



**THROUGH INNOVATIONS
TO EFFECTIVE COOPERATION**



THROUGH INNOVATIONS TO EFFECTIVE COOPERATION

Regional development of cooperation through joint projects and activities is reaffirmed as a key factor in building mutual trust, preventing conflicts and supporting economic and social development on both sides of the border between the countries of the European Union and their neighbouring countries.

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION - STRATEGIC CHALLENGE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER REGIONS

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A major EU initiative which covers and helps to develop cooperation projects, has since 2009 been the initiative called Eastern Partnership. The partnership develops relations with neighbouring countries of the EU, and for Slovakia, the gateway to the region is traditionally Ukraine. The purpose is to provide a platform for social

development, trade, deepening economic cooperation, tourism and other contacts.

The cooperation between the Slovak Republic and Ukraine is important and significant for both countries; and it is subject to several international bilateral agreements. However, practical experience and examples from abroad draw attention to the fact that in addition to the macro level of official relations at government level, micro level of the border regions is also crucial for the development of cooperation.

As a follow-up, the Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences of the Slovak





Academy of Sciences (hereinafter the “CSPS SAS”) in close cooperation with the Institute for Cross-border Cooperation in Uzhgorod, developed a project entitled “Provision of information and implementation of innovative approaches in cross-border cooperation between the Slovak Republic and Ukraine” (No. of project CBCo1030) within program area Cross-border cooperation, with the aim of reducing existing barriers in cross-border cooperation.

Project budget: 222 233 Euro

Project grant: 188 898 Euro

Project duration: May 2016 – April 2017

Project site: Košice and Prešov municipality, Transcarpathian region

Five other partner institutions from three countries were also involved in the project implementation in addition to SAS CSPV:

1. Institute of Cross-border Cooperation (Uzhgorod, Ukraine)
2. Authorities of Municipal Region of Finmark (Vadso, Norway)
3. ISD Slovakia (Bardejov, Slovakia)
4. Košice Municipal Region (Košice, Slovakia)
5. International Institute of Cross-border Analysis and Management (Uzhgorod, Ukraine)

'SLOVAKIA – UKRAINE: COOPERATION ACROSS THE BORDER'

PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION BETWEEN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC AND UKRAINE

The project aims to collect and analyse information on the forms, methods and results of operations of Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Regional Council and their application in individual bodies of decision-makers in Slovakia and Ukraine. Implementation

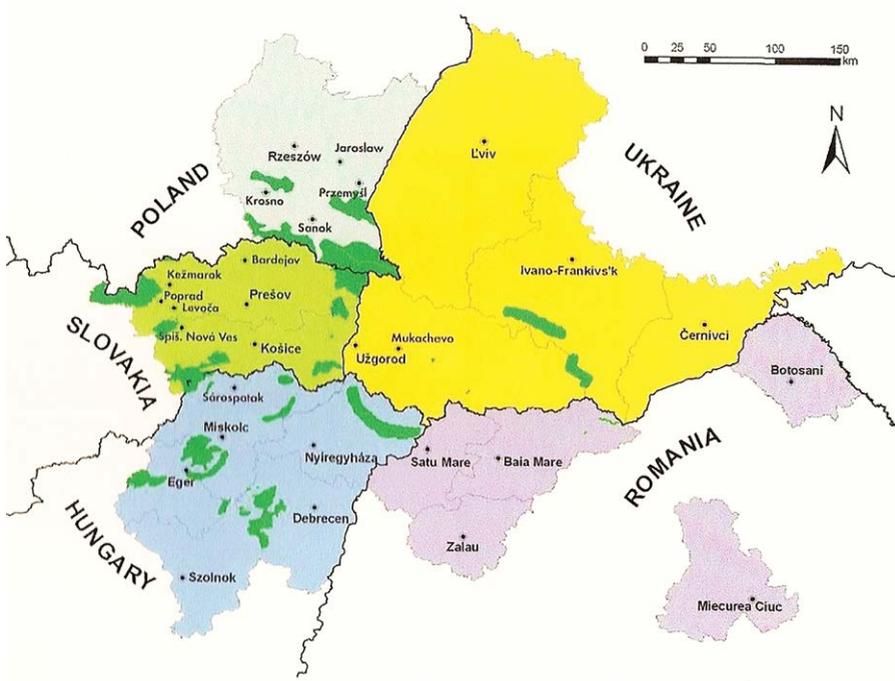
of work experience of northern European authorities should increase the efficiency of both cross-border cooperation of border regions of individual countries and the whole cross-border Transcarpathian region.

