

The Role of Railway Connections in
Cross-Border Cooperation –
the Example of the Passenger Transport
between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk.

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The regions of North Karelia in Finland and the Republic of Karelia in the Russian Federation share a long common history and are part of the first Euregio across the Finnish-Russian border. This makes the region of a specific interest as the cross-border cooperation across European outside border is different from within the EU. The cross-border cooperation activities are ongoing and very successful. But still the border can be described as a boundary for interaction. One interesting fact is that the passenger transport situation between the two regional centres Joensuu (FIN) and Petrozavodsk (RUS) are not connected with any kind of timetable based public transport.

The aim of this work is to take this region as an example to understand the role of passenger transport connections – with a focus on railroad connections – for cross-border cooperation. This work will give some answers to this question based not only on the traditional border theories but also links with the network theory to proof the importance of transport connections. To understand the level of interaction and what role the railroad connections can play the work is based on expert interviews with local cross-border cooperation actors. .

The work shows in which way Karelia can be seen as a cross-border region divided by borders and what is the situation of the passenger transport in this region. In conclusion the work will show that railroad connections can play an important role for cross-border cooperation even though they are can not guarantee successful cooperation. Furthermore it will be proven that the importance of transport connection is in providing the possibilities to get to know the other side of the border and build up necessary levels of trust.

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List of abbreviations

AEBR = Association of the European Border Regions

CBC = Cross-Border Cooperation

CBI = Cross-Border Interaction

CBR = Cross-Border Region

ENPI = European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument

ERDF = European Regional Development Fund

EU = European Union

NGO = Non-governmental Organisation

OktZhD = Oktjabrskaja schelesnaja doroga (October Railways)

RZD = Rossijskije schelesnyje dorogi (Russian Railroad)

TACIS = Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States

VR = Valtion Rautatie (Finnish State Railroad Operator)

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Preface

I would like to thank all the people that supported me during the writing of this thesis.

There is of course first of all my supervisor Dr. Jarmo Kortelainen who encouraged me to continue on the right way and supported me with his comments. But I also want to thank all my fellow students - the discussions and comments during the research seminar and also later on helped to finalize the ideas into a structured thesis.

Last but not least I have to say a big thank you to my interview partners for their time and willingness. Without the interviews the thesis would miss an important part.

1. Introduction

1.1. Overview and Background

The regions of North Karelia in Finland and the Republic of Karelia in the Russian Federation are two peripheral regions with a common history. By European programmes (Euroregion/Interreg and the Neighbourhood programme) the basic idea of a cross-border region (CBR) was created. This research will be conducted within this region because I believe that the strengthening of the cross-border cooperation (CBC) is one of the main factors for a future regional development. There is already a lot of literature available about border regions and especially about CBC and also the importance of infrastructure projects has been acknowledged (van Houtum 2000; ANDERSON 2002; AEBR 2004). Therefore this research will deal with the specific case of the possibilities of a passenger train connection between the two regional centres in the CBR Joensuu and Petrozavodsk. This topic has been always in the mind of some planners and there has been already some attempts but there is still a lack of understanding the difficulties to establish a connection. With this thesis I examine possibilities to establish a train connection between this two cities and show which role railway connections can play in CBC.

An often reason for CBC is the regional development and it is widely known that regional development needs a functioning network. A cross-border social network can benefit the whole border region. But one basic obstacle for a functioning network is the transport infrastructure (KORTELAINEN 1997b, 175). Additionally the relationship between regional development and reliable transport infrastructure is a widely accepted fact (COM 2007c GIANNOPOULOS & GOULOUGARIS 1995, KORTELAINEN 1997a, NIJKAMP 1995). Even though that the importance of infrastructure for the regional development has been acknowledged, lots of emphasize within the European Union and also crossing outside borders is based on the central connections between the big centres and on high speed rail connections (CASCETTA ET AL 2011,1). This policy is isolating the peripheral areas even more (NIJKAMP 1995, 10). In cases of the Russian – Finnish cooperation on passenger transport for example, the main emphasize is on the Helsinki – Saint Petersburg corridor (BJERKEMYR et al. 1997, 96).

An importance of the Joensuu – Karelia connection might be neglected in a European viewpoint, especially in comparison to the Helsinki – Saint Petersburg connection. But from a regional perspective it is an important connection. Within the last 20 years we have seen an increase in the cross-border passenger traffic (KARELIAN INSTITUTE 2003, 26) and following the argumentation of MAKAROV (1999) CBC “increases the passenger stream”. The “current state of the infrastructure is not able to sustain large flows of [...] passengers across the border” (BOYKOVA et al. 2004, 88).

Currently the only timetable based way for passengers to travel to Petrozavodsk is a Russian operated aircraft service from Helsinki three times a week or travelling by train via Saint Petersburg. Between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk is no timetable based transport but there are taxi services by minibuses available that can be booked from local travel agents. Due to this the idea of a new passenger train connection between Joensuu and Petrozavosk has come up again (Euregio Karelia 2010).

1.2. Aims and research question

The aim of my research is to gain a better understanding about the passenger transport connections between Joensuu and Petrosavodsk, as I see a need for an improvement of the traffic connections between the two cities to improve the cross-border relations. Out of this understanding I aim at describing the role that railroad connections can play for CBC. There have been already attempts to introduce some services by Finnish companies like an air service and also a bus service but nothing kept running for a longer time.

Even though there is infrastructure existing there must be some reasons for difficulties. Both cities have airports, there is an international border crossing point (Niirala-Värtsilä) and a street- and rail network exists. The infrastructure might be not in a suitable condition and there might be lacks of funding but also some policy frameworks can cause difficulties. On the other hand railroad connections might improve the cross-border contacts and it is needed to proof this.

The research is based on the following research question and three supportive sub-questions.

What is the role of railway connections in CBC?

- ◆ What is the transport situation now and how it has developed?
- ◆ How do actors see the role of railway transport in cross-border relations?
- ◆ How could the situation be improved?

I start this work with the assumption that a train connection is a proper mean of transport between this two cities and can in different ways support the CBC in the Karelia region. The work will analyse the development of the traffic across the border and with an emphasize on the specific problems of the connection of two regional cities. The work is based on the example of the research region and I will give some generalisations of the results in the end.

1.3. Limitations

Even though the research about cross-border regions (CBR) and CBC is often linked with governance research, I will not directly address governance in my research. Anyway talking about policies always implies governance and that is why I want to mention it in the introduction. The processes of governance are important for the development of CBC because for example the “Euroregion is one organizational form of cross-border governance” (PIKNER 2008, 211). I have understood that governance is an import way to describe the processes of CBC, but as the aim of this research is more about the practical issues relating to CBC the aspect of governance is not further studied.

But not only the development across borders and changed due to CBC receive grown interest, also the chances of improving rail infrastructure for both cargo and passenger traffic have become an important issue in the European Union (LAKSHMANAN 2011). “Rail is undergoing a remarkable renaissance with substantial new investments and increases in demand” (BANISTER & THURSTAIN-GODWIN 2011, 212). In addition the passenger transport by rail has some specific advantages especially for journeys to Russia. In the viewpoint of public transport, train connections serves a bigger group then Bus transport and are still a environmentally friendly modal choice. The popularity of the new Allegro high speed train between Helsinki and St. Petersburg, not only among touristic travellers but also among business travellers shows the potential of train connections (HS 2011). Due to this reasons and a personal interest in rail traffic I will limit my research on the railroad connection.

The research is conducted from a European and Finnish viewpoint. Even though the interest of the Russian partners might be sometimes included I will not further evaluate that. Especially due to language borders, but also due to my educational background from central Europe I will “stay on this side of the border”. Anyway this does not mean that I do not pay attention to the relationships of the region with other regions within Finland, within the EU and with Russia because it is “more fruitful to study a border region in terms of its comparisons and relations with other regions and institutions”(ANDERSON & O'DOWD 1999, 596).

As there has been a lot of research on borders and border regions by researchers from several disciplines I will not create a new discussion on the issue where to allocate border studies (NEWMAN 2006, 144). In my opinion the field of geography gives me the freedom to use the views from different disciplines to create a definition that suits the needs of this study. The research on border related topics has undergone a great change. NEWMAN (2006) gives a good overview of the development of border studies, starting from the classic more descriptive approaches that is often situated in the field of political geography until the approach of a “border as process” (NEWMAN 2006, 148). For my whole research it is important to understand that it is not the border itself that is interesting but the effects that are produced by the border and its interpretation.

As VAN HOUTUM (2000) has identified there are three possible approaches to border studies. Anyway he further notes that there is not a clear distinction between the approaches and therefore I will keep all three approaches in mind for my work. The flow approach that basically builds up on the understanding of border as a barrier for physical interaction across the border is part of my descriptive analysis of the barriers existing, whereas the CBC approach is more about how to overcome this barrier function and how to stimulate the CBC. The third approach is aimed at the social construction of borders and borderlands. During my further work it will become clear that this three approaches are strongly linked.

Furthermore it is important to notice that as said before this is not a work aiming only at border research but also looking at the transport geography issue. Transport generally is describing the activity of transferring goods or passengers from one place to another. “Transport geography is thus concerned with the explanation, from a spatial perspective, of the socioeconomic, industrial and settlement frameworks within which transport networks develop

and transport system operates” (HOYLE & KNOWLES 1992, 2). Therefore I limit my use of theories not only at the border research but I link it with the concepts of network and mobility.

1.4. Structure of the thesis

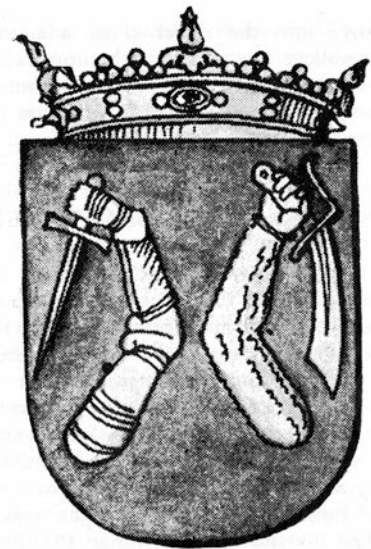
After I gave in this chapter a short introduction into the topic of my work I will discuss extensively the research area especially in the viewpoint of the border development and of course the public transport. The cooperation with Russia and also the other neighbour states I see as that important that it follows in an own chapter. After I have gave a lot of background information I start in chapter four with the theoretical discussion related to the topic. Before I start with the analytical work in chapter six, seven and eight I will give a short introduction in my methodology of data collecting. The analytical part is first putting emphasis on the passenger transport between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk to provide a basis for the answer of my research question and then in the seventh chapter on the general ideas of Karelia as a cross-border region. The chapter eight will highlight some of the difficulties that arise for CBC and finally in chapter nine I will discuss my results and link them with the theories. Furthermore I will give some ideas for a further research.

2. The research area

2.1. Karelia

The term Karelia is used in different contexts and to describe different areas. Therefore I need to clarify how the different concepts of Karelia are used by me. Even though low populated it has become an important issue in Finnish, Swedish and Russian history. Especially in Finland Karelia has been often "described as a borderland or battlefield lying between East and West" (FINGERROOS 2008, 235). Karelia has never been an institutional entity defined by borders, it has always been defined by the power structure in the region between the eastern (Soviet Union/Russia) and the western (recently Finland) powers (OKSA 1999, 285ff).

Nowadays the most important usages of Karelia are referring to the Russian Republic of Karelia, to the Finnish regions North Karelia and South Karelia and to the Euregio or Euroregion Karelia. Anyway the meanings of Karelia differ a lot. It can be said that "Finnish Karelia comprises five areas. They are the isthmus, which Finns call *Karjalan Kannas*, Border Karelia (*Raja Karjala*) to the east of lake Ladoga and, between the two, Ladogan Karelia (*Laatokan Karjala*) which is limited by a fjorded coast to the south and by Lake Saimaa to the north. At the meeting ground of Border Karelia and Ladogan Karelia is the town of Sortavala. The great northern lobe of Karelia (*Pohjois Karjala*) belongs to the lake plateau; west of the hinge of Viipuri, with the Gulf slope as background, is *Länsi Karjala* or western Karelia (italics in original)" as already noticed by MEAD (1952, 40) and is still valid because the concept of Karelia is not referring to a clear and coherent physical unit. There are no natural boundaries marking Karelia as a single unit, it can be described as a 'heterogeneous area'. Some parts have never been part of Russia and some never of Finland. Therefore the cultural connections vary. "In total, Karelia has been given over forty definitions in different periods. The central feature of all these definitions has always been the border" (FINGERROOS 2008, 236).



Picture 1: The coat of arms of the region Karelia from 1562

Source: PAASI (1996, 89)

The term Karelia has a strong importance in Finnish history as it is part of the nationalistic movements. "The persistence of this group [the inhabitants of Karelia] in the least accessible part of Karelia meant the retention and accumulation of a body of customs and culture upon which the emergent Finnish nation drew during the nineteenth century" (MEAD 1952, 43) even though in a selective way. During the enlightenment lots of Finns traveled to Karelia and got influenced by Karelian culture. Like for example Elias Lönnrot, who wrote the Finnish national epic Kalevala mainly based on Karelian folk poetry (BAZEGSKI & LAINE 2000, 38ff). As the Finnish-Karelian relations have been pretty flourish until the Finnish interdependency, Karelia has been always the bridge between eastern (orthodox) and western cultures and some of the mixtures of this traditions are still alive, The 'Road of the Bard and Boundary' (Runon ja Rajan tie) is one example of the old heritage used in the modern context (PAASI 1996, 127ff). Anyway Karelia has not only been the bridge, but also the battlefield between eastern and western cultures. The code of arms of the region of Karelia (see Picture 1) that dates from 1562 and is still used today as the code of Arms of North Karelia symbolizes the confrontation between East and West (PAASI 1996, 89).

The term Karelia is clearly seen different by Finns and Russians. The Russians see more the political administrative unit of the Republic of Karelia, whereas the Finns relate the term with the more mystified lost areas. The term Karelianism is for the Russians not related to identity building but to a description for "a natural heaven for wildlife, a land of forest and pure nature" (Jukarainen 2009, 225).

In my dissertation I will use the term Karelia to refer to the region on both sides of the border following mainly the territories of Finnish North Karelia and the Russian Republic of Karelia. Anyway a clear territorial bordering is not necessary. I am aware of the danger in using this term in regards of the feelings and identities behind this term especially due to the concepts of "lost Karelia" (NEVALAINEN 2001). But I show with my dissertation that in the future a new Karelian identity based on this cross-border region can be created. Anyway this is not related to the "political Karelianism" (FINGERROOS 2008, 238) that dates back to the late 19th century and had mainly the independence of Finland as a goal. The term Karelia is used by me only as a descriptive term about the border region and as a suggestion for a source of a new regional identity to promote CBC. Besides that the term Karelian is not referring to anybody living in this region, but to a member of the ethnic group of Karelians that form an ethnic minority

in Finland and Russia. Even though it is important to note that there is officially no Karelian question. Both, the Finnish and the Russian government, deny the existence of any border dispute. It is only the civil society that rises the question of Karelia. As I showed before the definition of Karelia is difficult and it can be said that "for the largest parts it exists in the imagination of the people" it is somehow "the image of the nation"(VAN WIJHE 2010B).

