

**Eurocity Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior (EUROBEC):
The Socio-Economic and Territorial Reality
of a New Cross-Border Governance Structure in Portugal**

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1. Borders

For centuries, borders represented an end (*Finisterra*), a line of separation and division, a territory where national states assert their political and military power, a space of discord and insecurity, of defense, fortification and policing. More recently, it has tended to become a space for approximation, complementarity, integration and greater development (Batalha and Mallmenn, 2017; Porta e Álvarez, 2017).

According to the European Commission (2017), the borders of the European Union have a major impact on economic, social and territorial dynamics. They represent 40% of the area of the community territory, with 30% of its population (150 million inhabitants) and 30% of the wealth produced measured in GDP. These territories are home to 2 million workers, being 1.3 cross-border workers, who carry out daily labor movements between locations belonging to two or more countries; they constitute 0.6% of total employees in the European Union.

In most of the border regions of southern Europe, there are important constraints in terms of their development and they have to respond to the great challenges of globalization. These are doubly peripheral regions in relation to the most dynamic political, economic and cultural centers in central Europe and the respective countries (Scott, 2019).

Low-density territories, markedly rural and in marked demographic loss, where a high number of unemployed predominates, resulting from a poorly diversified economic fabric, with low value incorporation and scarcely realized innovatives, which makes the border economic environment unattractive for the investment (Scott, 2019).

These regions have, in general, lower rates of integration and territorial cooperation, which can be seen in the duplication of urban policies, services, equipment, transport or in the lower exchanges and population or economic flows, resulting from obstacles such as the persistence of asymmetries at the institutional and administrative levels and (even at the level of the general European legal framework).

However, the relationships of competitiveness between cross-border urban centers, differentiate-governance practices, the existence of cultural and linguistic barriers, which constitute persistently one of the main obstacles in cross-border cooperation (Decoville, Durand, Feltegen, 2015; European Commission, 2017).

2. Cohesion and Regional Policies in the European Union and Legal Instruments for Cross-Border Cooperation in the European Union.

With globalization and the political integration process of the European Union, and the consequent elimination of internal borders and the Schengen Agreement, the border regions, in a process that begins in the 90s, receive the support of European structural policies, aimed at the local economy and regional development and the enhancement of the territory, with a view to solving problems in border regions, reducing development inequalities and promoting greater territorial cohesion in the European Union.

In 1975, the European Union created financial mechanisms to support projects within the scope of the cross-border cooperation policy, namely INTERREG, with the support of the European Development Fund which would constitute one of the main EU funds (ESPON, 2012). However, the first experiences of international cross-border cooperation take place at the internal borders of the European Community, in the 1950s, after the Second World War (Verschelde and Ferreira, 2019), in Euroregions based on the border between Germany and the Netherlands (Peters, 2019). Perkmann (2003) emphasizes the fact that until 1980 cross-border cooperation had relatively informal agreements. The first example is EUREGIO, between Germany and the Netherlands (Vassil and Olmedo, 2014).

In the Madrid European Framework Convention (1980), the Council of Europe defines cross-border cooperation, as a set of planned and concerted actions aimed at deepening and developing formal cooperation relations between neighboring communities or territorial authorities, belonging to two

or more States. It aims at removing the obstacles associated with the border effect, helping to blur territorial inequalities and the marginal position of border territories in relation to the most advanced national economic centers or the most dynamic regions of the European Union, contributing to making European cross-border regions into an important and dynamic center development (Gómez and Pérez, 2014).

With the Lisbon Treaty (2009), a new dimension is added to the policy of economic and social cohesion, the territorial dimension, which aims to reduce inequalities in development between the regions of the European Union, in particular among the less favored, such as border regions (Peters, 2019; Valcárcel and Calleja, 2019). In Europe, the solution for these regions involved concerted actions between institutions from both sides of the border, for the economic and social development of the territory. The European Commission has encouraged the creation of programs for cross-border cooperation, within the framework of the Community's territorial and cohesion policy. The aim is to develop complementary networks, associated with the concept of “critical mass”, which intend to provide cross-border urban centers with a number of strategic resources and equipment that would allow them to grow and reinforce their competitiveness, by obtaining savings of scale and agglomeration (Berges, 2015).

More recently, multilevel and multilateral governance (supranational, national and subnational) has been introduced in the process of planning and implementing regional policies in the European Union (EU). Multilevel governance comprises two dimensions of cooperation, one vertical and one horizontal. The vertical dimension refers to cases of cooperation between actors belonging to different levels of governance, while the horizontal dimension refers to cooperation between actors belonging to the same level (Gordon, 2019: 2; Verschelde and Ferreira, 2019; Scott, 2019; Medina, 2019).

New governance structures are recreated, such as the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), as a result of the cohesion policy of the EU, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe, following its constitution to Regulation EC 1082/2006, which guarantees a broad support of supranational legal support for territorial cooperation and institutional integration in border regions, eliminating problems with the chronification of cross-border projects, and enhancing community financial support funds

and bring national governments closer to cross-border projects (Lina Engstrom, Joaquim Nergelius, Wilhelm Persson and Pontus Tallberg, 2011).

