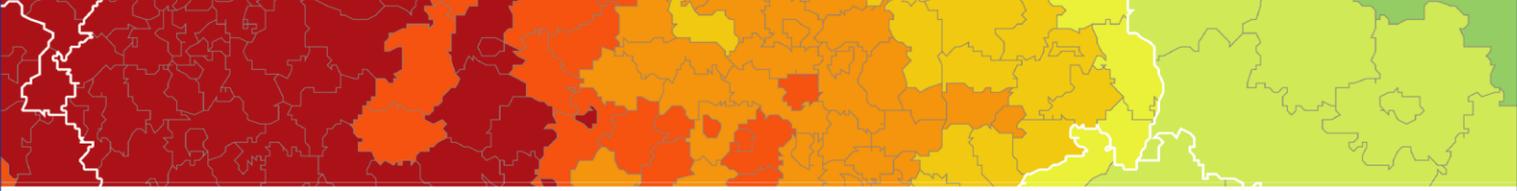


Inspire policy making by territorial evidence



Cross-border Public Services (CPS)

Targeted Analysis

**Final Report
Main Report**

Version 14/01/2019

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Cross-border Public Services (CPS)

Final Report
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Abbreviations

AEBR	Association of European Border Regions
CoR	European Committee of the Regions
CPS	Cross-border public services
CPSP	Cross-border public service provision
EC	European Commission
EGTC	European grouping of territorial cooperation
ESPO	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
MOT	Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière
MS	Member State

1 Introduction

The ESPON Targeted Analysis “Cross-border Public Services” is implemented under the Specific Objective 2 of the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme. The key objective of the project is to support a better delivery of cross-border public services and to improve awareness about the added value of cross-border public services. A special focus is on the interests of the project’s stakeholders:

- Where are cross-border public services (CPS) provided along EU borders?
- What services are provided in the case study areas and what is missing in relation to the stakeholders objectives and needs?
- What are blocking factors hampering the development of CPS in the case study areas?
- What are the development potentials and future needs for CPS in the case study areas? And what are possible access points to exploit these potentials?
- What main policy recommendations can be derived for improving CPS provision?

A key challenge for the study is that CPS were not yet comprehensively analysed at a European level and that previously no methodological concept for this is currently has been developed. This ESPON project makes a contribution to fill this gap by combining European overview analyses and in-depth case studies.

This requires a common understanding on what is a cross-border public service. All analyses of this report are based on eleven jointly elaborated working criteria that aim at differentiating CPS from project-level “ad hoc” cross-border cooperation, singular infrastructure developments or private sector services. A more detailed account of the eleven criteria is provided in the scientific report. Based upon these criteria and other observable features, the following general definition for CPS has been developed:

As a specific form of services of general interest, CPS address joint problems or development potentials of border regions that are located on different sides of one or more existing nation state borders. CPS are provided on a long-term basis and within in a clearly defined cross-border territory. Their aim is to generate benefits for the general public or a specific target group in this cross-border territory, without excluding any person or organisation from the respective scope of services provided. CPSs are delivered through the use of different types of existing domestic infrastructures (i.e. hard and soft infrastructures with a public supply function, green / blue infrastructures) or by establishing new infrastructures that allow tackling specific cross-border needs, although in these cases a provision of CPS is going beyond the mere setting-up of new infrastructures.

The final report presents the overview of currently provided CPS (Chapter 2) that could be identified. This analysis differentiates between the general European overview (Section 2.1) and a comparison of findings on current CPS provision (CPSP) in the case study areas (Section 2.2). Analysis of current CPSP shows that there are hot-spots of CPS in some border areas, that the reasons for developing CPS vary greatly including a better quality

provision and a more efficient provision of public services. The analysis also highlights that certain steps are reoccurring when a CPS is developed. An in-depth analysis of current CPS provision in Europe is given in Annex 1 of the Scientific Report.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to future potential development of CPS in the case study areas. The in-depth analysis has been conducted for ten areas at different types of European borders including different cross-border cooperation traditions and border regimes. The analysis shows that these differences are important to consider for actual CPS needs, how they may be established and what challenges need to be overcome. The analysis also illustrates the different ways forward chosen by the stakeholders of different case study areas to enhance CPS development where needed. More details on the case study areas' current and future CPS provision is presented in separate case study reports (Annex III to XII to this report).

Chapter 4 summarises main findings of good practice examples that have been identified for different relevant policy fields at various border areas without claiming that these are the best examples or that no other good examples exist. The examples illustrate how regional or local needs can drive CPS development and how important the individual domestic and cross-border context is. Nevertheless, transferability is feasible by using selected elements from successful CPS or collecting inspiration for searching the individual solution needed. More detailed information on each of the identified good practices is provided in a separate document (Annex II).

Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations and lessons learned. They derive in particular from the analysis in the case study areas and the information gathered for presenting a selection of good practice examples. Recommendations address not only regional and local stakeholders in border areas but also show how national and European authorities can facilitate CPS development.

This report is complemented by a variety of other documents. This includes

- a **scientific report** that details further the used conceptual framework for analysing CPS and the methodologies applied throughout the research. It also provides more detailed results that are only summarised in this main report.
- **ten case study reports**, that are presented as separate annexes to the scientific report. Each case study report is presented as separate file to allow better accessibility for readers interested in certain case studies only.
- a good practice file illustrating **29 good practice CPS**. Each of the CPS is shortly described on a two page factsheet to allow the reader to obtain a quick overview of the main CPS features, including objectives and target groups addressed, required framework conditions and how challenges were overcome.
- a "**Practical Guide**" that addresses local and regional stakeholders of border areas in the EU. It gives practical advice on how to approach CPS development, how to structure such a process, what to consider and what suitable arrangements could be.

2 CPS throughout Europe and in case study areas

The compilation of CPS provision differentiates between the general European overview (Section 2.1) and a comparison of more detailed reviews of current CPS provision in the case study areas (Section 2.2). The ESPON CPS study is the first approach to

- compile a **European wide overview of CPS provision**; no corresponding data had been collected previously;
- develop such an overview not only for a certain **policy field** but to cover all relevant policy fields in which CPS can be identified;
- **systematically** look into the reasons, challenges and solutions to implement CPS.

These cornerstones hint at the limits of the compilation of CPS in Europe in general and in the case study areas. No database provides sufficient information to contact all potential providers of CPS. Thus, the study builds on CPS found in document analyses and online sources, collected through a survey distributed to all European border regions and through in-depth search tapping on various local sources in the case study areas. The compilation of CPS has been hampered by a lack of awareness of regional and local players who are sometimes not even aware that they are offering a cross-border public service, as the term “cross-border public service” and the concept behind it are obviously not known everywhere. This is also linked to a past lack of a clear methodological concept defining CPS. Even cross-border institutions are not always aware of the variety of CPS provided in their region, since the providers may be of very different nature and a CPS may consist of a very small service not widely known but addressing specific target groups only. In consequence, the compilation of CPS in this study does not claim to provide a complete picture of all CPS existing throughout Europe. Even the analysis of CPS provision in the case study areas may not always be complete. However, comparing the case study area results with the results of their neighbouring regions indicates the benefits of in-depth searches that could be conducted for the case study areas only. Nevertheless, the European and case study CPS overview provides a good starting point to identify tendencies of CPS development and implementation. It shows where in Europe a higher CPS density can be expected and in which policy fields CPS are more common and in which they are less frequent.

2.1 CPS provision in the EU

The following sub-sections present an overview of current CPS provision at European level. Different data sources were used to compile this inventory of CPS examples, including literature, document and online reviews, stakeholders and practitioners from the case studies, expert’s interviews, and a comprehensive online survey. In particular the latter allows to present more findings regarding the main functional characteristics of CPSP as well as perceived challenges and obstacles.

The compiled inventory is the first of its kind, European-wide with harmonized structure, allowing to perform advanced (geostatistical) analysis with respect to

- themes, fields and sectors addressed with CPS;
- spatial distribution and clustering including border segments along all border regions in Europe;
- the development of CPS over the last 20 to 30 years, including an analysis of the duration of their implementation.

Cut-off date for the collection of CPS for this inventory was 15 July 2018. The inventory includes a total of 579 CPS in Europe.

The analysis gives an overview of the principal reasons that trigger the development of CPS over domestic service provision and what typical challenges had to be overcome for achieving the implementation of a cross-border public service. The section closes with a short outlook towards expectations for further CPS development in coming years.

2.1.1 CPS of various policy fields mainly along old Member State borders

CPS are found all over Europe, but they are spread in a rather imbalanced way with more CPS provided at borders of old EU Member States (MS). The following analyses highlight the strong geographical and thematic differences (or foci) that can be observed.

The highest share of CPSP in Europe has been identified along the borders between the six founding EU Member States (i.e. the Benelux countries, France and Germany) and Nordic countries (Map 2.1).¹ A high density of CPSP can also be observed along the German-Swiss, French-Swiss, Czech-German and (partially) Austrian-German borders, and along the Danish-German border. The relatively high share of CPSP along the southern part of the Finnish-Russian border can be explained by more flexible interpretation of the working criteria in one of the case study regions. This concentration along selected borders indicates that **a long-standing tradition of general decentralised cross-border cooperation, or mutual cooperation at national levels as well as population density determine largely the number and share of CPS per border segment.**

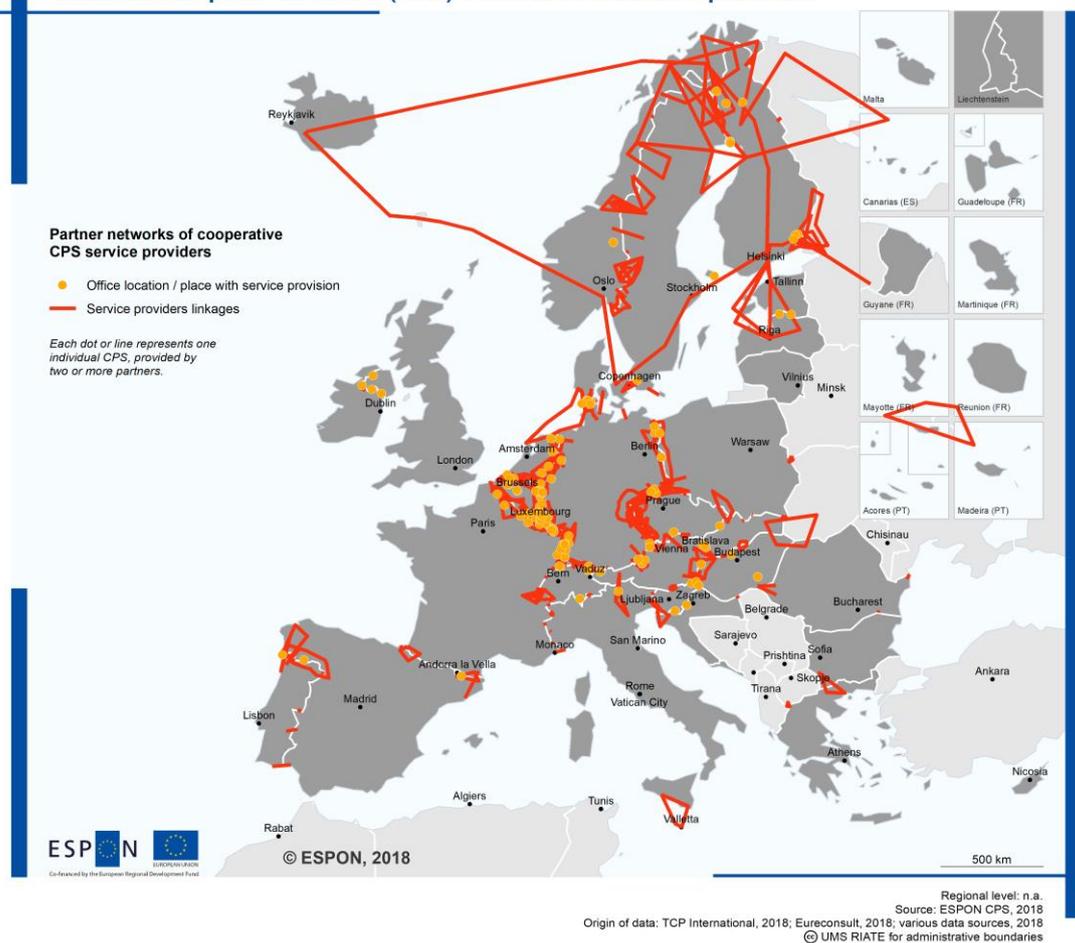
Border segments with more than five or ten CPS can only be found in Western Europe (Benelux countries, France, Germany, Switzerland) and in Nordic countries (Norwegian-Swedish and Finnish-Swedish borders, as well as Finnish-Norwegian and along the southern Finnish-Russian borders), with two exceptions along the Czech-German (Elbe-Labe region) and Austrian-German (Salzburg area) borders (Map 2.2). Other borders show only very few CPS (for instance, Slovak borders or the border between Portugal and Spain). For some borders no or only one or two CPS have been identified (for example, Latvia-Lithuania, Hungary-Romania, Bulgaria-Romania and Bulgaria-Greece). While keeping the

¹ For a more detailed spatial distribution of the borders with the highest number of provided CPS see Maps 4, 5, 6 and 7 of Annex I to the Scientific Report that zoom into Western European and Nordic countries.

abovementioned limitations of the availability of CPS data in mind, this still indicates a tendency of quite varying numbers of CPS provided along different borders.

Map 2.1: Location of CPS service providers along European borders

Cross-border public services (CPS): Locations of service providers



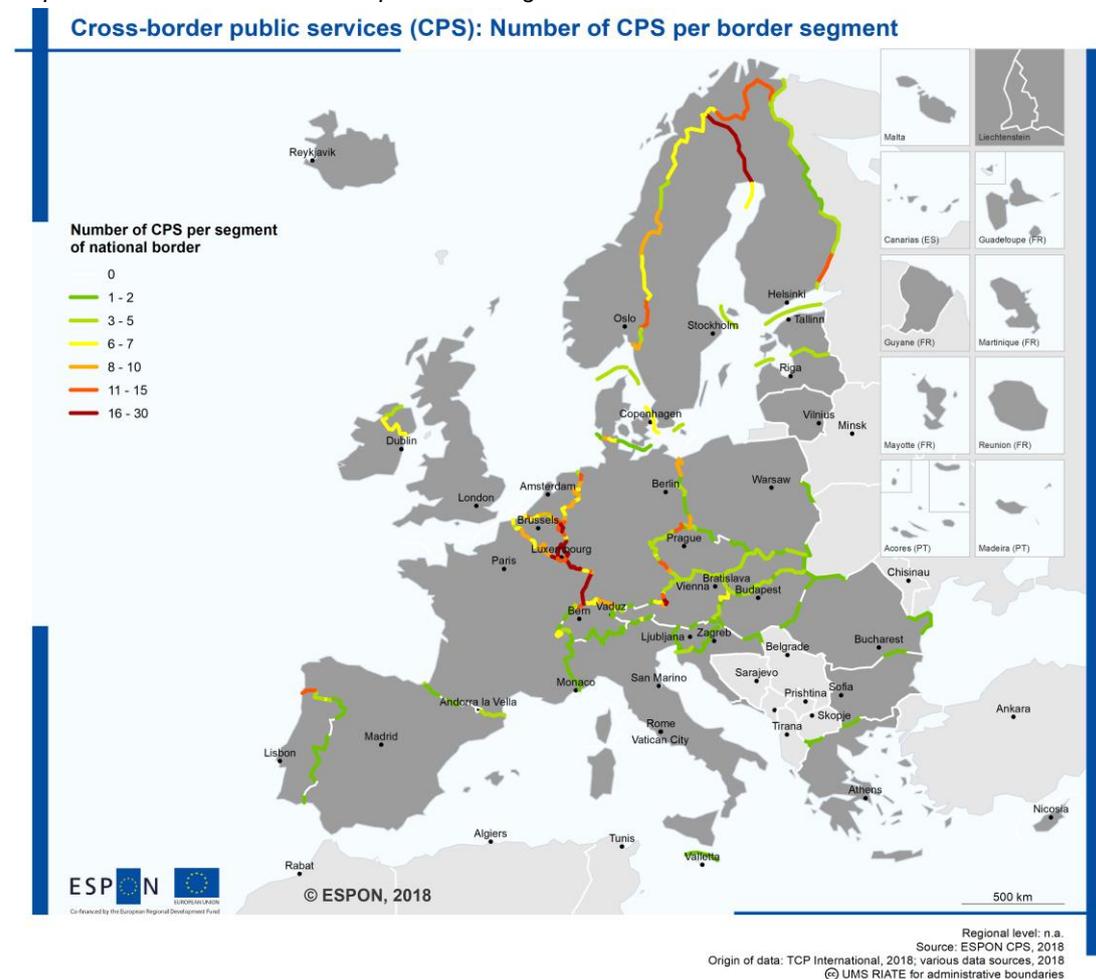
It appears that CPS primarily exist along borders that either

- (i) have a long tradition of cross-border cooperation in areas with high population densities or rural areas (Western Europe), i.e. high demand or specific needs for services of any kind, or in contrary in areas
- (ii) with extremely low population densities and long distances between towns and villages, i.e. in areas with difficulties and high pressures for maintaining public services (Nordic countries).