2.2. The Finnish-Russian Border – from the 12th century towards a Schengen border.

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the development of the Finnish-Russian Border until today, to gain a better understanding of the meaning of this border. Without a good knowledge of the historical background of the border it is not possible to understand the nowadays situation and the perceptions of this border. I will focus on the research area (see map in Picture 2), so mainly on the border development in the areas of Finnish North Karelia and the Russian Republic of Karelia but of course most of the historic development effected several parts of the border. Source: LAINE 2006a, 11



Picture 2: Map of the research area

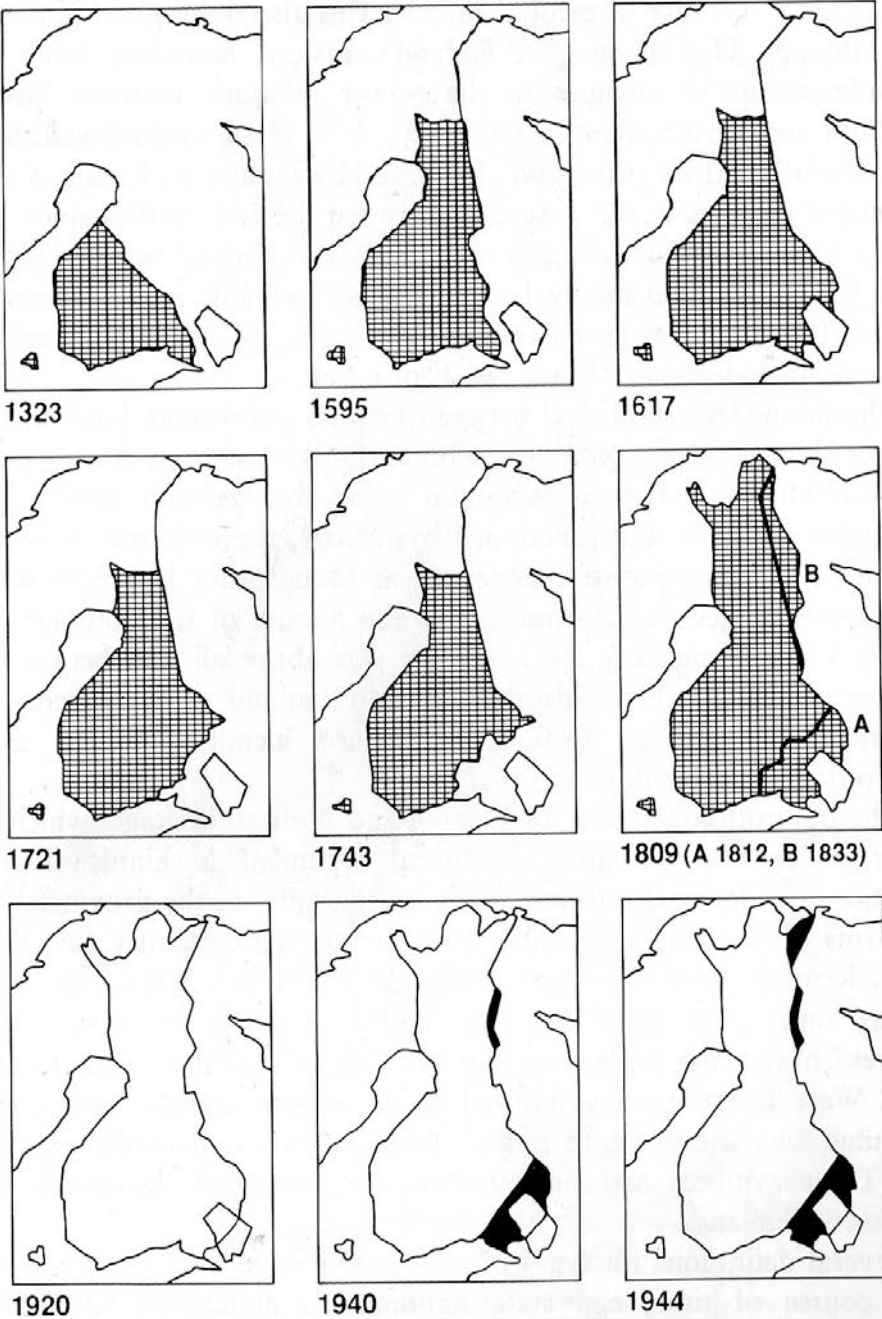
First of all important to mention is that today the Finnish-Russian border has one of the highest income differentials in the world and this affects all kind of CBC activities (COM 2007a). Even though the border regions on both sides are characterized by a low population density and remote peripheral areas.

Unlike the western border of Finland, the eastern border has undergone several changes. The most important changes are illustrated in Picture 3. The history of the Finnish eastern border is first characterized by the historic relation between the Kingdom of Sweden and the Republic of Novgorod and later the Kingdom of Moscow. The agreement of Notenburg (Orekhovetz) in 1323 was the first agreement that shaped the territory of Finland and also marked the separation of the religious influence between the orthodox and the catholic (later Lutheran) church. During the following centuries the struggle between Russia and Sweden over the influence of the nowadays Finland continued and the border line changed in several agreements.

After the Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617 Sweden gained large parts from Russia and started to convert orthodox inhabitants to the Protestant faith. Due to the conversion and a heavy taxation many Karelians moved eastward to Russia and the areas where settled by Finnish tribes (KORPELA 2008). However, until the 18th century the border does not really exist in the everyday life because the cultural and economical relations between Finns and Karelians were relative close. With the peace treaties of Uusikaupunki and Turku in the 18th century Russia got parts of the territories back and after another war between Russia and Sweden in 1808-1809 with the peace treaty of Hamina (Friedrichshamn) the territory of Finland became an autonomous part of Russia and the trade connections continued and were even improved. The Karelians were strongly active in trading between Finland and Russia and the 'laukkukauppa' (pedlar trade) as a special kind of street-hawking became an important source of income for the Karelians (BAZEGSKI & LAINE 2000, 38FF).

But with the independence of Finland in 1917 the situation largely changed. Nearly all cross-border trade was cut down and the "new" border areas suffered from food shortages until the railroad to Suojärvi was built. Even though the inner regional cross-border trade continued on both a legal and illegal basis. During the 1920's and 30's mainly agreements about timber trade were made. Basically Finland started to develop an own foreign policy and the border was used to create an understanding of we and the 'other' (VAN WIJHE 2010B). During

this time also the number of refugees to Finland raised, after already many of the followers of the loosing part of the the Civil War had left already to Russia. Besides that, the legal flow of persons across the border was pretty small. The Russian part of Karelia became a autonom-ous republic between the two World Wars and on the same hand nearly fully a border zone with different restrictions mainly concerning the movement of people and goods (BAZEGSKI & LAINE 2000, 42ff).



Picture 3: The areal shape of Finland since 1323 88)

Source: PAASI (1996.

The last changes of the borderline of Finland happened during the Second World War, when Finland lost land after the Winter War of 1939-1940 and the Continuation War (1941-44). This is when large part of Karelia went under the control of the Soviet Union and therefore Finland had to cope with more than 400,000 evacuees from that areas (FINGERROOS 2008, 237). After this no change of the borderline but changes in the border regime happened.

Nowadays the border is a clear boundary separating 'us' (the EU) from the 'outside' (of the EU) and protected under the border regime of the Schengen treaty. During the whole period of existence "the border evidently hindered daily mutual interaction" (Laine 2006b, 4) even though some interaction across the border has always been existing. Anyway "the separating impact of the border on the structure and functions of the border regions explain, why the region it divides is today peripheral in many senses of the word" (Laine 2006b, 4).

2.3. Petrozavodsk and the Republic of Karelia

The Republic of Karelia is situated in the northwest of Russia and part of the Russian Federation. Like other "ethnically-defined republics in the Russian Soviet Socialist Federated Republic (RSFSR)" (LANKINA 2007, 4) the Republic of Karelia was created "in the context of Stalin's nationalities policies of the 1920s and 1930s" and obtained more freedom than the 'oblasti'. After the collapse of the USSR the republic kept the partial freedom and was for example allowed to start own foreign relations to some extent. And it had freedom in the building of institutions within the republic. Therefore as a republic within the Russian Federation it has an own governmental body and internal institutional structure. In opposition to other regions the Republic of Karelia maintained a relatively democratic system of local autonomous and powerful administrations within the republic (LANKINA 2007, 5f).

The administrative centre of the Republic Petrozavodsk is situated in the southern part of the Republic of Karelia and around 420 km north of St. Petersburg, 900 km northwest of Moscow and around 350 km east of the border to Finland. The western border of the Republic of Karelia is as well part of the border of the Russian Federation with Finland. On an area of 180,5 thousand square km Karelia has a population of 684.200 in 2009 of which 76.4 percent are urban citizens (RoK 2010_A). Petrozavodsk has somewhat 290 thousand inhabitants (STBR 2004, 27) and forms the biggest city in the Republic. Nearly three quarters of the cit-

izens of the Republic of Karelia are Russians. Other nationalities are Karelians (10%), Byelorussians (7%), Ukrainians (3,6%), Finns (2,3%) and Vepsians (0,8%)(RoK 2010B).

The Republic of Karelia is characterized by its peripheral northern position. Wide areas are nearly unsettled and the main economic activity is based on natural resources. The major industries are woodworking and pulp-and-paper industries (41.2%), ferrous metallurgy (18%) and electric power industry (14.8%). Even though Karelia provides natural resources for the Russian Federation, as it produces for example 23% of the paper of the Russian Federation. It is also one of the biggest export regions in Russia due to the fact that it is situated next to the border. More than 50% of the production and in some branches even up to 100% are exported (RoK 2010A).

Another important and growing sector in the Republic of Karelia is tourism. The Northwest federal district is the biggest tourist destination in Russia with a total share of 38.8% of the amount of tourists in Russia. Besides the main destination St. Petersburg (24.6%) the Republic of Karelia can attract a notable amount of tourists (2.7%) due to its attractiveness and a relative high standard of infrastructure (SF 2003, 39). The Republic of Karelia offers a beautiful landscape and a rich cultural heritage. The Republic of Karelia has a unique landscape that is characterized by often untouched forests and lakes including Europe's biggest lakes Onega and Ladoga. Large areas of old grown forest are conserved in national parks like Paanajärvi, Vodlozersky or Kalevalsky and nature reserves like the Kivach waterfalls. But also the cultural heritage offers a vast variety from rock carvings made by ancient people more than five thousand years ago to the orthodox monastery history that can be seen in the Unesco world heritage museum island Kizhi in the lake Onega. Furthermore in Karelia there are a lot of monuments of the Finno-Ugric people like Karelians and Vepsians left. Not only the former monastery on the Valaam archipelago in the lake Ladoga but also several rune-singing villages and other signs of the roots of the Finnish national epos Kalevala are preserved.

The rich touristic potential is recognized and therefore tourism is "one of the priority areas for regional development in the Concept of Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Karelia until 2012" (RoK 2010B) and the tourism infrastructure is continuously improved.

We can see that the Republic of Karelia has a lot of economic potential and the centre Petrozavodsk is the hub for economic and touristic activities in the Republic.

2.4. Joensuu and the region North Karelia

The region of North Karelia is the most eastern region of Finland and Joensuu the capital of the region. According to the EU-division it is a NUTS 3 region. In a bigger scale North Karelia is part of the NUTS 2 region Eastern Finland (MILITZ 2001, 161). It shares a 296 km long border with the Russian Federal Republic of Karelia. North Karelia has an area of 22 thousand square km and in the end of 2009 the region had around 166 thousand inhabitants. Nearly 44% of them (73 thousand) are living in the regional capital Joensuu. Besides Joensuu the region is mainly rural and characterized by its peripheral situation. Most parts of the region are facing the problems of declining and ageing, especially young people are moving to the centres and leaving the rural areas. From Joensuu it is around 450 km to the capital Helsinki but only 70 km to the closet border crossing point. Besides this peripheral position North Karelia has developed importance in some industry sectors. Especially forestry and wood industry are an important factor in the region but also food, plastics, metal and stone. Besides the classic industry sectors the tourism is a growing sector. The region of North Karelia offers cultural and natural tourist attractions. Not only the national landscape of Koli but also several other national parks like Patvinsuo and Petkeljärvi and other nature reserves and national hiking areas make "North Karelia [...] the hiker's dream come true" (PKMS 2004). On the other hand there are several cultural monuments like the orthodoxy monastery 'new Valaamo' in Heinävesi or the rune-singer house in Ilomantsi.

The administrative structures in Finland have changed since the 2000s due to EU regulations and the need of more efficient municipal structures. Even though the traditional two-level system has not been changed in general, some power has been transferred to the indirectly elected regional councils (maakuntaliito). These regional councils play a major role in planning and developing of strategies for the region (MILITZ 2001, 233). Also due to this role they are one of the main actors for implementing EU programmes and CBC (SCOTT & MATZEIT 2006, 45F).

After the merging of several municipalities over the years, in 2010 a major reform replaced "several provincial offices and other state administrative bodies in the region" by "two new types of authorities: 15 centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment and six Regional State Administrative Agencies (EVY)". The centre for economic development, transport and the environment (ELY) for North Karelia situated in Joensuu is only re-

sponsible for the business and industry, the labour force, competence and cultural activities and the environment and natural resources. The responsibilities of transport and infrastructure are taken care of by the ELY centre for North Savo in Kuopio (ELY 2011).

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern business infrastructure • International key enterprise • Knowledge infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able actors, expertise in EU funding programmes • IST/IT/ICT knowledge • University, Polytechnic, Metla, European Forest Institute • Location and Border • Cultural identity • Nature • Well functioning infra and service structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low number of enterprise • Level of R&D development activities • Abilities for international activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low number of actors • International position <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remoteness, peripherality • Long distance to the core of economic and political power • Attitudes, recognition • Unemployment, migration
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalisation (opening up) • External border region to Russia, developments in the Russian economy • Future developments of the EU • Wider exploitation of key expertise areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry • Modern optics (photonics and IT) • Material technology and 3D product design • Reacting to global developments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cleanness and security • Exoticness, city – wilderness, four seasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russian border, Greek Orthodox culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalisation (china phenomena) • Social exclusion, change in age and demographic structures • Declining infrastructure • Uncertainty of the Russian economy • Development of the EU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration of power • Change in the status of border regions in the foreign and security policy of the EU • Weakness of regional image, remoteness, introspectiveness

Picture 4: North Karelia SWOT Analysis

Source: PKM 2009

This shows that the administration is partly following the regional division but partly also the bigger division into regions. This is why the regional councils of eastern Finland work close together. Anyway the regional development is mainly supervised by the regional council and therefore they monitor it and try to elaborate strategies. One outcome of this processes is the SWOT Analysis that provides us with a comprehensive picture of the region North Karelia. It identifies the peripheral position with long distances to economic centres as a weakness of North Karelia but on the opposite the location at the border and the cultural identity as a

strength. Especially the closeness to the Russian border is the source for some opportunities even though they are threatened by possible changes in the status of the border and the development within Russia. As well a declining infrastructure and a weak regional image are threats therefore the development of public transport infrastructure between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk can help to reduce the low accessibility and also support creating a new regional image (PKM 2009).

