

Stories of **COOPERATION**



Programming
period of
2014-2020



Foreword



Welcome to the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC 2014-2020 Programme Book. On behalf of the Managing Authority, it is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that we present this compilation of projects, achievements, and partnerships that have shaped the cross-border cooperation landscape in our region.

Since its inception, HUSKROUA ENI CBC Programme has proven the value of cooperation and common goal. With objectives centred around promoting local culture and preserving historical heritage, environmental protection and climate change mitigation, improving accessibility, and enhancing safety and security across our borders, this Programme has been instrumental in driving positive change across participating regions. Our concerted efforts have not only boosted the professional relations, strengthened the bonds between our nations, but also laid down a foundation for sustainable development and prosperity.

As we peruse the pages of the book, we are reminded of the remarkable achievements realized through the collective efforts of all involved. From infrastructure improvements and environmental conservation initiatives to socio-economic development projects and cultural exchanges, each project exemplifies the spirit of innovation, resilience, trust, and inclusivity that defines our Programme.

In the recent years of the programming period we had to face many challenges, however, we were able to react effectively to the different situations thanks to our well-functioning working relationship with Ukrainian, as well as Slovak and Romanian national management bodies.

In a changing world, the HUSKROUA ENI CBC Programme has become a stable and sustainable instrument for creating a common and better future as well as a more dynamic neighbourhood partnership for all stakeholders involved.

Looking ahead, we envision a future built upon the foundation of continued cooperation and sustainability. Our journey does not end with the conclusion of this Programme; rather, it marks the beginning of a new chapter characterized by cooperation, and shared aspirations.

In closing, we extend our sincere appreciation to all who have contributed to the success of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020. Your dedication, passion, and commitment have been the driving force behind our achievements, and we look forward to embarking on this next phase of our journey together.

Péter KISS-PARCIU
Head of the Managing Authority



It is my pleasure to introduce this comprehensive volume showcasing the remarkable achievements of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020. This publication offers a glimpse into the transformative projects that have enriched our border regions through the collective efforts of our communities and partners. The 2014-2020 Programme period saw an array of initiatives that brought tangible benefits to the lives of residents across the joint border of our four countries. By focusing on the thematic objectives of promoting local culture and preserving historical heritage, enhancing environmental protection and climate resilience, improving regional accessibility through sustainable transport networks, addressing safety and security challenges, and advancing humanitarian goals, we have made significant strides in fostering cross-border cooperation and regional development.

A significant aspect of the Programme has been its commitment to humanitarian support, particularly in aiding the Ukrainian border territories. By providing essential resources and assistance, the Programme has played a crucial role in addressing the immediate needs of vulnerable communities, demonstrating solidarity and fostering a spirit of cooperation and mutual support during challenging times. With 81 projects successfully completed and nearly €69 million of EU funding allocated, we addressed the diverse needs of our border areas - revitalized local cultures, promoted tourism, strengthened environmental sustainability, improved transportation infrastructure, and enhanced disaster preparedness and health services.

Programme book highlights the inspiring stories of collaboration and innovation that have emerged from the Programme. It underscores the deepened partnerships between stakeholders from neighbouring countries and the new connections forged to collectively address shared challenges. The lessons learned and experiences gained during this period will undoubtedly serve as a valuable foundation for future Programmes' implementation.

We take pride in the solid framework established. The commitment and trust among programme authorities, beneficiaries, and stakeholders have grown stronger, creating a more cohesive and resilient border region. As we reflect on these successes, we look forward with optimism to continued cooperation and the lasting positive impact on our communities. With gratitude and hope, we invite you to explore the achievements of the ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020, celebrating the collective efforts that have shaped a brighter future for our joint border regions.

Áron László SZAKÁCS
Head of the Joint Secretariat

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Introduction

The Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) Programme 2014-2020 successfully continued the legacy of its predecessor, the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI CBC Programme 2007-2013. With the support of the European Union, the Programme aimed to foster more intensive and effective social and economic cooperation within the common border regions of Ukraine and the Member States in order to initiate progress in the field of the existing social, infrastructural and environmental difficulties. Based on the above intention, the following vision was defined by the Programme planning: in 2030, the border area where Ukraine is adjacent with three EU member states (Hungary, Slovakia and Romania) is a cooperative cross-border region that makes joint efforts and shows effective cooperation with the local promotion of culture and preservation of historical heritage, environmental protection, adaptation to climate change and disaster management. Cross-border accessibility between Ukraine and the three EU member states does not hinder everyday international cooperation, while the security situation, including border management, is at an adequate level. Cooperation is an integral and natural part of the daily life of the people living here and the authorities operating here.

The HUSKROUA ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020 is one of 16 Programmes of Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) on the external borders of the European Union, implemented under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) for the financial framework 2014-2020. The CBC is an integral component of the European Neighbourhood Policy and aims to promote cooperation across the borders between EU Member States and countries in the European Neighbourhood to strengthen the prosperity and stability of the border areas and to avoid the formation of dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours.

What characterizes the CBC Programmes and makes them a unique cooperation mechanism is the strong commitment and ownership of the participating countries, based on balanced partnerships.

The programme's management was entrusted to a national authority in a member state, jointly selected by all participating countries, to Hungary, under a common legal framework and implementation rules. The main decision making body of the Programme, the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC), responsible for monitoring the Programme implementation composed of representatives appointed by each participating country.