Related to (i), another hypothesis that could be drawn from the geographical distribution of CPS is that there is a **negative relation between the size of a country and the number of CPS**, i.e. **the smaller a country is (like Luxembourg) the higher the need and opportunities for CPS**. Due to the closeness of national borders CPSP is vital in many policy areas such as water management, natural assets, urban development and public transport. Furthermore CPS provide a good solution to make best use of limited resources for smaller

countries². This hypothesis, however, cannot yet be confirmed for countries without a long tradition of cross-border cooperation.

Map 2.2: Number of CPS per border segment



The French-German border accounts for approx. 11% of all CPS (Table 2.1), followed by the Dutch-German border with 7% and the Belgian-Dutch border with 6.4% of all CPS. Almost 42% of all identified CPS are located along borders of the Benelux countries and its neighbours France and Germany. The border to a non-EU country with the highest share of CPS is the Norwegian-Swedish border (4.6%), remarkably ranked 7, followed by the German-Swiss and French-Swiss borders, ranked 10th and 12th with 3.9% and 3.4% of all identified CPS.

A further aggregation of this distribution reveals, that 64% of all identified CPS are located along borders between old EU Member States, almost 11% of all CPS along borders between old and new EU Member States, nearly 8% between new EU Member States and 17% between EU and non-EU countries (Figure 2.1).

² The report uses the term 'countries' rather than 'Member States', to avoid discrimination of neighbouring non-EU countries at external borders, although most CPS focus on internal and MS borders.

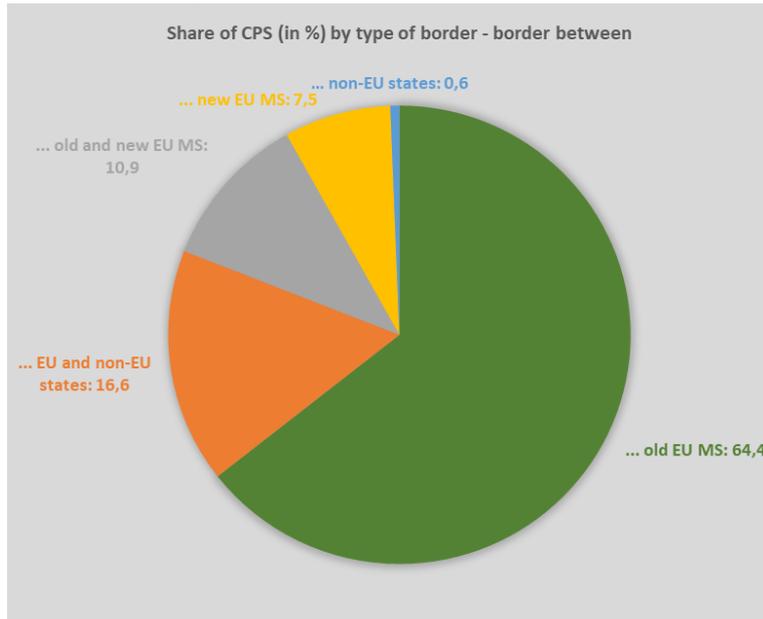
Table 2.1: Share of CPS by country borders

Rank	Border between	Share (%)
1	France – Germany	10.75
2	Germany – Netherlands	7.08
3	Belgium – Netherlands	6.42
4	Austria – Germany	5.64
5	Belgium – France	5.11
6	Czech Republic – Germany	4.72
7	Norway – Sweden	4.59
8	Belgium – Germany	4.19
9	Finland – Sweden	4.06
10	Germany – Switzerland	3.93
11	Germany – Luxembourg	3.80
12	France – Switzerland	3.41
13	Germany – Poland	3.15
14	Spain – Portugal	3.01
15	Finland – Russia	2.62
16	Belgium – Luxembourg	2.49
17	Denmark – Germany	2.36
18	France – Luxembourg	2.23
19	Finland – Norway	1.97
20	Austria – Hungary	1.44
21	France – Spain	1.05
./.	Other borders	15.99

Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

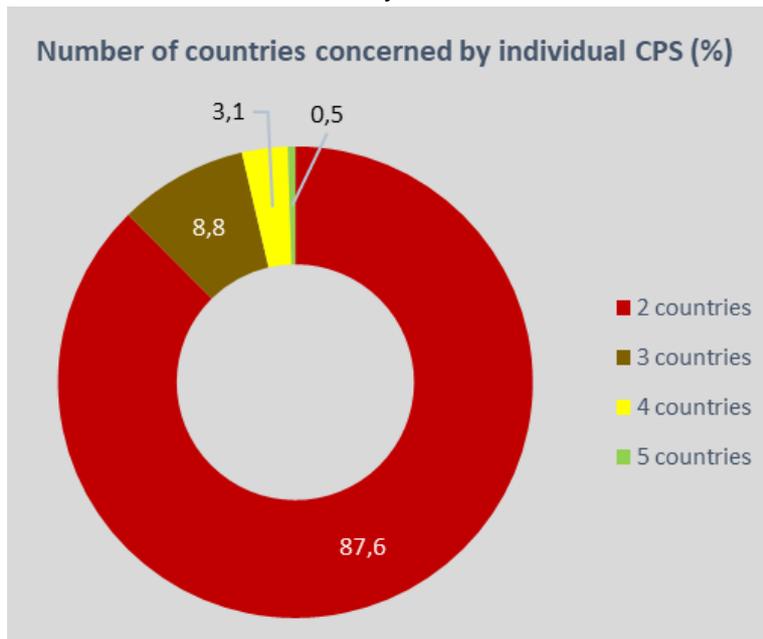
Most identified CPS are implemented between partners from two neighbouring countries, and only rarely involve partners from three or more countries. The majority of CPS (88%) cover two neighbouring countries (Figure 2.2), 8.8 % cover three, and 3.6% even more than three countries. On the one hand, this result is not surprising given the fact that most border regions in Europe represent just borders between two countries. On the other hand, even in border regions where three or more countries are neighbouring each other (such as Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn, Greater Area Luxembourg), most CPS are only established pairwise between two countries, even though there might be potentials to involve three or more countries. While this often may have legal or sometimes technical reasons, one reason could also lie in the complexity of the CPS implementation process (see Section 2.1.3) – the more partners from different countries are involved, the more complex and protracted this process may become. In any case, most of the identified CPS covering three or more countries are found in the Nordic countries.

Figure 2.1: Share of CPS by type of border



Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

Figure 2.2: Number of countries concerned by individual CPS



Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

The majority of CPS can be assigned to three policy fields

Most CPS deal with (i) environment protection, (ii) civil protection and disaster management or (iii) transport. Almost 60% of all identified CPS fall under these three policy fields, of which 21% are concerned with environment protection including wastewater treatment, due to the substantial presence of borders crossing natural areas and the existence of many border rivers. Almost the same number of CPS concern civil protection and disaster management and a little bit lower share could be found in the field of transport (Table 2.2 and Map 2.3). The next most important policy fields for which CPS have been

implemented so far, tend to be healthcare, education and spatial planning, each of which roughly accounts for 10%. Labour market and employment CPS obviously have, in total, a rather low relevance, so have CPS on citizenship, justice and public security, while CPS on communication/broadband/information society seem to be least relevant, accounting for less than 1%³.

Table 2.2: Number and share of CPS themes⁴

Theme / Field of intervention	Frequency	Share (%)
Environment protection	119	20.6
Civil protection and disaster management	118	20.4
Transport	105	18.1
Healthcare and social inclusion	64	11.1
Education and training	57	9.8
Spatial planning, tourism, and culture	55	9.5
Labour market and employment	29	5.0
Citizenship, justice and public security	27	4.7
Communication, broadband, and information society	5	0.9
Sum	579	100.0

Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

The spatial distribution of CPS themes is quite uneven across Europe, with borders that show a clear focus on one or two themes, contrasted with borders showing a mixture of a wide array of fields of interventions. For example, CPS in the Nordic countries have a strong focus on civil protection and disaster management on the one hand, and healthcare on the other. In contrast, CPS in the Baltic States are predominantly concerned with citizenship, justice and public security and CPS along the Czech-German and Austrian-German borders are concerned with either environmental protection (including sewage water treatment), medical emergency care or with transport services. The Belgian-French border area is, interestingly, a forerunner in healthcare CPS⁵. Other borders like the British-Irish border or the border between Germany and the Netherlands cover a wide array of intervention fields addressing various policy objectives and public needs.

A further look into the detailed spatial distribution of CPS by area of intervention reveals some interesting insights (see Scientific Report for a series of maps). In the health sector, emphasis was given to establish CPS on primary care (Benelux and Nordic countries, French borders to Germany, Italy and Spain) and on medical emergency or rescue services (for example, along Austrian, Czech and German borders, Belgian-French border). The types of services found in this policy field range from “small-scale” solutions (e.g. bilateral hospital cooperation) to territorially more wide-ranging and integrated solutions (e.g. integrated health care zones at the Belgium-French border). Highly integrated solutions can only be found in regions with a

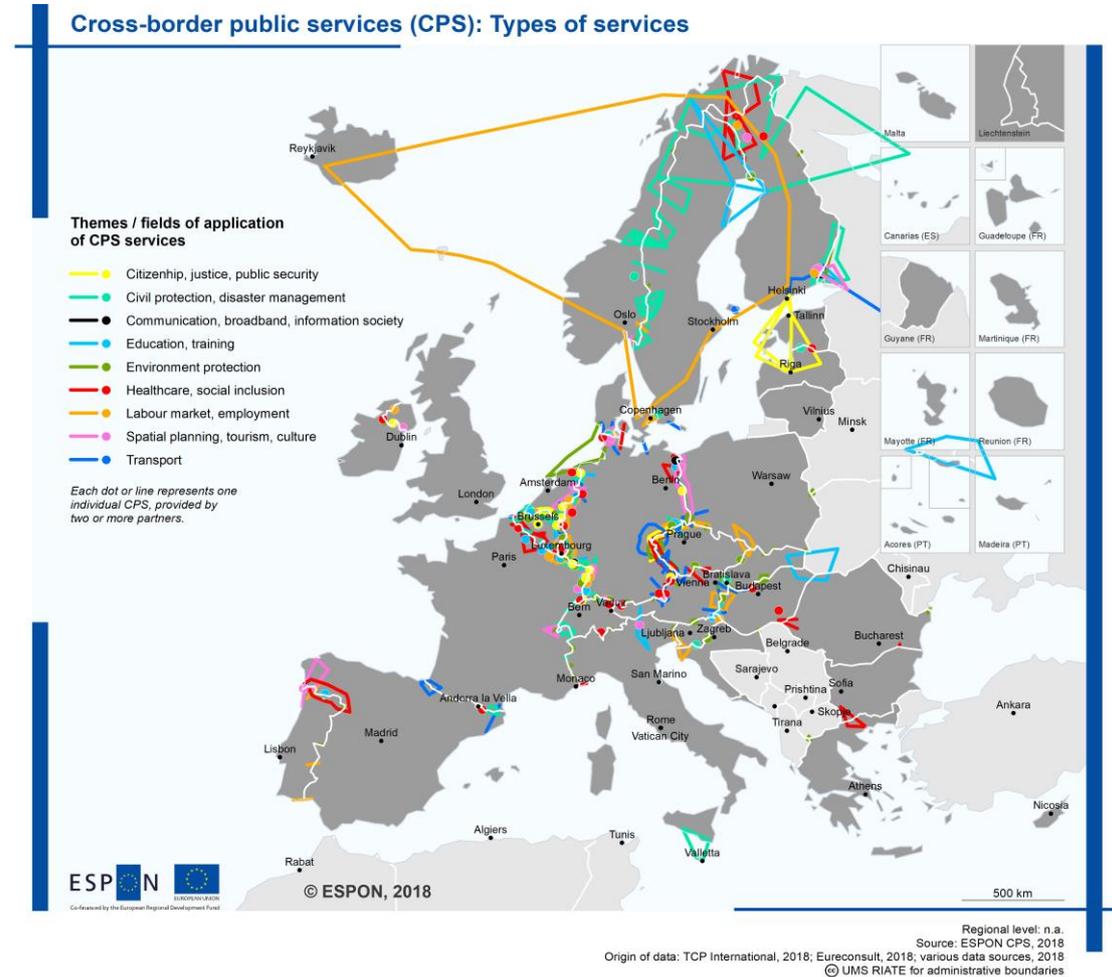
³ One explanation could be that this theme is too new given the recent significant developments in the IT domain.

⁴ It is worth mentioning that even though for this analysis each CPS has been assigned to just one theme, in reality some specific CPS have a multifaceted character, touching different fields of intervention. For example, airborne helicopter rescue services may be both assigned to healthcare and to disaster management.

⁵ Map 4 in Annex I to the Scientific Report provides a detailed zoom map into Western European countries.

long cross-border tradition, whereas other regions seem to begin CPS provision with smaller solutions that may be further developed and become more integrated over time.

Map 2.3: CPS by policy areas



Traditionally, there are many CPS on joint wastewater treatment and drinking water provision, a management of border rivers and other water bodies (i.e. lakes), and on nature parks, all across Europe. Their occurrence along many European borders confirms that these CPS are often the first to be established, since they are often implemented more easily as compared to e.g. CPS in health care. Meanwhile there are also a number of CPS on solid waste treatment and renewable energy related matters. As regards education, there is a strong focus on university cooperation, but between the old and new EU Member States there are also some interesting CPS on school cooperation. CPS supporting cross-border spatial planning were established between Germany and the Netherlands, in the Greater Region, between France and Germany as well as between France and Switzerland. This is similar for CPS related to cross-border business development.

It can be concluded that the themes addressed in the various CPS either reflect

- (i) regional topographic and **natural assets and specificities** (e.g. environmental CPS, CPS in civil protection and disaster management);
- (ii) **high demand** for services (e.g. transport CPS, CPS in spatial planning, tourism and culture, as well as education and training); or
- (iii) **urgent political issues** (e.g. healthcare and social inclusion, labour market and employment, citizenship, justice and public security)

or a combination of the three factors.

CPS may address unspecified as well as very specific target groups

About one third of CPS have a broad or unspecified defined target group. These address either public authorities (about 20%, Table 2.3) or the general public (about 13%). Depending on the policy field, targeted public authorities include, for example, planning authorities, schools or hospitals, fire brigades, rescue units or police and custom authorities. The largest specific target group are tourists (about 13.5%), which is not surprising since they are often one of the groups targeted by two of the most frequent CPS policy fields, namely environment protection and transport. CPS targeted at pupils, students, apprentices, job seekers and cross-border workers have a share around 12% each, followed by almost 7% of services addressing needs of economic actors and enterprises. More than 5% of all CPS are targeted at people requiring medical or permanent care, which can be exclusively attributed to healthcare CPS. Other target groups such as researches, other stakeholders or families tend to be rarely targeted individually but are sometimes one of several target groups.

