

# The Determinants of Transnational Cooperation Within the Framework of the Interreg Programme

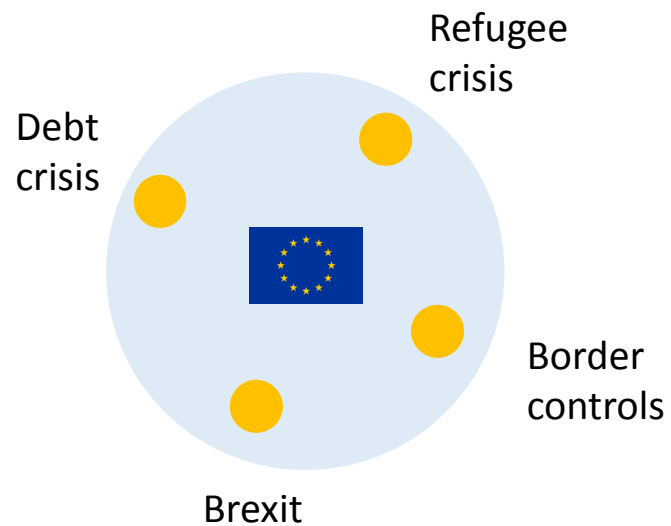
Master thesis 2016 – Some of the major results in a nutshell

Christoph Petry

Interreg North Sea Conference, Göttingen, 30 June 2017



# European cohesion under pressure?

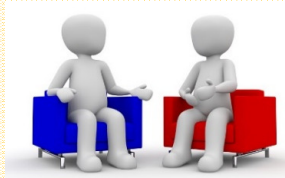


***“We need more Union in our Europe.”***

*Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, in his speech on the State of the Union, 2015.*



# What makes INTERREG so interesting



Partners from **multiple levels** of governance...



cooperate **across borders** in project teams



... and get **money from the EU** for that.



## Partnerships:

Joint actions and policy exchanges between actors to address common challenges.

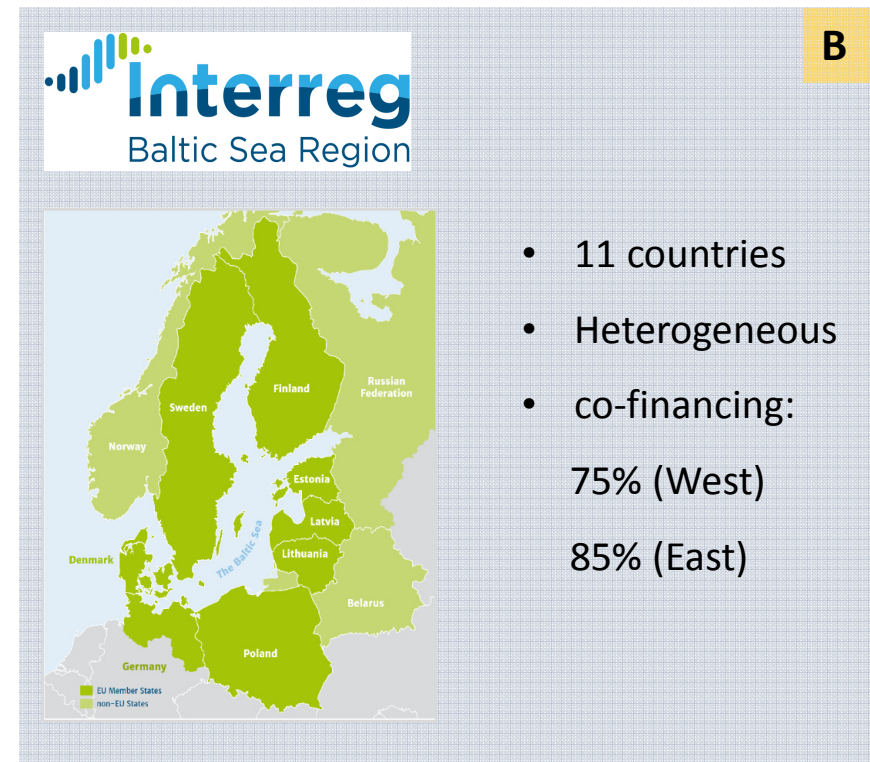
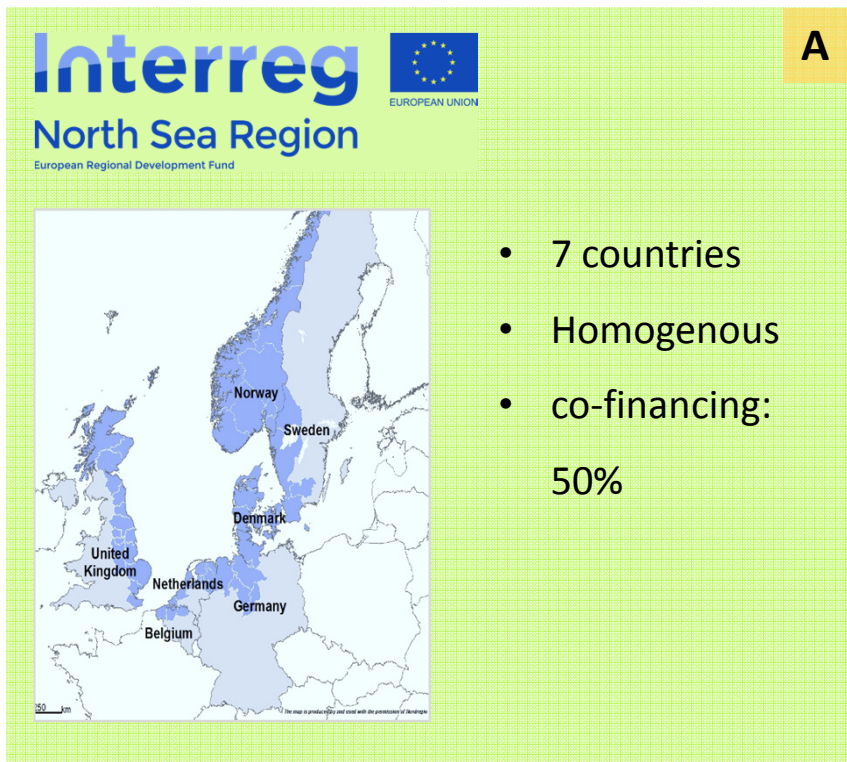