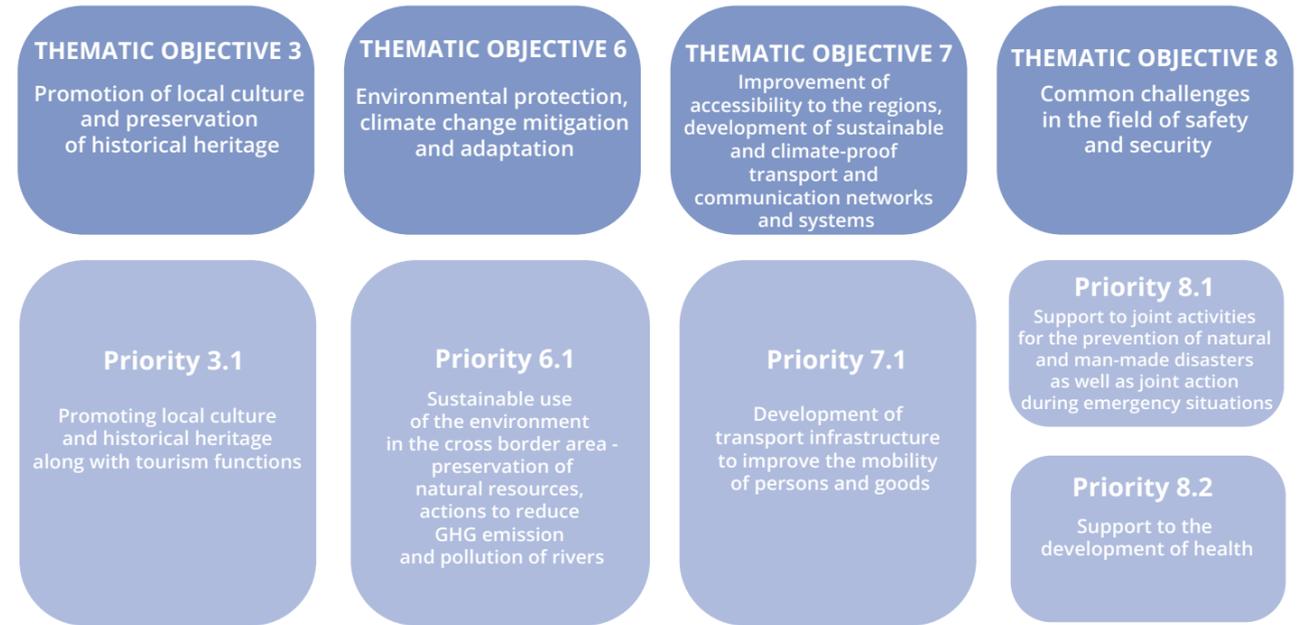
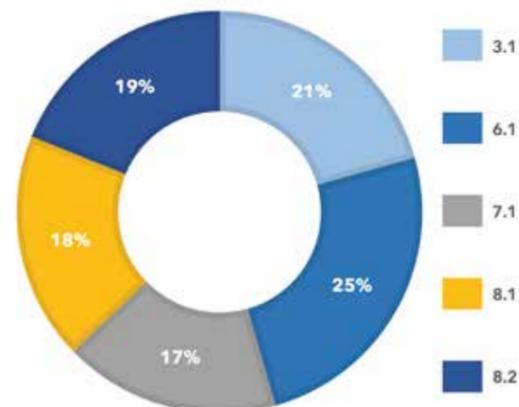
The reference document (Joint Operational Programme, JOP) for the implementation of the Programme was approved by the Commission Implementing Decision no. C(2015) 9180 on 17 December 2015. The Programme received €74 million of EU funding from the ENI as well as from the European Regional Development Fund for the financing of CBC projects and of the technical assistance. With

the EU contribution rate maximized at 90%, the Programme allocated nearly €69 million to support cross-border cooperation projects in the Hungarian-Slovak-Romanian-Ukrainian border region, with a total budget of €78 million. Projects could be supported only if at least one Ukrainian and one member state (Hungarian, Slovak or Romanian) organization from the eligible programme area participates in the implementation.

In frame of the Programme, three open calls for applications were successfully conducted. The significance of the interest to the Programme can be expressed via received 256 project proposals represented by over 865 applicant organisations from all core and adjacent eligible areas of the Programme.

The first call - launched on 15 February 2017 with closure on 15 November 2017 - was aimed at strategic, i.e. large infrastructure projects, targeted four key priorities: sustainable use of the environment, development of transport and ICT infrastructure, and support for joint activities in disaster prevention and emergency

EU CONTRIBUTION CONTRACTED (EUR)



response. Specifically designed for LIPs, the call required a minimum budget allocation of €2.5 million for infrastructure acquisition, emphasizing significant investments to enhance cross-border cooperation. Out of the 9 project proposals submitted, 4 were selected and then contracted. The second and third calls, both opened for all Priorities of the Programme, were dedicated to 'regular' projects, including purely soft projects, soft projects with infrastructure component(s), and infrastructure projects, with infrastructure acquisition budgets below €2.5 million. The most attractive Priority was 3.1 (culture and tourism) with the highest number of project proposals submitted to and with 5-times (2nd call) and 10-times (3rd call) more amount requested than the available EU funds. Under the second call - launched on 17 May 2017 with submission deadline on 30 November 2017 - 137 project proposals were received, of which 46 projects were selected by the JMC for award and finally contracted. 119 project proposals were submitted for the third call launched on 14 November 2019 with extended submission deadline on 27 February 2020. Out of the 30 winners finally 29 were contracted.

Although the entire amount of the available HUSKROUA ENI funds were previously allocated, the remaining funds from the closing projects were collected so that those could be re-allocated in order to increase the absorption of funds. The JMC decided about humanitarian aid to be provided to Ukraine, in the amount of €800.000 in total, through the implementation of two cross-border humanitarian projects (€250.000-€250.000 EU contribution), and through the mediation of Széchenyi Programme Office Nonprofit Ltd. in the form of a humanitarian donation of nearly €300.000. In total, the Programme provided financial support to 79 cross-border projects and 2 cross-border humanitarian projects, benefiting 280 beneficiary organizations.