Table 2.3: CPS target groups⁶

Target groups	Frequency	Share (%)
Public authorities	195	19.48
Tourists	135	13.49
General public	132	13.19
Pupils, students and apprentices	125	12.49
Cross-border workers	115	11.49
Job seekers	111	11.09
Economic actors	68	6.79
People of all ages requiring medical or permanent care	55	5.49
Researchers	28	2.80
Other stakeholder groups	21	2.10
Other person groups *	16	1.60
Sum	1001	100.00

* *inter alia* including families (with small children) and residents

Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

The territorial extent of the potential target group differs largely per CPS. The majority of CPS have a fairly equal distribution of the target group on both sides of the border. For some other CPS however, only a smaller part of the general target group is located on the other

⁶ Each CPS can address one or more target groups. Therefore, the total number of target groups does not correspond to the number of CPS.

side of the border. Based on survey results, there is no pattern according to the type of CPS with a more imbalanced territorial scope of the target group. This indicates that the very specific and individual nature of each CPS is decisive for the territorial extent of the target group rather than the policy field. This is due to the wide variety of different degrees of integration mirrored in different CPS. To give an example, the territorial extent of the CPS specific target group naturally differs between an international school in a border area and a local bi-lingual school offering its domestic service also to pupils from the neighbouring country.

For most CPS the frequency of use by the target group is variable, while in some other cases the target group is fixed and the CPS is steadily used on a day-to-day basis (e.g. cross-border sewage water treatment or cross-border drinking water provision). Typical CPS used on a daily basis often are in the fields of labour market, education and training and transport. CPS that are less frequently used are typically 'stand-by' services such as emergency medical care services, firefighting or civil protection services and health care services.

2.1.2 CPS improve domestic service provision and address specific territorial challenges

A large share of CPS aims to improve the quality of public service provision in border regions. The grounds on which the services were introduced differ largely, but some needs and motivations appear frequently and may be common to many CPS establishments. Differentiating the motivations for CPSP reveals that nearly half of the CPS primarily aim at quality-improvements, each a quarter could be attributed mainly to improving effectiveness and improving the efficiency of service provision respectively.

Typical motivations for **quality-improving CPS** are to

- address needs related to *cross-border flows*. Examples are the advice / support given to cross-border workers, the reduction of traffic congestion between cross-border towns, and the reduction of tourism flows by individual car use.
- address a *specific gap in service delivery* or a shared problem in the border region. Examples are the support to a development of cross-border schools and other educational facilities, the recognition of documents and diplomas or the lack of support to specific cross-border issues relating to an existing language barrier or the difference of legal/administrative systems. The latter are often addressed by establishing new systems-interface infrastructures that help "bridging" the observed differences between MS.

Effectiveness-improving CPS are often motivated by

- *increasing coordination for addressing a shared problem or common interest* through joining forces. Examples for shared problems that require joint action are efforts to decrease pollution or river and flood management. Other examples aim to ensure comparable service levels in health care or education on both sides of the border,

increasing the job chances of pupils and students, or supporting players in the region to overcome border barriers.

- *increasing the scope of the service*. This holds, for instance, for rescue services from the neighbouring country that may be faster than domestic rescue services.

The establishment of a CPS may also emerge from **efficiency related motivations**:

- *Increasing the territorial scope* supports service efficiency if the market for the public service may be increased. This may improve the availability of public services in less densely populated areas or can increase accessibility of peripheral areas.
- *Cost savings* may be possible by joining forces when offering a service together. At the same time public authorities have a larger pool of resources to ensure a better quality of the service as compared to a separate provision.

Beyond these main benefits, CPS have often **other positive effects** and impact more widely in the cross-border area. The following presents some of the more frequently mentioned benefits of CPS:

- CPS contribute to *reducing negative border effects*, for example by enhanced cultural integration, increased understanding of the neighbours or a common understanding on shared issues or needs.
- CPS contribute to *better connections*, not only between people but also by increasing the accessibility to services, provision of missing resources, or by offering a one-stop-shop and thus a simplification in dealing with a variety of border challenges. By increasing the accessibility and the scope of service, the quality of the services can be improved as knowledge and resources from both sides of the border can be better exploited. Thereby different principal motivations can be combined.
- CPS may contribute to *raising awareness of cross-border possibilities* in terms of work, health care, recreation, education etc. This promotion may have a positive effect on the image of the cross-border region and can support regional economic development.

Territorial characteristics and developments are typical drivers for CPS

Above examples show how coordination, cost savings and common problems provide the grounds for developing CPS and creating benefits for both, CPS providers and their target groups. Important for CPS development is a specified need for which a common understanding has been developed by the stakeholders involved.

For example, certain CPS in the field of environmental protection or disaster management (e.g. floods) can be attributed to very specific geographical characteristics of the border area. Other CPS are more driven by regional socio-economic characteristics or regional development including, e.g. demographic change or economic and labour market imbalances. Depending on the individual challenges border regions are facing, they identify different needs to address for instance reducing numbers of pupils in view of demographic change,

offer cross-border public transport to balance labour market imbalances or develop new services for an ageing population.

Taking the importance of territorial characteristics and their changes into account, **CPS delivery demands continuous monitoring and adaptations.** CPS establishment takes time and needs regular monitoring whether the needs are still addressed adequately and the supportive administrative and governance frameworks are still applicable. This requires continuous communication and open exchange of information among all stakeholders including CPS providers. Knowledge of the common needs is an asset supporting this communication, a general understanding of the history might be beneficial as well.

Long-standing cross-border cooperation and existing interstate agreements support CPS development

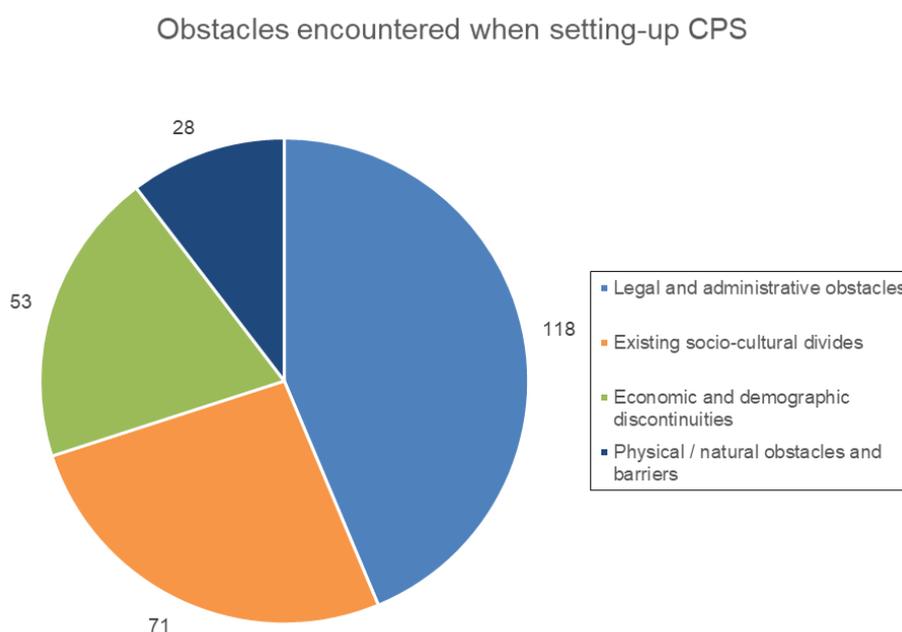
CPS do not generally require interstate agreements as examples in several policy fields show but can build on cross-border cooperation experience and tradition. These CPS often provide 'small-scale' solutions offering for instance cross-border transport connections, joint tourism information or allow pupils, ill people etc. from across the border to benefit from individual domestic services. However, interstate agreements are more often needed for encompassing and integrated service provision such as the above mentioned health care zones at the Belgium-French border. **In consequence, either an established cross-border cooperation or interstate agreements should be in place before addressing CPS development. Depending on the specific CPS and degree of integration attempted, both may be required and interstate agreements may provide the general grounds for later CPS development.**

Long-standing cooperation can be visible, inter alia, not only through interstate agreements but in policy documents at different levels. **Survey answers indicate that many CPS have been introduced indeed outside the scope of existing legal frameworks for cross-border cooperation or territorial and sector policy planning documents.** About 50% of CPS that responded to the survey have been developed without any specific policy document, followed by existing general action plans (35%)⁷. Existing general action plans tend to induce CPS development related to citizens affairs, justice and public security as well as labour market and employment and education and training. Spatial plans tend to matter in particular for CPS related to environment protection, education, health care and transport. Sector policy plans do not seem to be important for CPS development. This may show that sector policy plans consider cross-border issues and solutions less frequently than general action plans of border regions or spatial plans.

⁷ This refers to the basis upon which a (political/practical) decision was made to develop a CPS at all. It may be based on an existing planning document, on existing informal cooperation or just on a common understanding regarding an obvious problem. This does not mean that no other general multilateral or binational agreements already existed at the moment of developing the CPS. It has also to be differentiated from the fact that for most CPS during the development of the CPS a legal basis and new formal documents are developed and used later for implementation of the CPS.

Neither long-standing cooperation nor high-level agreements are, however, sufficient for ensuring that CPS can be developed as intended by local or regional stakeholders. **CPS providers addressed by the survey have encountered mainly legal and administrative obstacles when establishing the CPS** (Figure 2.3). Almost three-quarter of survey respondents indicated to have encountered legal and administrative obstacles during the establishment of the CPS. In particular asymmetric or unclear competences or responsibilities of policy actors and incompatible domestic legislation have been indicated as obstacles that needed to be overcome. In many cases more than one legal and administrative obstacle has been mentioned. Other obstacles mentioned frequently are language barriers (cultural divides), one-sided scarce budgetary resources (economic discontinuity), and mental barriers (socio-cultural divides). These obstacles are confirmed with regard to factors that have impeded CPS so far that could be useful in the future. Other obstacles mentioned by survey respondents are the lack of a common strategy, or the political will or interest to engage in cross-border activities.

Figure 2.3: Obstacles encountered when setting-up CPS



Source: Online survey ESPON CPS 2018; multiple answers between and within categories based on information from 73 CPS

Comparing the obstacles by policy area of the CPS does not illustrate significant differences. Nevertheless, to a certain extent the obstacles identified tend to be linked with the objectives a CPS is addressing. For instance, economic and demographic discontinuities may be considered an obstacle when CPS in the fields of education and training or labour market and employment shall be implemented. In consequence, **a need for a CPS can at the same time**

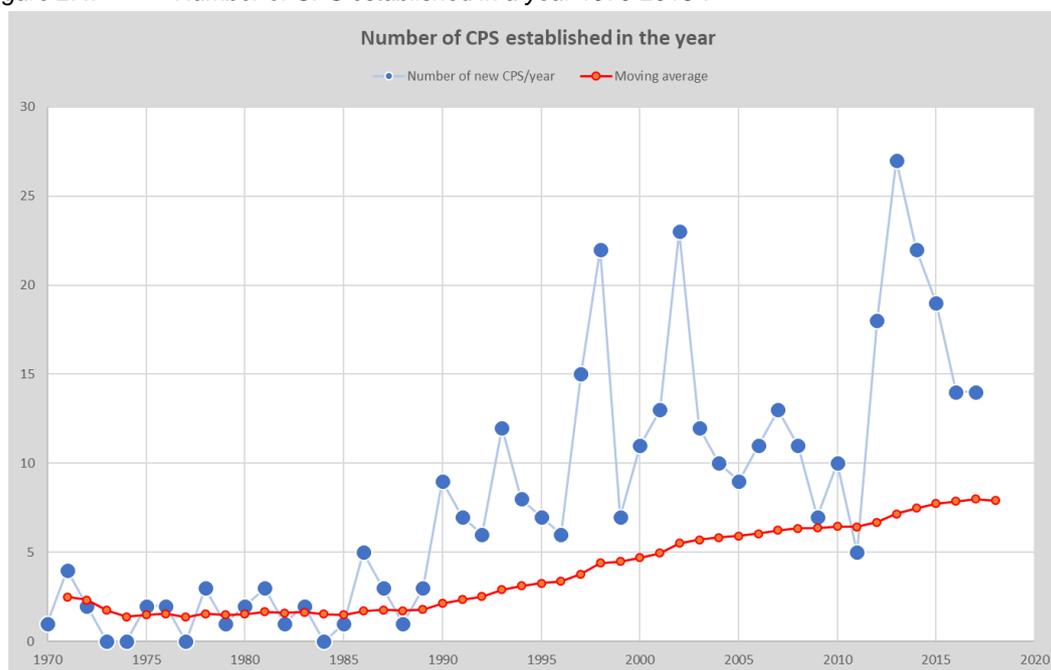
prove to hamper the CPS establishment, and the CPS can then, once established, contribute to reducing/removing the obstacle(s)⁸.

2.1.3 CPS set-up is usually time consuming and requires individual solutions

If a common need is identified, these objective obstacles nevertheless concretely impact on the CPS implementation processes. Only a limited number of CPS have been implemented per year over the recent past, not least because the process for their implementation often took a relatively long time.

After 2000 more CPS have been established than during previous decades. Among others this is due to more frequent introduction of CPS involving Eastern European countries. From 1970 to 1990, only very few initiatives were initiated to establish new CPS, mainly in the field of environment protection (nature parks, sewage water treatment etc.) (Figure 2.4). A maximum of five CPS implemented per year can be observed in this period (1986). Since 1990, a jump in CPS establishments can be seen with peaks of 22 (1998), 23 (2002) and 27 (2013) new CPS per year. However, there are also years with only few new CPS (for example 2005, 2009 or 2011), but these remain the exception. This strong increase clearly coincides with the introduction of the Interreg Community Initiative back in 1990 and its continuing implementation during the following decades.

Figure 2.4: Number of CPS established in a year 1970-2018⁹.



Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

⁸ From this point of view, each obstacle could also be considered a potential for a future CPS.

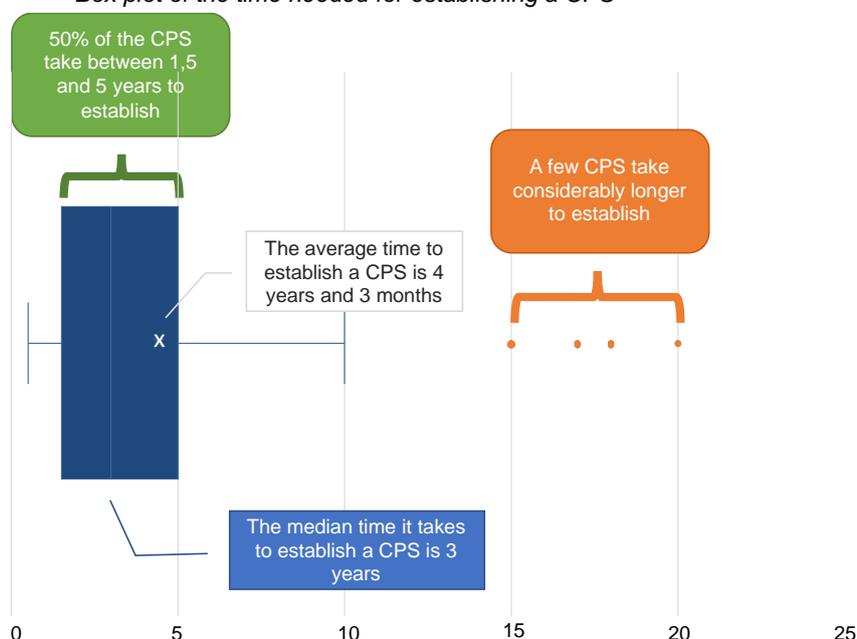
⁹ Some CPS have been established already before 1970, which are excluded from this chart. From the total of 579 CPS identified, information about the establishment year was given for 399 (i.e. 69%). Excluding CPS established before 1970, Figure 2.4 is based upon a total of 388 CPS.