The border itself is guarded by the border guards and customs that are both responsible for the border control but with different tasks. Where as the customs take care of the crossing of goods the border guards are actually guarding the crossing of the border by people. In practise both authorities are present at crossing points and check the crossing traffic. The border guards have to check the identity of people and their right to enter the European Union and the customs task is "to control international flows of goods in order to promote legal and prevent illegal foreign trade" (KONONENKO & LAINE 2008, 13).

2.5. Passenger transport in the research region

The border has always influenced the development of the transport system in the region of Karelia. On the one hand we can see that the planning in the Republic of Karelia was always orientated north-south to connect Murmansk via Petrozavodsk with St. Petersburg and Moscow (BJERKEMYR ET AL 1997, 85ff). On the other hand, in Finland we can see a similar situation where the infrastructure is mainly orientated towards Helsinki. Already shortly after the Second World War some agreements about passenger traffic between Finland and Russia were signed in 1947 and the first direct train from Helsinki to St. Petersburg was introduced in early 1953 and a year later extended to Moscow (BAZEGESKI & LAINE 2000, 51). But just in the last years of the Soviet Union the border opened also for tourists, which were mainly former refugees who wanted to see their old homes. Especially the opening of the crossing point in Niirala resulted in an increase of border crossings.

Anyway, in the case of public transport we can see a major concentration of the resources to the main connection between Helsinki and St. Petersburg. The travel times have improved over the years and in December 2010 the introduction of the new high-speed train in combination with customs control in the running train brought travel times down to three hours and forty minutes for the 450 km distance.

On the regional level the situation is slightly different. The two regional capital Joensuu and Petrozavodsk are not as well connected as it might be possible. The distance between these two cities is approximately 350 km and there is a road connection as well as a railroad line. Both connections run via the border crossing in Niirala/Värtsilä.

The road connection has been improved over the last ten years and there are still constructions going on to put the street in a proper state. The road connection is part of the 'Blue Road' project that aims at improving the east-west road infrastructure between Nesna (NO) and St. Petersburg via Umeå (SE) and Vaasa (FI) (ALIORAVAINEN ET AL. 2007, 39f). Anyway due to bad road conditions until now and waiting times at the border crossing the travel time by road is up to about seven hours. As soon as the construction works are finished the travel time will be reduced significantly. Between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk there are several kinds of passenger transport by minibuses (kind of taxi service) and other means of organised group transport. The introduction of a train was on the agenda but due to not enough estimated passengers it has not been introduced (OJAJÄRVI & HUTTULA 2008, 38). The minibuses can be ordered through certain travel agents, but are mainly used by Russian citizens and citizens from the Joensuu region that travel regularly. For tourist purposes this connections are not suitable. The language barrier and lack of information are the biggest obstacles. The only regular connection by train goes via St. Petersburg and due to that the travel time is at least 16½ hours as we can see in Table 1. This is not a suitable option for an average traveller.

There has been as well a Finnair connection by plane but it was cancelled due to lack of customers and the bad shape of the Airport in Petrozavodsk.

Despite the fact, that the connections between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk are that bad, each city is well connected within the country. On the Russian side Petrozavodsk is situated at the main railroad connection between Murmansk and St. Petersburg and has several trains daily to Murmansk, St. Petersburg and Moscow as well as regular direct connections (through carriages) to other Russian cities (including Kaliningrad). Besides the rail transport there are as well several connections by plane and bus connecting the city with the region and the other regions in Russia. As you can see from Table 1 it takes around 7 hours to go by train to St. Petersburg even though the connections might not be at suitable daytimes for tourism or business purposes because trains depart or arrive during the night times.

On the other hand Joensuu is well connected by train, bus and plane to other major cities in Finland. According to the guidelines of the Finnish ministry of transport and communications for public transport connections within Finland the minimum services between the “largest regional centres” is supposed to make a stay of “at least three hours at destination during normal office hours” (VEHVILÄINEN ET AL. 2008, 20) possible. There are six daily departures to Helsinki by train and a night bus connection as well. As you can see from Table 1 it takes less than 5 hours by train to the capital. But also other cities are well connected with Joensuu. There are four regional train departures to Pieksämäki from where you can connect to the western coast and north Finland. In addition there are regular bus connections to cities all over Finland. Furthermore Joensuu has an airport with several flights a day to Helsinki. Anyway long distance trains are only leaving to the direction of the capital region. Even though the regional trains to Pieksämäki are used for long distance travel the speed and comfort is not suitable to attract new long distance travellers.

Table 1: Travel Time by Train Winter 2010

from	to	Joensuu	Helsinki	St. Petersburg* ¹	Petrozavodsk
Joensuu			4:20 – 4:51 (0)	6:19 – 7:24 (1)	16:31 – 24:13 (3) * ²
Helsinki		4:22 – 4:40 (0)		3:36 – 6:28 (0)	13:31 – 21:33 (1) * ²
St. Petersburg* ¹		6:00 – 6:26 (1)	3:36 – 6:26 (0)		7:11 – 8:48 (0)
Petrozavodsk		17:10 – 21:23 (2)* ²	14:19 – 18:59 (2) * ²	7:04 – 8:17 (0)	

*¹ any station
*²transfer in St. Petersburg between different stations might be necessary
In brackets the maximum number of changes

Only the better connections were chosen, connections with several changes or much longer travel times are ignored
Source: own calculations based on the winter timetable 2010/2011 received by www.bahn.de (accessed 14.12.2010)

As we can see, there is a lack of proper cross-border traffic connections and therefore the travel distance between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk is relative long. It is obvious that the border has always hindered the development of traffic connections and therefore the cities of Joensuu and Petrozavodsk are peripherally located.

Besides the not perfect connections there is traffic between the two cities and it has increased over the last years. Even though the amount of passengers seems not high enough for a economic public transport there is charter traffic that covers the demand in addition to the mentioned taxi services. Especially in the summer time a rail connection could be worth to try (OJAJÄRVI & HUTTULA 2008, 44). The border crossing point in Niirala is the closest international crossing point to Joensuu and on the way to Petrosavodsk. It is also a railroad border

crossing point but only used for rail cargo traffic. The passenger crossing is by car and bus. As you can see from Table 2 in 2007 there were a total number of 898.00 passengers in 435.908 passenger cars and 1.629 Busses crossing the border. The Niirala crossing point is by the amount of passenger car crossings the 3rd biggest crossing point within Finland whereas the importance for Bus traffic is much lower due to the fact the two big crossing points Vaalima and Nuijanmaa are situated on the Roads to St. Petersburg.

Table 2: Border Crossing Niirala 2007

	<i>Finland -> Russia</i>	<i>Russia -> Finland</i>	<i>Total</i>
Passenger Car	217.263	218.645	435.908
Bus	820	809	1.629
Passengers			898.000

Source of data: OJAJÄRVI & HUTTULA 2008

Besides the amount of passengers also the origin and reason for the border crossing are interesting. We can see an importance of Russian citizens as in 2008 38 % of the foreign visitors are from Russia and mainly Russian citizens (KRZYWACKI 2009, 14ff). The border crossing in Niirala is mainly important for visitors from and to Russia and therefore the structure of the visitors from Russia is mainly interesting for this study. For over half (54 %) of the Russian visitors some kinds of leisure trips are the main reason to visit Finland and only 11 % are arriving in Finland because of business trips (KRZYWACKI 2009, 59). Most of them (67 %) stay only for the same day (KRZYWACKI 2009, 31). For Eastern Finland the share of day trips is extremely high (70 %) and it is also the most favoured region for the Russian visitors (32%) (KRZYWACKI 2009, 59).

These numbers just give a first idea of the situation but can support some assumptions. It is not possible to get a more detailed picture about the travellers between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk without further research, but a basic picture is that eastern Finland is one of the most important regions for Russian travellers and Joensuu is one of the centres in this region. We also see that a big share of the visitors from Russia is not staying overnight or just for one night and the main reason is other leisure. This raises the assumption that a huge group of the Russian visitors is coming to Finland for shopping reasons. Besides the leisure trips, visitors due to business purposes are another important group.

As the passenger numbers of the three biggest road border crossing stations show in Table 3 the number of crossings increased a lot during the last years. The numbers for the railroad crossing at Vaalimaa have not changed until 2010 significantly but after the introduction of the new high speed train connection there is a huge increase that is not shown in any statistics yet because the year 2011 is not over. It is obvious that the bigger crossing points have a bigger increase as well but still the Niirala crossing point shows significance increase of traffic as well. It can be estimated that the increase in this border station is basically due to more crossings between Petrozavodsk and Joensuu regions whereas the major touristic crossings to St. Petersburg are mainly via the two other big border crossings. In my opinion this picture leads to the assumption that the cross-border relations between the two Karelia's increase.

Table 3: Change of Passengers crossing at the biggest road crossing points

	2007	2010	Change	
			Passengers	%
Niirala	898 435	1 022 496	+ 124 061	+ 13,8
Imatra	930 308	1 320 164	+ 389 856	+ 41,9
Nuijamaa	1 634 362	2 315 600	+ 681 238	+ 41,7

Source of data: Rajavartiolaitos 2011

3. Finland's cooperation with the neighbours

Finland has a long history of cooperating with its neighbour countries, especially with the nordic countries like Norway and Sweden, but also with Russia and the former Soviet Union. There has been always interaction across the Finnish-USSR border but mainly based on centralized political agreements and bilateral trade (ALANEN & ESKELINEN 2000, 59).

Especially the trade across the border was strong – in 1985-86 for example more than 20 % of the Finnish exports were going to the Soviet Union. “But with the decline of the Soviet System this export market collapsed” (PAASI 1999, 673). But his cooperation was only based upon the nation states and not the regions. This is why the borderland can be seen as alienated borderlands during this time (VAN WIJHE 2010B).

Anyway shortly “after the collapse of the USSR, the interaction across the border accelerated” (LAINE 2006b, 2). The new start of the cooperation can be marked by the treaty entitled “Cross-border cooperation between Finland and the Russian Federation” that was signed in 1992. This treaty was based on the earlier “Good Neighbourhood and Co-operation Agreement”. The aim is to promote cooperation throughout all regions and support the regional development. This treaty identifies the main topics of cooperation that include economic development and transport links.

The border areas are divided into three zones. The Barents zone, the Karelian zone and the south-eastern zone including St. Petersburg. ‘The Karelian Development Zone’ is based on a transnational transport and development corridor from Norway to the Russian Republic of Karelia. The main aim for this region is to support economic cooperation by providing and improving cross-border infrastructure to underline the ‘gateway’ function of this region (VON MALCHUS 1998, 13f; ALIORAVAINEN et al. 1997, 35).

This shows that the cooperation with the Federal Republic of Russia “focuses on Northwest Russia, especially the Republic of Karelia, the Leningrad and Murmansk oblasts and St. Petersburg” (MFA 2006). In general all cooperation activities are based on 'Finland's Strategy for Cooperation in the Neighbouring Areas', a policy document of the Government of Finland. “A key objective of Finland's cooperation with its neighbouring areas is to support economic and social development in the regions and to promote the preconditions of cooperation

between the public authorities, business life and citizens” (MFA 2006). The coordination of the cooperation activities is done by the 'Unit for Regional Cooperation' in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Nearly one third of the budget are allocated to economic cooperation and therefore this is the most important field.

Besides the economic cooperation other areas include the "promotion of environmental protection and nuclear safety, combat of the spread of risks related to contagious diseases and drugs, and support of civil society development and administrative and legislative reforms” (MFA 2006). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the main financial source for cooperation projects with a budget of EUR 19.5 million in 2010. In addition to this budget there are around EUR 1.6 million of funds for cooperation with neighbouring regions by other ministries. The focus is mainly on the cooperation with Russia and therefore from the Budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a total of EUR 18.7 million is allocated to cooperation with Russia.

As mentioned before the cooperation boosted shortly after the collapse and led to the improvement of the border infrastructure and new international border crossing points. The new approaches of CBC started mainly on the federal level until Finland became a member of the European Union in 1995. Finland's entry into the EU "brought in the broader dynamics of international politics and enabled the implementation of new bilateral programmes within the EU frameworks” (LAINEN 2006B). And in 2001 also the Schengen principles were applied to the border regime. From this moment on the cooperation was based on a two level approach. On the one hand the bilateral cooperation continued and on the other hand the European level cooperation appeared. Finland took part in the development of the Strategies towards Russia. The EU-Russia dialogue has created five expert working groups covering transport strategies, infrastructure and public-private partnership, transport security, Road and rail transport and air and water transport (COM 2007B). As well as the EU the dominant sponsor and promoter of the CBC whereas Russia and its regions have been more passive (LIIKANEN ET AL. 2007, 30).

The EU wants to promote the socio-economic cohesion to make the EU a more integrated and stable entity. CBC is seen as "an important means to achieving the overall EU aim of economic and social cohesion across the EU” (LINDQUIST 2010, 12). The major financing for CBC is done by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) mainly via the former called INTERREG programmes. Within the INTERREG programmes one of the main object-

ives was to promote CBC as an important source of economic development and therefore the INTERREG programmes became the most important source of financing for CBC projects first within the EU but with the foundation of the EUREGIO Karelia also across EU external borders. The INTERREG programme is continued as the European Territorial Cooperation Objective (ETCO) in the fourth programme period. “The objective covers three types of programmes: cross-border cooperation, transnational cooperation, and interregional cooperation” (LINDQUIST 2010, 12). Anyway this programme is now only aimed at internal borders. Also not effecting that much the Finland – Russian cooperation it the in 2009 adopted “major strategic policy document on the territorial future of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR): The European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)” , that “sets out the framework for the strengthening of territorial and thus also transnational cooperation around the Baltic Sea”(LINDQUIST 2010, 12).

Besides the objective of economic cohesion, the second objective of the EU is to guarantee a stable neighbour Russia and therefore the 'Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States' (TACIS) programme was launched to provide financing for projects in the Russian Federation and the former states of the Soviet Union. As the INTERREG IIA and Phare CBC also the TACIS CBC had wanted to support border regions and stimulate the creating of cross-border networks. Therefore it supported the improvement of transport connections (MARTINOS 1998, 8).

The two programs were badly coordinated on the EU-Administrative level and within the regions and a major problem was that the funding was restricted either to the EU or outside of the EU. To ease the financing of programs on both sides of the border the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) was introduced. It “permits a single application process, including a single call for proposals covering both INTERREG and TACIS operations, as well as joint selection process for projects” (LIIKANEN ET AL. 2007, 31). Since the INTERREG programme is continued under a different name, the ENPI is the follow-up programme of the former soviet states area aimed TACIS and the Mediterranean area aimed MEDA programmes. The current programme period of the ENPI is 2007 – 2013. “The ENPI targets sustainable development and approximation to EU policies and legislation, and improves the EU's capacity to support cross-border cooperation along the EU's external borders – thus giving substance to the aim of avoiding new dividing lines” (LINDQUIST 2010, 42).