## Main research question

What determines the **partnership** of European transnational cooperation projects within the framework of the Interreg programme?

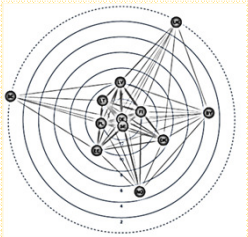


# Two cases of analysis: North Sea and Baltic Sea Region



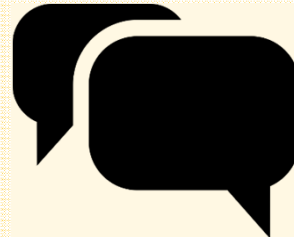
# A mixed methods analysis

## 1. Network analysis



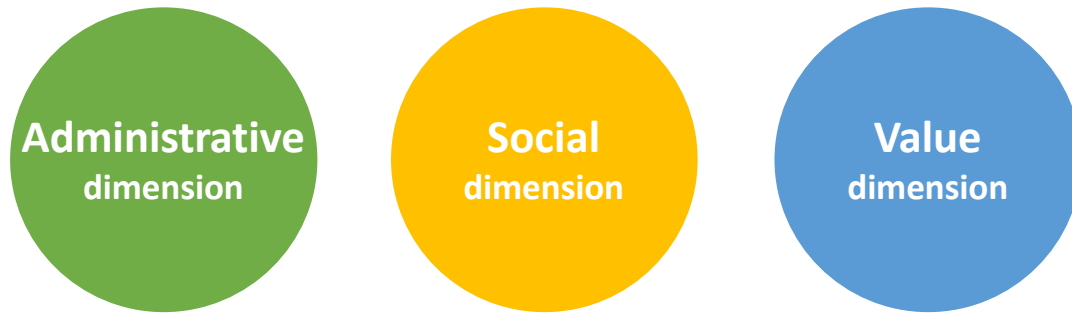
- 2007-2013 period
- 2014-2020 period (first call
- 3108 project partners in 215 projects