The number of CPS in Europe is slowly and steadily increasing, with an average of 5 to 10 new CPS per year. The steady increase in new CPS per year is also reflected by the moving average. In 1991, this average jumped to 2.136, followed by next jumps to 3.27 in 1995 and to 4.41 in 1998. Since then the averages increased steadily with further jumps in 2002 (from 4.97 to 5.52) and in 2012 (from 6.43 to 6.7). In 2017, the average reached its temporary peak of 8.0.

Map 2.4 illustrates the temporal development of CPSP in Europe in 5-year increments. Until 1989, when only few CPS services were implemented each year, this happened mainly between France and Germany. Increasing dynamics in the coming ten years still focussed on Western Europe. Only after the year 2000 and in the course of EU enlargements, Eastern European countries recognised the CPS instrument and started to use it widely. In the first years, German-Czech cooperation were initiated, later CPS along the Austrian-Hungarian and Slovenian borders started emerging.

Establishing a CPS takes generally a few years, although there is a large variability of the time needed to establish a CPS. The range was from six months up to 20 years. Figure 2.5 illustrates this variety. Implementation time for most CPS lies between 1.5 and five years, however, experiences show that this seems to be very case specific, depending on many factors. Previous experience, or a long standing cooperation in the area does not always guarantee that a CPS can be established faster than in other border areas or policy fields with less experience¹⁰.

Figure 2.5: Box plot of the time needed for establishing a CPS



Source: Online survey ESPON CPS 2018; based on information from 61 CPS

¹⁰ In any case, it is often difficult to identify the “starting point” for a CPS implementation – even for stakeholders. Sometimes, ideas for a CPS circulate already for years. In other cases, smaller pilot actions paved the way of the CPS.

While health care CPS have the tendency to take the longest on average to be established, and CPS in the field of spatial planning, economic development, tourism and culture tend to need the lowest development time, variation is also huge within policy fields as indicated in Table 2.4, so that no significant correlation could be derived. This further supports the finding that many factors matter for CPS development including past traditions and existing policy documents and agreements but also the specific nature of the CPS within a policy field. For example, extending an existing bus line across the border may mainly require an approval of the involved MS whereas the development of a new and joint tramline requires many agreements ensuring that all formal and security standards are met.

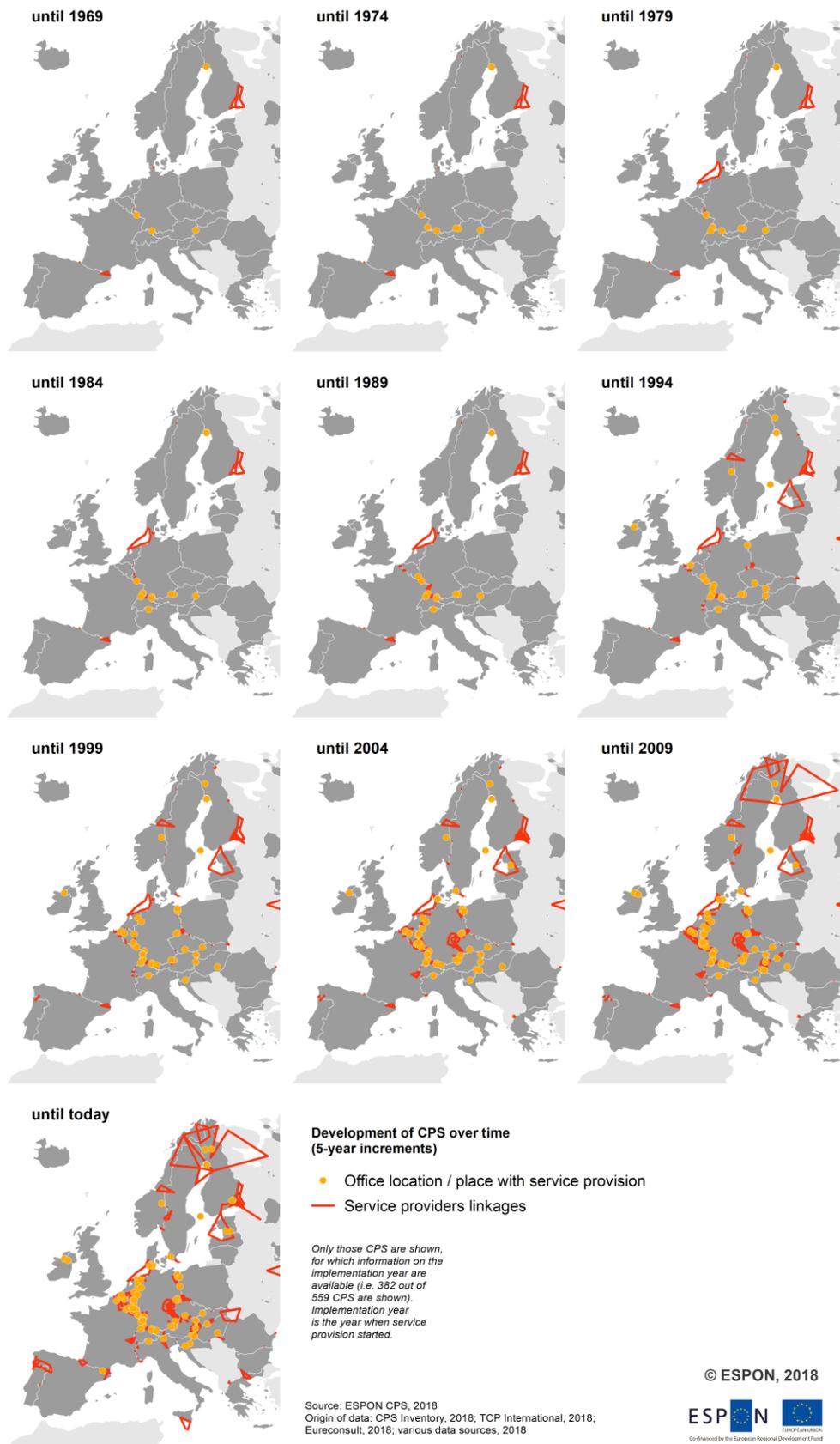
Table 2.4: Time needed for developing and implementing a CPS (in years)

Theme / Field of intervention	Minimum	Average per field	Maximum
Healthcare and social inclusion	5	8.3	15
Citizenship, justice and public security	1	5.8	17
Transport	0.8	5.4	18
Environment protection	2	4.4	10
Civil protection and disaster management	1.7	4.4	11
Education and training	0.5	4.4	20
Labour market and employment	1	4	20
Spatial planning, economic development, tourism and culture	1	1.8	3

Source: Online survey ESPON CPS 2018; based on information from 61 CPS

One of the reasons why only few CPS per year are implemented may be linked to difficulties in the design and administrative implementation. Subject to the type of service envisaged and the local and regional conditions, the implementation can take several years. First, stakeholders on either side of the border need to develop a common problem understanding, followed by identifying possible solutions, setting-up possibly required structures or concluding specific agreements before shaping actual service delivery in question. Also, developing the production base of a service (such as sewage pipes, tram way tracks etc.), which may be a prerequisite of the service provision, may take quite a long time and may involve some lengthy legal planning and public participation procedures.

Map 2.4: Development of CPS provision in Europe



Specific governance solutions often combining several preparatory steps required for each CPS

Each CPS development is faced with an accumulation of border-specific framework conditions that have to be considered when developing a CPS. These framework conditions range from asymmetric stakeholder responsibilities, different financing models for the public service in question in the countries concerned to domestic rules to be considered.

Since CPS lack the legally binding obligation that domestic service provision usually frame, the provisions of CPS is based on voluntary actions, specific legal frameworks and cooperation agreements. This lack of a specific normative base results in a heterogeneous legal, administrative and political cross-border context in which CPS operate. In addition, the complex legal context also shapes the production base of the CPS (i.e. various types of hard/soft and green infrastructures), which often requires additional clarifications on ownership, maintenance and development. The following highlights the key findings at European level on these aspects.

Delivery modes characterising the actual provision of CPS differ largely between policy areas. A majority of 53% of all CPS are completely new public services in the cross-border operating parallel to similar domestic services. 35% of the CPS represent cross-border coordination of services. The remaining 12% consists of existing domestic service with a border crossing extension. This variety of different delivery modes illustrates the variety of solutions found to actually provide a CPS.

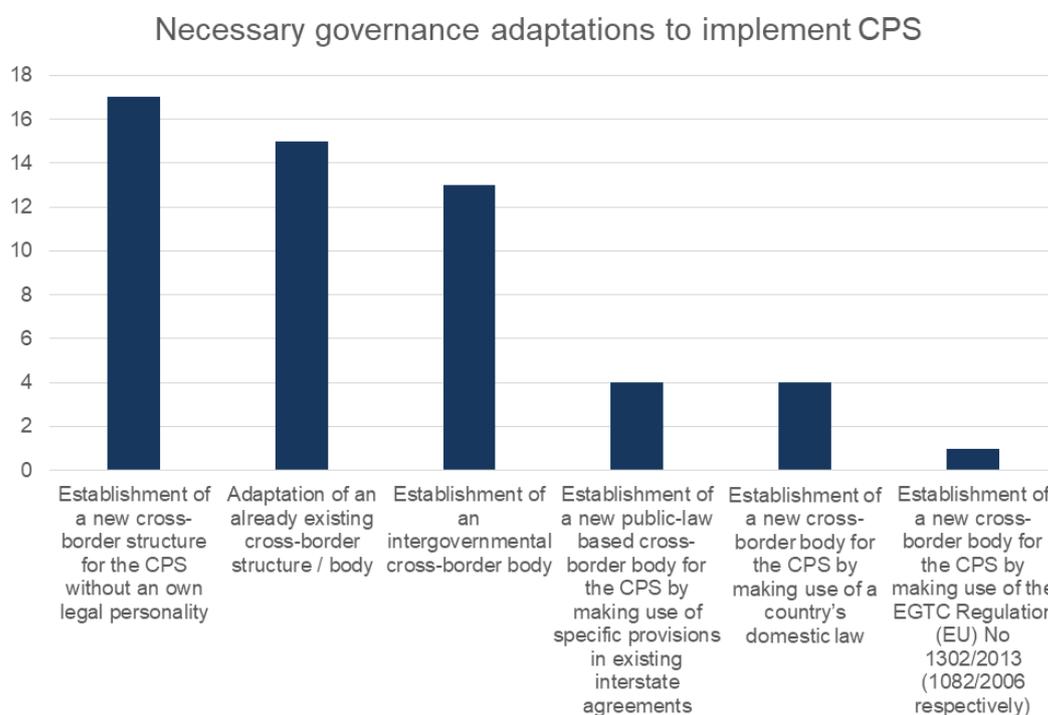
Survey findings suggest a differentiation of these delivery modes by policy area. While survey responses indicate some variation between policy fields they are not significant and have to be interpreted with caution, given the low number of survey responses for some policy areas. New CPS in the policy fields of labour market and employment and citizenship can be attributed in particular to system interface CPS occurring only in border contexts. Better coordination of existing domestic services on both sides of the border can be observed, for instance, in the fields of environmental protection and spatial planning and tourism. In the case of environmental protection often individual care of nature or national parks has been transformed into a joint service; similarly joint tourism services often bring together previous individual activities to better market a cross-border region. CPS for sewage water treatment, drinking water provision and health care tend to be more often provided as a cross-border extension of an existing domestic service to the benefit of both sides. Here **pragmatic considerations may dominate delivery mode decisions** – existing infrastructure is used to either more effectively or more efficiently provide a previously domestic service

Frequently, multiple modifications of cross-border legal frameworks are necessary to implement a CPS. Most survey respondents indicated to have modified more than one aspect of cross-border legal frameworks to allow implementing a certain CPS. Most frequently mentioned is the conclusion of a specific local or regional cooperation agreement between the competent entities organising the public service, followed by the elaboration of a new

convention between local and regional authorities. The differences between policy area are minor. In fact, the European-wide CPS inventory shows that a total of 36 different combinations of (i) EU regulations and directives (Type 1 of legal frameworks), (ii) general multilateral conventions and bilateral interstate agreements (Type 2), (iii) theme-specific interstate agreements (Type 3), and (iv) regional or local cross-border agreements (Type 4) are applied.

Independently from the delivery mode, most CPS included in the online survey required establishing a new cross-border structure or body. Structures without a new legal personality seem to dominate CPS delivery and often already existing structures are used and adapted (Figure 2.7), no matter whether existing services on both sides of the border are better coordinated, a domestic service is extended or a completely new CPS is developed. Sometimes several adaptations are combined, for instance the adaptation of existing structures with the establishment of specific committees or working groups or different adaptations are required over time. For instance, at the beginning of a CPS development a cross-border commission or working group may be set-up that in the further process is then complemented by a new public law body to allow actual delivery of the CPS. Very few respondents indicated that no governance adaptation at all was required.

Figure 2.6: Governance adaptations to implement a CPS



Source: Online survey ESPON CPS 2018; based on information from 58 CPS

Theoretically, all governance adaptation alternatives may be used in any policy field to provide a CPS. However, not all solutions may be applicable in reality since, e.g. new public-law bodies based on interstate agreements are a territorially limited alternative or not every CPS provider may qualify as a potential EGTC member. In addition, establishing a new body

with its own legal personality may question the efficiency of 'small-scale' CPS, since such bodies usually require more set-up efforts than structures without a new legal personality.

In addition to governance adaptations and possibly required interstate or regional agreements or protocols CPS implementation may entail administrative or regulatory domestic adjustments. These can be adjustments of operating provisions, a change in the administration of service provision or a change of sector policy law. Indeed very few respondents indicated that CPS could be provided without any such adjustment. Usually, at least operating provisions and/or administrative organisation require some change.

Summing up, the often **time intensive set-up of CPS can be attributed to a combination of different needs for change that may occur individually or together** referring to

- legal frameworks at higher levels or the level of the CPS provision;
- governance adaptations for developing and implementing the CPS;
- change of domestic rules and processes.

2.1.4 Future CPS

Above analyses have indicated that CPS development may not necessarily evolve from existing cross-border spatial plans or other joint sector policy documents but also arises from bottom-up activities if needs are identified by local or regional stakeholders. Consequently, such policy documents do not sufficiently indicate the likeliness of future CPS development. In order to give an indication for the likeliness of future CPS in Europe the survey asked whether regional and local players know about any plans for future CPS development and for which policy fields these exist.¹¹ The answers depicted in Figure 2.8 are not representative but collect indications for future CPS development from 49 border relations¹² in Europe. Responses cover with few exceptions (France-Italy, Poland-Slovakia, Hungary-Romania and Bulgaria-Romania) all EU internal borders, thus including borders between old MS, new and old MS, new MS. Various responses also refer to CPS development along external borders including not only Switzerland, Norway and Russia but, for instance, Belarus, Albania and Turkey. Some responses also referred to tri-national border relations. And few responses also indicated CPS development plans for maritime borders, including Cyprus, the Italian-Malta and the Danish-Swedish border.