The implementation of territorial cooperation programs and projects within the EGTC framework are co-financed by EU instruments, such as the European Regional Development Funds, the Cohesion Fund and the European Social Fund, as well as other EU financial instruments or projects that do not mobilize any EU financial funds (Lina Engstrom, Joaquim Nergelius, Wilhelm Persson and Pontus Tallberg, 2011; Vasileios Migkos, 2020).

These are instruments that purport to answer a set of common problems, through an integrative and multidimensional approach, in economic, social, cultural, political, administrative or environmental areas, which contribute to greater cohesion and balanced development of territories frontier urban areas (within European polycentrism) and their insertion in the global context of the economy (Magri, Miranda, Galao and Goinheix, 2017).

The cooperation mitigates the lack of certain urban functions and guarantee access to economic activities, services and equipment, optimizing means and resources and eliminating duplications, reinforcing territorial competitiveness in a global context of territorial and economic competition (Berges, 2015). In other words, it improves the socioeconomic conditions and living conditions of its inhabitants, privileging knowledge, acquiring skills and deepening trust, between two or more countries, in the area of culture, economy, social cohesion, infrastructure or linguistics (Peters, 2019). It contributes to new centralities, by generating intense material and immaterial flows, and new opportunities for innovation and development (Scott, 2019). Cross-border cooperation also makes it possible to expand the area of influence of certain public services and facilities, such as in the health area.

3. Polycentrism and Sustainable Urban Policies

The European Council, institutionalized in 1999, and the European Space Development Scheme (EDEC), a territorial model that among other measures, seeks to reduce regional asymmetries and promote sustainable urban development, through efficient, intelligent and participative urban management, which natural values resources and historical or cultural heritage (Ramos, 2014) and (DGT, 2018). Subsequently, the Territorial

Agenda for the European Union (2007) considers polycentrism fundamental to guarantee greater competitiveness and economic and social cohesion between the center of Europe and the most peripheral regions (Nunes, Mota and Campos, 2012). A European polycentric urban system encourages the development of cooperation and urban complementarity strategies, at different scales (political, administrative, territorial, functional and sectoral), which include cross-border polycentric urban systems (Nunes, Mota and Campos, 2012).

European cohesion policies stem from urban policies linked to the new paradigms of urbanism, architecture, intelligent city management or urban governance, linked to sustainable development, which give greater economic, functional and territorial prominence to urban centers in the context of European polycentrism (ESPON, 2014). The Urban policies focus on urban qualification, revitalization, rehabilitation and regeneration. It is a restoration of building the cultural and natural heritage. The compact, concentrated and dense urbanism should be contrasted with the dispersion, discontinuity, fragmentation and urban segregation of the last decades. It is meant to be an inclusive urbanism that combats urban poverty developing cities with well-planned and sustainable urban and suburban spaces (ESPON, 2014).

More recently, the EU and its cohesion policy have tended to deepen through Agenda 2030/40, based on sustainable development goals (SDGs), Paris Agreement on EU Political Climate Change, with a view to promoting economic growth, competitiveness, social and territorial cohesion, in which cities must be inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable human settlements (Medina, 2019).

4. Small and Medium-Sized Border Towns

Urban border regions are becoming increasingly important in the context of European Regional and Cohesion Policy, Community financing programs, such as INTERREG (1990), the entry into force of the Schengen Agreement (1995) and the Single Currency (2002). These urban areas have the greatest capacity to participate in cross-border projects. The Leipzig Charter approved in 2007, the document “Cities of Tomorrow”, published by the Sustainable Europe Commission, reinforces the importance of cities and cooperation in Territorial Cohesion Policy.

Second, Antoine Decoville, Frédéric Durand, and Valérie Felten (2015), small and medium-sized cross-border cities have a population between 20,000 and 250,000, inhabitants, interfering in their classification factors as diverse as geographic, historical, economic, cultural, social or governance issues. For Luís Macorra (2011), small and medium-sized border cities refer to two or more urban centers, belonging to at least two countries, organized around structures of cross-border governance, located geostrategically in the context of urban systems, national and European, or trans-European development corridors, linked to major continental transport axes.

One way of providing small and medium-sized cross-border cities with critical mass and scale, improving the quality of services and recreating innovative territories (clusters, business incubators, science and technology parks), is through the sharing and development of complementarities within the scope of cross-border cooperation, which take place between networks of universities, R&D centers, companies, employment and vocational training centers, linked to the digital sector and scientific, technical, industrial and business management, but also to the endogenous resources of the territory, such as agriculture, which generate high levels of qualification and employment (the great competitive challenge of the European Union), as protagonized in the Europe 2020 strategy (Moura and Cardoso, 2009) and (Decoville, Durand and Felten, 2015). It seeks to prevent the duplication of infrastructure, services and urban functions, and to reduce the impact of the disorder of the territory, associated with urban growth and the provision of new infrastructure and equipment (Decoville, Durand and Felten, 2015).

Border cities have to respond to other common problems and obstacles, in institutional, administrative legal and economic competitiveness, access to financial resources and community and national programs, labor mobility, tax systems, academic equivalences, differentiated forms of governance, ordering territory, housing, equipment and services management, transport or linguistic differences (Trigal, 2014; Satamaria, González and Carril, 2015). Some European borders due to their new international (transnational) framework and strategic location in multimodal and logistical corridors become suitable spaces to accommodate new investments and promote the European Union's economic and social development (Lato, 2016).

