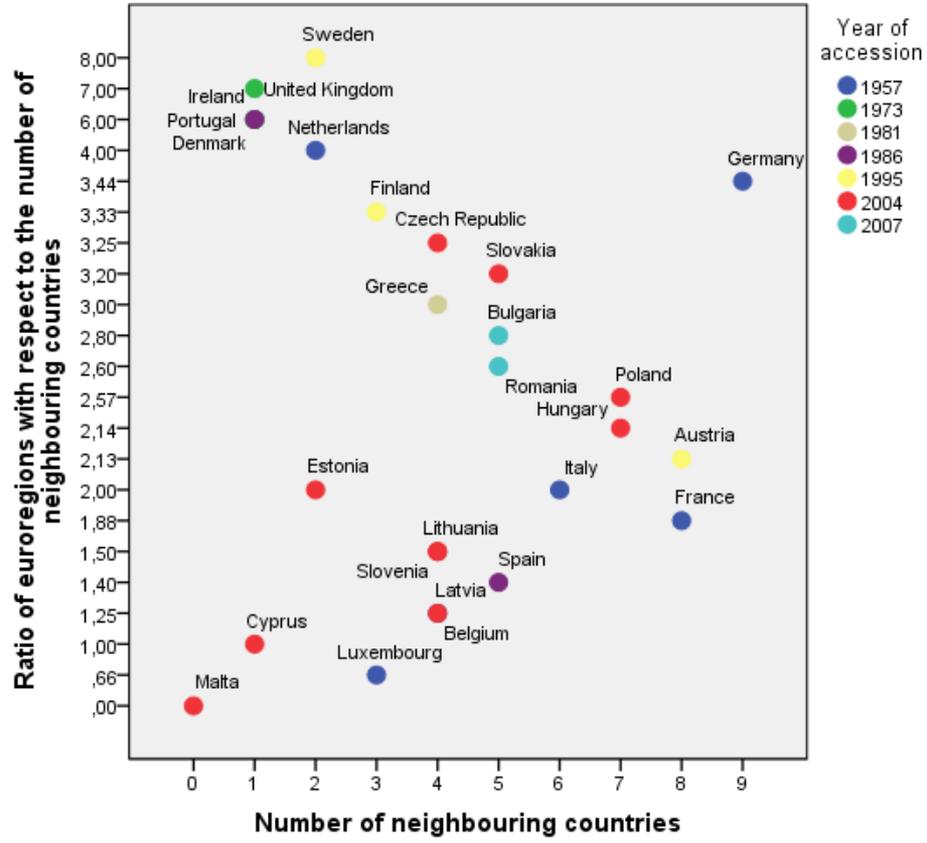
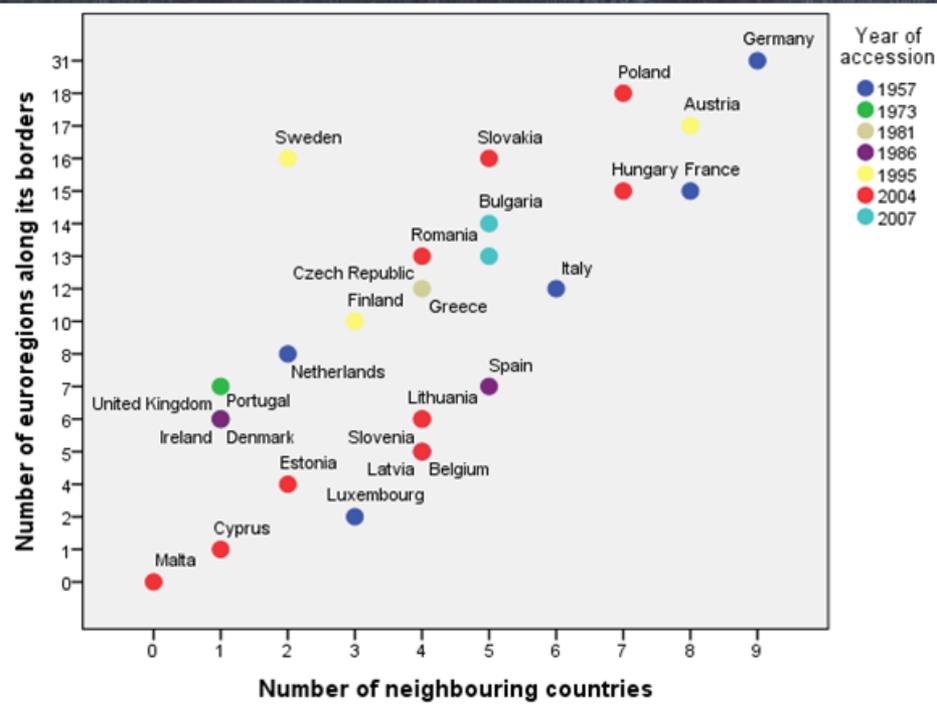


Relationship between the number of euroregions and the year of accession



- two years can be considered as the most significant from the aspect of the year of accession
- cooperation readiness is the closest (1) between the founding states, and (2) between the countries which became open after the transition period

Relationship between the number of neighbouring countries and the number of euroregions (grouped by the year of accession)



The number of cross-border co-operations increases with the number of neighbouring countries.

- Germany
- Sweden

Ratio of euroregions in the function of the number of neighbouring countries

Distribution of euroregions from the aspect of countries



	low number of neighbouring regions	high number of neighbouring regions
low number of euroregions	<i>Malta, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Belgium, Luxembourg, Estonia</i>	Spain
high number of euroregions	Sweden, Denmark, <i>Netherlands</i> , Portugal, Ireland, United Kingdom, Finland, <i>Czech Republic</i> , Greece	<i>Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, France, Poland, Germany, Italy</i>

In the case of the founding countries and the new Member States joining after 2004, the number of euroregions is proportionate with the number of neighbouring countries. This shows that there is connection between the three factors, and therefore the study of euroregions is reasonable with respect to the proposed dimensions.

Enlargement 2004: the (re)unification Europe?



- **Correlation between the year of establishment and the enlargement period**
 - in the case of the regions of the member states concerned (with the six founding states being an exception from that) in almost 80% of the cases the establishment of the cross-border co-operation happened in the year preceding the accession of one of the member countries concerned
 - this is true for all enlargement periods, but can be the most explicitly observed in the case of the countries acceding in 2004, thus confirming the hypothesis that “in Europe these co-operation forms constitute a kind of “stepping-stone” and “mini-laboratory” where the applicant countries can practice and prove their intention and ability to co-operate

The relationship between active/passive and sceptic/enthusiatic and the number of euroregions

	active and enthusiastic	active but sceptic	passive and sceptic	passive but enthusiastic
Austria	H			
Denmark	H			
Norway		H		
Sweden		H		
United Kingdom			H	
Finland			H	
Estonia			L	
Latvia			L	
Ireland				H
Lithuania				L
Poland				H
Czech Republic				H
Slovakia				H
Hungary				H
Slovenia				L
Romania				H

Conclusions



1. the EU enlargement processes have an incentive effect on the foundation of euroregions
 1. for instance, the categorisation of the euroregions by countries demonstrated that in the case of the countries participating in the fifth enlargement in 2004 the more neighbouring countries a country has, the higher participation ratio in euroregional co-operation is observed
2. there are strong relationship systems between
 - the year of establishment of euroregions
 - the year of enlargement
 - and the year of the launching of the Interreg Programme
 - the geographical area and the year of establishment

It does not matter whether the people in Europe are sceptic or enthusiastic about integration but in fact they still support and initiate cross-border co-operations. And this shows the strong local element of cross-border co-operation.



Thank you for your attention.