About 40% of respondents indicated that no plans are currently made to develop future CPS for any of the policy fields. These can be found both in border areas with a high density of CPS already in place as well as at borders with only few or no CPS so far at all. In some cases this may indicate a certain saturation with CPS provision, although for the same border

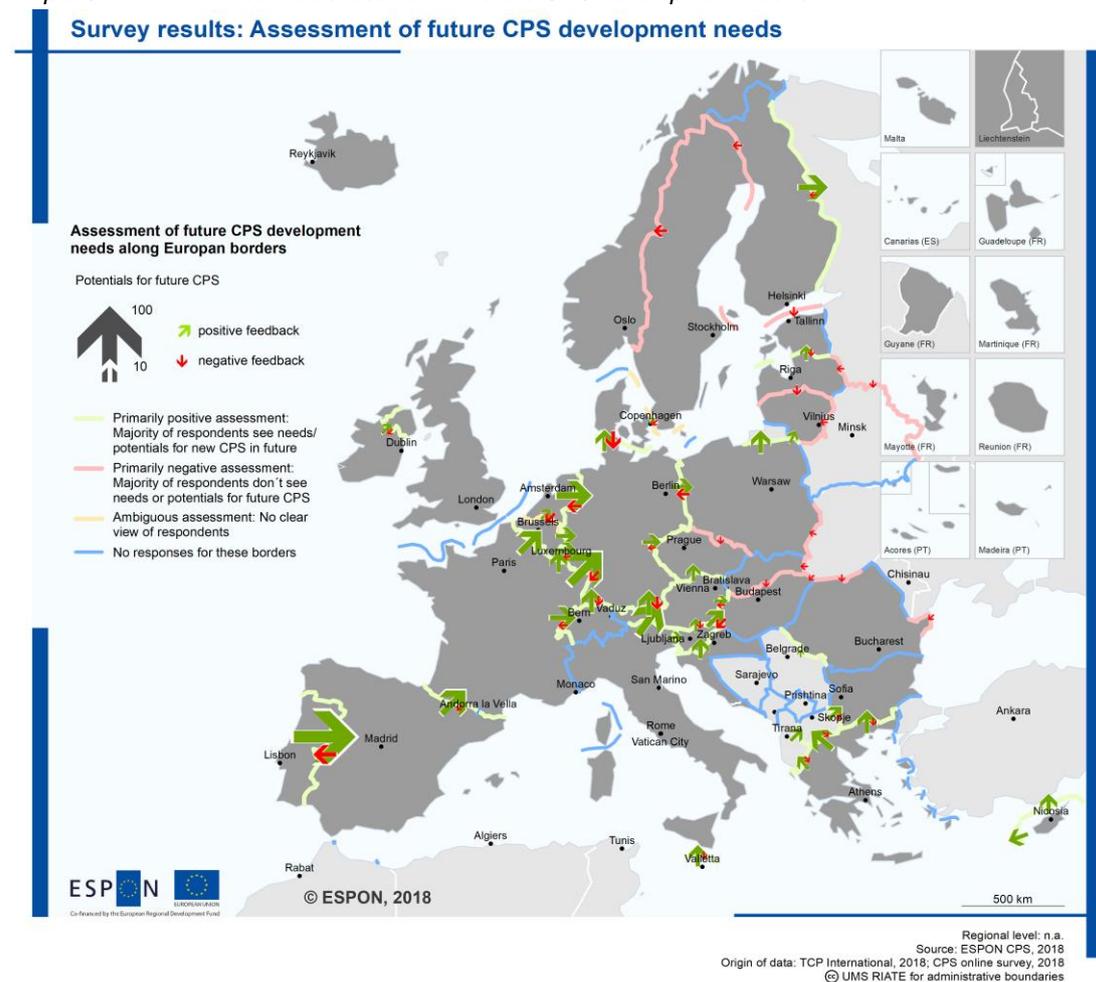
¹¹ Chapter 3 gives additional insights into future CPS development in the case study areas.

¹² A border relation does not differentiate at regional or Euro-regional level but refers to the relation between two countries, e.g. the Austrian-German border is similarly counted as one border relation as the Belgian-Luxembourgish border, not taking into account the length of the respective border. In some cases it includes more than only two countries.

relations other respondents indicated further CPS plans (Map 2.5). These different perceptions may be explained through the following factors:

- One border relation consists often of several border segments (regions) and not all of them have necessarily the same current CPS density. Thus, answers from different border segments of the same border relation may differ.
- Even within one border segment, perspectives can differ depending on the type (background) and knowledge of the respondent and on the fields of intervention he represents.

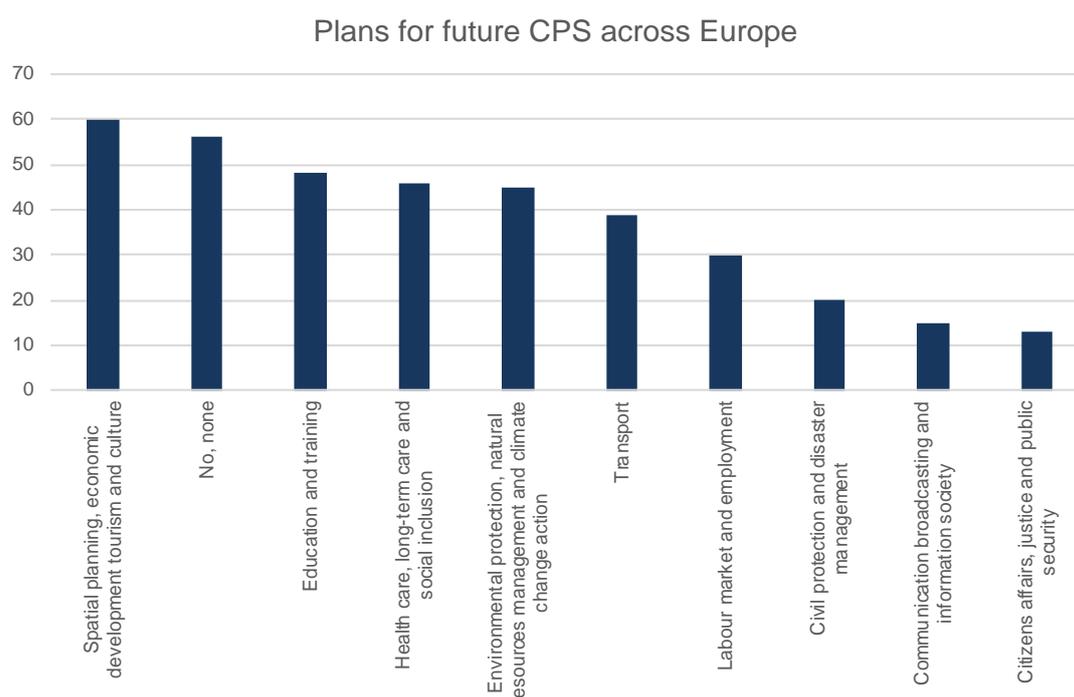
Map 2.5: Indicative assessment of future CPS development needs



For some border relations with few or none current CPS respondents, however, exclusively stated that there are no plans for future CPS development. This holds in particular for some external borders but also a few borders between new MS. Reasons may be a lack of awareness of existing plans in other authorities, a lack of feasibility in view of the often mentioned legal and administrative obstacles or a lack of awareness regarding the benefits CPS may create. In consequence, **some border regions may risk to miss opportunities for integrated regional development in a cross-border context, thereby possibly hampering their future regional development potential.** Even if specific potentials for

further CPS along these border areas have not been analysed it is unlikely that they do not have any need or potential for CPS provision, given the increasing application of CPS for enhancing development of border regions in many parts of Europe. At the same time, plans for additional CPS in border areas with a high level of current CPS provision indicates that (i) past experience reveals sufficient benefits to support further CPS development and (ii) disparities in terms of current CPS provision and the benefits thereof for the target groups and providers do not tend to be balanced, or (iii) new needs arose during the recent past or new common problem understands developed.

Figure 2.7: Plans for future CPS across Europe



Source: Online survey ESPON CPS 2018; based on 134 responses, 61 respondents indicated more than 1 field of intervention or theme

The analysis of survey responses indicates a shift in the thematic foci of CPS development as compared to the CPS currently in place in Europe (see sub-section 2.1.1). Especially, new transport and civil protection and disaster management CPS have been mentioned less frequently as compared to their current share of CPS (Figure 2.8). Further CPS in the field of transport are planned at various borders where little or no transport CPS have been identified so far. This includes for instance various parts of the Portuguese-Spanish border, the Austrian-Italian border and the Estonian-Latvian border. But also borders with existing transport CPS seem to intend to further integrate cross-border transport by offering more links that can possibly close gaps or developing generally more integrated public transport systems (e.g. for common ticketing). Plans for future CPS in the field of civil protection and disaster management were mostly mentioned for a few borders without or with very local and limited CPS currently identified in this field. Keeping in mind the limits of survey responses and of the identified CPS currently in place, this may nevertheless hint at a saturation in this field in some parts of Europe where civil protection measures are already

largely integrated across borders. At the same time no intentions for these CPS can be identified along many borders that do not seem to have CPS for civil protection and disaster management so far.

CPS may emerge most likely in the near future in the fields of spatial planning, labour market development, tourism and culture. These encompass in particular CPS for the joint management of cultural heritage or museums and tourism offices and promotion. Other CPS that may be established in the near future can be expected in the policy areas of education and training, health care and environment protection. Education and training CPS may in the future focus in particular on schemes enhancing mobility of pupils, students and researchers including joint educational schemes and curricula. These plans may be taken in view of future labour mobility to better match labour markets and answer the demand for qualified workers not least in border regions. In the field of health care CPS access to cross-border health care with a focus on primary and hospital care and emergency services seem to be the most relevant intervention fields in the future. This may imply some responsiveness of regions in view of EU requirements of the cross-border health care directive (2011/24/EU). In the field of environmental protection most future CPS may be expected in the intervention fields that already now dominate environment related CPS in Europe. This includes CPS in support of joint nature management, whether of water bodies or nature parks. Positive experience made in various regions seems to lead to further joint approaches, either in other cross-border areas or aiming to further integrate already existing joint management efforts to more aspects of environmental protection. Similarly, cross-border solid waste and wastewater treatment as well as fresh water provision can be expected to be dealt with in a cross-border way even more in the future. Interestingly, the energy related CPS development is not among the often mentioned intervention fields for the future, despite apparent needs for better integrating energy provision across EU borders, as expressed in the EU's 2030 Energy Strategy.

2.2 CPS provision in case study areas

Ten case studies have been conducted in different parts of Europe, including varying territorial, regional and administrative frameworks and different border regimes. The detailed analysis of current CPS provision and their framework conditions in the case study areas is provided in separate documents annexed to the scientific report. Thus, Section 2.2 focuses on some general findings across case studies by comparing their commonalities and differences and explaining the reasons for these observations.

Altogether 170 CPS have been identified in the ten case study areas. Considering the total number of CPS identified in the EU wide analysis, this indicates an over-representation of CPS in the case study areas. It shows how an in-depth search as conducted for the ten case study areas can add to the actual identification of CPS.

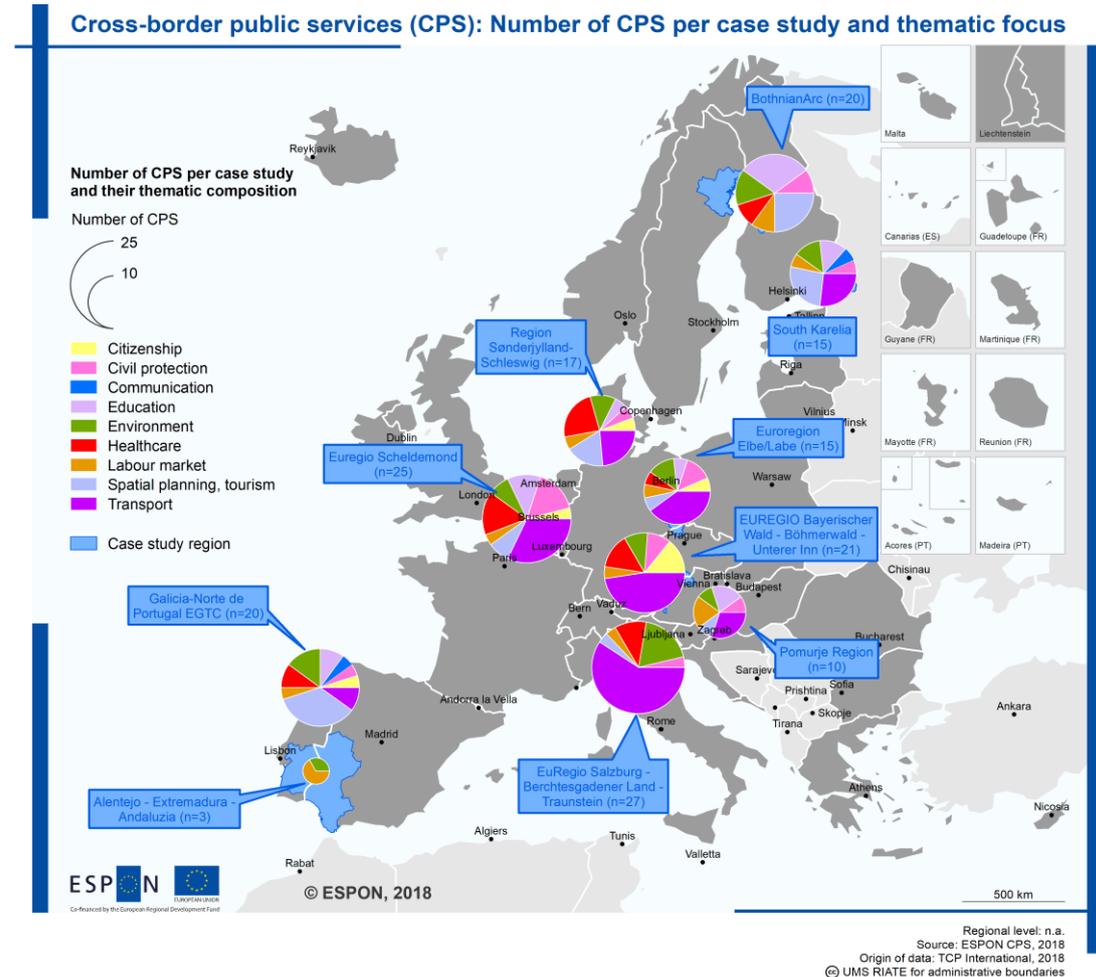
2.2.1 Comparative overview of CPS in case study areas

The number of CPS per case study area varies considerably, ranging from three for Alentejo-Extremadura-Andaluzia to 27 in the EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein (Map 2.6 and Table 2.5). The ten case study regions can be divided into three groups:

The first group includes EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein, Euregio Scheldemond, BothnianArc, Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn and Galicia-Norte Portugal EGTC with 20 or more CPS. Another four case study areas have between ten and 20 CPS each. These are the region Sønderjylland-Schleswig, Euroregion Elbe/Labe, South Karelia and Pomurje Region. In this sample of case study areas less than ten CPS were identified for Alentejo-Extremadura-Andaluzia.

Apart from this grouping, a closer look at the type of border the case study areas represent reveals that areas representing new internal borders and external borders tend to have a lower number of CPS than the case study regions located at old internal borders. The lower numbers of CPS in the case study areas at new internal borders is less an indication of particular difficulties to implement CPS but rather shows the catching-up process of these regions.

Map 2.6: CPS per case study region and thematic focus



A further look into the policy areas addressed within these CPS reveals that most case study areas have a strong focus on one or two policy themes. In the Bothnian Arc the focus is on CPS in the fields of education and spatial planning CPS (representing 30% and 25% of all CPS); in the Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn it is clearly transport (45%); the Euregio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein strongly focusses on transport-related and environment-related CPS with respective shares of more than 61% and 19%. Likewise, the Euroregion Elbe/Labe (40%), Euregio Scheldemond (32%) and Pomurje Region (30%) are three other examples with a predominant share of transport related CPS. In contrast, the case studies Galicia-Norte de Portugal EGTC, the Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig as well as South Karelia have a more balanced structure of policy themes, with less dominant foci on spatial planning/tourism/culture (35% in Galicia-Norte de Portugal EGTC; 28% in South Karelia) and healthcare (23.5% in Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig). Despite these foci, most case study areas have CPS in at least six different policy themes.

