

Manuel Müller

# Crossing Borders

European Cooperation for success



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Manuel Müller

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## Abbreviation Index

CEI	- Central European Initiative
CEP	- Central Europ Programme
CO2	- Carbon Dioxide
ECTS	- European Credit Transfer System
ERDF	- European Research & Development Fund
ET	- Education and Training
EU	- European Union
EUR	- Euro (Currency)
FDI	- Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	- Gross Domestic Product
HEIs	- Higher Education Institutes
ICT	- Information and Communication Technology
ISO	- International Organisation for Standardisation
LLP	- Life-long Learning Programme
NUTS	- Nomenclature des Unités Territoriales Statistiques
R&TD	- Research & Technology Development
SDS	- Sustainable Development Strategy
SONORA	- South-North-Axis
TEN-T	- Trans-European Transport Network
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation
VET	- Vocational Education & Training

## 1 Introduction

The European Union has until now delivered peace, prosperity and stability for half a century. Economic cooperation has been on the first steps being fostered. As a result the conflicts among economically independent countries had been able to reduce. Nowadays the European Union is not anymore only a partnership of countries, but also a single market. Another result of the globalization relating to free movement of goods, services, people and capital is the risen standard of living.

With the aim of achieving one strong and competitive economic area the first aim has to be reaching one equal standard among all countries. This means to support and help disadvantaged countries to develop and reduce their deficits but also ensure sustainable growth without limiting the opportunities for future plans. One of the keys for successful and sound growth without restricting future possibilities is trans-national cooperation. In terms of competition the only aim is to be more productive and generate more added values. Within international cooperation every participant can benefit from knowledge or expertise exchange and learn more about cultural diversity.

Deficits can be seen in various areas from highly developed Information and Communication Technologies to basic supply as sufficient infrastructure networks e.g. roads or railroads. In order to reduce those deficits the European Union is supporting numerous programmes and projects in every possible field.

As one part of this thesis I will introduce the 'Education and Training' sector of the EU and give a general overview of the Lisbon Strategy and Bologna Process. The main part of the Education and Training programmed is the Life-long

Learning Programme. Implemented in 2007 the structures, action plans and aims are responsible to lead Europe to a more connected future and an improved education and training system. Further the different areas of the LLP (Life-long Learning Programme) are explained which are ensuring that not only single parts of the system are promoted but every sector of the education and training system is facilitated.

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In the end of the paper there is a conclusion about status and development of the highlighted areas and projects in the chapters before. Purpose of the thesis in general is to figure out if new member states, Central Europe countries supported by established program can catch up to the western countries of the European Union. In possible terms of an open answer to this question and still targeting a competitive economy, considerations may be necessary about alternative investments with higher benefits. As part of the elaboration a survey has been created, relating on the partially underdeveloped infrastructure and the decreasing population numbers in new member states. Results of this survey are included to allocate reasons for the negative development and are featured within the conclusion.