In this context, polycentric urban strategy seeks to provide small and

medium-sized European cross-border cities with a greater international dimension, to ensure greater territorial convergence, to restore and expand the natural hinterland (Decoville, Durand and Feltegen, 2015). It had recovered the centrality lost with the process of European integration, the disappearance of internal borders and the control over the movement of people and goods.

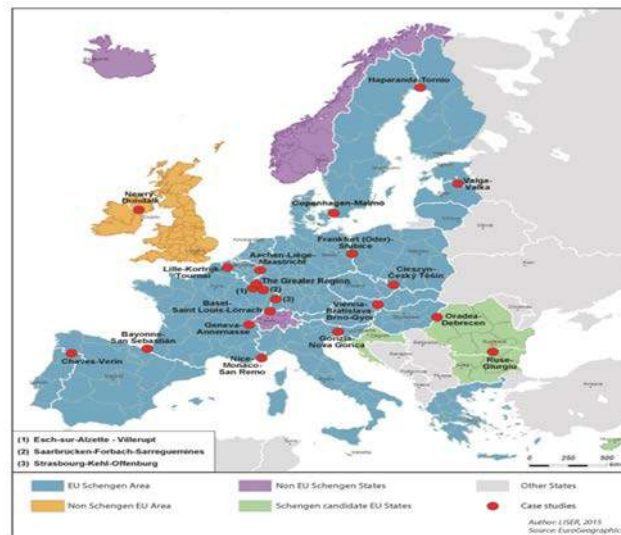


Figure 1 - Experiences of cross-border urban cooperation in Europe.

Source: Antoine Encoville, Frederica Durando and Vallérie Feltgen (2015).

In fact, border cities are possible capitals and development poles, as opposed to the strong polarization of large cities and metropolitan regions, promoting a more harmonious and balanced development of the territory of the European Union, cross-border urban territories whose development strategies are sustained, largely through community financing programs and funds (Ramos, 2014). In fact, borders tend to increasingly constitute opportunities and development opportunities for cross-border urban centers and their inhabitants, in the commercial, employment, tourism and cultural spheres, generating opportunities for economic and social development (Magri, Miranda, Galao and Goinheix, 2017).

New models of governance and cooperation are recreated around functional territorial regrouping, such as Euroregions and Eurocities. An important part of these governance structures in Europe are European

Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) (Decoville, Durand and Feltegen, 2015). In Portugal, cross-border governance structures have multiplied recently, such as Eurocities: Valença / Tui; Chaves / Verin; Vila Real de Santo António / Castro Marim / Ayamonte; Monção / Salvaterra.

5. EUROBEC

5.1. The Origin of a Eurocity

In 2006 the idea to create the Eurocity Elvas-Badajoz arose. However, the protocol for cross-border cooperation was only signed on September 16, 2013, between the Municipality of Elvas (Portugal) and the Ayuntamiento de Badajoz (Spain). This cooperation commitment aimed at the design, management and sharing of services, equipment and facilities between both cities, the development of experiences and projects of cross-border cooperation of common interest with community financing in the area of economy, social services and culture, to promote cooperation and the creation of companies and to improve conditions for attracting companies and investments, by taking advantage of synergies resulting from the construction of the logistics platform around Caia or from structural investments, such as the rail freight line originating in Port of Sines (and High - speed). It is also recommended to build a Euro-citizenship that fosters integration, interaction and partition processes, promoting active citizenship. In 2015 Campo Maior (Portugal), claiming the geographical proximity to Elvas and Badajoz, and the economic and functional links, requested the integration into Eurocity, which was voted in favor by the Mayor of Elvas and the Mayor of Badajoz.

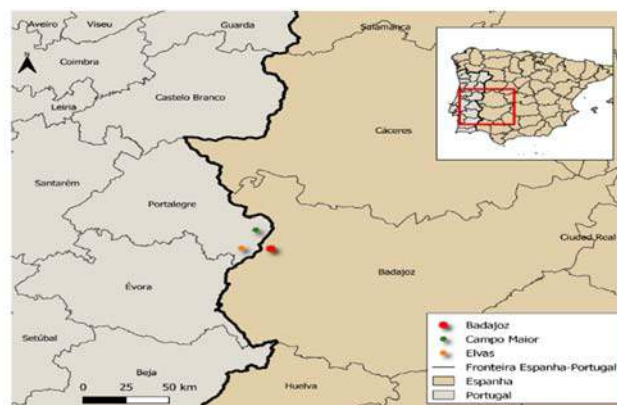


Figure 2 - Location of EUROBEC (Badajoz, Elvas and Campo Maior) in the context of the Iberian Peninsula. Source: Own elaboration.

Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior are close together territorially, with a long history of historically consolidated connections (Figure 2), due to cultural and anthropological affinities, where there is growing population mobility between the two sides of the border, a functional space with some urban density. Campo Maior is also home to one of the largest companies in Portugal and the Eurocity, Delta Cafés, with important logistical and multimodal transport requirements.

Despite the geographical proximity, in the last decades, the projects developed under Interreg were very small (Bruno Janeco, 2015). The most recent cross-border cooperation actions between Badajoz, Elvas and Campo Maior, in an integrated perspective in the Eurocity context, take place within the scope of INTERREG VA through the GURA projects (Guardiães da Raia, finally not approved) and the EUROBEC project (Building Eurocity, approved in June 2007). EUROBEC, includes Eurocity governance structures, Eurocity strategic design and micro-cooperation, where several actions stand out, among which: the creation of a common agenda (cultural and sports), elaboration of the Eurocity strategic plan, sustainable cooperation, creation of the Eurocity card, creation of the Observatory and a communication plan.