Two policy fields, namely environment protection and labour market/employment, seem to be relevant in all case study areas since related CPS for both fields can be found in all ten case studies. CPS in civil protection/disaster management and spatial planning/tourism/culture are provided in nine out of the ten case studies. CPS in spatial planning/tourism/culture (8), transport (8), education/training (7) and healthcare/social inclusion are also paid high attention. CPS in the fields of citizenship / justice / public security and communication / broadband / information are those which seem to have the least relevance in the case study areas, reflecting their small shares at European level.

Comparing the shares of the policy areas with the overall shares for the total of CPS in Europe reveals some interesting observations:

- Seven out of ten case study regions have an over-proportional share of transport-related CPS.
- Similarly, five of the ten case studies also have an over-proportional share of CPS in the field of labour market and employment.
- For those case studies who have CPS in the fields of citizenship, justice and public security, these shares are higher than the European average. However, for half of the case studies no CPS in this theme could be identified.
- On the other end of the spectrum, the share of CPS in the field of environment is for all case studies smaller than the European average, although all case studies have at least one such CPS¹³. A similar observation can be made for CPS in the field of civil protection and disaster management.

¹³ The case study Alentejo-Extremadura-Andaluzia must be considered as a specific case, since in this case study only three CPS in two policy fields are actually implemented.

Table 2.5: Number and policy fields of CPS in case study areas*

Theme / Field of intervention	Alentejo-Extremadura-Andaluzia		BothnianArc		Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn		EuRegion Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein		Euregio Scheidebund		Euroregion Elbe/Labe		Galicia-Norte de Portugal EGTC		Pomurje Region		Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig		South Karelia		Total Europe (all CPS)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Citizenship, justice, public security					3	14.3			1	4	1	6.7	1	5.0			1	5.9			27	4.7
Civil protection, disaster management			2	10.0	2	9.5	1	3.7	4	16.0	2	13.3	1	5.0	1	10.0	1	5.9	1	6.7	118	20.4
Communication, broadband, information													1	5.0					1	6.7	5	0.9
Education, training			6	30.0					3	12.0	1	6.7	2	10.0	2	20.0	1	5.9	2	13.3	57	9.8
Environment protection	1	33.3	3	15.0	2	9.5	5	18.5	2	8.0	2	13.3	3	15.0	1	10.0	2	11.8	2	13.3	119	20.6
Healthcare, social inclusion			2	10.0	3	14.3	3	11.1	4	16.0	1	6.7	2	10.0			4	23.5			64	11.1
Labour market, employment	2	66.7	2	10.0	1	4.8	1	3.7	1	4.0	1	6.7	1	5.0	2	20.0	1	5.9	1	6.7	29	5.0
Spatial planning, tourism, culture			5	25.0			1	3.7	2	8.0	1	6.7	7	35.0	1	10.0	3	17.6	4	26.7	55	9.5
Transport					10	47.6	16	59.3	8	32.0	6	40.0	2	10.0	3	30.0	4	23.5	4	26.7	105	18.1
Sum	3	100	20	100	21	100	27	100	25	100	15	100	20	100	10	100	17	100	15	100	579	100

blue = "old internal" border; orange = "new internal" border, green = "external border", pink = "old and new internal border"

Figures in bold indicate case study shares above the average share of all CPS in Europe.

* The total number of CPS in case study areas adds to 173 rather than 172. One CPS is allocated to two case study regions, since it encompasses both Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn and Euroregion Elbe/Labe.

Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

2.2.2 Little differences of CPS policy fields in case study areas

Comparing the occurrence of CPS in the case study areas according to their policy fields no systematic differences are visible (Table 2.5). Even within single policy themes, often CPS of similar fields of intervention can be found. The following compares the intervention fields of a few policy themes to highlight similarities and differences between the case study areas that may indicate reasons for these observations.

Transport

The field of **transport illustrates mostly similarities between the case study areas**. Most often CPS offer cross-border bus lines or regional trains. This shows that CPS in this field can be implemented at any European border, which is in line with the high share of transport related CPS identified in the European wide analysis. In some cases, and depending on geographical conditions cross-border transport also includes ferry lines.

There are a few cases with specific cross-border bus line services, targeting e.g. hiking tourists to consider very specific local and regional needs. There are few other transport related CPS, which show approaches for joint ticketing systems. These systems take into account specific regional needs to enhance regional development, e.g. by easing cross-border tourism with joint tickets or costless bike transport by rail.

Thus, close **cross-border transport integration beyond the mere offer of individual cross-border bus or rail connections** including joint tickets or a harmonisation of time schedules **is not very frequent (e.g. the setting up of cross-border public local transport managing authorities)** also with a view to the EU wide analysis. The joint ticketing systems have very different features and are specifically adjusted to the particular needs, target groups and objectives.

Labour market

All case study areas have one or two labour market CPS. Thus, there is little differentiation regarding the number of CPS in this theme per region. Furthermore, labour market related CPS seem to be even more homogeneous than transport related ones. **Six of the ten case study areas have an EURES cross-border partnership** to provide labour market information and job placement services. This shows the influence EU initiatives can have for enhancing similar approaches across the EU if they also allow for the possibility to adapt to local needs.

The four other case study areas either provide similar CPS through other means, such as a Euroregion or a local agency or they only offer labour market related information for commuters or employers without job placement activities.

At the same time, many of the **labour market related CPS are vulnerable in terms of financing** since they often depend on EU support rather than relying solely on funding from the authorities principally responsible for job placement services.

Environment protection

All case study areas have at least one CPS in the field of environment protection, in some areas several CPS are in place. Virtually **in all cases there is one or another CPS for joint management of natural resources**. Depending on geographical conditions this focuses either on water bodies or nature parks. Only in one case study area geographical conditions benefit from joint management on both, river management and nature park management. This is in line with the identification of CPS of these intervention fields in the European wide analysis and entails a relatively strong pressure for all regions to do something. This pressure may derive from EU directives as well as local incidents, e.g. after experiencing floods. Furthermore, this observation shows how a long-standing tradition in cooperation as it is in place for environmental protection can be transformed into CPS establishing durable cooperation.

Differences between the case study areas are more visible with regard to more complex environment related CPS. **Cross-border wastewater treatment, fresh water provision and solid waste treatment (incl. sewage sludge disposal) seems to be a more frequent phenomenon along borders between old MS**. This may indicate that CPS in these fields have considerable development potentials along new internal borders, particular at border sections with sufficiently high population densities at both sides. Energy related CPS can be observed even less frequently. Only two of the case study areas along old MS borders have such CPS by providing district heating across the border. They make use of a possibly emerging trend of organising district heating not only within a certain city but to bundle facilities and energy provision of several municipalities. These examples indicate that this does not need to stop at a national border; but sufficiently dense urban settlement structures along both sides of the border can be one trigger for such services.

These differences in the occurrence of different intervention fields in support of cross-border environment protection may furthermore hint at **different complexities for implementing these CPS**. Joint management approaches of parks and water bodies may be easier to be established as compared to the delivery of services on wastewater and solid waste treatment or fresh water provision. The latter especially require, inter alia, comprehensive agreements on the establishment, use and maintenance of hard infrastructure and service pricing of systems, as well as a sufficient population base, both of which are not necessary for setting up a joint nature management approach (quite the opposite).

Health care and emergency medical care

Health care CPS in the case study area are suitable to indicate even further differences in relation to old internal and new internal borders. In most case study areas located at new internal or external EU borders little or no health care CPS could be identified.

While emergency medical care services exist along several old internal borders and may also emerge more easily along new internal borders, which can also be observed for the European wide analysis, primary and hospital care CPS, so far, seem to be

located primarily along border between old MS, in particular along borders with a long-standing cooperation tradition. Only one case study area has developed a long-term care CPS, which is located in an area with a long-standing cooperation tradition.

Despite the pressure inserted by EU legislation and initiatives, cross-border health care, especially when aiming at **CPS covering integrated primary or hospital health care, tend to be very complex in developing and implementing**. Apart from questions relating to a coverage of treatment cost by the respective national public health insurance funds and to joint health resources use / planning, these CPS involve a whole set of other issues such as patient information and language issues (for both patients and medical staff), follow-up treatments or medical accidents. Thus, their development often is time-intensive as well and may take many years before first CPS are running.

Summing up, the review of selected policy fields and their comparison across the case study areas reveals that **CPS concerning intervention fields that require relatively complex solutions may not yet be found very frequently at other borders than between old MS**. These services seem to require more cross-border cooperation experience in order to more frequently emerge also along new internal or even external EU borders.

2.2.3 Differences more visible in CPS design acknowledging domestic conditions and regional needs

Differences between CPS become more visible when considering the detailed service rather than fields of intervention or even policy themes. Within some intervention fields the extent of service provision differs significantly. **This may be partially explained by different complexities of CPS development and implementation. Another reason may be very specific regional needs**, that require a CPS design that has little to no potential for transfer, since the same need may appear hardly elsewhere.

Primary and hospital health care

A comparison of health care CPS aiming at primary and hospital care in the case study areas shows the different degrees of complexity and integration. Cross-border primary and hospital care has only been identified so far at old internal borders. Table 2.6 summarises differences of these CPS and shows that **cooperation tradition and possibly also language and cultural barriers matter more than for many other CPS to achieve a high integration level**.

The examples of the first two case study areas in Table 2.6 are the only examples where patients can actually use health care services on the other side of the border, even though access is only one-sided in the second area. The other two examples represent either information services or do not offer services directly to patients. These services may be implemented more easily than the services with actual provision of care services. Together with the observations on health care in sub-section 2.2.2, these findings may indicate that

- the better founded and the longer the cooperation has been ongoing, the more integrated these services seem to be;
- low language and cultural barriers support the service development as some hampering factors are simply not relevant that are crucial when treating patients;
- complexity of these services may require more time for their establishment than many other CPS.

Table 2.6: Different primary and hospital care CPS in case study areas

Case study area	CPS
Euregio Scheldemond	Two integrated health care zones (ZOAST) at Belgium-French border and the only case of long-term day-to-day care provision (at the Belgium-Dutch border)
EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein	German citizens living in the EuRegio have easier access to medical and hospital care services in the Austrian part of the EuRegio than vice versa.
Galicia-Norte de Portugal EGTC	Two municipalities, Tui and Valença, share their health care equipment
Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn	Information service for patients from Bavaria and Upper Austria on cross-border health care

Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

Nevertheless, examples elsewhere in Europe show that none of the hampering factors may completely impede cross-border primary and hospital care.

Spatial planning, economic development, tourism and culture

CPS of three intervention fields of this policy field illustrate the specific needs that lead to the design of quite different services.

CPS in other regions outside the case study areas dealing with **spatial planning** are very often related to statistical or geographical information systems. They seem to cover a need felt by many border regions to better monitor and inform about ongoing socio-economic developments across the border. The Oceanic Observatory in Galicia-Norte de Portugal EGTC, for instance, thus evolves from a very specific need that may not be found in many border regions. Located at the Atlantic, the service is a tool for better observation of meteorological, oceanographic and water quality measures and information. Often, CPS on monitoring systems are developed to provide the necessary information base to better plan policy measures and activities in other sectors, such as transport sector or labour market.

Similarly, CPS in many European border regions focusing on **economic development** facilitate a cross-border business park. These differ mostly in terms of specific foci, e.g. by including a scientific park or focussing on certain economic sectors. Some CPS in the case study areas reveal very specific approaches answering specific needs. This holds, for instance, for the port management CPS in the Euregio Scheldemond or the cross-border regional management of the Flensburg chamber of commerce in the region Sønderjylland-Schleswig, which represents a joint economic and cluster development.

CPS touching upon **museums, culture and heritage** seem to have a certain focus on areas with 'twin-cities' or municipalities located in immediate neighbourhood at the border. In other

words, proximity matters for CPS design in this field. Twin cities can benefit best from jointly offering and using their cultural infrastructure. In the case study areas a high density of such services has been identified for the two cities Haparanda and Tornio in the Bothnian Arc and in several 'Eurocities' in the area of the Galicia-Norte de Portugal EGTC and Alentejo Region. Rural municipalities located right along the border may make use of single infrastructure that does not need to be provided on both sides of the border. An example from the case study areas is a joint sports arena of the municipalities Bayerisch Gmain and Großgmain in the EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein. Due to distances, other case study areas offer CPS in this field more by supporting each other's cultural offers rather than using infrastructure jointly. In Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig, CPS in culture and tourism are also important as a mean to support the mutual minorities on either side of the border (i.e. support to Danish minority living on the German side, and the German minority living on the Danish side) and to contribute to a better integration of these minorities.

Wastewater treatment and public local transport

The EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein shows that in the field of wastewater treatment three different models / solutions are adopted for CPS within the same area, involving sometimes a pragmatic unilateral management / delivery of the service but in one case also a unilateral delivery with a joint management approach (Schneizlreuth / wastewater treatment association Pinzgauer Saalachtal).

Also cross-border public local transport offers are quite different, with a strong predominance of regular bus and rail services in the EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein and a primarily seasonal and tourism-oriented offer in the Euregio Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn.

3 Prospects for CPS in the case study areas

Potential future CPS development in the ten case study areas focuses on political themes and fields of intervention selected by regional stakeholders of this targeted ESPON study. In view of the very limited timeframe of the study, case study research was the only way to develop in-depth analyses for future CPS development and to initiate first steps with the stakeholders and other regional players involved in the respective CPS development. Thus, the analysis of potential future CPS in the case study areas does not give a full account of possibly useful or beneficial CPS but focuses on pre-selected themes and services only. In consequence, needs and potentials refer to these pre-selected themes and services.

The following section gives an overview of CPS that were selected for further development by case study area stakeholders. This highlights that certain policy fields are of particular interest for several areas. Thereafter, general observations on driving forces, needs and potentials are summarised. Section 3.3 shortly highlights typical challenges expected for establishing the prospective CPS and the chapter closes with illustrating the different approaches chosen to continue CPS development in the participating regions.

3.1 Wide variety of CPS with a focus on few policy themes

Despite the very different geographical, economic, political, administrative and socio-cultural characteristics of the ten case study regions their selection of prospective CPS focuses on six of the nine policy themes (Table 3.1). Furthermore, within these policy themes there is a clear focus on three themes, namely transport, environment and health care related CPS. In addition to these also education, labour market and spatial planning and tourism CPS shall be enhanced in the case study areas.

The different regional characteristics and the current CPS provision, however, matter clearly for the **needs addressed within the various policy fields**. Whether the case study areas are already at a stage of specifying a certain CPS or are in the process of defining the most urgently needed and feasible CPS within a political theme, the formulation of CPS varies greatly. Indeed, none of the CPS in either of the policy field has exactly the same focus. For example, within transport two CPS are linked to transport connections but even they differ in their objectives. Although several prospective CPS deal with hospital care they differ in their access points and services envisaged. This includes reactivating access for people with certain illnesses, providing access for citizens in the neighbouring MS to all hospital facilities by applying a step-wise opening approach and combining health and well-being access to non-EU patients from across the border.

For several policy themes, quite different fields of intervention have been covered by the prospective analysis of the case study areas. Some of them also tackle intervention fields for which there is relatively little European evidence so far. Examples are the information for car travellers in the field of services along the EU external border and the home care in bi-polar villages in the field of long-term care services for elderly and disabled people.

Thus, it may be concluded that **many border areas have indeed needs for cross-border public service provision in several policy fields at the same time**. The different needs only become visible when specifying a CPS within the themes and fields.