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BARENTS EURO-REGION

The Barents Euro-Arctic Region





PROJECT RESULTS

- 1.** Research of political, legal, economic, financial, organizational and other aspects of activities of northern European international bodies of cross-border cooperation;
- 2.** Study and analysis of the conditions, development and previous experience of the Norwegian-Russian and Ukrainian-Slovakian cross-border cooperation;
- 3.** Implementation of empirical sociological research into the opinions of the population in eastern Slovakia and in the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine on cross-border cooperation and the current processes on both sides of the border;

- 4.** Preparation and presentation of specific recommendations aimed at intensifying cross-border cooperation of neighbouring regions for state authorities and local governments, as well as other authorised institutions and organizations;

The target group are the state authorities and regional authorities and local governments in the border areas of Slovakia and Ukraine. Businesses, educational institutions, social and interest organizations, media and subjects that have partners or clients abroad will be interested in the project. Another group is represented by travel agencies, conservation and protection organizations, as well as scientific research institutions.



PROJECT TEAM

Marián Gajdoš – expert guarantor of the project for the recipient (historian, senior researcher at the Institute of Social Sciences CSPS SAS Košice, gajdosm@saske.sk);

Serhij Ustyč – expert guarantor for the Ukrainian partner (director of the Institute of cross-border cooperation in Uzhgorod, ustich_si@ukr.net);

Anna Kalistová – Project Manager for the recipient (Head of the organisational unit of SvÚ CSPS SAS, kalist@saske.sk);

Olesia Benčák – Project Manager for the Ukrainian side (benchak2504@gmail.com)

EXPERT TEAM SLOVAKIA:

Richard Filčák – development of theories and environmental sociology (Senior Scientist of the Prognostic Institute of CSPS SAS, progrfil@savba.sk);

Stanislav Konečný – ethnic issues, cross-border cooperation, historian (Senior Scientist at the Institute of Social Sciences CSPS SAS, konecny@saske.sk);

Alexander Mušinka – cultural anthropologist, multiculturalism and the issue of ethnic minorities (University of Prešov, alexander.musinka@gmail.com)

Eduard Nežinský – prognosis of short-term time series (Senior Scientist of the Institute for Forecasting of CSPS SAS, progenez@savba.sk);

Zlatica Sáposová – historian, ethnic minorities, cross-border cooperation (Senior Scientist of the Institute for Forecasting of CSPS SAS, saposova@saske.sk);

Ivana Studená – processes of adult education and skills development, business development and processes at company level, the labour market (Senior Scientist of the Institute for Forecasting of CSPS SAS, progistu@savba.sk).

EXPERT TEAM UKRAINE AND NORWAY:

Ukraine: **Volodymyr Prykhodko, Dmytro Miroshnikov, Jevhen Jaščenko, Oleh Pilipenko**. They are experienced professionals who have had long experience with working in non-profit organizations, civil service and research. In terms of professional focus they mainly deal with economic, sociological, legal and historical aspects of cross-border relations.

Norway: **Rune Rafaelsen** (Mayor of municipal region Sør-Varanger), **Lars Georg Fordal** (Head of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat).

RESEARCHED AREA

Result of comparative analysis of the development of Slovakia and Ukraine is the source information for building and supporting local information capacity and identification of opportunities and definition of priorities for cross-border cooperation (CHS). The comparative analysis is focused on the institutional framework of Slovakia and Ukraine which creates economic environment and represents a vital dimension of economic development. Both countries were first evaluated from the point of view of the condition of institutions of market economy by standard methodology of transformation index of Bertelsmann Fund (BTI). Institutional quality of Slovakia may in general serve as a model for Ukraine with the full knowledge that the transformation involves many cultural, historical and geopolitical factors. Intertemporal analysis for the period between 2006 - 2016 in Slovakia indicates degradation in the area of stability of institutions; and in Ukraine, the deterioration in the political and social integration.