Order No. 9370 of October 24, 2017 published in the Diário da República 2nd series, which finally authorizes the celebration of the Cross-Border Cooperation Protocol between the Municipalities of Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior, called “Eurocidade Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior”, aims to create a body without legal personality in the form of a working group, in which the different parties seek to address the following issues:

- a) The concertation of initiatives and the adoption of decisions;
- b) The promotion of studies, plans, programs and projects susceptible to state, community and international financing;
- c) The promotion of forms of relationship between agents, structures and entities, public and private, that contribute to the development of the respective border territories.

However, it was only in March 2018 that the authorization to sign the EUROBEC constitution agreement was published in Diário de la República, contributing to the delay in the start of the planned actions.

The following areas are subject to Eurocity action: urban equipment; energy; transport and communications; education, teaching and vocational training; heritage, culture and science; free time and sport; Cheers; social action; housing; civil protection; environment and basic sanitation; Consumer defense; promotion of development; spatial planning and urbanism; municipal police and external cooperation.

In this context, EUROBEC is an opportunity to mitigate the main bottlenecks and development problems, strengthen cross-border cooperation and enhance the strategic advantages resulting from territorial integration in the context of increasing globalization.

The capital function of the eurocity in the context of the two regions could increase the functional area of influence and strengthen its position.

5.2. EUROBEC's Socio-Economic and Territorial Dynamics

EUROBEC is the largest urban complex on the border between Portugal and Spain, occupying the three municipalities at 2360.4 km². This cross-border urban territory is located in the southwest of the Iberian Peninsula; it has a geostrategic baricentric position between the cities of Lisbon, Madrid and Seville, as a territory of cross-border cooperation between Spain and Portugal which is the largest urban center in Extremadura. It is a privileged central location that could be reinforced in the future as a territory of articulation between Spain and Portugal, a rotating platform in terms of logistics, services and business infrastructures that connect the sea ports of the Portuguese Atlantic façade and Madrid (Ayuntamiento de Badajoz, 2005).

In 2018, the resident population in EUROBEC, amounted to 179,143 inhabitants. This population represented 16.8% of the total population of Extremadura and 25.4% of Alentejo. Between 1900 and 2018, there was a strong population growth in the urban territory that constitutes EUROBEC. The number of residents goes from 59,335 to 179,143 inhabitants.

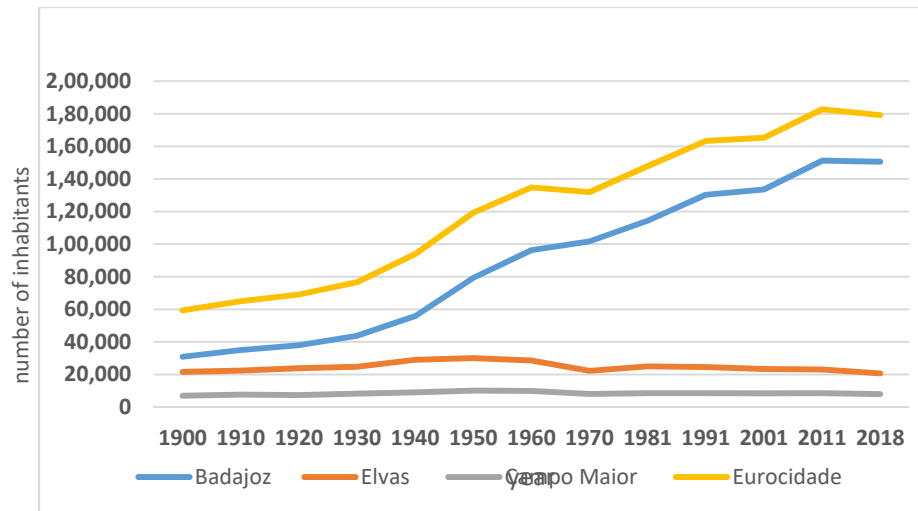


Figure 3 - Population Evolution at EUROBEC 1900 - 2018. Source: INE, Population Census and General Population Census and Annual Estimates of Resident Population.

In this Eurocity, however, there are different demographic dynamics. In 2018, the population of Badajoz amounts to 150,330 inhabitants, constituting the largest urban center and a major driver of demographic growth in the Eurocity. The population of Elvas is 20,706 and Campo Maior 7,907 inhabitants. The systematic departure of the population and the consequent drop-in birth rates in Portuguese municipalities have contributed to a marked aging of the population. There is a strong imbalance in the urban structure of EUROBEC, with a strong macrocephaly of the city of Badajoz.

The three EUROBEC centers have an urban Muslim foundation in the 8th century, with the Islamic Alcazaba of Badajoz, with six 8 hectares, the largest in Europe (Garcia, 2010). This border territory had a prominent role in the context of the Iberian Peninsula, being the scene of important war events and political negotiations in the history of Spain and Portugal, and consequently of Europe, in the context of the geostrategic alliances of the Iberian kingdoms, with other transpirenaicos.