Table 3.1: Overview of potential future CPS in case study areas

Theme / Field of intervention	Education, training	Environment protection	Healthcare, social inclusion	Labour market, employment	Spatial planning, tourism, culture	Transport
Alentejo-Extremadura-Andaluzia		Invasive species management				Multimodal freight transport platform & mobility observatory
BothnianArc	Lowering language barriers			Better labour market matching		
Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn						Better transport links
EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein		Improving waste water treatment services	Optimising existing CPS			
Euregio Scheldemond			Home care in bi-polar villages			North Sea Port nautical management
Euroregion Elbe/Labe			Providing access for Czech patients to a German hospital			
Galicia-Norte de Portugal EGTC	Education (universities)				Spatial Planning	Transport
Pomurje Region		Nature park management				New connections & information services
Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig			Potentially different CPS for cross-border emergency, psychiatric advice etc.	Stabilisation of existing CPS & online platform	Cross-border spatial monitoring	
South Karelia			Health 'tourism' for Russians		Information platform	Information for car travellers

blue = "old internal" border; orange = "new internal" border, green = "external border", pink = "old and new internal border"

Source: Service provider, 2018

3.2 Potentials for CPS arise from various motivations

Motivation of CPS development in the case study areas differs widely and cannot be linked to certain specific spatial structures or regional specificities but depends much more on the specific CPS and existing level and cooperation intensity. Table 3.2 indicates primary motivations of the different potential CPS in the case study areas.

Table 3.2: Main motivations for prospective CPS in case study areas

Motivation	Quality		Effectiveness		Efficiency	
	Cross-border flows	Filling a gap	Shared problem	Increasing scope	Territorial scope	Cost savings
Alentejo-Extremadura-Andaluzia	Transport (Multimodal freight transport platform)		Environment protection			Transport (mobility observatory)
BothnianArc	Labour market					Education
Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn		Transport, Emergency medical care				
EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein	Transport tariff integration (rail, bus)	Micro-pollutants in discharge waters	Health care & medical emergency care	Sewage sludge disposal		Wastewater treatment
Euregio Scheldemond	Transport		Home care			Home care
Euroregion Elbe/Labe		Hospital care			Hospital care	
Galicia-Norte de Portugal EGTC	Transport			Education Spatial Planning		
Pomurje Region	Transport links & information		Nature park			
Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig	Labour market	Spatial monitoring on information for a cross-border rescue service	Spatial monitoring	Labour market		Labour market
South Karelia	Transport	Tourism information			Hospital CPS	

blue = "old internal" border; orange = "new internal" border, green = "external border", pink = "old and new internal border"

Source: Service provider, 2018

A few patterns are visible nevertheless:

- Most transport and labour market CPS are motivated by quality objectives and in particular aim to facilitate cross-border flows.
- For several CPS motivations are multiple (see CPS depicted in Italics in Table 3.2). Sometimes they combine different quality related motivations or effectiveness improving motivations. For example, the labour market CPS in Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig obviously addresses cross-border flows (of workers), but at the same time its scope

should be increased (thereby improving its effectiveness) and cost savings should be reached to increase its efficiency as well.

- In other cases quality and efficiency or effectiveness and efficiency considerations together build the overall motivation. For example, a CPS to open hospital access to citizens from the neighbouring MS, aims to fill a service gap on one side of the border (quality) by extending the territorial scope of an existing service on the other side of the border (efficiency). Better coordination of a shared problem as in the case of health care services of the EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein also aims to overcome uncertainties in CPSP. The home care examples combines effectiveness considerations through addressing a joint problem that is combined with efficiency objectives in view of demographic change.

These findings indicate that potentials for CPS development derive from different needs and motivations. These are mostly not related to one particular motivation, but can be driven by several motivations. The actual potential for implementing a certain CPS, nevertheless, depends on the challenges that need to be overcome.

3.3 Challenges occur in different combinations

Many challenges for prospective CPS can be linked to different legal and administrative systems of the neighbouring countries. This is in line with the findings of the DG Regio study on "Easing legal and administrative obstacles in EU border regions". This holds also for the case study areas in view of various prospective CPS and confirms the usefulness of the recently proposed "New cross-border mechanism" (COM(2018) 373) as regards legal obstacles. Several cases refer to administrative challenges due to asymmetries of competences, which cannot be addressed by this mechanism. But at the same time, successful CPS examples (see e.g. Chapter 4) show that different administrative systems and asymmetries present hurdles that have often overcome.

Nevertheless, not all prospective CPS face typical legal or administrative challenges. For some of them other challenges matter more. For example:

- Language barriers present in some cases an obstacle to implement CPS but can at the same time be the main object of a CPS. Education related CPS with a focus on improving language skills are an example for this.
- A very specific case of administrative challenges occurs when responsibilities change on one side of the border during the CPS development process as the example of spatial monitoring in the Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig shows. This illustrates the vulnerability of CPS and their development, especially when this is a long-lasting process.
- Financing is a reoccurring issue that challenges CPS development. This is either due to a lack of domestic funding sources for stabilising a service or may result from different funding schemes for the same type of service on either side of the border.

Each prospective CPS in the case study areas has its **own combination of challenges to overcome**, whether they are a combination of individual legal or administrative challenges or any other challenge mentioned above. This requires very different actions by stakeholders and regional players including potential CPS providers.

3.4 Getting into action

Stakeholders of the case study areas used the opportunity of the ESPON CPS study to either initiate CPS development processes focussing on quite specified services or discuss possible benefits of different alternatives for CPS development more broadly. A specific case is the EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein, where the dense presence of CPS focussed discussions mostly on further optimising the existing services. This requires mostly different steps to achieve the envisaged CPS development in the mid- to long-term (Table 3.3). These actions alone, however, are most often only the starting points for the coming months. Depending on the current starting point prospective CPS in the case study areas will require one or several of the follow-up activities as outlined in the "Practical Guide" of the ESPON CPS study.

Table 3.3: *Examples for typical CPS development actions in case study areas depending on overall approach*

Typical actions for regions ...	
developing specified CPS	elaborating alternative CPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborating detailed CPS improvements for existing CPS • Finalising common understanding of CPS details • Initiating intensive exchange with suitable good practices • Mapping of existing domestic services and their scope of service (both geographically and in functional terms) • Mapping of potential benefits for both sides of the border (win-win-relations) • Identifying suitable providers and management modes • Awareness raising e.g. among relevant policy makers for overcoming obstacles & information dissemination • Developing mid-term work process / action plan • Involve additional stakeholders required • Investigating alternative governance options • Introducing pilot actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting and structuring information to fill gaps e.g. on size of target groups, domestic services • Collect information about and identify potential CPS and describe their scope of service • Identifying process for best suitable & feasible CPS in a policy theme • Involving policy makers in CPS discussions • Developing cooperation agreement • Clarifying objectives of stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying & agreeing on lead stakeholder who takes the responsibility for driving the process • Make funding available (e.g. from Interreg SPF) for driving the process 	

Source: *Service provider, 2018*

The range of activities foreseen by stakeholders who have initiated a process on principally defined CPS is quite wide. Such activities are for instance envisaged by the Elbe/Labe Euroregion, for one labour market service of the region Sønderjylland-Schleswig, the home care service in the Euregio Scheldemond and several prospective services of Pomurje region, South Karelia and the EuRegio Salzburg-Berchtesgadener Land-Traunstein.

Some case study areas focus currently more on elaborating alternative CPS development in certain policy fields. In these cases, often more similar actions are required to obtain political support and to assess different alternative or complementing prospective CPS. Examples for stakeholders who elaborate currently alternatives are health care related CPS in the Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig, transport related CPS in the Euregio Scheldemond and the Euregio Bayerischer Wald-Böhmerwald-Unterer Inn as well as the approaches currently considered in the Bothnian Arc.

Thus, the prospective analysis shows that case study areas were mostly successful in using the ESPON CPS study for initiating CPS development in line with their needs. Especially getting into action requires commitment by the study's stakeholders. They acknowledge the necessity for continuity for successfully developing the envisaged prospective CPS. The required continuity in many cases may require additional resources to acknowledge the voluntary actions taken by border regions and cross-border organisations.

4 Summary of good practice examples

Good practice examples of CPS aim to illustrate successful approaches that can inspire other stakeholders and give food for thought on alternative ways for addressing shared needs and problems. Good practices can be a valuable contribution for awareness raising and knowledge transfer. To fulfil these expectations, two aspects need to be considered:

- Any good practice still needs *adaptation to local, regional and national conditions and contexts*. The actual approaches and solutions presented for the CPS provision depend for a large part on border-specific factors (esp. legal / institutional context). Thus, good practice examples can only illustrate general approaches that may be useful, they cannot be transferred by copying but need possibly considerable adaptation and change.
- To be valuable for practitioners good practice descriptions need to be *easy to read, guide the reader through the information available* and needed and provide this information to the point. In addition, it is beneficial if the information is prepared in a comparative way, which further helps the reader to put the information into the appropriate context. Consequently, good practice examples are described in a separate file (Annex II), where for each good practice example a factsheet describes the practices' features in a comparative way.

Keeping this illustration aim in mind, the good practice examples collected in the frame of the ESPON CPS study do not claim to be a complete collection of good practices nor is the intention to discriminate any other good practices. All policy fields with sufficient number of CPS¹⁴ are included in the examples and within each policy field different approaches are presented. The examples furthermore include CPS from many different borders across Europe to include as different frameworks as possible within which the CPS have been developed (Section 4.1).

The following section (4.2) shows some commonalities and differences of the presented examples and draws a few lessons regarding transferability and feasibility of similar (adequately adjusted) CPS in other regions with a similar need.

4.1 CPS good practice examples

Twenty-eight good practices have been selected. Due to the high number of CPS implemented at borders of old MS, their number is also relatively high in the good practice examples (Map 4.1). Policy themes are covered in a balanced way (Table 4.1) with an average of three to four examples per policy theme. If suitable this covers either several intervention fields or highlights the variety of approaches feasible within one field of intervention.

¹⁴ Thus, only for the policy field "Communication, broadcasting and information society" no good practice example is presented.

Table 4.1: Overview of good practice examples according to policy theme

	CPS name	Border	Summarising comparison of CPS
	Transport		
1	Tram Strasbourg-Kehl	DE-FR	Many transport related CPS aim at providing better transport connections across the border. This may be done by developing a new infrastructure (1), by extending an existing or providing a new link (2). More integrated transport CPS focus on a joint ticketing system (3) that may exist with or without cross-border transport links or even a joint authority that is responsible for organising cross-border bus transport connections and ticketing (4).
2	Twin city bus line 983 Frankfurt (Oder) – Słubice	DE-PL	
3	Elbe-Labe Ticket	CZ-DE	
4	Joint transport authority for the Geneva cross-border metropolitan area	CH-FR	
	Spatial planning, economic development, tourism, leisure and culture		
5	Joint tourism office Haparanda-Tornio	FI-SE	CPS of this policy fields may tackle a variety of regional development issues and different target groups. The examples illustrate approaches of very different intervention fields. For tourism joint offices and marketing activities are quite frequent (5) and primarily tackle tourists. Spatial planning CPS are often linked to information provision, in particular targeting public authorities of different sectors (6). Economic development CPS usually target companies or other economic players by providing information for cross-border economic activities with a focus e.g. on trade or investments (7).
6	Geographic Information System of the Greater Region	BE-DE-FR-LU	
7	InterTrade Ireland	IE-UK	
	Health care, long-term care and social inclusion		
8	ZOAST	BE-FR	While there is a wide variety of health and care CPS available, alone primary and hospital health care services show a wide variety of possible applications and degrees of integration. A comparison of these different degrees allows insights into possible step-wise approaches if a comprehensive health care integration seems unsurmountable. The most integrated examples in Europe are the integrated cross-border health care zones (8). They have been implemented at only one border relation, so far. Completely integrated cross-border care at the level of one hospital and based on a specifically established legal personality may be the next least integration level (9). The third example illustrates a cross-border extension of an existing domestic service for out-patient hospital care (10), which may be an option for border areas that first need to test cross-border health care before enterprising more integrated health care CPS.
9	Hospital Cerdanya	ES-FR	
10	Healthacross, Clinic Gmünd	AT-CZ	
	Education and training		
11	European Exchange School Alliance	HU-RO-SK-UA	CPS in education and training most often focus on either school or university education and research. The first example highlights how specialised and non-formal educational services are provided at an external EU border (11). Two school education examples illustrate how an existing domestic service may be extended to pupils from across the border (12) or a how a new service may be developed to facilitate a truly joint education with joint service management (13). The other two examples on university cooperation illustrate first approaches feasible at external borders (14) and a more integrated CPS for cross-border research cooperation with its own legal personality (15).
12	Bilingual elementary school in Prosenjakovci	HU-SI	
13	Schengen Lyceum	DE-LU	
14	University cooperation South Karelia	FI-RU	
15	Eucor – the European campus	CH-DE-FR	
	Labour market and employment		
16	Grensinfopoint Scheldemond	BE-NL	Labour market and employment CPS usually address information needs of commuters and/or support cross-border labour market match-making. The examples include a one-stop-shop for cross-border workers (16), a service aiming to enhance cross-border labour mobility in view of few commuters (17) a 'headhunting de-luxe' approach which not only takes care about job placement but includes support for family members, housing and other issues (18) and another comprehensive CPS originally supporting labour mobility and now also aiming to enhance business relations (19).
17	EURES Alentejo	ES-PT	
18	job over grænsen	DE-DK	
19	Border mobility	NO-SE	
	Environmental protection, natural resources management and climate change action		
20	Xures-Gerês National Park	ES-PT	Environment related CPS may take very different access points. Thus, five examples are described that tackle different environment issues. The first two examples have a focus on nature conservation in transboundary biosphere reserves. The first highlights
21	Mura-Drava Danube	HR-HU	

4.2 Anything is possible – even if domestic contexts matter

The comparison of good practice examples highlights various commonalities and differences. Firstly, many CPS encounter similar principal obstacles, even if they differ in detail (Section 4.2.1). The mere existence of the CPS shows, however, that it is feasible to overcome them. Secondly, each cross-border area has its own specificities and needs, some may be similar, others are of very local nature. In other words, the variety of characteristics that feature the needs are combined always in different ways. This affects the specifics of the services that are provided as well as the ways how they are managed, financed and delivered (Section 4.2.2).

4.2.1 Obstacles require tailor-made solutions

The factsheets with detailed CPS narratives include, inter alia, descriptions of obstacles that have been overcome during the CPS development process. Indeed, some CPS did not even encounter severe obstacles. The comparison of examples shows that, at least at internal EU borders, there is no principal limit to designing the service as it is needed, even if obstacles at first may appear unsurmountable.

Table 4.2: *Typical obstacles and their solutions*

Obstacles encountered	Selected solutions found
Domestic legal frameworks with different security or insurance requirements or lack of clear legal basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming the 'stricter' rules from both sides of the border • Pushing for required legal adjustments at higher levels • Interstate agreements (e.g. providing framework for a common border area) • Local cooperation agreements • Establishing a cross-border structure with legal personality • Tailor-made search for solutions of different elements of service provision • Start with "simple" bottom-up approach with low level of formalization, and increase formalize in parallel with increasing success of CPS.
Different or unclear responsibilities and competences and changes of responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make use of existing cross-border structures (Euroregions) • Developing a relatively wide network and intensive communication with relevant players • Identify factors / services that each partner can best provide (comparative advantages) compared to the other partner • Define clear interim steps and milestones in the implementation process, split the overall implementation process in clearly identified steps, sign commitment letters • Assign clear tasks to all partners involved in the implementation (each partner should get a similar number and scope of tasks), to share work and also to generate "ownership"
Identifying a suitable governance structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor-made approaches ranging from working groups to the set-up of new legal structures • Tailor-made decision about central, joint vs. networking management • Start with low level solutions with low level of formalization, or with small pilot cases
Lack of comparability of information and data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a joint harmonised system, that takes into account different needs • Developing an overarching CPS such as spatial monitoring system that serves or supports the development or improvement of other CPS
Different domestic price systems or service levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate fare systems (e.g. transport tickets) for cross-border transport • Extending an existing fare system to the other side of the border • Assuming the 'wider' service provision understanding from both sides of the border • Make use of the different price schemes in the design of the service (often different price systems are also a sign for different

	costs, and in the service design different costs levels may explicitly make use of)
One-sided scarce budgetary sources or cost differentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-wise service development building on pilot actions to test budget effects
Cultural and language barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff with required language skills and different domestic background
Unequal distribution of benefits (even though target groups exist on both sides of the border)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at longer time periods to assess benefits; it is likely that due to changing macro-economic conditions, the encountered benefits may for a certain period of time favour one side of the border, while at other times the other side is favoured. • Look at the overall border area. If one side of the border gains higher benefits from service A, another service B may generate higher benefits for the other side of the border. So, don't try to reach equal benefits for one CPS, but look at the entire set of CPS. • Some CPS cannot be measured in terms of "direct benefits". For instance, CPS for civil protection and disaster management are "sleeping" CPS which only become visible in case of large incidents. Start with implementing such CPS, which thereby also helps to develop mutual trust and so may provide the basis for the establishment of other CPS.
Long implementation times for certain CPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with implementing "low hanging fruits", for instance with CPS in the fields of tourism or culture, which on average can be implemented rather fast.