With the Euregio Karelia project they try to “overcome the problem of incompatibility” (JUKARAINEN 2002,86) started.

There are three ENPI programme areas in the north: South-East Finland/Russia (FI, RU), Kolarctic (NO,FI,SE,RU) and Karelia (FI,RU). The ENPI is operating under the framework of the existing cooperation agreements between the EU and the neighbouring countries. Its policies focus on exchange of experiences and the forming of 'twinning arrangements', but it also supports CBC and finances therefore “joint programmes bringing together regions of member states and partner countries sharing a common border” (LINDQUIST 2010, 42). It also “brings strongly the cross-border aspect to regional development” (KARELIA ENPI 2007, 5) and therefore the ERDF is co-financing the CBC projects of the ENPI.

Besides this cooperation and financing instruments the interaction across the borders is guided by the general policies for the northern area covering the nordic countries of the European Union, Iceland, Norway and Russia. This policy document is called Northern Dimension.

In practice the most active partners in Finland are the municipalities because they are in a historical strong position within the Finnish political system. But the EU instruments are mainly aimed at the regional level and this is why a regional level had to be established in Finland. On the other hand in Russia the situation is more difficult. CBC is effected by different laws and documents (Constitution (1993), Law on the State Border (1993), Law on Entering and Leaving the Russian Federation (1996), Conception of CBC (2001)) and for example the law about the state border has several obstacles for CBC (LIIKANEN ET AL. 2007, 35f).

For the nowadays situation it means that several actors on Finland and in Russia are involved in the CBC work and the development of further strategies. An important actor is the in 2000 founded Euregio Karelia. It was the first Euregio that was founded across the external EU border and is therefore different than inner European Euregios. It was founded by the regional councils of Kainuu, Northern Ostrobothnia and North Karelia and by the Republic of Karelia. The Euregio Karelia is seen as a “continuous process, in which cooperation aiming at joint goals takes place on a concrete level on both sides of the border” (EUREGIO KARELIA N.D.). With the introduction of the European Neighbourhood Programme one major goal of the Euregio Karelia was reached – a combined funding for projects on both sides on the border. Due to this the Euregio Karelia is nowadays a political forum. It aims at supporting the CBC

in the current ENPI programme and monitoring the “European Commission's decision making process as regards regional policy after 2013 and ensure that the area's interests are taken in to account” (EUREGIO KARELIA N.D.).

The Euregio Karelia is headed by the board of 12 members representing the Finnish and the Russian side equally. The members from Finland are the executive directors and leading political representatives from the three regional councils and on the Russian side there are high-level governmental representatives. The board has two chairmen at the same time – on Finnish and one Russian representative. The meetings of the board can also be attended by representatives of the Finnish Ministry of Employment, the Finnish and Russian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and three European Commission. The operational body is formed by the secretary that consists of four members – one from each regional council and one nominate by the government of the Republic of Karelia. The Secretary-General and the Chairmen of the board come from the same area (EUREGIO KARELIA n.d.).

While the political lobby work for the region is done within the political forum of Euregio Karelia the project work is done within the Karelia European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation Programme (Karelia ENPI CBC) that is in the same area then the Euregio Karelia and is the continuation of the Interreg II and Interreg IIIA Karelia programmes and the Euregio Karelia Neighbourhood programme (KARELIA ENPI CBC 2007, 7; INTERVIEWEE 3; COM 2007c), The Karelia ENPI CBC provides the framework for the CBC between 2007 and 2013. The key objective is to increase wellbeing in the region with CBC.

The Karelia ENPI CBC can be seen as the most important programme for CBC in Karelia but in addition the Region of North Karelia is also involved in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC). The Barents cooperation is a joint cooperation initiative that comprises the northernmost regions of Finland, Norway, Sweden and North-West Russia. Even though North Karelia is only a observing member the representative of the region has the right to speak in the meetings and can influence the cooperation work. In addition to the wok on regional level, the regional council is also member of the cooperation group between the two states. Within this group there is also a sub-division called Karelian-Group (INTERVIEWEE 3).

Furthermore not only the regional council is active in CBC but also the central Karelian municipalities (Kiter, Kesälahti, Rääkkylä and Tohmajärvi) and the city of Joensuu have an own cooperation agreement with the administration of Sortavala in the Republic of Karelia. The

so-called border forum (rajafoorumi) meets once a year to talk about the challenges in the region and about possibilities of local CBC (INTERVIEWEE 3). Out of this cooperation there has not been developed big projects but it is a start to talk with each other and mainly the direct at the border smaller situated municipalities cooperate. The city of Joensuu has a long time cooperation with the City of Petrozavodsk – also due to the fact that the cities can be seen similar. They have a similar working structure and their position within in the country has as similar significance even though they differ in size (INTERVIEWEE 4).

We have seen that the cooperation is done on all political levels and in different sizes. Especially due to financing tools the most important projects are done with in European Union projects and with the support of the financing of the Finnish government. For a better understanding of the difficulties it is necessary to know about the numerous actors involved in CBC. Financial resources are a major factor but also contacts and structures are important. The region of Karelia on both sides of the border is involved in the major EU programmes and has therefore the need to follow EU regulations for the financing. One important factor of this is, that there are EU financial resources but they always need to be co-financed by the regional partners. Without direct political legitimacy the regional council has only few own resources and needs therefore the support from municipalities and the Finnish government. But still it has become obvious that the regional council is one of the most important driving factor for CBC in Karelia. Also if the municipality of Joensuu is relative active in CBC the regional council is part of the important European projects for CBC.

4. Theoretical approaches

4.1. Region

4.1.1 *What is a Region?*

There are several ways of defining a region. The easiest and most common way is to use administrative divisions. Within the EU the most common administrative division is the differentiation by the NUTS categories. According to the European Commission a border region is a NUTS II/III region that is situated at an border (COM 2007_A). Besides that this is a simple political-administrative definition; it can be used to define a border region as a region next to a border independently from how region is defined. Anyhow according to P_{AASI} (2000) regions have been often first a construct of politicians, and then later became reality as a social construct for the inhabitants. This is a continuous process of 'territorialization and re-territorialization'. In this way a region is understood as a "complex synthesis or manifestation of objects, patterns, processes, social practises and inherent power relations that are derived from simultaneous interaction between different levels of social processes" (P_{AASI} 1996, 33).

According to P_{AASI} it is a process of 'institutionalization' until a region is fully established. During the process a region has to establish a territorial shape, symbols, institutions and then as the last step it has to be established and socially recognised. Out of this process of institutionalization we can find the definition of a region. A region is an area with a territorial shape that is marked by some boundaries, it has its own symbols like a name. Furthermore a region has own institutions that socialises the inhabitants "through institutional practises into varying territorial memberships" (P_{AASI} 1996, 35) and finally the region is recognised by the inhabitants and they identify themselves with the region. A fully established region gives an identity to the inhabitants by creating a difference between 'us' and 'them'.

The difficulties of framing a cross-border region are obvious as soon as you try to define it apart from administrative structures. Even though it might be possible to just say a cross-border region is a region that goes across a border it seems difficult. At least a fully established region in the understanding of P_{AASI} is really difficult to create even though it might be thinkable. Anyway, naturally a border within a region might be vanished as soon as the process of

institutionalization is finished. Therefore I see the need to understand a cross-border region as a region that is still in the region building process and the goal might be to reach a fully established region. But anyway a static approach might not be useful for certain reasons. It might be possible to define the border area by differences from the rest of the state, like for example the mentality of the inhabitants or by a static definition like a specific maximum distance from the border (KŘENEK 2005, 25). Therefore the simple technical definition by the European Commission by the Nuts III regions is useful to get a properly defined research region. Even though the shaping of a border region is not much depending on administrative divisions and it should be more defined by the radius of interaction and cultural similarities. Anyway for CBC these definitions are not useful because the area of power of the cooperating institutions might be different.

Some authors like RIEDEL (1994) use the term border region for a region that is divided by a border but I will continue to use the term cross-border region and understand a border region as a region next to a border. Anyway RIEDEL (1994, 23f) points out that a region divided by a borderline is different from the rest of the country and therefore has also some advantages and not only the disadvantage of peripheral position.

Defining a CBR based on the idea of a 'functional region' (SCHAMP 1995) is a useful way. More detailed it means that a CBR is an entity of similar characteristics like culture and that has some interaction but is divided by a state border. This approach is taken by the Council of Europe for example that sees a CBR as a "transfrontier region" that "is a potential region, inherent in geography, history, ecology, ethnic groups, economic possibilities and so on, but disrupted by the sovereignty of the governments ruling on each side of the border" (COE 1995, 10). But as this basically means a reduction to functional entity, it has to be added that a CBR can also be an acting unit. Important is that CBC is a way to form a CBR. Finally "it does not matter whether a CBR is built upon cultural or ethnic commonalities. A common historical background, existing functional interdependencies or a mere community of interests as it is precisely the process of construction that matters" (PERKMANN 2002).

As the discussion of the definition of a CBR follows quite much the region discourse, I need to create a clear definition for this thesis. The importance of the functional aspect is obvious and also shows a clear connection to the transport infrastructure. But on the other hand I see it as important to keep the social and identity aspect as important. For the understanding of

the needs and problems of creating a cross-border train connection a extensive definition is not needed and can in my opinion not be provided. Therefore I will understand CBR as a region across an international border that is somewhat defined by the regions on both sides that participate in CBC activities. The borders of the region are not necessary sharply marked, but more diffuse even though due to administrative borders still painted on the map. Most important is that the CBC activities are an important part of the region building and support the creation of an cross-border identity. Thus when I speak of a CBR Karelia it can be seen as the aim to reach in the existing Euregio Karelia but it is more a vision of a socio-cultural identity of the inhabitants in the Finnish and Russian borderland.

4.1.2 EUREGIO/Euroregion

In a European context a cross-border region is mostly referred to as euroregion or Euregio. Even though in some cases the terms of euroregion and Euregio are seen as different concepts (ÖREK 2005), mostly the euroregion is just the more descriptive term and Euregio the name for the institution. A Euregio is a clearly defined political concept but the institutional structure is depending on the cooperating partners. The structure is supposed to ease CBC and also improve the personal contacts between the inhabitants. The idea is that they get to know “those who live nearby but are separated by the state border” (CRONBERG 2000, 171). A Euregio can be seen as a cross-border regional organisation with some governmental powers that works in all fields, and especially values socio cultural and socio economic issues the same (DEITERS 1998; SCHELBERG 1998).

With the creation of the first euroregion 'Euregio' in 1958 on the German-Dutch border, the ideas of working together to handle the peripheral situation within the states got a framework. The Euregio has become a model for other regions to form a framework of cooperation and the creation of a lot of similar initiatives has led to the creation of the 'Association of European Border Regions' (AEBR) in 1971 and in the 1990s the model was taken as a important model for economic development in the European Union. During the last decades the institutionalisation of the CBC has been effected by the development of the European Union, like the increasing cross-border traffic and the extension of the European Union (CELATA & COLETTI 2008, 5). The Euregio and CBC is a clear success story of the European Union and

“by 2010, hardly any border in the EU was not part of a cross-border agreement” (MIRWALDT 2010, 2)

4.2. Border

4.2.1 What is a border?

To “understand the obstacles to CBC, how networks of trust can be established, and how the democratic governance of cooperation might be achieved” (ANDERSON 2002, 2) it is necessary to analyse the function of borders. This is why I will concentrate also on the border aspect. The studies of borders and the related terms of boundaries or frontier has been always a topic in the different fields of geography. For example the rise of the European Union has changed the role of borders from a traditional barrier function towards a bridging function. This is why the definition of border and border regions has become more difficult (VAN WIJHE 2010A).

The term border can be seen in different ways. Already the differences between the British English definition, where border is “an area running parallel to and on both sides of the boundary, which is a line without area” (LUNDÉN 2006, 8) and the American English definition, where the term border usually refers to the dividing line and borderland is used for the area around this line, make it difficult to find a simple definition of the term. If we look into other languages we find different words and definitions. Like in Finnish the word “raja” or the German word “Grenze”, both can be used in several meanings. But in general we can state, “a border is a line that separates one from another. [...] for many whose everyday life is affected by a border, a particular line drawn on a map is often not the factor limiting their actions; it is rather the mental, symbolic, cultural, ethnic and virtual aspects that make a border incommodious from them” (LAINE 2007, 49). This separation “creates an 'inside' and an 'outside'” (VAN WIJHE 2010A). The term boundary is a broader term that is linked to the term border (PAASI 1999, 670).

Furthermore according to PAASI (2000, 88f) boundary is not a technical term but a social construct. Also AHPONEN & JUKARAINEN (2000, 5) follow this approach and claiming that “*borders are fundamentally human-made social constructs*” (italics in original). This means that “boundaries and borders are now understood as a verb, it is not so much about the border,

but about b(/)ordering (Houtum 2005)” (VAN WIJHE 2010A). Furthermore we can say that boundaries can create identities in the political but also in the social world. It is important to note that traditionally the border had a function of separating and hindering someone or something to cross and just recently the borders or border areas have started to be the areas where people tried to contact and get to know each other (NEWMAN 2006, 150). As PAASI (1999, 670) says about boundaries:

“Boundaries exists and gain meanings on different spatial scales, not merely at the state level, and this meanings are ultimately reproduced in everyday live. Boundaries are rarely produced in the border areas themselves, however, since these are usually nationally peripheries in an economic sense and their essential meanings as far as foreign policy, the national economy and politics are concerned are typically produced in centres”.

This citation of Paasi shows the complexity of the term boundary and therefore I need to develop a more clarified definition of my understanding of the term for this study. I acknowledge the importance of the boundary and border discourses. To ease the further understanding of the text I will use the terms border and boundary in two different ways. I see border as a descriptive term of a line and boundary as a more complex term. Boundary describes a social construct of the effects of a border and implies a process and social interaction. The important term is border as a barrier or to say it otherwise: Borders have a barrier effect which means that they are “...obstacles in space or time that – apart from normal average distance friction costs in spatial interaction – impede a smooth transfer or free movement of information and activities” (NIJKAMP ET AL. 1990, 239).

With this approach I do not want to say that the terms are the same; I know that the term border is generally more often used to describe the legal term of a border as a marking between two territories (ANDERSON & O'DOWD 1999, 594f), but as any kind of border involves political and social aspects – which makes the definition so complicated – I want to reduce the complexity of the definition in accordance with my approach for the whole research. Even though “understanding a contemporary border or border region demands some theoretical and historical contextualisation of border in general” (ANDERSON & O'DOWD 1999, 594) I do want to concentrate more on the practical aspects of the border in the research region than on a theoretical discussion on border definitions. The research on borders becomes interesting when

you put it into the local context. As mentioned by ANDERSON & O'DOWD (1999) already in the first sentences of the introduction:

Every state border, every border region, is unique. Their meanings and significance can vary dramatically over space and time, as regimes change in one or more of the adjoining states, as borders are 'closed' or 'opened', or as price advantages lurch from one side of the border to the other. Borders and their associated regions require localized study and repay detailed comparison. But they have a great variety of material uses and symbolic meanings and display apparently bewildering diversity of characteristics and relations.