In fact, following the War of Restoration and successive ones (1640-1668), the three urban centers assert themselves as important bastioned military squares (Garcia, 2010). The bastioned military heritage of the three urban centers has since given this territory a strong identity, constituting, today, an important strategic asset for the future. In this context, Eurocidade has an urban

center classified as World Heritage by UNESCO, the Quartel Fronteira City of Elvas and its Fortifications.

The 30s and 60s of the 20th century, mark the growth and urban expansion of Eurocidade, especially in Badajoz. Since the 1960s, the great urban expansion outside the ancient city of Badajoz, which held 120 hectares, has been consolidated. In 1990, the occupied area amounts to 1500 hectares, and in the beginning of the 21st century to 3000 hectares (Cayetano, 2017). Urban policies that created an expansionist and fragmented city model, little cohesive and solidary, evidenced in the cities of Elvas, Campo Maior and Badajoz. The three urban centers of the Eurocity are degraded and underutilized and have become vacant historic centers, with gentrification or miscegenation phenomena (more recently in Elvas and Campo Maior), simultaneously with certain suburban peripheries.

Despite the fact that residential mobility, together with labor mobility, is essential to ensure greater mooring and integration of the territory, generating complementarities and economies of scale of agglomeration that are fundamental for cross-border development, there has never been a consistent phenomenon of residential mobility, despite the difference in average value of accommodation between Badajoz, relative to Portuguese municipalities, is always higher; in Badajoz € 1,042 and Elvas and Badajoz € 846.

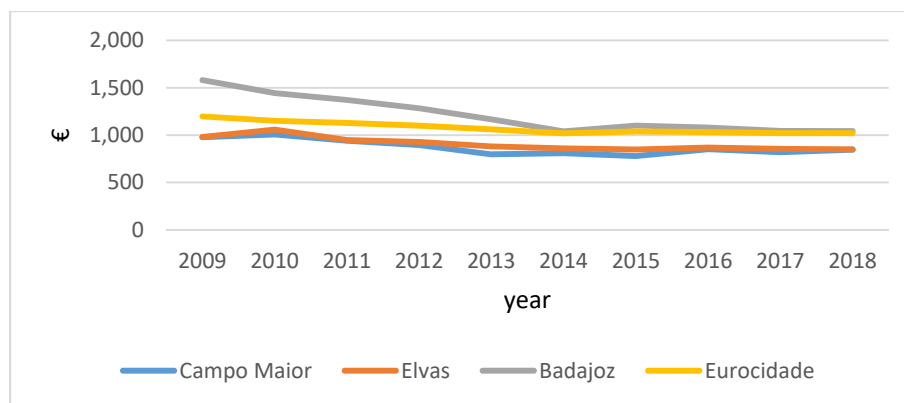


Figure 4 - Average bank valuation values for accommodation in Eurocidade 2009-2018. Source: PORDATA and TINSA, 2009-2018.

The Eurocity as a highly outsourced territory, since 88.9% of the population is employed in this sector. Badajoz is the most important urban, service, administrative and commercial center, of regional and cross-border

scope, in 2011 with 92.2% of the employed population of this sector. In Elvas, the tertiary sector in 2001 occupied 77.4% of the employed population and Campo Maior, 61.4% (2011 Population Census and 2011 General Population Census). With regard to groups of professions, based on the National Classification of Professions in Spain and Portugal, it appears that in Eurocity the population employed in public administration and compulsory defense / social security (16.2%), wholesale trade and retail / repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (13.2%), human health and social support activities (13%), accommodation, restaurants and similar (6.3%) and manufacturing industries (5.5%) (Census of la Población 2011 and General Population Census 2011).

The agricultural sector, due to the increasing levels of mechanization, is experiencing a sharp setback in terms of the active population. EUROBEA's territory is located in the Mediterranean region of Europe, although it has continental contours. Vulnerable to the effects of climate change, with loss of natural resources, ecosystems, habitats, landscapes, biodiversity, soil or water, problems of "desertification", degradation, erosion and loss of soil, resulting from the intensification of livestock and agricultural practices, namely by intensive and super intensive olive groves, and irrigation linked to agro-industrials (DGT, 2018).

As occurs in many of the border regions of southern Europe, in Eurocidade Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior, there is a high unemployment rate. In 2011 Badajoz had the highest unemployment rate (25.1%). In Elvas the unemployment rate reached 18.4% and Campo Maior 15.08% (Censos de la Población 2011 and General Population Census 2011). The high unemployment rate in the Eurocity, the existence of certain administrative obstacles, and the lack of cross-border labor culture led to reduced cross-border labor mobility in the Eurocity.

The characteristics of the job market and unemployment in the Eurocities reflect the specificities of this border territory, which has felt, in the last decades, with particular intensity, the absence of large productive investments, the impact of the globalization of the economy and world trade, of European policies associated with the disappearance of borders and European integration, national guidelines associated with public administration and defense reforms, the growing cross-border economic integration in the context of Eurocity (whose polarizing effect of Badajoz

affected Portuguese municipalities). The high population belonging to different ethnicities influence unemployment rates.

A more diversified economic base is required. A small number of economic sectors tend to place important obstacles to the development of urban centers and creates weaknesses in times of pandemic disruptions or more resilient cyclical crises. In view of the wealth of Eurocity, urban and cultural tourism has increased significantly in Eurocity, in particular in Elvas, as a result of its UNESCO classification, an increase in tourist flows, accompanied by an increase in its internationalization, and in hotel units (Table 1). Between 2015 and 2018, overnight stays grew 21.0% of overnight stays, from 357,769 to 432,962, an increase of 75,193 overnight stays. The majority of overnight stays are concentrated in the municipality of Badajoz, which records in 2018, 340,896.