## 2. Expert interviews

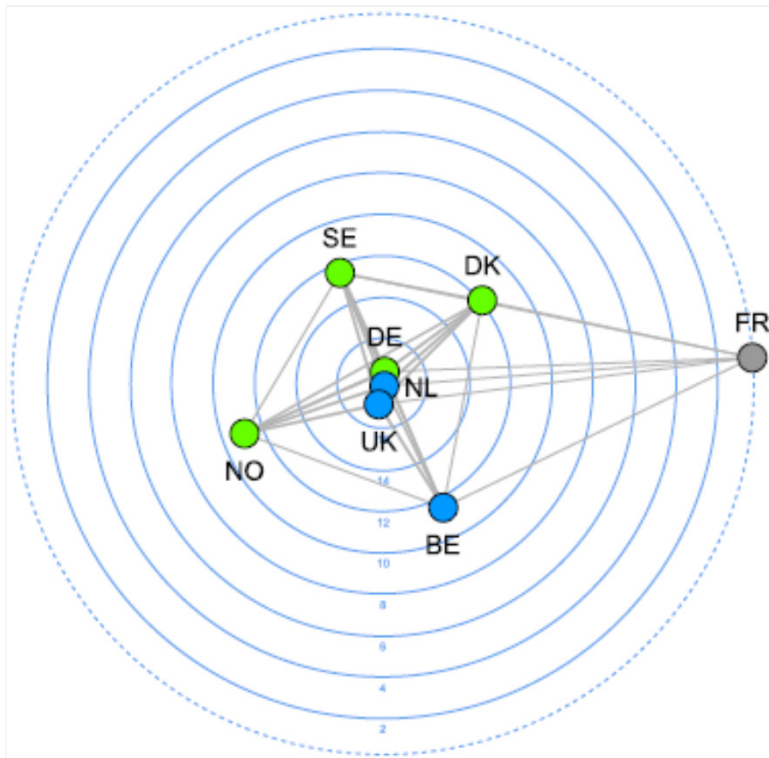


- 11 experts interviewed (anonymized)
- North Sea and Baltic Sea Region
- Two types of interview partners