The EEA Grants and Norway Grants represent the contribution of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway to reducing economic and social disparities and to strengthening bilateral relations with 16 EU countries in Central and Southern Europe and the Baltics.



Concentrating on the regional level and economic performance, the border regions were characterized by selected macroeconomic indicators in terms of equipment and use of production factors. The aim was to determine the position of the border regions within the states. The results show that the border regions are among the least developed parts of Slovakia and Ukraine, both in terms of investments share, utilisation of labour (unemployment) and ultimately wealth (income per capita). Weaker relative performance encourages thoughts on the lack of capacity of national resources to support economic performance and use the potential of cooperation with neighbouring regions in the common problem areas. These are in particular

- Utilisation of human resources
- Insufficient investments

The solution can be seen in the offer of business opportunities as a result of improving the functioning of institutions and launching particular projects on the basis of cross-border cooperation.



Other thematic area of work focused on conceptual frameworks of cross-border cooperation and identification of success factors for cross-border cooperation. Effective development of cross-border cooperation requires not only mapping the barriers and driving forces based on the social and economic analyses, but also integration of this knowledge with research and practical experience from cooperation strategies in specific geopolitical areas. The following approaches are key in the process of proposal and implementation of cross-border cooperation:

- 1.** identification of the areas of forming strategies where communication is possible on individual competencies,
- 2.** identification of the areas of forming strategies that would benefit from cross-border coordination,
- 3.** identification of key and prominent parties involved in cross-border cooperation,

- 4.** identification and mapping of implementation potential of individual parties involved in cross-border cooperation,
- 5.** analysis of the relationship and links between policy parties who are involved on cross-border cooperation

In the context of preparatory study of our project, the following factors with a positive impact on the implementation of the various forms and activities may present priorities for Slovakia-Ukrainian cross-border cooperation:

- 1.** Look for tool for recruitment and keeping young and talented people
- 2.** Promote connections and movement between cities
- 3.** Develop cultural and economic potential of cities
- 4.** Improve living standard of inhabitants, thereby improving quality of environment for visitors

'SLOVAKIA – UKRAINE:
COOPERATION ACROSS THE BORDER'

BARENTS MODEL

INSPIRATION FOR CARPATHIAN REGION

An important part of the project is to analyse innovative processes in cross-border cooperation of northern European countries in terms of their applicability to the conditions of Slovakia-Ukrainian cross-border relations and Carpathian region as such. Macropolitical management and intergovernmental cooperation is enabled by the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, a forum consisting of the Foreign Ministers of Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. Coordination as well as stimulation of cross-border cooperation is provided by the Barents Regional Council that unites 14 border regions in the northernmost parts of these countries. It was founded in 1993 by signing the declaration in Kirkenes. The role of the International Barents Secretariat (IBS) is to support the activities of the aforementioned authorities and provide continuity, coherence and effectiveness of cooperation in the area of the Barents Sea.

Cooperation within the Barents framework builds on institutional basis established by the participating countries with emphasis on long-term strategy for development of cooperation, as opposed to ad hoc projects and activities. Four working groups, supported by a small but stable international secretariat focus on development in the area of culture, ethnic minorities, education, youth, business, information, environment, health and transport. The Barents Euro-Arctic and Regional Council and is an inspiring example of cooperation that confirms the

value of close integration on inter-governmental, inter-regional and individual level. Its critical evaluation and comparison with the Slovak-Ukrainian context provided the project with valuable information and suggestions on the way how to further develop cooperation and to identify priorities.

During the implementation of the project, the expert team examined examples of cooperation at the EU's eastern border. Specifically, it mapped and analysed the development of cooperation at the border between Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia. This is implemented through the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and the Barents Regional Council (BRC). For the purposes of the project, the experience and know-how of both councils were used as an example of good practice and a strong inspiration for further discussion on how to institutionalize and deepen the cooperation between adjacent Slovak and Ukrainian regions.