However, it is in Elvas that the highest percentage growth in the number of overnight stays in this period is 51.6%, from 55,729 to 84,501, an increase of 28,772 overnight stays. It is an increase higher than that observed in the same period for Portugal (27.5%), Alentejo (39.1%), Spain (27.5%) and Extremadura (39.0%). Eurocidade Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior, in the regional and cross-border context, are surpassed, in terms of the number of overnight stays, as we saw in relation to the number of guests, by Évora (645,904) and Cáceres (461,667) (Table 1).

Territorial unit	2015	2016	2017	2018	Var. 2015-2018	
					Nº	(%)
Portugal	53074176	59122640	65385260	67662103	14587927	27,5
Alentejo	1924308	2134313	2487385	2675945	751637	39,1
Elvas	55729	63587	74854	84501	28772	51,6
Campo Maior	6173	6553	0	7565	1392	22,5
Espanha	53131920	59188243	65462131	67748622	14616702	27,5
Extremadura	1930481	2140866	2487385	2683510	753029	39,0
Badajoz	295867	285788	301838	340896	45029	15,2
Eurocidade	357769	355928	376692	432962	75193	21,0
Cáceres				461667		
Mérida				373130		
Évora				645904		

Table 1- Evolution of overnight stays in Portugal, Spain, Alentejo, Extremadura, Elvas, Badajoz, Campo Maior, Cáceres, Mérida and Évora.

Source: Junta da Extremadura and INE - Statistical Yearbook of the Alentejo Region, 2015-2017.

The Eurocity has a major role in terms of trade, hotels and restaurants (one of the activities that generates greater cross-border flows, especially by the Spanish who highly value Portuguese cuisine). Trade is one of the main economic sectors of Eurocidade, an important generator of employment, mobility between the urban centers of Eurocidade and attraction of visitors and tourists. Badajoz is the biggest retail shopping center in the Eurocity of the Alentejo and Extremadura region and the Iberian Southwest border.

One sector, the traditional trade sector, which suffers from competition from large commercial areas, has important structural and entrepreneurial weaknesses, affecting the traditional trade areas of the Eurocity, especially in Elvas and Badajoz. The “Markets” of Badajoz are also highly sought after by the population of Elvas and Campo Maior.

Another of the demands of the Portuguese urban centers of the Eurocity, is the massive purchase of fuel from the stations of Badajoz. In addition to cross-border mobility between the three urban centers for commercial reasons, there is a high demand for other services by the Portuguese, namely in private health. Badajoz is the largest health center in the Eurocity, which stems from being its largest municipality and has a wide area of provincial influence. In Badajoz there are five hospitals, public and private, with a wide range of health services and hospital facilities, and in Elvas a hospital. The high number of Spanish doctors and nurses working at the Santa Luzia Hospital in Elvas and health centers stands out. However, in the last decade, there has been a retraction in cross-border cooperation and complementarities between the health units of the three municipalities, in sharp contrast to what is happening in Europe where the health sector is one of the privileged in the area of cross-border cooperation.

EUROBEC has an important network of services, equipment and infrastructure anchor in the development of the territory, especially the city of Badajoz. Services, equipment and infrastructure that, when endowed with a greater critical mass and complementary dynamics, can provide an opportunity for efficient management and ensure economies of scale in the construction of new equipment that in isolation could not be achieved, ensuring greater sustainability urban renewal, a strengthening of the cross-border hinterland and a greater competitiveness of the Euro-city.

Among the various facilities, the Eurocidade Elvas, Badajoz and Campo

Maior, due to its population size and regional influence, is also the most important center of culture of the lane, between Portugal and Spain, having a much wider and diversified offer of material heritage, immaterial, services, equipment and cultural infrastructures, in the expansion and diversification of the cultural offer, which determined an increase in cultural demand, although the complementarities between the three urban centers remain relatively limited.

From the standpoint of culture, education and recreation of Eurocity citizenship, one of the objectives is to make this territory trilingual (including English). At the moment, in primary and secondary schools, on both sides of the border there is already a high number of students attending the subjects of Portuguese and Spanish. In Eurocidade there are 6,113 students attending Portuguese or Spanish, as a second language, as in schools in the municipalities of Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior 4,947 students attending Portuguese in schools in Badajoz in 2018-2019. In the academic year 2017-2018, in the municipalities of Elvas (887) and Campo Maior (279), a total of 1166 students attended the Spanish (DGEEC, 2020) and Junta de Extremadura (2020).

Eurocidade has a network of higher education establishments, linked to the Polytechnic Institute of Portalegre and the University of Extremadura. There are 8,756 students in the Badajoz centers, schools and colleges in the academic year 2019-2020. The Escola Superior Agrária de Elvas (ESAE), integrated in the Polytechnic Institute of Portalegre, has 426 students in the same period. In cross-border interurban cooperation, the technological dimension must be a priority for the whole Eurocity, namely the development of EUROBECE's intelligent management systems, in order to allow the environmental and functional optimization of the three urban centers in order to acquire an urban resilience.