The Programme and projects' implementation were seriously affected by several challenges, starting from 2020 with the eruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was followed by Russia's war against Ukraine from February 2022. The aggression against Ukraine is considered to be the case of force majeure, the circumstances of which cause many difficulties

in project implementation on Ukrainian side, and as such, for the whole implementation of the projects and of the Programme. The Programme bodies immediately started and continued analysing the situation with all our efforts to provide solutions that might be a smooth and safe response to financially and administratively maintain the implementation of our contracted projects. From the entering into force of the Regulation (EU) No. 2022/2192, which allowed for a more flexible implementation of the disrupted ENI CBC Programmes, the HUSKROUA ENI CBC Programme set up a series of supporting provisions and measures. Thanks to those, the implementation of all the projects could be continued but at a slower pace, till the finalization.

Despite challenges, the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020 concluded with significant achievements in enhancing cross-border cooperation: the Programme successfully fostered sustainable development and strengthened partnerships between Ukraine and the Member States, leaving a lasting impact on the region.



Promotion of local culture and preservation of historical heritage

Eligible area under the ENI CBC Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020 Programme boasts a diverse cultural landscape, reflecting a tapestry of traditions, languages, and customs unique to each participating country. This diversity is an invaluable asset, providing a fertile ground for cultural exchange and mutual enrichment. The historical heritage of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine region is profound, with numerous sites, monuments, and buildings that tell the stories of its rich past. The preservation of these sites is crucial not only for maintaining cultural identity but also for fostering tourism and education.

High values of cultural heritage make promotion of local culture and preservation of historical heritage crucial development opportunities for the neighbouring regions of Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine. These efforts,

besides fostering community identity and pride, play a significant role in boosting tourism, which creates new jobs and generates income.

Under the programme, a special priority was dedicated to promoting local culture and historical heritage along with tourism functions. This priority, identified as Priority 3.1, focused on leveraging the rich cultural and historical assets of the border regions to enhance tourism and foster cross-border cooperation.

To achieve this goal, the programme financed **22 cross-border cooperation projects** with a total EU allocation of €14,245,642.10 contracted, representing 21% of total contracted EU funds. These projects brought together **69 beneficiaries**, forming new or enhancing former partnerships across the participating countries. Project partnerships of municipalities, civil society organisations, local councils, museums and churches succeeded in:

Cultural Route Development and Promotion:

- Launched the Carpathian Cultural Route with digital information points and a mobile application
- Mapped the cultural route ViaGastrocarpathia showcasing crafts and gastronomy
- Published the book "Passing a Triple Frontier" about traditional gastronomy and craftsmanship
- Developed 52 market-ready products based on intangible heritage assets across four countries
- Organized the Cross-Border Festival of Traditional Work Cultures
- Hosted International Crafts Fairs and the Borderless Calvinistic Meeting of Szatmár in Nagyecséd and Perechyn
- Launched promo videos, visibility packages, and campaigns to attract tourists to partner museums
- Organized professional development programs, cross-border training sessions, and conferences for museum experts

Historical Monument Restoration and Renovation:

- Restored historical monument Casa Bay in Seini and Concert Hall in Kalush
- Partially renovated Lower Castle buildings of Palanok Castle in Mukachevo
- Revitalized Perenyi Manor House in Chepivka
- Renovated and equipped spaces of cultural monuments "Zlatý býk" in Michalovce and "Owl's Nest" in Uzhhorod

Museum and Cultural Heritage Rehabilitation:

- Rehabilitated three museum storages, one peasant household, and a wooden iconostasis
- Enhanced infrastructure and tourist appeal at the Roman Catholic Church in Nyíregyháza and Berehove
- Constructed the Archeoparc with exhibition buildings and local market areas
- Established the "Ancestors" museum in Liptovská Teplička
- Created and modernized smart exhibitions for immersive museum experiences
- Produced a historical animation film about Palanok Castle

Overall, the projects under Priority 3.1 not only contributed to the preservation of the region's historical heritage but also significantly boosted local culture and tourism. By doing so, they demonstrated the importance of cross-border cooperation in achieving shared development goals and highlighted the rich cultural and historical tapestry of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine region.

Restoration of tourist attractiveness of the historical “SaltRoad”

In the heart of the Romanian-Ukrainian borderlands lies a hidden treasure—the historic Salt Route. Imagine caravans of mules, their hooves stirring dust as they wound through rugged landscapes. Their cargo? Not gold or spices, but something equally precious: salt.

Centuries ago, the Salt Route connected Sotolvyno to Europe. Salt was not merely a seasoning; it was survival. Families depended on its trade for sustenance. The route was not just about commerce; it was a cultural artery where Hungarian goulash met Ukrainian borsch at roadside inns. Alongside salt, it carried stories, languages, and traditions.

The Salt Route, once vital for transporting salt from Sotolvyno to Europe in the XI-XII centuries, faced neglect and disrepair over time. Lack of preservation efforts and inadequate infrastructure hindered access to key historical sites and impeded tourism development in the region.

Our project breathed life into this ancient artery. Collaborating across borders, SaltRoad sought to revive the Salt Route by creating preconditions for its preservation and developing a new tourist route. Through infrastructure improvements and collaborative efforts, we aimed to enhance accessibility to historical sites and promote cultural tourism in the region. The project performed reconstruction of

Zamkova Street in Khust, Zakarpattia, creating a pedestrian-friendly area. This infrastructure enhancement facilitated convenient access for visitors to Khust Castle and to places for filming landscapes. Now, visitors can tread where salt-laden carts once rumbled. Convenient parking spaces await – inviting tourists to explore Khust Castle and capture landscapes through their lenses.