It is important to understand that there is an interaction across the border and that between what it is bordering. Therefore I will in the following put also a high emphasis on the historical development in the research region. Considering the idea that borders and boundaries are “products of social practise” and looking at “what happens at the border” so to say following the ‘policy-practise-perception approach” (VAN WIJHE 2010A) is what I do. This is why I look at the practises at the border, at activities across it and as well at the policies on the Finnish-Russian border especially according to public transport. Therefore I use the term boundary as a “set of practises and discourses” (VAN WIJHE 2010B) whereas the term border is referring to the actual border itself.

4.2.2 Border as an obstacle

This barrier effect has been proved in economic geography already by BRÖCKER (1984) and NUSSER (1985) and even earlier works by LÖSCH (1940), CHRISTALLER (1968) and GIERSCH (1949) have not lost validity. This leads to the assumption that the barrier effect is mainly depended on the development of the physical infrastructure but this is not the case. Like BRUINSMA (1994 cited by Van Houtum 2000) argues it is much more the nonphysical factors that play an important role. The economic and sociocultural factors have a great influence on the strength of the barrier effect. While this barrier definition and the flow approach is a solidly economic approach the CBC approach gives a more rich and broad idea. The border is still identified as a barrier but now the barrier is more understood as an obstacle “to success or prosperous integration and harmonization process” (Van Houtum 2000, 64).

Anyway instead of measuring the degree of hindering it is more important to understand the reasons and find a solution how to lower the obstacles because it is seen that border regions “could profit heavily from the benefits of integration and cooperation” (VAN HOUTUM 2000, 64). These ideas are heavily promoted by the European Union for the inner community borders but can be transferred also to the outside borders with a lower degree of openness. This is especially important because otherwise the peripheral position of the border regions at the outside borders would be manifested. The basic concepts and terms “like trust, transaction costs, interaction costs, learning, and embeddedness” (VAN HOUTUM 2000,64) can be used for the analysis of the border between North Karelia and the republic of Karelia as well.

If we understand the barrier effect of the border as any condition or action that hinders or restricts free movement and interaction of people, capital, products, services, ideas, etc. An open border opens the possibilities for social interaction. It is a bridge between the countries and prevents people and companies from orientating only inside their own territory and reducing possible economic development (LAINE 2007, 51f). Even though borders can be “windows of opportunities” (NIJKAMP 1995,10) they often reduce the performance of a network due to geopolitical reasons but also due to barriers based on “institutional, physical or human impediments” (NIJKAMP 1995,10). They form an obstacle in a free transfer of people, goods and information. Most of the barriers are man made like “congestion, fiscal constraints, institutional rules, technical conditions, market regulations, cultural inertia, language barriers and information shortage” (NIJKAMP 1995,10). The barriers differ from border to border and also in their possibility how to overcome them.

When speaking about the barrier effects the focus is quite often on the general effects for the CBC development but especially for this thesis it is important to have a closer look at the effects on traffic generation. Even though general development affords are made into a reducing of traffic in the global world for a successful cross-border traffic connection by train a certain amount of traffic has to be generated. The effect of international borders on public transport is a field that is mostly studied in relation to commuting traffic in highly populated areas and mostly on internal European borders. As this thesis is analysing a regional connection between two regional centres that do not have commuting connections it is obvious that commuting traffic will not be a main source of new traffic.

Anyway it is possible to take the already proved barrier effects for commuting traffic and transfer them to the given Joensuu – Petrozavodsk link. Following KNOWLES & MATHIESSEN (2009) the barrier effects can be divided into three categories: political, economic and cultural. While according to KNOWLES & MATHIESSEN the political barriers are for example the visa and custom control procedures but not the differences in taxation because they are added to the economic category. This shows that the categorisation is done based on the area of effect and not by who is influencing the effects and can do changes. The political barriers are nearly not existing at the EU internal borders but are therefore even stronger at the outside borders of the EU and are therefore an important barrier effect for the cross-border traffic between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk.

The economic barriers figured out by KNOWLES & MATHIESSEN are especially focussing on taxation problems besides the cost for transport due to fees and tolls. The differences of income tax and the way how the taxes are charged as well as differences in the social security systems are much more important barrier effects for commuting traffic than for a connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk. But the currency exchange rate fluctuations are also an important factor for any kind of traffic. The fluctuations of the EUR – RUB exchange rate can affect not only the prices for the transport itself but also the attractiveness of travelling across the border for business, shopping or touristic reasons. Besides the more important effects KNOWLES & MATHIESSEN mention also the problems of high prices international phone calls and the differences in the banking system as barrier effects even though of less importance.

In addition the cultural barriers can be seen as generally stronger on the Finnish – Russian border. The language barrier is still a strong barrier not only as it is creating identity but also as communication barrier. Furthermore the cultural differences besides language are existing and have to be coped with. As they are even existing between Sweden and Denmark it is quite obvious that they also exist even stronger between Finland and Russia. An important factor is the “ media perspectives” (KNOWLES & MATHIESSEN 2009, 163) and how much the region on the other side of the border is in the focus. Besides the negative description as barriers some of these effects can also be seen as a chance for cross-border traffic. Especially the economic differences are source of traffic across the border for example for shopping but also for transferring labour or business activities. Even the cultural differences can be seen

positive as they might influence the development and enrich the cultural experience of the inhabitants.

4.2.3 Cross-border cooperation

The idea of CBC is strongly linked with the development of the European Union. It dates back to the 1950s and the “first institutionalized cross-border cooperation was established on the Dutch-German border in 1958” (ROMAN 2010,2). Since then it has been spread all over Europe and nowadays there is nearly no border region not involved in CBC activities. The different CBR vary “between each other regarding their scope, working systems and levels of institutionalization, however all of them involve a certain level of trans-border cooperation and commonly realized initiatives” (ROMAN 2010,2). In general CBC “means cooperation and collaboration between local and regional authorities on different sides of a national border, aimed at the joint management of different kinds of activities” (CELATA & COLETTI 2008, 5). This cooperation can be “more or less institutionalized” (PERKMANN 2003, 156).

A more detailed definition is that CBC protagonists are always public authorities, it must be located in the realm of public agency. CBC refers to collaboration between subnational authorities in different countries. The actors are normally not legal subjects by international law and therefore CBC involves so-called ‘low-politics’. It is often based upon informal or ‘quasi-judicial’ arrangements among the participants. CBC is foremost concerned with practical problem-solving in a broad range of fields of everyday administrative life and it involves a certain stabilization of cross-border contacts over time (PERKMANN 2003, 156). One keyword of CBC are the so called euroregions or Euregio and nowadays it is an “integral component of the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy [...] and of the EU-Russia Strategic Partnership” (COM 2007A, 4) and therefore has reached the external borders.

In difference to the aim of nearly vanishing the borders within the EU the CBC at the external borders aims at supporting a “sustainable development along both sides of the EU's external borders, to help decrease differences in living standards across these borders”, it wants to promote local cross-border “people-to-people” actions (COM 2007A, 5). With the strengthening of the civil societies and NGOs contacts across the border, local governance and democracy can be promoted and the mutual understanding increases. In short CBC can be

defined as a strategic and project orientated cross-border interaction between neighbours that involves mainly local and regional partners from different sectors (KŘENEK 2005, 27).

It is important to understand that CBC “does not create some kind of supranational authorities” (ROMAN 2010,3). Anyway it influences the decision making process and gives more powers to the local and regional authorities by somewhat creating a new level of governance (ROMAN 2010,3). A common problem of CBC is that it is mainly visible on the political level and the inhabitants are not involved (LÖFGREN 2008, 195). But CBC projects can only be seen as successful when they are not only effect the political cooperation but also the daily live of the inhabitants in a positive way. The introduction of a cross-border public transport connection can be a start for supporting the participation of the inhabitants.

4.2.4 Mobility across borders

As before I based my writings a lot on the well known field of border studies and related it already with the network studies. Anyhow border studies is important for this research as the research area is situated at a border but I intend to link it with concepts from transport geography. I do see transport geography as a field of geography that relates the ideas of several geographical field to transport. Transport geography “should embrace and accommodate theories and methodologies from other social and physical sciences that can better assist our holistic understanding of the nature and impacts of transport and communication processes and the mobilities – spatial, social and psychological – that may accompany them” (HALL 2010, 1). And this is exactly what I want to start from with my question about the impacts of changes in the transport infrastructure across the border.

The nowadays challenge is “to find new ways to understand the complex casual web in which transport is embedded” (NIELSEN ET AL 2005,1) an an important basic concept therefore is mobility. Mobility as a concept is a more modern approach that in general refers to the ability of movement within space and time it refers to the Latin terms *mobilitas* (mobility) and *mobilis* (mobile). In general the mobility is divided into realised and potential mobility. Mobility is used for several kinds of movements. The movement within the position of an individual in the society is called social mobility while the abilities of flexible thinking are called mental mobility. But for this study the physical or spatial mobility as the ability of moving within space is

referred to when talking about mobility. The physical mobility can be referring to temporary or long-term moves within the space (also virtually) (GATHER ET AL. 2008, 23ff).

The traditional approach to mobility is to understand mobility as the movement of single individuals and the measurements of their movements while traffic describe the movement of individuals (or goods and news) during a fixed spatial and temporal term. But I will follow the definition of GATHER ET AL. (2008) whereas traffic describes the realised movements and mobility describes the potential possibilities of movement. This results in that, that more mobility does not necessary means more traffic but just better possibilities of fulfilling the wishes for movements. Mobility is important for the networked society. People need to get from one point to another to meet each other by any mean of transport (physical and virtual). This is why the research on mobility has also become important in social sciences (CANZLER ET AL. 2008, 1).

As said before mobility is defined often as movement between two places but this is lacking something. So it should be more defined by the three dimensions movements, networks and motility. Movements are the geographical relocating of somebody or something in a physical or virtual understanding. As described in an earlier chapter networks are the frameworks for the movements. But to express the mobility fully a third dimension is important - motility. Motility expresses the access to networks in various ways and also the skills to take advantage of the access and their appropriation or „ what the actor does with this access and skills“ (CANZLER ET AL. 2008, 2f).

The demand for travelling results in different motives and this motives affect the modal choices and abilities (time, money, comfort). Therefore a differentiation of the traffic by the reason for the journey is useful. A big amount of Journeys is related to the daily commuting because of the job or school. The job traffic has a major share in the so-called rush hours and is limited to a certain distance when done on a daily basis but can also cover longer distances when commuting on a weekly basis. Another traffic on regular basis is the journeys for supply (shopping food and other needed goods). In the research more new approaches are the free time traffic and the business trips (GATHER ET AL. 2008, 181). This two types are the most interesting for long(er) distance and cross-border traffic. Keeping this in mind, the main possible customer groups for a train connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk are tourists and business people. But before looking at the kind of traffic that exists we need

to understand if the traffic can be generated. A traffic can be only generated if the options are existing (mobility) and the possible customers are able to use it (motility). To link this with border studies we can see that borders effect mobility and motility in some ways and therefore have therefor a definite effect on the traffic development.

Major constrains to motility can be understood as a problem of distance. Distance in this understanding describes the “force that determines how far the demand for travel is met” (GIBB & CHARLTON 1992, 216). Even though distance is often described in spatial distance it is more useful to describe it as a time distance as for most travellers the time matters most. Especially in case of different options a time-money distance comparison leads to the choice for a specific mean of transport. The distance between two destinations is influenced by several factors that are exactly the same as earlier described obstacles for a improved network. We can say that a network can be evaluated by the distance between the two nodes. Especially international borders can effect the distance negatively due to “politically-motivated legal or administrative controls” (GIBB & CHARLTON 1992, 217) or the need to change the mean of transport due to technical reasons.

As a result we can say that a distance analysis is a suitable tool to understand the situation of passenger transport across a border. It can take into consideration all the obstacles that are resulting from a border and provide even a measurement tool for improvement as “the common way to analyse the benefits of transport system improvements is via travel-time savings” (VAN LOON ET AL. 2011, 917) or change in the time-distance. In case of cross-border connections there are specific conditions that result from the border crossing and can effect travel-times a lot. Due to this fact the border analysis is a needed pre condition for a understanding of the transport systems across the border.

4.2.5 Types of Borderland

To analyse border regions or borderlands, MARTINEZ (1994) has done a useful classification according to the cross-border interactions. Martinez differentiates between four different types of borderland: “alienated borderland, co-existent borderlands, interdependent borderlands, and integrated borderlands” (MARTINEZ 1994, 2). The alienated borderland refers to a totally closed border without nearly any interaction. This can be due to different kind of conflicts like political or cultural differences. The main characteristic of the border is that it is

heavily guarded and the cross-border traffic, if existing, is marginal and heavily controlled. The fear of a armed conflict is hindering a proper development of the borderland. In case of a more stable relationship the border stays relative close but allows some interaction between the inhabitants. This is the case of the co-existent borderlands. Anyway also in this case the cross-border interaction is marginal and the economic development in the region is low. Only in interdependent borderlands the cross-border interactions have a more stable character and lead towards a stable structure across the border. This is often the case du to a interdependency due to raw materials or cheaper labour on the one side of the border.

Anyway this "economic interdependence creates many opportunities for borderlanders to establish social relationships across the boundary" (MARTINEZ 1994, 4). The degree of the interdependency is depending on the economic situation and on the bilateral agreements between the two nation states. The permeability of the border differs according to the policies and national interests. Especially with a relatively open border this type of borderland can be also seen as a cross-border region. But if the border is nearly not existing as a barrier anymore and the two nations cooperate close we can speak of a integrated borderland. In an integrated borderland the flow of capital, products or labour is free and not hindered by the border. In this case it would still be possible to speak of a cross-border region because the border is still existing but not effecting anymore the development so much. Anyway for this work the term of cross-border region is more related to a interdependent borderland with a low interdependency and a high level of cooperation. In addition to that the identification of the inhabitants with the region is an important factor as a region is only real if it is accepted by the inhabitants.

Where as Martinez categorizes the borderland based on the interaction across the border, TOPALOGLOU ET AL (2005) have found a differentiation of five classifications of a border area based on several economic and socio economic factor. According to TOPALOGLOU ET AL (2005) the regions can be ranked from highly integrated and good performance to a peripheral problem region. The approach is mainly based on fuzzy clustering and therefore a more quantitative approach. The major factor is a economic classification as it is visible from the characteristics of the categories (cluster) as you can see from table 4.

The combination of the two approaches makes it possible to describe a border region in a more detailed way. Especially the category of a integrated borderland needs a more detailed

sub division because the level of integration can differ a lot. There the clusters are a good choice to analyse a region more detailed. If we take the research are Karelia as an example according to the Martinez definition it is an integrated borderland to some extend but it is also a border region with a low market potential and no prevailing positive characteristics (cluster E). Aim of the regional development should be to reach an upper cluster and one basic mean is to extend the integration of the region. Some factors like the geographic position are not changeable but the level of integration can be influenced by supporting CBC with different policies.