The construction of the conventional line of goods along Sines -Évora - Elvas / Caia - Badajoz -Madrid, may reinforce the centrality of this territory as a multimodal and logistical interposition and promote greater territorial integration, since the Port of Sines is an important exit port for scattered cargo types from the Iberian Peninsula, due to its privileged strategic location at the crossroads of the major international shipping routes by sea, and can constitute an important revolving plate between Africa, North America and South America.

In 2019, the first company was installed on the Logistics Platform of the European Southwest, based on the border, in Spanish territory, which will have a goods terminal that will connect this station to Madrid and the rest of Spain to the Portuguese Sea Ports through the new electrified line of goods, with the objective of supporting regional companies and expanding markets, enhancing the economic development of Eurocidade (Caballero Calzada, 2019).

A structuring project, which should be viewed in cross-border terms, and closely linked to the construction of Eurocity, is inserted in European policies and economic and territorial cohesion, cross-border cooperation and trans-European transport, with the different public and private agents of Eurocity and Europe, regional and central administration involved in the logistics platform in institutional, governance, business, construction and management of facilities and infrastructures, implementation of free zones or customs procedures (Janeco, 2015).

EUROBEC is served by road, rail and air links that connect the Eurocity to several destinations in Portugal, and Spain (especially the large urban areas of the Iberian Peninsula), with Badajoz having better accessibility than Elvas and Campo Maior. The city of Badajoz has a wide network of municipal transport, with urban and peri-urban lines that depart from the city center, and include rural centers and peripheral neighborhoods, with day and night routes, with a wide range of buses powered by electricity. In the context of Eurocity, however, road passenger transport lines between Badajoz and the Portuguese municipalities of Eurocity are reduced. The geographical proximity between the three urban centers, around 20 km, means that individual transport by residents is privileged.

Passenger rail transport has serious deficiencies in Alentejo and Extremadura. Only more recently has the Badajoz-Mérida-Madrid Line been invested, which has made it possible to shorten travel times relatively. Badajoz, awaits the High-Speed Train / AVE, one of the great aspirations; until its completion a High-Performance Train is planned that substantially improves the quality and the distance between the two cities. In this context, the Badajoz railway station receives modernization works.

EUROBEC is the only one, on the border between Portugal and Spain, which has in its territory an airport, where domestic flights are operated, to

Madrid, Barcelona throughout the year, and to Palma de Mallorca, during the summer, although there are also flights to Paris, Valencia and the Canary Islands. It is worth mentioning the successive delays in completing the High-Speed train line between Badajoz and Madrid and the suspension of the connection to Lisbon-Badajoz, one of the strategic assets considered fundamental for Eurocidade Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior.

From the point of view of spatial planning, each urban center is 20 km away. The only hypothesis of territorial confluence is, however, between the municipalities of Badajoz and Elvas. The city of Badajoz, whose objective is to compact the interstitial spaces generated by a radial growth, has been converging in relation to the border, asserting itself as a new centrality of the city in terms of residences, university students, commercial toilets, services and logistics. The future urban growth of Elvas can be based on two complementary models, a nuclear one, structured according to the radials to the urban center, similar to the city of Badajoz, which would necessarily include a qualification and revitalization component of the historic center, in a more urban style. Mediterranean, or other linear, more expansionist, which follows a catechetical model of urban growth, around the EN4, is a strategy to bring Elvas closer to Badajoz, which depends in the long term on the economic dynamism surrounding the Eurocity project, with a wide range of spaces that support this growth.



Figure 5 - Road Structure and Urban Growth in Elvas and Badajoz.

Source: CESUR (2007).

The importance given to cross-border cooperation and Euro-city is framed by strategic and structural documents from the municipalities of Elvas and Badajoz and the Alentejo region. The PROT (Regional Spatial Planning Plan)

of Alentejo, the PDM (Municipal Master Plan) of Elvas and Campo Maior, was revised in 2009 and the “Territorial Development Strategy and Action Plan Alto Alentejo 2020”, highlight the development of logistical activities and the creation of Eurocidade Elvas / Badajoz (DGT, 2018; CME, 2009; DHVFBO, 2007).

The Campo Maior PDM incorporates strategies to optimize the benefits resulting from the structuring of this cross-border urban reality, at a time when this urban center did not yet integrate the future Euro-city, as a structuring factor in the cross-border cooperation and territorial integration of these three municipalities. The PGM of Badajoz (Plan General Municipal) and the PEB of Badajoz (Strategic Plan of the Ciudad de Badajoz, with many of the actions already implemented) recommend as one of the major strategic objectives, the implementation of the Elvas / Badajoz eurocity. EUROACE 2020 (Euroregion Alentejo-Centro-Extremadura) gives territorial importance to the railway corridor Sines, Madrid and the rest of Europe.

In fact, the urban development plans of Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior installation of business and logistics investments and transport infrastructures linked to multimodal road and rail modes (Sines, Évora, Elvas-Caia, Badajoz, Madrid and Europe intermodal freight line and Alta Velocidad Madrid-Badajoz), which are part of one of the major trans-European transport corridors, and because they are based in this territory, can contribute to the internationalization of the economic base and the territorial assets of the Euro-city, contributing to the international projection of Alentejo and Extremadura.