Ten special markers, mini-sculptures representing historically significant sites, were installed along the Salt Route - 5 in Zakarpattia region and 5 in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg region. Each whispers tales of salt merchants, customs posts, and crossings. These markers are not mere statues; they are guardians of memory. Unveiling of mini-sculptures and inclusion of all 10 sites in newly created and existing tourist routes, as well as preservation of the castle ruins, will attract the attention of local population of the two regions, in particular those who seek to provide innovative services and products to domestic and foreign tourists.

The project fostered collaboration between regions, facilitating joint studies and publications on the Salt Route's history. Comprehensive historical study, released in Ukrainian, English, and Hungarian languages, adds to the region's cultural legacy and promotes cross-border understanding. The book “Salt Road” is not a

glossy brochure. It is a time machine. It has been added to the libraries of the Salt Route regions and its authors V. Moizhes, I. Prokhnenko, M. Zhylenko, and M. Drabants unearthed forgotten customs, trade agreements, and the pulse of medieval life.

Did you know salt was once used as currency? The book reveals these fascinating tidbits. It describes main points of the salt route, customs posts and crossings, personalities and sights along the historical route. It describes the importance and role of salt for the region since the Middle Ages. It includes information about salt mines, salt miners and their work, places of extraction and transportation by all possible means.

As the sun sets over the Salt Route, remember this: It was not just a road; it was a lifeline. It connected souls, bridged cultures, and left footprints etched in salt and stone. Come, explore – the Salt Road awaits.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: SaltRoad

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0091

Partnership:

LB: Communal enterprise “Agency of Regional Development and Cross-Border Co-operation “Transcarpathia” of Zakarpattia Oblast Council”(Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B1: Executive Committee of the Khust Town Council (Khust, Ukraine)

B2: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Regional Development and Environmental Management Agency Nonprofit Ltd (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 344 626,40

Implementation period:

November 2019 - April 2021

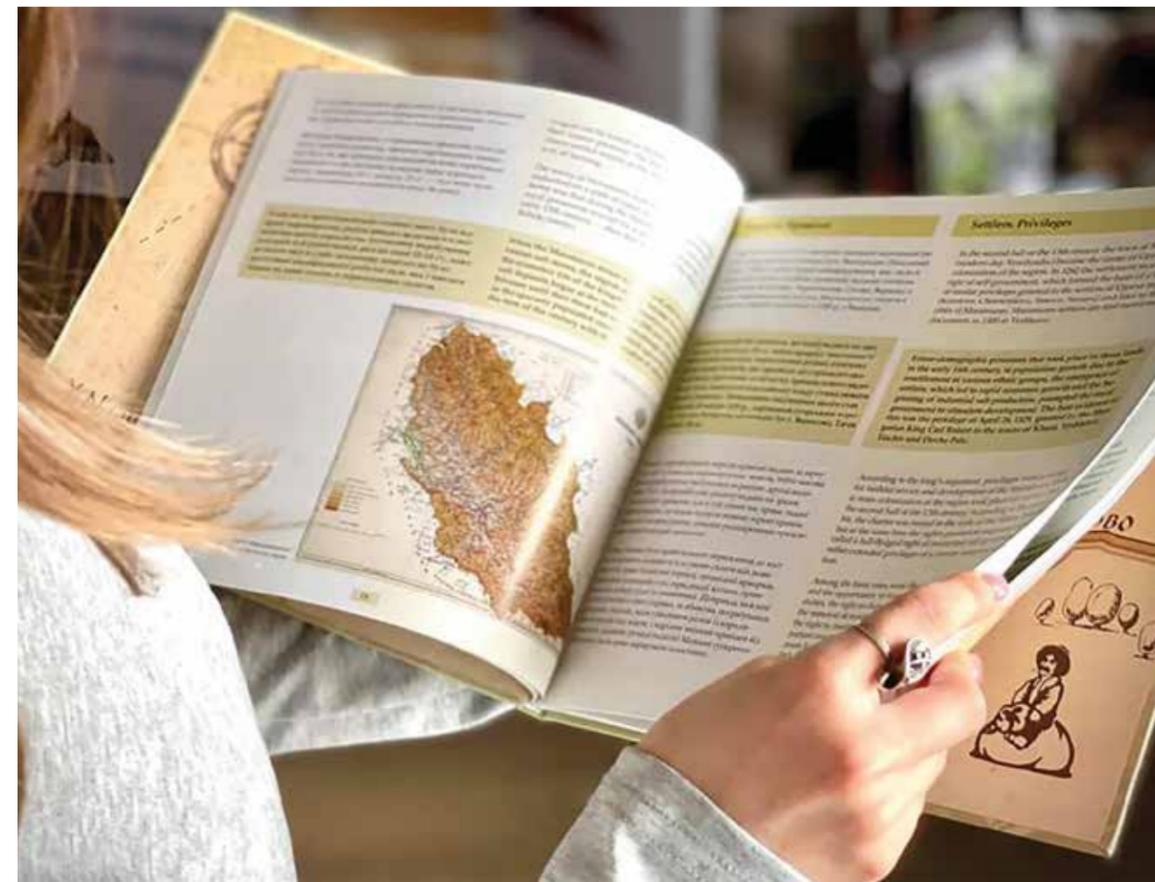
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Published 1 book titled “Salt Road” and 1 monograph
- Conducted 1 scientific research about salt roads
- Installed visual and information stands at key castle sites
- Implemented infrastructure enhancements, including the reconstruction of pedestrian zones, landscaping, drainage, and electric lighting, along with the arrangement of parking, water supply, and small architectural forms at Zamkova Street in Khust, Zakarpattia
- Organized 3 “Clean Space” actions in Kvasovo, Korolevo, and Vyshkovo, Zakarpattia, aimed at clearing castle ruins from greenery and waste, improving their attractiveness for tourists
- Installed 10 mini-sculptures along the touristic route Vyshkovo-Khust-Korolevo-Vynohradovo-Kvasovo-Tiszabecs-Vasarosnameny-Csenger-Nyirbator-Nagykallo, each indicating interesting locations, buildings, and personalities of the region (5 in Zakarpattia, 5 in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County)
- Created a 3D scanned model of Kvasovo Castle to aid in elaboration of conservation plan



