

Shared Cultural and Historical Heritage and Cross-Border Cooperation?

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(Summary)

The article examines the policy of cross-border cooperation in the field of culture and cultural and historical heritage of the bordering region of Petrich, Bulgaria, and Strumica, Macedonia. For centuries, until their final political division after 1944, the two regions were not familiar with the existence of dividing state border and established close economic, social and cultural relations. However, in the period after 1944, those relations were rendered difficult and for a certain time even completely impeded which led to their strong violation. The political contradictions between Bulgaria and Macedonia (until 1991 part of Yugoslavia) almost completely broke off the contacts and cooperation between the municipalities of Petrich and Strumica. The attempts at their resumption began only after the year of 2000 when the European mechanisms for cross-border cooperation started working. Focusing the attention on joint projects of the two municipalities, the article tries to answer the question to what extent the example of cross-border cooperation presented here achieve the purposes related to cultural and historical heritage and identity and set in the idea of a “Europe of the regions“ and which are the main problems and failures.

Keywords: cultural and historical heritage; cross-border cooperation; borders; bordering regions

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