Source: Service provider CPS database, 2018

4.2.2 Individual combinations of managing, financing and delivering CPS

The good practice examples illustrate the whole variety of available alternatives for managing, financing and delivering CPS. Actual service design in terms of the services provided depend on (a) the actual need and (b) on feasibility at a certain moment in a specific cross-border region. The examples of several policy themes show that it is possible to start with single services that may be of small-scale if an all comprehensive CPSP is either not necessary or may take too long to indicate potential benefits. Many good practice examples result from previous cooperation that over time becomes more comprehensive and complex.

Interreg **funding** often plays an important role in supporting CPS development. Even running CPS rather frequently make use of Interreg funding to either develop additional service features or upgrade the existing CPS or to acquire additional resources (e.g. new infrastructure). Other typical funding sources for everyday business of CPS are public resources assigned typically to a comparative domestic service and/or income from tariffs and fees by CPS users.

The examples show that the decision about a possibly extended use of existing hard **infrastructure** or the development of a new infrastructure depends on (a) what infrastructure is needed to provide the CPS and (b) the adequateness of existing infrastructures. Many CPS have been developed making use of existing infrastructure, which in some cases required to add new infrastructure elements, e.g. such as tube connections. The good practices include some examples that required new infrastructure because either a lack of infrastructure (e.g. no transport connection) or out-of-date infrastructure that required refurbishment (e.g. old hospital).

Changes in the **management and delivery** more often relate to the actual organisation of the service rather than hard infrastructure. Several examples illustrate that even one-sided

delivery with a central management mode require several changes in the management and organisation and may also lead to additional or changed costs.

These different elements of the good practice examples' comparison highlight that each CPS solution, that is not entirely covered by EU legislation, needs to be seen in the **context of the policy theme** and the **specific domestic context**. Principal 'building blocs' are re-occurring and connected in different ways to trigger solutions that may then be considered as tailor-made.

Consequently, the **good practice examples give food for thought**,

- if similar obstacles are identified, possibly the solution of a good practice may prove to be suitable or easily adjusted;
- if management and delivery depends very much on the starting points of competences, existing infrastructure and organisations;
- if the number of principal alternative delivery modes is limited but specifics are considered in the details;
- whether the own needs require a complex CPS approach or may be addressed relatively easily;
- that also other finally successful examples may have taken many years to be established.

5 Policy pointers

The ESPON CPS study is a targeted analyses project, which aims to derive conclusions and policy proposals for EU cross-border regions in general and the case study areas in particular. In view of the study's findings, policy relevant conclusions derive furthermore for other governance levels, in particular, addressing different players at EU level and at national and regional levels.

5.1 Cross-border institutions, border regions and CPS providers

The following policy pointers address cross-border regions in general and the case study areas, in particular. Further recommendations are presented in the Practical Guide of the study and the individual case study reports.

Ensure sufficient commitment and capacity for CPS endeavours

Some CPS can be established in simple ways, not requiring the set-up of complex cross-border bodies with own legal personality etc. However, often CPS require commitment to drive the process and the capacity in terms of knowledge required, personal and institutional networks and persistency. Without commitment lengthy processes tend to lose momentum.

CPS usually are a voluntary task of authorities of border regions and Euroregions that add to their everyday business. That puts every CPS endeavour at risk. Thus, regional authorities and cross-border structures should reflect critically whether they have sufficient commitment and capacity available in-house to drive such a process. Hiring an external advisor with the explicit mandate to drive the process may be an alternative. Financial resources can be ensured, inter alia, with Interreg Small Project Funds. Although Interreg is one important source supporting CPS development, other EU and national funding can be tapped to raise resources required.

Use Interreg deliberately for CPS

Cross-border Interreg programmes aim to initiate cross-border actions that may possibly become self-supporting after project duration. Stakeholders who think about establishing a new CPS might use Interreg funding for carrying out the preparatory steps or initiating a pilot service. Alternatively, existing CPS can make use of Interreg to further enhance their service quality, level etc. Results towards durable services should be outlined in funding applications already. This helps to become clear about objectives and to enhance commitment by applicants.

Be pro-active and patient! Not everything needs to be solved at once

In the best case CPS development starts with a voluntary action to address a joint need. Experience shows that principal agreement needs clarification to develop a real common understanding – even the same term may have different meanings on either side of a border (or in different languages involved)! The request to be pro-active, addresses several aspects:

- CPS development needs a starting point, most often from bottom-up. A step-wise approach leading to some benefits tends to support further commitment rather than lengthy processes without any visible result. Start with “low hanging fruits” to reach success soon and to develop mutual trust, instead of searching for the “big overarching solution” from the beginning.
- For first pilot actions or small-scale CPS minimise formalisation, only ensure that sufficient resources are available (see above) and a common understanding exists. Formalisation before achieving first results may create unwillingness and also too much rigidity to adopt changes and improvements during the initial phase. Formalise only if absolutely required. Trust is indispensable for establishing CPS. Cross-border obstacles will not disappear without action. This requires continuity of action and the willingness to search for solutions – including step-wise results – even if an obstacle seems insurmountable. Existing examples show that a lot is possible with persistency and pro-active actions!
- Consider obstacles as potentials for future CPS and as an opportunity to intensify cooperation. Many existing CPS were implemented to tackle obstacles.

Cross-border organisations can assume different roles

Across Europe cross-border structures like Euroregions have different degrees of experience in cross-border cooperation and CPS. In consequence, cross-border institutions should adjust their roles and activities to the level of existing cooperation in their area. The more experienced they are, the more involved they may become. They should not stop with funding but can develop and provide CPS themselves or through spin-off organisations. Moreover, they should initiate CPS development by pro-actively using their networking competence. This may require considerable awareness raising activities with all players relevant for a certain CPS. Regardless previous experience with CPS cross-border institutions are most suitable to mobilising stakeholders and other key players to drive CPS development processes.

Communicate cross-border needs to the higher level

To develop a CPS, many challenges cannot be solved at local or cross-border regional level. Interstate agreements, domestic legislative action or other activities at higher administrative level may be required. National governments often do not act by themselves without an obvious need. So, existing cross-border structures may intensify the communication of cross-border needs and desired action from higher levels. Cross-border structures need to lobby for development objectives in their area. Specific cross-border monitoring data, cross-border spatial plans or sector policy plans can be useful and convincing tools for visualising needs and indicating scenarios or visions for cross-border regional development.

Not every need is addressed best by a CPS

Experience shows that many CPS require considerable efforts for appropriate development and implementation. Thus, if a need can be solved better domestically, there is no need for a CPS. Domestic public services tend to be more resilient than CPS, since the latter depend on the political will and competences of at least two countries.

5.2 National / federal authorities

Policy pointers for national authorities primarily address their capacity as law-making authorities. Federal authorities may, however, act as law-making authorities or assume direct contributions to CPS similar to those of cross-border and border regions addressed above.

Do not shy from asymmetry of responsibilities

Along some EU MS borders asymmetry of responsibility between neighbouring countries is repeatedly mentioned to hamper CPS development. Federal and regional authorities sometimes find it difficult to identify the right person in charge or to negotiate with national authorities of their neighbouring country. However, many CPS along borders with these asymmetries show that this challenge can be overcome through existing EGTCs, Euroregions, cross-border working groups or sectoral informal committees, or even European networks. This often requires trustful working relations. Support from national authorities in a federal MS may also be beneficial for establishing sound working relations.

Strengthen awareness about cross-border and border regions' needs

National authorities (and sometimes regional authorities) have various tools to pro-actively support border regions. With respect to CPS development this includes, inter alia,

- initiating activities at local level through pilot programmes and projects;
- supporting cross-border analysis and planning e.g. by asking for cross-border consultations or providing funding for developing cross-border spatial plans, scenarios or visions;
- considering all relevant policy areas for cross-border cooperation and involving partners from these policies in cross-border cooperation activities;
- creating funding opportunities for cross-border cooperation and CPS in the different policy fields concerned;
- supporting cross-border initiatives through offering advice and knowledge, e.g. through a regional or national cross-border cooperation contact point;
- contributing to exchange e.g. through conferences, peer-to-peer meetings, info days, websites.

Listen to cross-border and border regions' concerns and requests

CPS interventions subject to nationwide rules face different counterparts at different segments of a national border. Thus, harmonisation with neighbouring countries cannot be easily achieved. In federal MS, delegation from the national to state (Länder/ Cantons etc.) level may solve this at least partially.

If delegation is not feasible or sufficient, national authorities can support border regions by willingness to conclude interstate agreements, which bridges otherwise incompatible laws. The recent proposal by the EU Commission for the 'New Cross-Border Mechanism' (COM(2018) 373) is meant to overcome such incompatibilities. The proposal should not only

be seen as being for the benefit of regional and local units but it shall ease national authorities' need for action.

5.3 EU level

Policy pointers for the EU level summarise actions that address different players beyond national level. This includes in particular all Directorates-General of the EU Commission and ESPON, networks such as AEBR or URBACT and cross-border ETC programmes. The ESPON ULYSSES study has developed the means to elaborate cross-border spatial development concepts. The legal obstacles study by DG Regio¹⁵ has made clear that there is a need for the recently proposed cross-border mechanism. The benefits of both tools are reflected in the policy pointers for the local, regional and national levels. Despite these achievements, different EU level players can take further actions.

Pave the way for support to CPS through ETC and other measures

Analyses have highlighted repeatedly that Interreg cross-border programmes are an important access point for providing EU level support. CPS development can be supported through various actions when developing the legal framework for the next programming period and at programme and project levels – including not only ETC but budgets of all Directorates-General.

Working towards a CPS should be seen as an asset to strengthen cross-border cooperation in view of achieving more sustainable and self-supporting results. CPS represent a favourable result not least because many can become self-supporting through either redirecting funding from domestic to a cross-border service or raising tariffs upon use of the CPS. Among others, EU institutions should pave the way for CPS development in ETC for the 2021-2027 programming period

- by favouring CPS related actions in the regulation. This could be done by mentioning CPS development explicitly as expected and eligible activity or even a performance related bonus (in view of actual CPS development support) to the programmes' volume could be envisaged.
- Considering CPS as an essential element, e.g. in the priorities, of the programmes rather than using it as a buzz word in programme development. In such an approach, actual practice matters rather than the formal mentioning of CPS in the programme.
- in line with the objective to reduce cross-border barriers through an adequate budget for ETC and a favourable regulation addressing these barriers to give ETC programmes the flexibility to better address local and regional challenges that reduce the administrative burdens for beneficiaries and facilitate investment in the diminishing of obstacles.

¹⁵ DG Regio (2017) "Easing legal and administrative obstacles in EU border regions"

- by better integrating vertical and horizontal governance levels for considering indirect and intangible effects of CPS development. In turn, this may require to rethink indicators as far as measuring the achievement of CPS development with ETC support is concerned.
- by collecting information on cross-border interaction for a better and more informed decision-making process in cooperation with the Member States, regions and municipalities, as well as EGTC and similar cross-border legal forms during programming period preparation to provide all relevant information to potential beneficiaries from the very beginning.
- by supporting and financing specific European-wide studies, analysis and territorial research on CPS, including a continuation of the approach provided by the present study.
- by proposing measures to analyse and overcome any possible obstacles to the effective application of the EGTC instrument as one of the legal instruments to support CPS.

Consider thematically focused support

The European wide analysis has indicated some territorial imbalances with quite advanced coverage of CPS in certain policy fields (e.g. civil protection and disaster management) along some borders and a virtual lack of comparable CPS along other borders. These may require further policy-specific analysis and policy-specific awareness raising activities in the territories concerned that is initiated by cooperative action of the relevant DGs, to include ETC knowledge of DG Regio and sector policy knowledge of the policy field concerned.

In addition to these territorial imbalances of CPS in some policy fields other policy fields seem to be only emerging. Energy related CPS are among these. Not least in view of EU climate policy related objectives and policies, the EU level could pro-actively support the development of suitable frameworks for border regions rather than waiting for the demand to be voiced.

Market CPS achievements

Numerous CPS are operating across various border regions of the EU to further improve the quality of life of citizens living in border regions. A lot has been achieved but awareness of what is available is still lacking among decision-makers. The European Institutions should put more effort in granting access to knowledge on existing CPS and related good practices to coordinate and optimise the results of their work in this area. The newly established EU Commission FUTURIUM platform for boosting EU border regions¹⁶ is a step into the right direction but requires continuous efforts. This includes better and more concrete communication of CPS benefits as well as better guidance for regions on CPS matters.

For instance, ETC programmes could use part of their technical assistance to provide such support for local players, e.g. by offering exchange of experience along the programme border or by directly addressing potential CPS providers that. They may also offer funding

¹⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/boder-regions>

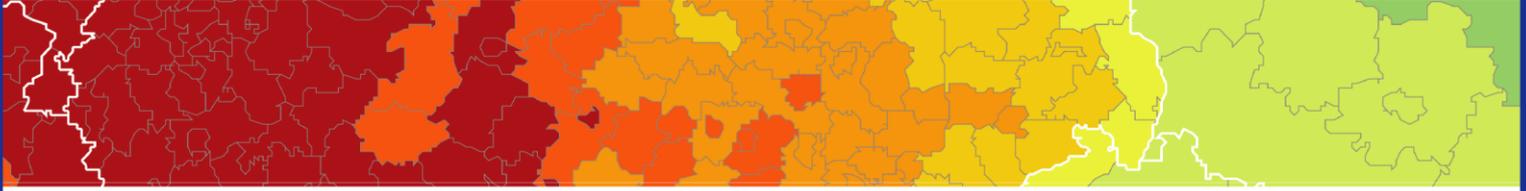
through a specific budget line for local players to allow them to learn from good practices elsewhere. The programming framework can support this directly or indirectly.

Provide open access to data and facilitate exchange of information

Last but not least and linked to better marketing of achievements, make actively use of ESPON CPS study results. The different outputs may be of wider interest to primarily regional and local border authorities, cross-border institutions and potential CPS providers: a) the practical guide; b) the CPS database with currently 579 CPS across Europe; c) descriptions of 29 good practice CPS examples. In the medium-long term, an information platform such as a CPS Expertise Centre could help to streamline information and data and to support territorial development and quality of life in European border territories.

In the short-term good practice examples of the ESPON CPS study could enrich the FUTURIUM platform and the practical guide could be translated into an appealing online version, that is possibly not only available on the ESPON website but also linked with the FUTURIUM platform and other relevant knowledge resources such as DG Regio, Interact etc.

These efforts are only starting points that need follow-up initiatives. Indeed, neither the CPS database nor the good practice descriptions are complete but require more efforts in the future. In particular, the database requires updates and further collection of CPS as CPS provision develops very dynamically. CPS data could be enhanced not only with additional CPS as they develop over time but can be enhanced with more descriptions. Similarly, more good practice descriptions could be developed and made available for enhancing exchange of experience.



ESPON 2020 – More information

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