“Thanks to this project, awareness about preserving the castles of Zakarpattia, key checkpoints along the salt route, spread widely through mass media coverage. Many discovered these castle ruins for the first time and even visited them. The information compiled in the book will benefit both locals and enthusiasts of Zakarpattia's history. Special thanks to historians Zhylenko M., Moizhes V., Prokhnenko I., Dr. Drabancz M. Róbert for their invaluable contributions. Gratitude to the ARD “Transcarpathia” team, especially Olena Onda, for their dedicated work on the project. We also extend our thanks to the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020 for making the project implementation and book publication possible”.

M. Dankanych, Director of ARD “Transcarpathia” of Zakarpattia Oblast Council”



Religious cultural heritage and tourism development in Nyíregyháza and Berehovo

As the project team behind RECREATE, we successfully concluded our efforts in the Hungarian-Ukrainian cross-border area, focusing on Nyíregyháza, Hungary, and Berehove, Ukraine. Addressing underdevelopment and deterioration of historical and cultural sites within the target regions, we proposed and implemented a comprehensive solution. Our strategy involved infrastructural enhancements and integration of modern informational tools, aimed at transforming these sites into more attractive and interactive destinations for tourists.

The "big solution" encompassed both infrastructural development and implementation of innovative tourism attractions and information dissemination strategies, significantly increasing visitor numbers and engagement at the historic-religious sites.

In Nyíregyháza, we achieved substantial infrastructural developments at the Roman Catholic Church, including modern restrooms in the church, a lookout center in a church tower, renovation of the ground floor organ, and the establishment of a visitor center and guest rooms in the parish building. These improvements greatly enhanced the infrastructure and tourist appeal of the site, making it a more attractive destination for visitors and pilgrims. Similarly, in Berehove, we made key infrastructural improvements at the Roman Catholic Church such as roof and gutter repairs,

reconstruction of the bell tower to accommodate visitors, overhaul of the drainage system, and the creation of a museum and exhibition hall, significantly contributing to enhancing the touristic and cultural value of the historic sites in Berehove. Indoor repair works were also completed in the Tourism Development and Management (TDM) office premises. Moreover, we constructed a bicycle parking space and a pergola in the churchyard. These efforts have not only preserved the cultural heritage but also improved the region's appeal to tourists and locals alike.

Besides the range of infrastructural renovations, the tourism specialized offices within the partnership implemented soft interventions on both sides of the border such as the production of multimedia promotional materials, training sessions, and the setup of interactive technologies like VR experiences. Solution's effectiveness was reflected in the infrastructural upgrades that made the sites more accessible and appealing, new visitor centers and restrooms that enhanced tourist comfort, and innovative marketing tools like VR film and mobile apps that increased the sites' and of the cities visibility. We proudly reached an expected annual visitor count of 5,000 and organized numerous cultural and educational events. RECREATE initiative successfully revitalized local historical sites and fostered a

sustainable tourism model. As we reflect on our achievements, we are proud of the impact we have made and are committed to preserving and celebrating our rich religious cultural heritage. Looking forward, we aim to replicate our successful model, continually enhancing and promoting cultural tourism through innovative and sustainable practices.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: RECREATE

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0057

Partnership:

LB: "Magyarok Nagyasszonya" Roman Catholic Parish of Nyíregyháza (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