Table 4: The EU NUTS III Border Regions Typology

Cluster	Characteristics	Examples
A	Highly integrated border regions with advanced economic performance, many cultural similarities and small size.	Border regions in the EU15 core, Scandinavia, Ireland, UK
B	Border regions that enjoy agglomeration economies but need significant structural adjustments in order to deal with the increased competition.	Border regions in the Baltic's, Slovakia, Czech Rep., Poland
C	Highly integrated border regions that present significant economic performance, though much cultural dissimilarity.	Border regions in France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Austria
D	Border regions with high development potential due to their favourable geographic position, but with low economic performance.	Border regions in the western side of the EU new member-states
E	Border regions with low market potential and no prevailing positive characteristics	Border regions in the EU external borders prior to enlargement

Source: TOPALOGLOU ET AL. (2005), 84

This classifications of the borderlands is a good way to describe the development on the Finnish-Russian border and the aim is to show that a train connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk can be a step towards a highly integrated cross-border region with a better development potential . To say it in other words for a functional region a good infrastructure is needed as basis.

4.3. Cross-Border Region as a Network

A major issue of the society is to cope with space and the ability has increased over time. The “integration of territories” and the “interaction in networks (cooperation between points separated in space)” are an outcome of the increasing ability of coping with space (WESTLUND 1999, 94).

A network is always a system of nodes and links. The durability of a network is depending on several factors and on the type. Durable networks can be seen as infrastructure, this counts especially for economic networks. But there are also non-economic networks based for example on family ties. These networks can be less durable and it can be difficult to measure the links but the interaction costs are always measurable. Networks differ in the complexity and as more complex they are as more difficult it is to improve structures. The goal is to reduce the interaction cost which express all cost that are related to interaction between the nodes. A road network is a network with a low complexity and consists only of roads as links and road intersections as nodes. But a city system has a high complexity level and a lot of different links. Basically each node can contain several less complex nodes. Like in the city system a transport network is also included (WESTLUND 1999, 95ff). Therefore a region can be seen as a network as well. Based on the understanding of a region as a network I will argue later that the improvement of sub-networks can support a whole region.

While the difficulties of borders was identified and the border regions tried to handle this in starting co-operation it came out that the European Unions regional policy instruments where fitting well to support cross-border co-operation and therefore the INTERREG imitative was started. In the case of the eastern borders the development started later but was much more needed after the long time 'closed' borders and nowadays most regions at borders are involved in some form of CBC. The main motives are to reduce the barrier effect of a border and make it a place for communication between neighbours. By enabling communication prejudices between people should be overcome. Not only strengthening of democracy but also positive economic development and a overcoming of the peripherality is seen to be supported by CBC (AEBR 2000, 5ff).

The common organisational form for CBC are the euroregion, they are an "amalgamation of regional and local authorities from both sides of the national border" with permanent administrative staff according to local private law concerning organisations or foundations. They do not form a new administrative level but are designed to development and strategic-orientated cooperation and balancing between different structures and powers on both sides. They might have own resources to support projects but mainly co-ordinate only. The working topics depend on the field of interest and importance in the region and regard all areas of life like infrastructure, economy or culture (AEBR 2000, 9). This Euregio are meant to "link areas and

people irrespective of language and cultural differences” (AEBR 2008, 7) and this is why we can understand a cross-border region as a network. A Network is a system of nodes and links and a cross-border region is nothing else than the link of at least two border regions as nodes towards a network system. For this understanding Euregio and cross-border region are similar terms or to say it in a different way: the aim of the political creation of an euro-region is to create a cross-border region. The aims of the Euregios to reduce the barrier effects of the border are similar to the ideas of improving a network by reducing the interaction costs via the links by improving the links. On a legal basis this creation of governmental bodies across a border creates difficulties but especially when talking about CBR across the Finnish-Russian border creating a single governmental body is not the major goal (PERKMANN 2002).

One main issue is to cope with space and the ability has increased over time. The ”integration of territories [... (and)] the interaction in networks (cooperation between points separated in space)” are an outcome of the increased ability of coping with space (WESTLUND 1999, 94) and this can be not only the physical space but also the mental space by reducing mental borders thanks to an improved interaction within Euregios. Following the approach that a Cross-border region is a network we can use the existing approaches of analysing networks to get a closer look at the problems for developing a cross-border region.

Furthermore it is important to not only see the CBR as an own network but also as an actor within other networks as well as both border regions are acting within there networks. “The crucial relations include ones with: (1) other regions of its own state (including other border regions); (2) the central state institutions; (3) immediately adjacent regions of neighbouring state(s); (4) its other regions, (5) its central institutions; and all in the context of (6) direct relations between the states, and wider forms of transnational governance” (ANDERSON & O'DOWD 1999, 596). One measurement for this relations are traffic connections, as in general the traffic connections between regions with strong interaction are well established. A second indicator for the relations are the political interactions and membership in political organisations.

The definition of a region or even CBR should not be done just to create a new administrative level or a container for research but it has to stay linked with the identity of the inhabitants and decision makers. As research on Finnish administrative regions shows they are often not

used in the everyday language (ANTONSICH 2010, 268) due to the fact that the regions have been just created as administrative units for European Union purposes. Anyhow regions can exist and there is a useful way to define them without losing the connection to the inhabitants: The functional region or the understanding of a region as a network. This is why the network theories can be used as a basic theoretical background for the research of CBC and CBR. Besides this it is still important to have a look at the perceptions of the CBR and to what extent the inhabitants identify themselves with the region. It might be the case that even though the region can be described as a functional region but the inhabitants do not identify themselves with it or do not notice the connection as the identity might be more taken out of the city or even part of the city where they live. This is especially in Finland often the case where traditionally the politics is based upon a two power system the municipalities and the state without any regions in between.

4.4. Applying network analysis to border studies

One important thing to do is a proper grouping of the obstacles that are formed by the border or that hinder the development of a network. As you can see from Table 5 WESTLUND (1999) provides a useful scheme to organise the possible barriers by their potential of change and in the same moment provides a grouping of them.

Table 5: Factors, which generate interaction costs in and between networks, grouped by potential for change

Rapid change possible				Very Slow to change
Technical-logistical	Political-administrative	Economical-structural	Cultural-historical	Geographical and biological
Costs of production and transport of goods Costs of transport of persons Costs of capital and capital transfer Costs of information and information transfer	National/regional and regulations for goods and services Customs duties, etc. Tariff zones	Economic development level/demand patterns Economic structure Educational level Compatibility and standard of infrastructure	Language Religion Mentality Ethnicity Population density Power structures and property rights	Physical distance Geographical obstacles (e.g. Rivers) Time zones Human biology

Source: WESTLUND 1999, 107 modified by author

This kind of grouping is not sufficient enough to understand the exact problems of the barrier effect and how to cope with it, it is only a starting point for getting an idea where the problems

are. Basically the political-administrative, economical-structural and the cultural-historical factors are the core of the boundary and are therefore most interesting and also the main factors where CBC is aiming at. The technical-logistical factors are normally globally changed and do not relate so much to borders and the geographical and biological factors are basically unchangeable. Compared to the categories of difficulties for CBC identified by the AEBR (2008, 15) we see the similarities. The AEBR identifies four categories the economic, social-cultural, administrative and legal differences. If we combine the administrative and legal differences in one group we get the same result as the three major categories by WESTLUND. For a deeper understanding the categories of problems are not enough. Furthermore we need an understanding of how to analyse CBC and therefor SCOTT & MATTZEIT (2006, 26) provide a useful tool. As you can see from Table 6 they make a vertical division by the the level of the responsibility and horizontal they differentiate the effects on CBC into policies, practises and perceptions.

Table 6: Analytical Framework of CBC

Level	Policies	Practices	Perceptions
Supra-national	Legal frameworks; directives; institutions; programs, policies and strategies developed at the EU and at bi- and multinational levels	Quality of relations between the EU and neighbouring countries; transnational and non-state actors' activities with regard to the border regions	EU geopolitical and geo economic discourse regarding strategic significance of the regions; statements and debates regarding enlargement
National	Legal frameworks; directives; institutions; policies affecting or specifically addressing the border regions	National activities related to CBI; constellation of national actors involved; co-operation strategies an initiatives	"Nationalising" discourses and strategies; prevailing perceptions of the border regions
Sub national (local / regional)	Local policies and formal institutions (regional associations)	Regional and local actor constellations (public agencies, civil society, economic agents); co-operation strategies and initiatives	Prevailing perceptions of the border regions

Source: Scott & Matzeit (2006, 29)

The SCOTT & MATTZEIT approach shows basically a way how to group a possible analysis of CBC and where to address problems of CBC. With an analysis in this grouping it becomes easier to figure out the right tools to address this difficulties. But not only the areas of involvement are important but also the actors. The actors in CBC are on the one hand influencing each other in improving or dis-improving the CBC situation but are as well directly actor in CBC. To figure out the correct tools it is necessary to first of all get an idea of the actors. The actors can be defined by a combination of the Westlund and the SCOTT & MATTZEIT models as

shown in Table 7. All the nine actors can effect CBC by using tools changing policies, practises and perceptions described in

Table 7: Actors of CBC grouped by level of acting and area of responsibility

Level/Category	Political-administrative	Economical-structural	Cultural-historical
Supranational	European Union	International companies	European or other global NGOs
National	Nation States	National companies	National NGOs
Sub national	Regions/Municipalities	Regional companies	Local NGOs and civil society

Source: own creation

If we take a closer look into the three major categories it becomes clear that the state agencies have a major power in doing changes and on the other hand especially the people are important.

This categorization might seem pretty simple and obsolete but it is still useful to understand the complexity of CBC. The shown categorizations mirrors one of the reasons for CBC. In general CBC results in added value especially the political, socio-economic and socio-cultural added value (GABBE 2006). In addition CBC contributes to the general values like peace, freedom, security and the observance of human rights. This so called european added value is a more abstract generalisation and therefore for a closer evaluation not needed. But as this are one of the main driving forced behind CBC it shows that we can use the suggested categorization derived from network studies to analyse the Cross-Border networks.

Understanding CBC as a acting within networks gives us the opportunity to use exactly the network tools to understand how to improve CBC. And this leads to the idea of analysing the infrastructure across the border as a important network itself but as well as an important pre-requisite for a further development of the cross-border network as a complex system – so to say the cross-border region.

4.5. Policies supporting public transport across the border

An important part of supporting CBC are the policies. Policies are “understood as official measures of governments and inter-governmental agreements that regulated or effected border permeability and gave directions to cross-border cooperation by defining formal incentive

structures as well as restrictions” (LIIKANEN et al. 2007, 13). So basically policies are the framework given by political authorities for development across the border. This also means that there are a lot of policies aiming at CBC in general but also policies aiming at transport connections. “The transport system consists of the transport infrastructure, the means of transport, the people who are in motion and the goods being transported, as well as all the regulations and organizations involved. Transport policy refers to all measures which are taken that focus on these sectors of the transport system and serve to promote national competitiveness and economic activity as well as to maintain the well-being of citizens. Transport policy and the transport system are closely connected with other functions of society, especially with the development of regional and community structure” (VEHVILÄINEN et al. 2008, 5).

The definition of the policies shows that they are not a ready made tool but more a way to direct the process of development into the correct direction. Policies are written down in different governmental papers and also influence the laws. In case of the CBC transport especially European Union policy papers are important.

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is one of the major EU policies according to transport across borders. It “was developed with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the EU and its neighbours: its aim is at promoting peace, stability, security, growth, development and prosperity in the neighbouring countries as well as modernisation of economy and society” (COM 2007_B,3). Its main focus is the “infrastructure used by international transport and on the relevant legislation affecting the use of these routes by all transport modes; over time this approach may lead to the development of common rules and regulations for the transport sector as a whole and thus create an effective transport market involving the EU and its neighbours” (COM 2007_B,3). It focuses investments on 30 priority transnational axes and projects. The policy has a strong focus on the integration of the networks of the new Member States.

As emphasised by the European Council in December 2003, the trans-European axes will reinforce the competitiveness and cohesion of the enlarged Union by better connecting the internal market. The TEN policy does not, however, address transport connections between the EU and the neighbouring countries or other trade partners. These links have been developed through the Pan-European Corridors and Areas since the early 1990's. The Pan-European Corridors and Areas (PEC) were developed during two Ministerial Conferences in

Crete (1994) and in Helsinki (1997) with the aim of connecting the EU-15 with the then neighbouring countries. Following the 2004 and 2007 enlargements, the Corridors are now mainly within the EU and thus part of the TEN network (COM 2007B,4ff). Anyway this European policies are not at all mentioning the Joensuu – Petrozavodsk connection because it is not part of an more international important connection but only a regional connection. Besides that the TEN policies are as well effect the regional connections as they effect other policy papers and the main ideas of how to develop transport infrastructure.

Another important policy paper of the European Union is the citizen's network from 1998. It outlines „a system of local and regional passenger transport which would be achieved by providing the public authorities, operators and user groups with appropriate tools and establishing a policy framework which promotes sustainable mobility“ (COM 1998, 19). This policies are also acknowledging the importance of regional connections as it notes that „a well-functioning European transport system needs a good, sustainable local and regional Passenger transport structure“ (COM 1998, 19). A more sustainable transport is based on a major change in the modal split reducing the use of private cars. This can be reached by several measures including the improvement of public transport infrastructure. It is obvious that most of the policy papers put emphasise on an general public transport level and does not mention cross-border transport explicit but most policies can be adjusted to cross-border transport as well keeping in mind the differences and special problems.

As it is the aim of the European Union to reduce the negative effects of mobility this ideas are represented in several policy papers like the White Paper and the Green Paper published by the European Commission (COM 2001, 2006 and 2007D). The major tenor is that „Sustainable and functional local and regional passenger transport would be achieved by providing the public authorities, operators and user groups with appropriate tools and establishing a policy framework which promotes sustainable mobility“ (GOLOMBEK & ŠITAVANCOVÁ 2009, 17).

It is important to keep in mind that there are several drivers that have an impact on the passenger transport. The population effects as much as the economic situation but also a change in social habits and technological development. On the other hand infrastructure environmental issues and policies have influences as well. The effects are mainly change the share of the different means of Transport and the total number of trips and length but a cre-

ation of new traffic is possible as well (PETERSEN ET AL. 2009, 67). Anyway policies and the deriving instruments are important to develop the cross-border traffic possibilities..

The available policy instruments can be divided in five groups (Infrastructure, Technology, Economic, Regulatory and Participatory) according to the driver that is influenced. Most of the policy instruments are traditionally used and well established but the participatory might need a further description. "In general, participatory instruments are those that heighten public participation in transport planning. They can be seen as being particularly appropriate for meeting social sustainability objectives which are concerned with the ideas of social capital" (PETERSEN ET AL. 2009, 200).