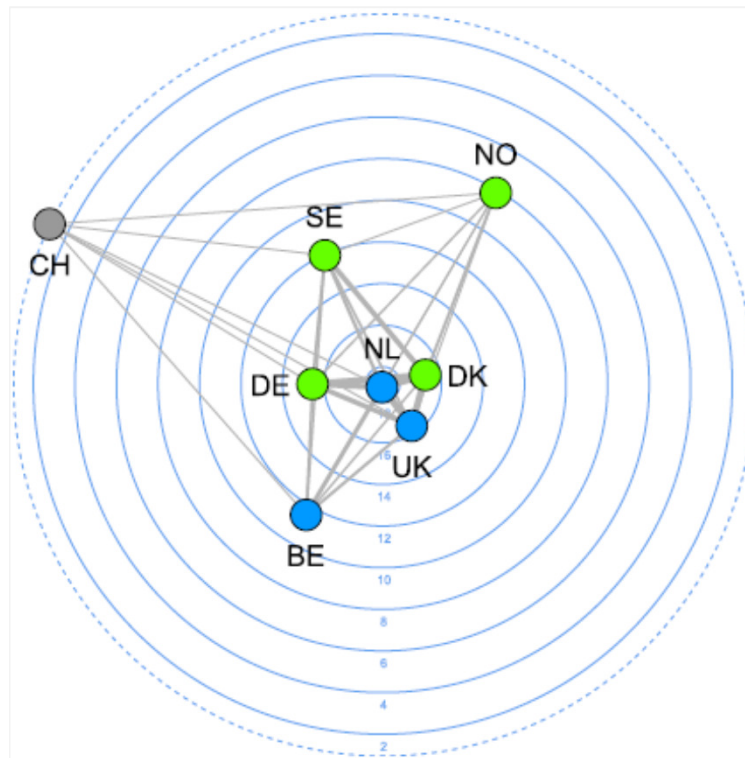
# Focus on three explanatory dimensions



# North Sea Region – Network analysis



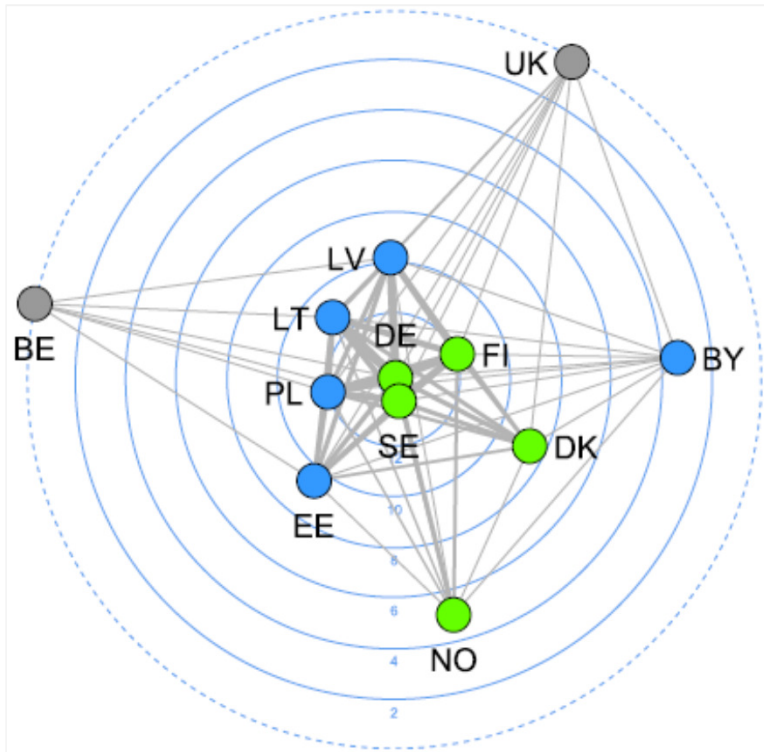
Interreg North Sea Region: 2007-2013



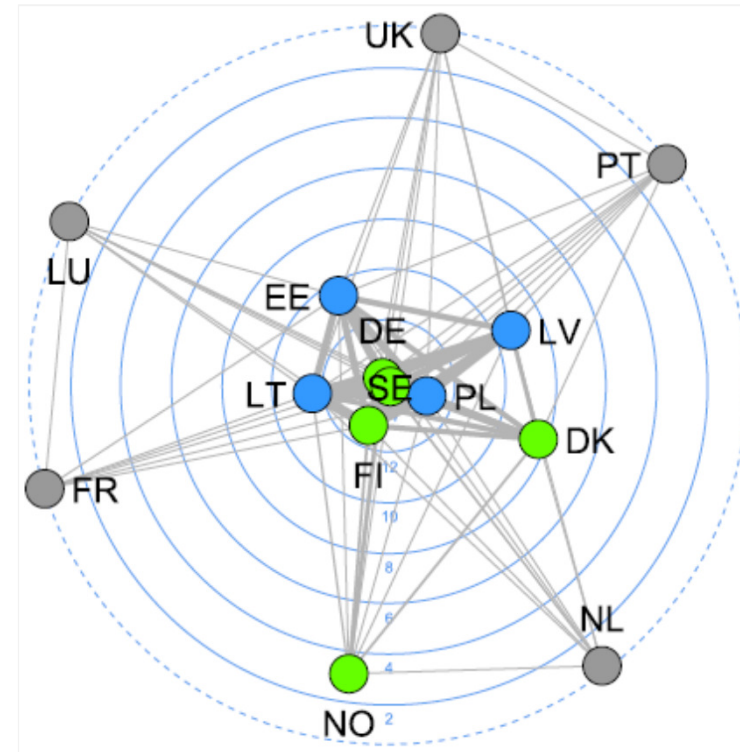
Interreg North Sea Region: 2014-2020 (first call)



# Baltic Sea Region – Network analysis



Interreg Baltic Sea Region: 2007-2013



Interreg Baltic Sea Region: 2014-2020 (first call)

# Important factors with respect to the administrative dimension



## Application procedure

To what extent is it perceived as complex and time consuming.

## Expertise

Involvement of external consultants.

## Alternatives

Other funding instruments that might be available.



But: These factors themselves do not sufficiently explain determinants of transnational cooperation.

# Important factors with respect to the **social** dimension



Social  
dimension

## **Mutual trust**

For instance through pre-existing connections.

## **Type of project issue**

There has to be a “real problem”.