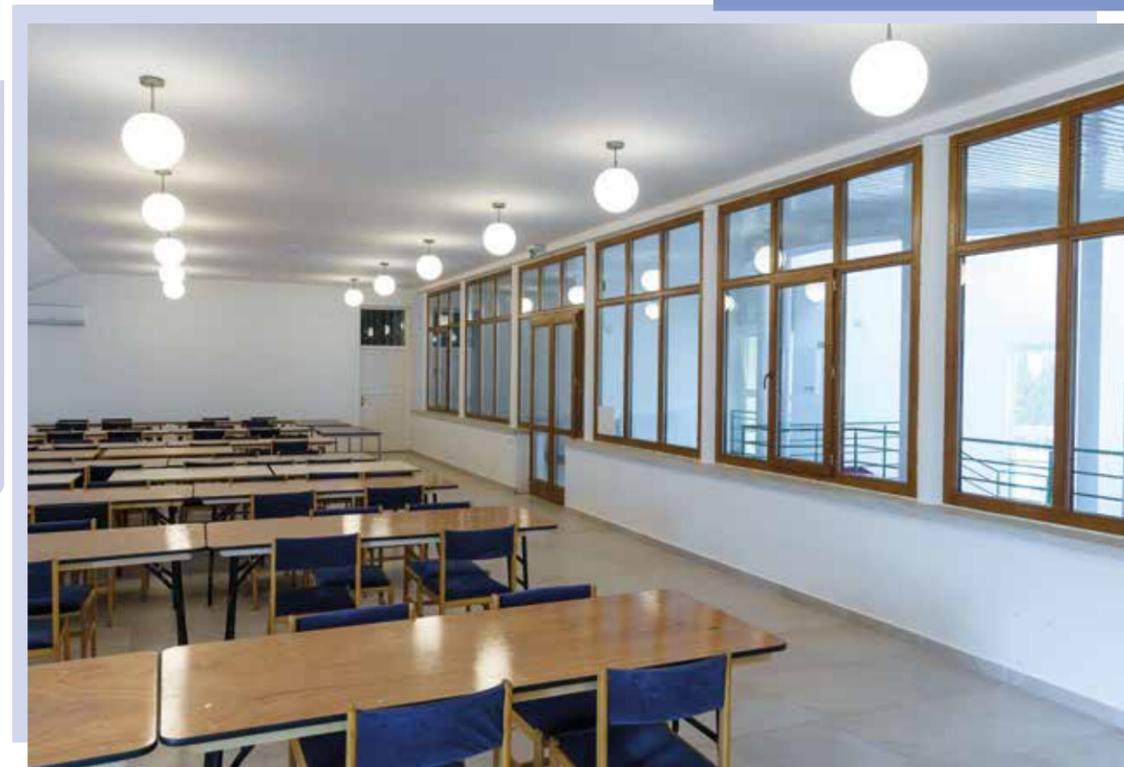
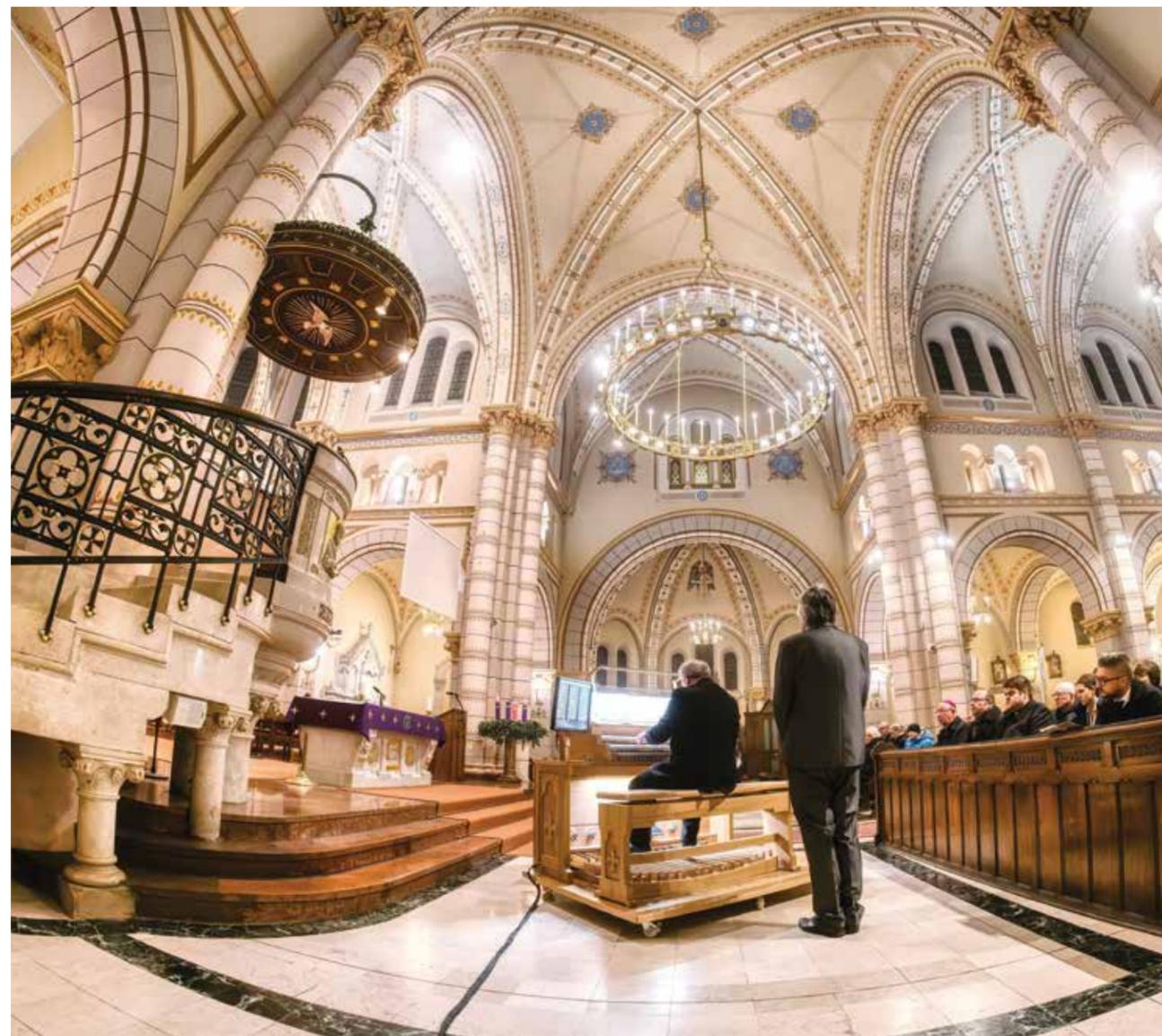
B1: Religious Community of Berehovo Roman Catholic Church (Berehovo, Ukraine)

B2: Nyíregyháza Tourism Nonprofit Ltd.(Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B3: Ukrainian-Hungarian Regional Development Centre (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 844 979,11