On the EU-level the participatory process is included in the guidelines for proposals and policy initiatives and refers to both individuals (e.g. private persons or companies) and groups (e.g. NGOs or representing organisations). On the lower level the participation is included in the formal process for consultation (legally binding) and the informal methods that are generally not legally binding but encourage participation. The ways of participation are multifarious and can include workshops, questionnaires, interviews and newspaper articles. A set of the described instruments can be used to reach the defined goal.

5. Methods

The aim of this study is a deeper understanding of the difficulties for introducing a passenger transport and not that much a detailed description of the possibilities. As the idea of this study is not to provide a detailed analysis of the technical and financial possibilities, which would be the task of a feasibility study, I used a qualitative approach to understand the framework provided and needs for a connection. Due to this qualitative approach the main method of data gathering are qualitative interviews with key persons involved in CBC and possible users of the train connection. These so-called expert interviews were conducted in the autumn of 2010. The possible interviewees were contacted by email in Finnish and English to avoid a non-response due to lack of English knowledge. The final interviews were carried out in English or German, in one case with the help of a colleague of the interviewee to translate Finnish answers into English. I recorded all interviews with a digital voice recorder and transcribed and summarized them later for the use of analysis.

As KING & HORROCKS (2010) suggest depending on the situation a full transcribing of the interviews is not needed. Therefore I followed the approach of a summarized transcription for the interviews because I neither do a narrative nor a phenomenological analysis. Especially due to the fact that parts of the interviews are in different languages and I need them for my further work in English. The combination of my recorded interviews and the notes made during the interviews result in a proper summarized transcription that I can use for the further analysis.

The choice of possible interviewees was made by me according to the possible actors in CBC. As ROMAN (2010, 9) suggest and as the table 2 in chapter 4.2.2 shows there are several actors involved in CBC. In the Finnish case the national government and EU are mainly responsible for the framework and policy documents. But the coordination is done by local authorities and the decisions are made by the local and regional political authorities like regional councils and municipalities. In addition to the governmental involvement there are several other non-governmental actors involved like non-governmental organisations or private companies. Based on this I contacted the regional council of North Karelia, the municipality of Joensuu and the regional development company JOSEK in Joensuu as political actors. As

representatives from the private sector I contacted the tourist sector semi-private company Karelia Expert Oy, the chamber of commerce and then of course the train operator and train service provider VR-Group Ltd (VR-Yhtymä Oy). Even though there is a liberalised train market in Europe, VR Passenger Services is still the only passenger train operator in Finland and therefore they are the only possible operator for a train connection as well as the track maintenance company of the group would be responsible for the track construction and upgrading on the Finnish side.

After some difficulties of getting into contact with possible interviewees I finally managed to carry out three interviews with a representative of the council of North Karelia, the municipality of Joensuu and Karelia Expert Oy. A representative of the VR-group Ltd gave me some answers by email due to lack of time for a personal interview. Even though representatives of companies and political agencies are often able to speak English or German it is not always easy to find somebody who is willing to do a full interview in a foreign language. I did not feel in the position to be able to conduct a full interview in Finnish.

Even though based only on three interviews and one email response I think I got quite vital and useful answers as they cover the most important actors of CBC. An interview with a state representative would be an option but as the state opinion is written down in policy documents and also to some extent represented by the regional authorities I think it is not needed. Already the answers of the representatives of the city and the regional council show similarities. Furthermore missing is the viewpoint of the private sector companies besides tourism due to the fact that I could not get into contact with a representative even after several tries. Anyhow the most important sector is the tourism sector in this region and that is represented and for a detailed understanding all different kind of sectors would need to be interviewed. As the major research question is aiming at the major potentials of the train connection this can be left for further research and a possible feasibility study.

The interview was conducted as a semi-structured interview based on a couple of key questions related to the research questions. Following the schema of KING & HORROCKS (2010, 37) I tried to understand the background (related to CBC/the research) of the interviewee, their experiences with CBC but also the interviewees opinion and their personal feelings about CBC. Last but not least also knowledge questions about CBC and the structures of CBC were asked.

A major part was not directly aiming at the train connection but more about the CBC in general. I asked firstly about the involvement in any CBC projects of the interviewee and then about the opinion and assessment of the CBC in Karelia to hear where the interviewees sees possibilities and problems. Furthermore I asked about the structure of CBC and the involvement of the authority/company in CBC projects. Finally my questions were aiming at the train connection, where I tried to evaluate what the interviewee thinks about it, what needs and what difficulties he sees and what he knows about the past activities.

As I said before, the aim was not only to ask about the train connection in specific but also about CBC in general to gain knowledge about the difficulties as well as about the functioning of CBC in this region. Especially interested I was in the organisational structure of the cross-border institutions. In addition to that I base my analysis also on the policy documents of the Finnish government to include the national viewpoint.

It is important to notice that this kind of expert interviews follow the idea to get an inside view based on the position of the interviewed people. I know and explicitly hope that the answers include personal opinions and information out of these positions as this makes their answers significant according to LINDSAY (1997, 35ff).

To support my studies I used secondary and tertiary materials as well. Important sources for information about the current situation of the transport where the official timetables published online by the Finnish railroad VR and especially the webpage of the German railroad company (<http://www.bahn.de>) as it gives easy access to cross-border timetables. An important source for the statistics about the border crossing where the border survey of the Finnish tourist board (KRYWACKI ET AL. 2009).

To analyse the political background I used the European policy papers related to transport and cross-border cooperation. Especially the recent green paper (COM 2007_D) and white paper (COM 2001) related to transport and of course the documents about the ENPI in general (COM 2007_A) and in specific about the Karelia region (COM 2007_C). Furthermore I based my analysis on the publications of the Finnish government about the cross-border strategies (MFA 2006; OJAJÄRVI & HUTTULA 2008; VEHVILÄINEN ET AL. 2008).

Additionally I had also a look at newspaper articles that were published about the Joensuu – Petrozavodsk connection as they show if the topic is also acknowledged with in the public

discussion. Based on the described interviews and the other materials I analyse the situation and give answers to the earlier formulated research questions.

6. Passenger transport between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk

In chapter 2.5 I have already described the development and situation of the passenger transport between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk but now I want to analyse more detailed the specific possibilities of the railroad connection and also show how the interviewees see the situation. Furthermore I develop a few ideas about how further connections could be introduced.

Since there is a development of cross-border interaction between the two cities the idea of the passenger train connection has been alive. During the late 1990's and beginning of 2000 the project had been on the political Agenda already and it was planned to have a twice-weekly night train connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk. The initial introduction of the connection was planned to be in August 1999 by a train set of "one 18-berth first-class and two 38-berth second class sleeping cars of Russia's October Railway (OktZhD), but it would be strengthened with extra vehicles as needed" (RINDBAD 2002). The train was planned to be operated by VR and October Rail with a change of the locomotive in Niirala. The Finnish border crossing point in Niirala was seen to be ready to handle the train passengers but the Russian side there would have been a need for new buildings. The estimated number of passengers was up to 20 000 a year. It seems that all It seemed that the project was not carried out mainly because there was no agreement with the Russian customs possible. As interviewee 1 assumes the project fall flat due to the request of the Russian customs for a new office building paid by Finland (RGI 1999; INTERVIEWEE 1).

I could not find more information about possible problems but I tend to follow this argument at least that far that the lack of financial aid for the improvement of the border control infrastructure was a reason to stop the project. Furthermore this shows that a lot of other problems obviously had been solved. Generally difficulties of cross-border train connections are based on technical differences and security laws (COM 2001, 25ff). Even though the demand for open access and the possibilities of crossing the border with one locomotive are often demanded in this case they seem to be not the problem. The information I got give the impression that the cooperation between the Finnish and Russian railroad companies are working well and the conditions on how to operate the train where already set.

Anyway the ideas of the train connection were not put totally on hold, they stayed in the mind of the decision makers even though there was no real activity to start the project again (ROUVINEN 2008, INTERVIEWEE 4).

We can say that there is some interest in a public transport connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk but the project has no high priority right now. The old project of a night train seems not to be the best option anymore. It is still questionable if the amount of passengers between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk is high enough for an economic public transport on rail, but a rail bus connection during the summer could be started on a trial basis (OJAJÄRVI & HUTTULA 2008, 44). For touristic purposes a train would be the best solution especially during the summer time (INTERVIEWEE 2) but it seems on the other hand that a plane or bus connection would be favoured (INTERVIEWEE 4) depending especially on the need of the companies in Joensuu. As mentioned before, during the last years the road connection has improved and therefore travel times by car or possible bus connection might become better.

The amount of passengers is one of the important questions to judge about a possible new connection as there is a need for an economic profitable operating. Especially for a cross-border connection that crosses the EU outside border the estimation of passengers is not that easy and depending on several factors that are not necessary depending on local or regional developments but also on national and international relations.

Therefore without further detailed studies an estimation is not possible but if we look at the border traffic development there is a trend visible. But as shown in chapter 2.5 the amount of passengers crossing the border is increasing and this can lead to the assumption that if already ten years ago some potential for a train connection has been detected it might be even higher nowadays. As shown in chapter 2.5 the business travel has not a high share but should be kept in mind. Business travel as travel of staff for work purposes to a non regular destination (to differ it from commuting) is an important part of mobility for companies even though it is not one of the most important shares in the long-distance trips. The business travellers are highly time sensitive and demand high comfort. Even though information and communication technologies (ICT) reduce the need of business travel, there are certain reasons for the need of face-to-face meetings. Especially complex and strategic decisions need face-to-face meetings and therefore good travel possibilities are needed to improve co-operation (AGUILERA 2008, 1109ff).

Interviewee 2 and also the results of chapter 2.5 show that a big group of the people crossing the border are tourists coming to Joensuu for shopping and other touristic purposes. A lot of them stay only one day and therefore early arrival and late departure in/from Joensuu might be interesting. This goes according to the Finnish policies for connections between regional capitals. The Finnish ministry of transport and communications acknowledges the importance of transport connections. They see “good transport connections are vital for regional development” (VEHVILÄINEN et al. 2008, 5).

The guidelines they publish for the transport within Finland are also applicable for cross-border connections. For example the definition of a minimum services between the “largest regional centres”. The level of service is supposed make a stay of “at least three hours at destination during normal office hours” (VEHVILÄINEN et al. 2008, 20) possible. But in the case of cross-border connections for passengers the ministries guidelines concentrate only on the Helsinki – Moscow corridor.

Anyway this can be seen also as a basis for a possible Joensuu – Petrozavodsk connection. All interviewees acknowledged the importance of a public transport connection between the two cities even though their opinions about the mean of transport differ. A flexible and relatively cheap option is the road transport by bus and thanks to the improvement of the road infrastructure it could also offer acceptable travel times. But this option is not mentioned by any of the interviewees as a proper alternative. Comfort and speed are for most user groups not acceptable and therefore the major options are a train or a flight connection. Especially for business purposes the flight connection is the best option.

Interviewee 4 thinks that already nowadays it is possible to cross the border by the taxi services for a good price but it is still an exhausting and slow journey. In his opinion it gets even more difficult to establish a profitable railroad connection thanks to the improved road. In opposition to this opinion interviewee 2 sees potential for a railroad connection on daytime. He thinks that even though nowadays a lot of Russian tourists come by car to go shopping in Joensuu, they might change to a train and additionally the train would attract foreign tourists visiting Joensuu to travel to Russian Karelia if the Visa regulations are changed. From the viewpoint of the Euregio Karelia board a train connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk is needed. They see even the possibilities of travel connections between Petrozavodsk and Helsinki via Joensuu and also bring the visa issue into the discussion (KARJALAINEN 2010).

Finally I think it become obvious in this chapter, that the idea of a railroad passenger connection is not utopian and after the success of the Helsinki – St. Petersburg connection it seems to be about time to concentrate on regional connections. The cross-border tools have been developed and financially both sides are nowadays involved so financial support might be possible to start the project. As I said before the idea of this work is not to be a feasibility study and therefore I do not make further comments about the possible amounts of passenger then saying I see some potential as the interviewed experts as well.

Finally we can say that the transport situation in the research area has developed in that way that at least the road infrastructure has been improved and the amount of people crossing the border is rising. Furthermore it is obvious that the need for public transport connection is acknowledged by the decision makers and written down in policy papers. There has been several tries of public transport connections between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk but besides the minibus services not very successful yet. Depending on the viewpoint but also on personal interest the actors of CBC see the role of any kind of public transport as important but do not necessary favour a railroad connection. Even though from the perspective of the possible users of public transport connection the railroad seems to be a suitable solution to attract enough passengers for a economic connection. Another supportive factor is obviously the Visa regime. An ease of the Visa regulations is seen by all experts as an important factor to increase the cross-border contacts. Besides that, it is out of question that a proper timetable based regular public transport connection by any mean of transport but favourable land transport would improve the situation in the region, not only for CBC but also for the regional development.

It is important to see the Joensuu – Petrozavodsk connection not as a single connection but in the viewpoint of the public passenger transport network. The Picture 5 shows the position of the connection within the train network in Finland and its neighbouring countries. All the activities where just concentrating on the economic possibilities of a connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk without taking possible further connections and more needs into account. As described already Joensuu is well connected to southern parts of Finland and to some extend also to the western coast. As you can see from the Picture 5 that shows a roughly which area can be reached with in seven hours by public transport even St. Petersburg and Tallinn are within this time limit. The traffic connections north from Joensuu by train

would need improvement to connect for example Kuopio by direct train to Joensuu. This would also effect probably the attractiveness for Passengers from Russia. Besides Joensuu as an attractive touristic and shopping area also Kuopio with its soon opening of an IKEA and other shops can attract Russian shopping tourists.



Picture 5: The railroad network in Finland

Even nowadays there is a lot of passenger traffic between Joensuu and Kuopio and since the University of Eastern Finland has campuses in both cities the amount might rise. Additionally the already well developed tourist region of Tahko and the developing area of Vuokatti could be reached by a new train. This possibilities need a further research to analyse possible effects on the passenger amounts across the border but mostly it could help to reach a economic traffic.

7. Karelia a cross-border region divided by borders

The research region is not a single region for several reasons as described earlier and it is also questionable that it will be in the near future. But the awareness of each other has been become better and the cooperation improves. I used the heading Karelia a cross-border region divided by borders for this chapter to express the importance of the border in this region and to show a possible future development. I do not want to state that it is already a CBR. In this chapter I will show on which stage the region is and where are possible problems for the further CBC development. The Finnish-Russian border has undergone several changes and also the border regime has changed. Nowadays the situation is relatively complex and influences by a lot of actors on all levels. We can see that the boundary effect is still strong. As I have shown in chapter 4.2.2 the barrier effect can be divided in three categories – economic, political and cultural effect. Additionally the actors of cross-border interaction can also be divided into this three categories as I have shown in chapter 4.2.2 It is important to notice that the actors do not only influence the cross-border relations within their level and category but also in between each other. It results in a complex system of interdependencies and makes a analysis of single factors difficult.