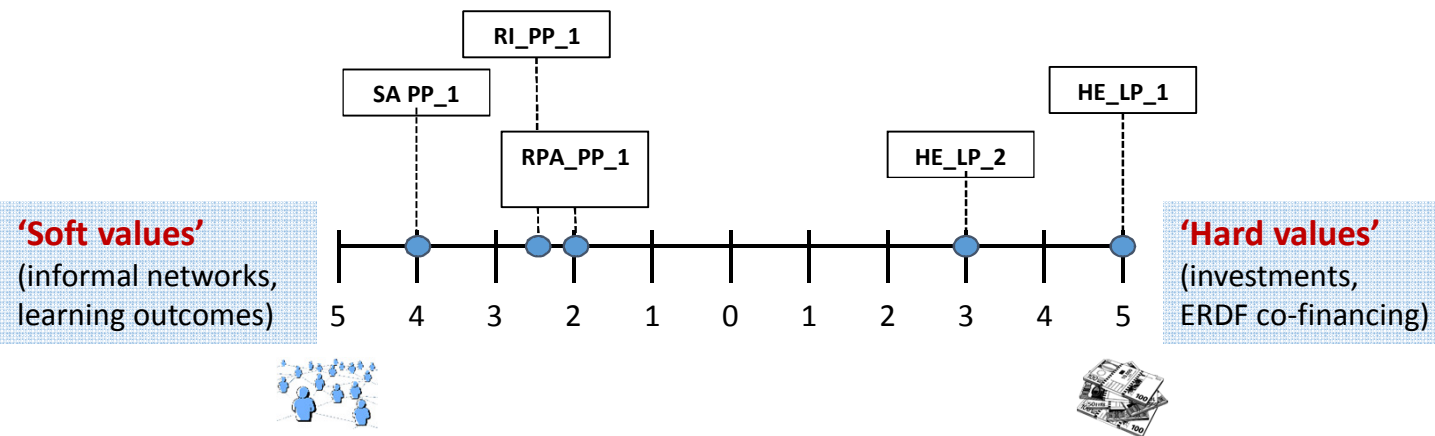
## **Individual competences**

Such as openness towards partners from foreign countries.

# Important factors with respect to the value dimension

Value  
dimension

## Project partners and lead partners



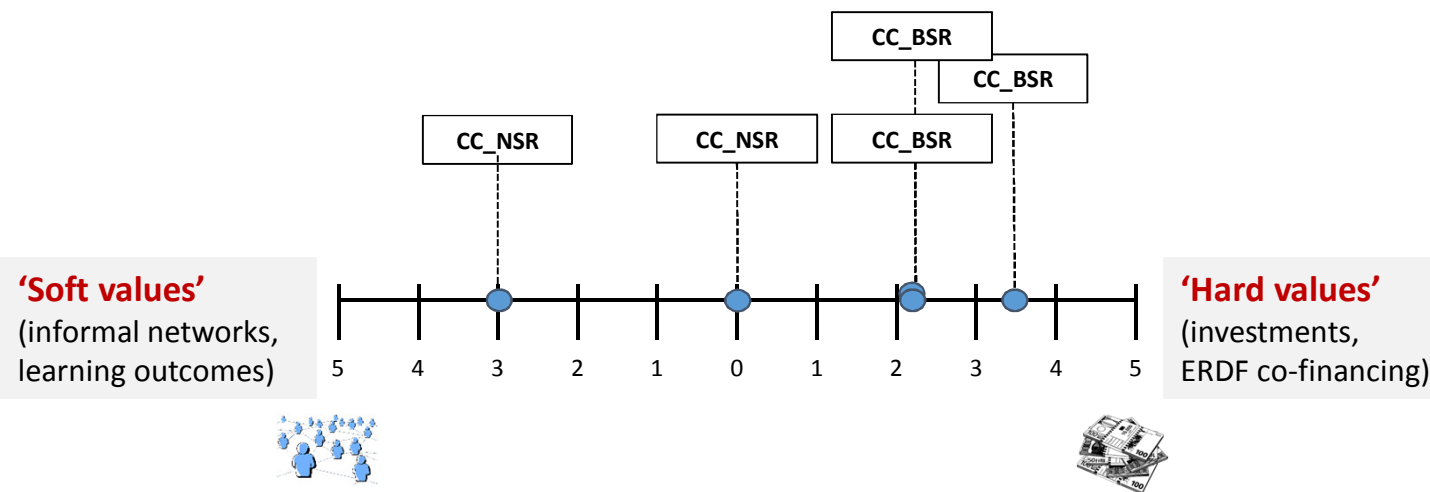
- **Co-financing:** for universities of primary interest
- **Informal connections:** highlighted by others

Distinction between 'soft' and 'hard' values (Dühr & Nadin, 2007)

# Important factors with respect to the value dimension

Value  
dimension

Policy advisors



- **North Sea Region:**  
Hard values seem to be less important
- **Baltic Sea Region:**  
Hard values seem to be more important

Distinction between 'soft' and 'hard' values (Dühr & Nadin, 2007)

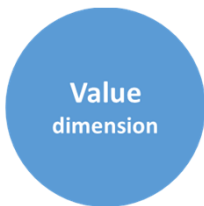
# Discussion of three determinants for transnational cooperation within INTERREG



Administrative capabilities of lead and project partners.



Mutual trust and experience in working together.



Depends on the individual actor and cooperation programme.

# Conclusion

*“Interreg is **a bit like Erasmus** – for organizations.”*

Quote from an  
Interviewed expert



# Thank you for your attention!



christoph.petry@posteo.de



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/christoph-petry-b398b511b/>

References:

- Cf. master thesis Christoph Petry (2016).
- Pictures retrieved from Pixabay, Wikipedia, Interreg BSR and NSR.