Implementation period: June 2020 - March 2023



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Infrastructural developments such as installation of modern restrooms in the church, creation of a lookout center in one of the church towers, and renovation of the ground floor organ at the Roman Catholic Church in Nyíregyháza, Hungary. Additionally, a visitor center and common room established in the parish building, along with renovation of three guest rooms, greatly enhancing the infrastructure and tourist appeal of the site
- Key infrastructural improvements such as repair of the roof and gutter systems, reconstruction of the bell tower to accommodate visitors, overhaul of the drainage system of the Roman Catholic Church, and establishment of a museum and exhibition hall in its courtyard, significantly enhancing the touristic and cultural value of the historic sites in Berehove
- Expected annual visitor count of 5,000 and an increase in organized cultural and educational events



CULTURE IN THE MIRROR - Restoration of Bay House in Seini (RO) and Concert Hall in Kalush (UA) into Multicultural Centers

In the heart of Seini (Romania) and Kalush (Ukraine), where cultural diversity intertwines with rich heritage, a longing for intercultural vibrancy echoed through the streets. Yet, amidst the historical charm, a glaring absence of platforms for cross-border exchange stifled the communities' potential.

Driven by a shared vision to revitalize their cultural landscapes, local administrations embarked on a bold mission. Recognizing the pivotal role of restored heritage buildings in fostering meaningful connections, they rallied as partners to secure EU funding. With unwavering determination, project team embarked on a transformative journey, guided by a three-step plan: revitalizing cultural infrastructure, igniting interactive initiatives, and championing tourism promotion.

The restoration of the iconic Casa Bay in Seini and the Concert Hall in Kalush heralded the dawn of a new era, transforming them into 'mirroring' Multicultural Centers. Through immersive experiences like Gastronomy Classes and Traditional Folk Art Workshops, 55 citizens from both cities became catalysts for cross-border collaboration.

As the project unfolded, its impact rippled across the region. Nearly 4000 individuals graced the restored Multicultural Centers, while four restaurants proudly featured partner country recipes on their menus. The birth of the cross-



border artistic group ROUA symbolized the blossoming of shared creativity and heritage. Today, Maramureş – Ivano-Frankivsk region resonates with a newfound sense of unity, as traditions and skills transcend borders. Residents and tourists alike are drawn to the

vibrant tapestry of cultural events hosted by the mirroring Centers, serving as beacons of intercultural harmony. The legacy of Culture in the Mirror endures as a testament to the power of collaboration and the enduring spirit of community.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CULTURE IN THE MIRROR

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0020

Partnership:

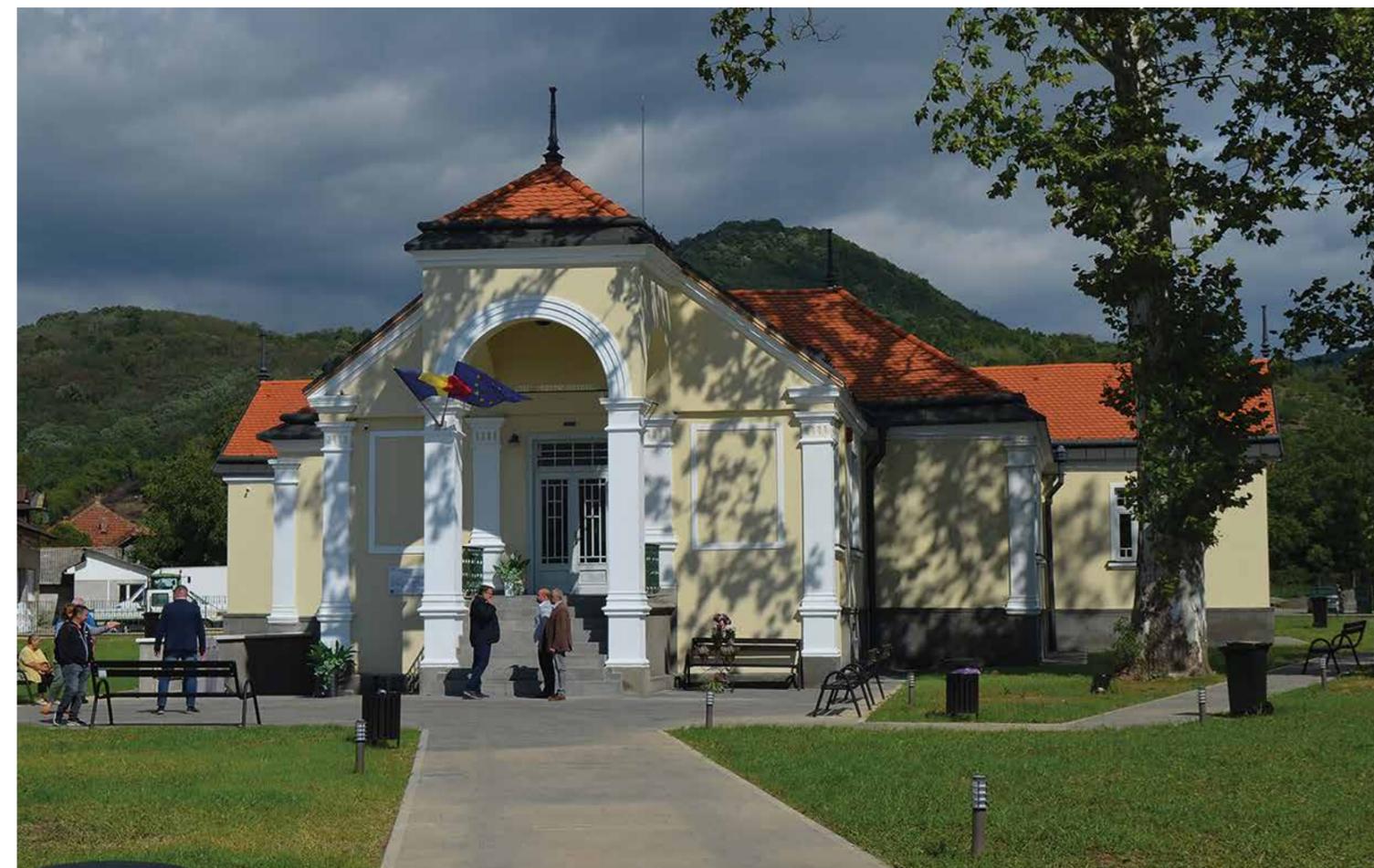
LB: Town of Seini (Seini, Romania)