In case of the Finnish-Russian cooperation we can see a change in the cooperation and also a reduces barrier effect. The beginning of cross-border interactions is based on intergovernmental agreements and basically effected only large industry imports and exports. The social contacts as well as political cooperation where marginal if not at all existing. Interestingly the perception as a border region is much stronger on the Russian side then among Finnish people and Russians tend to be more open to cross-border cooperation (JUKARAINEN 2009, 24; JUKARAINEN 2002, 89).

With the joining of the European Union the actors on the Finnish side changed and became more diverse. The bilateral cooperation continued but also the EU started to develop cooperation programmes. The introduction of INTERREG, TACIS and later ENPI programmes involves first of all the EU level in the CBC but also give the financial support for regional cooperation. Thanks to this programmes the CBC activities on a political and cultural level have boosted as interviewees 3 and 4 agree. Besides this the economic cooperation seems to

looks different. The touristic sector for example is not well developed yet in Russian Karelia and there are no partners for cooperation like interviewee 2 says.

As said CBC at EU's outside borders is very complex. It differs from the type of border. In cases like the Finnish-Russian border with a strong income difference on the one side and on the other side the clear perspective for a lasting outside border the difficulties arises from several factors. The conflicts between the states about border lines and the political framework is hindering a proper cooperation. The central state plays a major role and informal contacts are another way to improve cooperation. But the changes and improvements since the fall of the iron curtain are visible (VON MALCHUS 1998A, 4ff).

We have seen that the different policies on both sides of the border have been long time a reason for hindering the cooperation. But during the last years the development of the EU programmes has taken the new situation into account and eased the financial support for cooperation projects. This is why the Finnish-Russian borderland can be described as a independent borderland that still has low market potential and now prevailing positive character like I described in chapter 4.2.5 But it has developed as it has been earlier a alienated borderland with nearly no interaction.

We have seen that there are signs of networks across the border especially in the political category. The cooperation frameworks are stable and long established like the Euregio Karelia and the ENPI CBC programme. But also the national level has a fixed group for CBC in the Karelian area and even the cities within the border area started talks about cooperation and learning from each other. Until here I did nearly the same As ESKELINEN & ZIMINE (2001) NOTICE ABOUT A LOT OF "STUDIES OF CBC FOCUS ON POLITICAL, LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS [...] USING WELL-DOCUMENTED MATERIAL ON VARIOUS INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMMES". And this is why until now my results seem to focus on the political cooperation. But I will go a little bit further and utilise the typology of cross-border contacts developed by ESKELINEN & ZIMINE (2001). As you can see in Table 8 the classification of the cross-border contacts looks similar to the earlier described classification of CBC actors.

The differentiation into four types of contacts results from the identifying of the "legal basis for such contacts: formal versus informal and [...] their organisational reason: private profit orientated (economic) versus public-benefit orientated (political)" (ESKELINEN & ZIMINE 2001). It is obvious that this four types of contacts develop independently from each other and depend-

ing on the type of border and border regime some are faster in developing than others. We can say that on the development from an alienated borderland towards an interdependent borderland the cross-border contacts develop in the order that the numbering of the four types suggest. As we have seen in the Finnish-Russian case the cross-border interaction started with a formal economic and political cooperation and just after a more open border the informal economic contacts become important.

Table 8: Classification of cross-border contacts

	Formal	Informal
Private profit-oriented (economic)	1. Foreign trade and investment	3. Shopping tourism, migration, crime
Public-benefit-oriented (political)	2. Official co-operation agreements, international projects	4. Informal cross-border networks addressing issues of public interest

Source: ESKELINEN & ZIMINE 2001

Anyway as the border region is still not highly integrated we can see that the fourth type of border contacts are not all. Informal cross-border networks addressing issues of public interest need a highly integrated border region and a similar interest on both sides. The differences of living standard on the Finnish-Russian border result in different interest. But as interviewee 4 says there are informal contacts especially between youth groups and cultural groups. So this type of border contacts are developing but they are often hindered by the difficulties of the procedure of border crossing. This is not only the problems of the visa regulations but also due to the fact of missing transport links.

Talking about the identity of North Karelia, it becomes obvious that the region is influenced by the border. Especially due to the border and its regular changes Karelia is loaded with multiple meanings nowadays (JUKARIANEN 2009). Anyway the Karelian identity is often similar to Finnish identity as it is based on cultural heritage from Karelia. The historic development and the continuous changes of the border have influenced the people living here. One important point is, that the Lutheran but as well the Orthodox Church are strong in this region and therefore provide a mixture of the cultures and a link across the border (VARIS 2010, 21). All the mentioned European Union programs and policies effect the programs and plans for North Karelia. A lot of major aspects are linked to the border and CBC. The region is preparing for a stronger multicultural identity but as well for more business and touristic traffic across the border. Not only the improvement of Russian language knowledge but also and improved

transport infrastructure and easier border crossings are seen as a chance for North Karelia (VARIS 2010, 44).

Like interviewee 4 notes the city of Joensuu would be a boring city without the border. He wants to express that the impact of the closeness of the border for the cultural life is important. The since the opening of the border the possibilities of exchange between social groups across the border has improved and enriched the cultural life.

CBC and the possibilities of crossing the border can support the mutual understanding of each other. "Take for example, two groups, such as ethnic or linguistic communities that are prejudiced against each one another. When members of different groups get together, they can gather first-hand information about each other. If they find that their prejudices were unfounded, then contacts can gradually bring [...] more favourable and tolerant attitudes" (MIRWALDT 2010).

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter the research region can not be seen as a fully established CBR but the concept of CBR is useful to understand the connections across the border. My definition of a CBR follows the understanding of a region of P_{AASI} as I have shown in chapter 5.2.1 and this mean that a the process of establishing a region – the process of institutionalization leads towards a region that is clearly defined by a territorial shape, symbols, institutions and by social recognition. I further argued that this definition can be used for CBR as well but only to some extend. Because naturally the border in between would have been vanished in the end of the institutionalisation process. Due to this you can say that a CBR is more a region in the region building process without ever reaching the final stage. Especially in the case of Karelia and any other region across a EU outside border, the vanishing of the border and especially its boundary effects will not happen.

Even if we look and older Euregio regions we can not speak of a fully established region in the understanding of P_{AASI}. Many of the Euregio regions might have own symbols, a territorial shape some institutions and even the inhabitants might have some identity with this regions but still they are not fully socially recognised. They do not create a feeling of 'we' and the 'others'. This is why the understanding of a CBR as a functional region is also in this case the more useful way, especially because it is easy to connect it with the influence railroad connections can have. Functional region means that the region is not defined by a territorial shape or administrative borders but more by the way of interactions – or to say different by

the network it creates. A network is a system of nodes and links generally. The usefulness of the network theory is, that a network can be always consists of several subnetworks and therefore with the picture of a network you can paint the picture of complex systems like a region.

If we look at a CBR as a network again and define what it means in relation to Karelia we can say that a fully established CBR would be a region where several networks are linked towards a complex network of cross-border relations. Infrastructure is one of the basic supportive networks in this case but more important are the social, business and governmental networks.

If we look again at the types of cross-border contacts we can understand them as several networks. This means that basically four networks of contacts are needed to create a functioning region besides the basic requirements of several infrastructure networks like road connections but also transport connections for passengers. The quality of this networks is evaluated by the quality and amount of contacts. As more contacts are existing as better the networks work and as more closer together the two regions are.

8. CBC and its difficulties

As shown in chapter 4.4. the difficulties for CBC can be grouped into different categories. Difficulties arise from lack of infrastructure and border crossings but also from economic differences and currency disparities. As this category of economical-structural difficulties includes economic differences and other slow changing differences they might be not changed directly but during a development of better CBC. Anyway infrastructural differences are one of the easy to evaluate and address. As I have shown earlier the lack of infrastructure especially for regular passenger transport is obvious across the border. Basically this is the problem my work is based on and has been tried to address but until now without success. As INTERVIEWEE 1 guessed the possible trial of a train connection was due to missing infrastructure at the border and lack of money. Also INTERVIEWEE 2 and 4 see the lack of public transport infrastructure as basic problem for better cooperation.

The psychological-political climate is affected by migration due to economic and political reasons. A lack of organisational and political structure and lacking democracy can cause

problems as well. But also trust and understanding are an important prerequisites or to say in different words the attitudes towards the partners are important. Russia tries to avoid for example, that Karelia is seen as the raw-material source for Finland and does not want to rise the picture that “Karelia and its leadership are drifting towards Finland” (SHLYAMIN n.d., 4). “Equal benefiting on both sides is regarded very important, because unbalanced benefits would cause a situation, which does not encourage sustaining cooperations in a long-term” (RUUSUVUORI 2005, 336). It is obvious that the viewpoint also effects the judgement of the barriers for CBC even though some problems are existing on both sided of the border like the bureaucracy at the border for example.

But “frequent changing of the rules in business, corruption, and security problems” (RUUSUVUORI 2005, 337) are more seen as a problem by the Finns where as the Russians feel more hindered by a lack of support from “national, regional and local level associations and agencies” (RUUSUVUORI 2005, 337). This shows that a basic prerequisite for CBC there is a level of trust between the partners needed and that seems to be present nowadays. As INTERVIEWEE 3 says the institutive Euregio Karelia has build up a level of trust and even the changes of people does not create any problems. Also language wise the problems are marginal as nearly all are speaking english. INTERVIEWEE 4 confirms this impression, that the political cooperation works well. He has a lot of experience in different fields of cooperation and especially the youth and cultural projects are successful. Furthermore he addresses the financial problems that are not based on the unwillingness of the russian partners but more on the gaps between funding periods of the EU programmes. He notes that in opposition to a common opinion the processes in Petrozavodsk are relatively western and well organised. The political cooperation between Joensuu and Petrosavodsk is well established and has build up a good level of trust. As expressed by INTERVIEWEE 4: “We understand each other and and it is uncomplicated. We help them and they help us if needed”.

A regular obstacle has been the missing of sufficient funds from Russia and that the Russian partners where not experienced in dealing with the European bureaucracy but the situation has been improved and the funds for the current ENPI programme period 2007 – 2013 are approved by the Republic of Karelia in December 2010. The process of developing the programmes and approving the funding before the work can start is one of the general obstacles for a continuous cooperation. Like for the city of Joensuu it has been always a problem, that

projects can not be started when all partners are ready but only when the funding is available. This sometimes results in a break of projects (INTERVIEWEE 3).

9. Discussion

Transportation Geography has always put emphasis on the relationships between infrastructure, accessibility, mobility, policy and social change. A simplified result is, that a region or place with better transportation links and accesses has done better in economic and social development. "Transportation provides a fundamental foundation for the building blocks of societies – labour, capital, territory – and intersects with the human and physical environment in ways that have profound geographical consequences" (KEELING 2007, 217).

For Karelia it is obvious that especially the informal political network is weak and this is that one that requires more than the other networks a good public transport network as the contacts are based on personal contacts of inhabitants of the region and not so much on political representatives or business representatives that are more likely willing to use private transport.

As I have shown it is not a major pre condition to have a proper railroad connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk to have successful CBC but it would be a supportive measurement. Generally speaking passenger railroad connections can be an important measurement to support CBC activities and speed up the process of cross border identity building. Any kind of transport infrastructure is important – not only for CBC activities, but also for regional development in general. Like VEHVILÄINEN et al (2008, 5f) notes that, "good transport connections are vital for regional development. The availability of transport connections affects companies' decisions about where to locate. Shorter travel times for passengers make business trips more efficient and promote networking between regions and municipalities for the joint production of services".

Anyhow railroad connections can be seen as a specific role, as they are build up a strongly visible fixed link between two regions or cities. If we look for example at regions within the European Union we can find several examples of successful railroad connections across borders. The railroad connection between Copenhagen (DK) and Malmö (SE) is one example for an successful connection of two countries. In this case a former natural boundary – the

ocean – was removed by building the bridge and has led to more traffic across the border. As a second example we can look at the reopened connection between Gronau (D) and Enschede (NL). The new regional train connecting Enschede via Gronau with the important cities Münster and Dortmund shows growing passengers and has created new opportunities for people in the former peripheral region. The importance of railroad connections has been proven by history since the 19th century and will most probably continue. A regular train connection improves the mobility and motility better than other means of transport as they are most easy to access. We have seen that even though there are mobility options a lot of potential travellers are not able to use them due to lack of access. This lack of access results from the information difficulties of the taxi transport or the lack of own car. As INTERVIEWEE 2 thinks that the train is “the best thing” as “getting guest is more easy”.

I hope that this work was able to show what impacts a passenger train connection can have on CBC. I hope that future CBC research will take the important role of railroad infrastructure into account and with more detailed analysis and comparisons of different CBC regions it might be even possible to prove a measurable effect.

As I said earlier the aim of this research was not to analyse the possibilities of a railroad connection between Joensuu and Petrozavosk but I hope that it can be used as a supportive argument for a detailed feasibility study. Therefore my suggestion for further research on the regional level is the better understanding of the possibilities of a passenger train connection between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk. Important parts of further research are the possibilities for a future modal split. Detailed border surveys among existing and future traffic are needed to understand the needs of traffic and how to run a train connection economically. It is important to not only concentrate in the effects on the accessibility between the regions but also within the regions.

This work gave a small insight into the role of railroad transport in CBC but this topic would need more in-depth research. First of all a detailed comparison of the different means of transport would be an interesting option to understand if any kind of public transport or even any transport infrastructure has the same effects or play different roles. I might even bring up the hypothesis that it is a combination of the means of transport that has the most positive effect on CBC. Furthermore I just touched the link of the role for identity building and awareness of the other side of the border. There is room for plenty of different research and a com-

parison between different regions would maybe lead towards a better general understanding of the roles.

It became obvious that the transport situation between Joensuu and Petrozavodsk has developed in the last 15 years but especially the road transport was improved. In the same time that the infrastructure for road transport improved also the amount of passengers raised. Anyhow public transport connections have been not sustainable until now.

Generally we can say that the actors see railroad connections as one possible way for a public transport connection but they do not express a clear preference for a railroad connection. Anyway obvious is, that a improvement is needed. A regular timetable based public transport between the two cities is a clearly expressed wish of all actors.

Finally we can see that railroad connections can play an important role for CBC as they give the opportunity for broad members of the civil society to get to know each others and start to build up trust. Not without reason the Finnish president Tarja Halonen “encouraged Finns to visit Russia in order to 'update' their knowledge on our eastern neighbour” (NYMAN 2010). A passenger railroad connection can be a useful supportive tool for CBC activities and that in a environmentally friendly way. But it is also important to notice that it is not a major factor that is absolutely needed as we can see in the Euregio Karelia where the CBC is on a good way without any proper public transport between the two major cities. Especially CBC across external borders is influenced by so many other factors that it is difficult to measure the exact effects of on single factor. Anyhow I like to conclude that “[...] historically speaking railway has often demonstrated its power to bring people and nations closer to each other” (COMMENTARY TRACKS 2010, 10). And this is exactly that what I have earlier described as building up trust and therefore a major prerequisite for succesful CBC.

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Ari Vanhanen , Vice President Passenger Services VR-Group Ltd. Email from 28.09.2010.