In the urban centers of Elvas and Campo Maior, we are witnessing the development of a set of spatial planning instruments aimed at the urban and sustainable qualification of these urban centers, which include the regeneration of urban peripheries; the rehabilitation of historic centers and their cultural, historical and heritage assets, including their amenities and immaterial identity values; the use of historic or heritage buildings for cultural, museological, creative industries, arts or tourism purposes; the introduction of environmental efficiency technologies to mitigate climate change in the rehabilitation of buildings; spatial planning policies that review urban perimeters and contribute to the consolidation of urban fabrics; rationalization and qualification of equipment and services; policies to support the elderly population, intergenerational relations and ethnic minorities; sustainable mobility; economic revitalization (including trade)

and enhancement of public spaces, the attraction of productive investments, employment and greater social cohesion.

This plan develops the urban, residential and functional rehabilitation and reuse of Casco Antigo (old city). Prepare the city for a set of opportunities arising from the global economy and the trans-European transport network, namely the availability of soil to accommodate the route of the High Speed and conventional freight line, as well as the respective terminals, logistics.

To create a new urban centrality (markedly cross-border) around Fronteira do Caia (Real de la Feria, Amusement Park, IFEBa Centro Comercial el Faro), with neighborhoods of villas, more recently a high typology is added in density with the University Campus and Technological Science Park of Extremadura and the University Hospital of Badajoz (Ayuntamiento de Badajoz, 2005).

5.3. Building EUROBEC's Governance Structure

The implementations of all these actions require efficient, multi-scale governance structures that involve the participation of various institutions and actors, from the public and private sectors, from civil society at the local, regional, national and European level, in the concerted search for solutions or in joint enhancement of urban strategic assets, which allow for efficiency gains and economies of scale. A cross-border urban cooperation that does not eliminate all the logic of competition between the urban centers of Eurocidade Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior, but where each investment based in one of the urban centers must be viewed in a cross-border logic of the eurocity, with the objective of obtaining savings scale, efficiency and urban qualification.

From a sociological point of view, there are certain 'ghosts' among the border population, namely that Eurocity is a political union, with the consequent loss of nationality. In the context of the strong territorial and functional dominance of Badajoz, this urban center is considered a threat to development by Campo Maior and Elvas when there is a border mentality with losses in relation to a neighbor who throughout history has been the invader or enemy.

The EUROBEC start-up involves the strategic design of the Eurocity, which after a diagnosis, consists of a document with strategic proposals and future operational priorities, which result from several documents and studies prepared by the different working groups, in the short, medium and long term. This structure makes a broad and multisectoral diagnosis, which should assess

EUROBEC's problems, challenges, potentials and common opportunities, which identifies the bases for the construction of a new cross-border urban reality and which defines the instruments for planning and spatial planning in the future. The Ayuntamiento de Badajoz, in the context of Euro-city, is responsible for developing the Euro-city diagnosis and strategic plan, as well as implementing the Observatory.

After the strategic phase, the EUROBEC Observatory should be created, which accompanies and monitors the implementation of the various strategic proposals, materialized in the set of actions, for the construction of EUROBEC. It aims at improving and developing cross-border cooperation between the different actors and agents, public and private, of the eurocity, generating synergies and cross-border networks that lead to the successful completion or the emergence of new projects included in the actions of the major strategic axes, and that allow to secure real development processes in this border region. Finally, EUROBEC's governance efficiency can be enhanced by collaborating on projects financed under programs such as Interreg and other regional and cohesion policy funds.

Immediately, the operationalization of the Eurocity and its consolidation requires a set of cooperation micro-actions that should evolve civil society, through an active Euro-citizenship with cultural and sports initiatives, a common cultural agenda, the Citizen Card, language courses, school exchanges and teacher training, which allows for better cultural and linguistic knowledge. It is a possibility of creating a common social area with access to public services by the population residing in Eurocidade Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior. The construction of the eurocity requires symbols that strengthen the sense of belonging among citizens and reinforce territorial marketing, such as the already created EUROBEC common brand. It is a unitary image with a common signage in the public space.

The eurocity may have its own communication and multimedia systems, such as a future cable television, written press, radio, eurocity website or common computerized advertising panels. For eurocity to compete in wider and more demanding tourism markets, it is important to group all tourism resources and values, creating a joint eurocity tourism workshop or post initiatives in potential markets, not restricted to major tourism fairs (BTL and FITUR), but specific actions in public spaces and projection events, with greater efficiency in promoting the EUROBEC brand.

The strategic diagnosis must analyze the historical, demographic, economic and functional constraints, the duality of legal systems, the excessive duplication and fragmentation of administration and public services, the border mentality and the insufficient degree of integration of infrastructures and services, which hamper the construction of the eurocity. In order to overcome some of the obstacles of a legal and administrative scope, or those linked to the commitment and political will, transparency between institutions and efficiency in public management, which hinder the consolidation of the eurocity and the adoption and development of broader cooperation projects, Eurocity Elvas, Badajoz and Campo Maior should adopt instruments that facilitate cross-border cooperation, such as the European Grouping of Cross-Border Cooperation (EGTC) and the European Cross-Border Mechanism (MTFE) under discussion for approval by the European institutions.

This proposal must be participated by the central governments of Spain and Portugal, Junta da Extremadura, CCDR-A, the universities and polytechnics of Extremadura and Alentejo and Euroace. A project participated by civil society, economic and social agents.

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