As the need to develop co-operation is growing, it shows how important is institutional capacity and security that would provide a framework and stability.

**"COOPERATION
WITH COMMON VALUES"**

FINDING FUNCTIONAL MODEL OF COOPERATION

Development of society in terms of addressing global issues and regional disparities assumes maximum use of integration processes and close cooperation not only between states but also neighbouring border regions, which are, moreover, disadvantaged by their marginal status. Current eastern Slovakia and Transcarpathian Ukraine present a typical example in this respect. Although mutual contacts and cooperation between the two regions has a long tradition, their form, intensity and efficiency do not correspond with current needs or options. There is need for innovation in the field of management of cross-border relations, as the Carpathian Euroregion project is not a very effective tool for intensification of cooperation of border regions in Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine and sporadic meetings of inter-governmental committees are not very effective either.

In the context of local capacity, it is helpful to use the relatively rich network of institutions, organizations and individuals who already have considerable experience with Ukraine, Ukrainian partners, cross-border cooperation and so on. In addition to standard economic subjects (natural or legal persons – i.e. businessmen and companies), which should be one of the main pillars of mutual Slovak-Ukrainian (as well as the wider Carpathian regional - except for Ukraine and Slovakia we are referring to Poland, Hungary and Romania) cooperation, a very important role should be played by local and regional authorities, cultural and educational institutions, national organizations and associations, the media, etc.

In all areas, we may find relatively numerous representation of particular experience and positive examples, which, however, have mostly several common features. These are primarily one-time, random or individual activities, which not only lack continuity and long duration (or repeatability), and institutional (local or regional) support and promotion. This situation has a negative effect on but also sustainability of cross-border cooperation.

Clearly, building regular local cross-border structures in the aforementioned cooperation can bring very significant momentum and positive results.



KIRKENES

Kirkenes (Girkonjårga in North Sami, Kirkkonieemi in Finnish) is the administrative town of the district of Sør Varanger in Finnmark county in north-eastern Norway. The town has 3,440 inhabitants (2011). Kirkenes is the seat of the Barents Secretariat. It was founded in 1993 - six months after the signing of the so-called Kirkenes Declaration (Kirkeneserklæringen), i.e. an agreement on cooperation between Norway and Russia in the use of the Barents Sea.

THE CENTRE OF SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES SAV (CSPS SAS)

is focused on basic and applied research and prognostics in sociology, demography, economics and research in psychological sciences and history. CSPS SAS was founded 01 October 2015 by combining three departments: the Prognostics Institute in Bratislava, the Institute of Social Sciences in Košice and the Institute of Experimental Psychology in Bratislava in order to implement an interdisciplinary approach, more information <http://www.cspv.sav.sk>

THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES CSPV SAV

has long focused on analysing historical and social context of the geopolitical space of Slovakia and Ukraine, which forms the basis for the development of Ukrainian-Slovakia cross-border relations.

THE INSTITUTE FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN UZHGOROD

is a non-governmental organization which aims to:

- examine the nature and trends of cross-border processes;
- analyse the geopolitical dynamics in the context of current changes of borders in Europe;
- development and optimization of implementation of the model of the cross-border system "East-West Europe" through long-term monitoring of its basic parameters;
- development of practical recommendations as well as the development of a broader and more effective cross-border cooperation.



Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences SAS
Šancová 56
811 05 Bratislava
Phone: +421 (2) 524 950 62
www.cspv.sav.sk



Organisational Unit Institute of Social Sciences CSPS SAS
Karpatská 5
040 01 Košice
Phone: +421 (55) 625 58 63
www.svusav.sk



Institute of cross-border cooperation
Sobranecká 137
Uzhgorod, Ukraine
Phone: (+38095) 159 16 68
Email: cbcinnovations@gmail.com

project website: www.cbcinnovations.sk
email: cbcinnovations@gmail.com



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