B1: Department of Culture, Nationalities and Religions of the Kalush City Council (Kalush, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 933 373,42

Implementation period:

September 2019 - September 2022



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Restoration of historical monument Casa Bay in Seini and civic monument Concert Hall in Kalush
- Engaged 55 children and adults from both cities in joint intercultural activities
- Nearly 4,000 individuals participated in events hosted at the restored Multicultural Centers
- Introduced partner country recipes in menus of 4 restaurants in the cross-border region
- Establishment of the cross-border artistic group ROUA
- Enhanced intercultural dialogue and cooperation in the Maramureş – Ivano-Frankivsk region
- Growing interest from residents and tourists in further intercultural engagement

Restore your common history and cultural heritage

In the heart of Košice, two iconic monuments stand side by side: St. Urban's Tower and the St. Elisabeth's Dome. These architectural gems held stories of faith and shared heritage. Our joint efforts, guided by tradition and a commitment to preservation, transformed these structures into beacons of understanding and friendship.

St. Urban's Tower had weathered centuries. Yet, time had taken its toll – the roof sagged, timbers weakened, and winds threatened pedestrians below. We knew it was high time for restoration. With unwavering determination, we undertook a comprehensive renovation project to breathe new life into this historic sentinel. Our longstanding tradition of cooperation between churches has been instrumental in safeguarding historical and religious treasures with utmost care and dedication.

The meticulous restoration of the roof, timbers, ceramic cover, apex cross, tin-smith works, lightning rod, exterior, gallery, entry porch, and epitaphs revitalized the tower, once again gracing the main boulevard with its majestic presence. The roof received tender care, its timbers strengthened. The old ceramic cover yielded to a fresh one, glistening under the sun. The apex cross, once weathered, now stood proud with its finial restored. Tin-smiths worked their magic, shaping intricate details. The tower's lightning rod watched over Košice once more. The gallery and entry porch regained their splendour. Ancient epitaphs whispered stories of the past. And then, it happened - the tower emerged, renewed and resilient. As

pedestrians crossed the bustling boulevard, their eyes lifted to witness history. St. Urban's Tower, once a fading memory, now stood tall, a testament to our shared commitment.

Similarly, in Uzhhorod, Zakarpattia, the Holy Cross Exaltation Greek-Catholic Cathedral held sway over time. Its walls bore witness to prayers, joys, and sorrows. Our mission was: to restore its soul – the delicate wall paintings and the revered iconostasis. Through meticulous restoration efforts, including the revival of wall paintings and the iconic iconostasis, guided by a "Comprehensive scientific and restoration study of the interior of the Holy Cross Cathedral XVIII – first half of the XX century" (performed by L'viv National Academy of Arts), the cathedral regained its former splendour. And so, the Holy Cross Exaltation church became more than stone and paint. It became a pilgrimage – a tapestry of devotion and wonder. Tourists arrived, drawn by whispers of centuries past. They marvelled at the frescoes, touched the iconostasis, and felt the pulse of faith.

Our collaborative efforts culminated in the creation of a captivating publication, meticulously detailing the historical journey of the Cathedral of Uzhhorod. This publication not only celebrates the unique beauty of the cathedral but also serves as a beacon, attracting tourists to Zakarpattia, where they can immerse themselves in its rich history and architectural marvels.

Our cooperation transcended bricks and mortar. It forged bonds – between Košice and

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Restore your heritage

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0130

Partnership:

LB: Perals of Gothic Route (Košice, Slovakia)

B1: Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 944 589,63

Implementation period:

September 2019 - November 2023

Uzhhorod, between tradition and progress. The success of this partnership is evident in the transformation of these landmarks into vibrant tourist destinations. Together, we have not only preserved our heritage but also offered an unforgettable journey for visitors exploring these monumental treasures.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully preserved and restored key historical landmarks, including St. Urban's tower in Košice and the Holy Cross Exaltation Greek-Catholic Cathedral in Uzhhorod. These endeavours ensured the longevity and integrity of these cherished monuments for generations to come
- Renovation of St. Urban's tower improved safety for pedestrians by addressing the risks posed by the deteriorating roof. Additionally, the restoration efforts made the tower more accessible and visually appealing to visitors crossing the main boulevard in Košice
- Restoration of wall paintings and the iconostasis at the Holy Cross Exaltation Cathedral in Uzhhorod helped conserve important religious artefacts and artworks, enriching the cultural heritage of the region
- Creation of compelling publications and promotional materials, highlighting the historical significance and architectural beauty of the renovated landmarks. By positioning these sites as attractive tourist destinations, we stimulated tourism growth in the regions, contributing to local economies and fostering cultural exchange
- Publication about the Cathedral of Uzhhorod, coupled with the successful restoration efforts, contributed to making the cathedral an attractive tourist destination in Zakarpattia. This, along with the improved condition of St. Urban's tower, offers visitors an impressive touristic adventure in both regions
- Initiated educational programs and workshops aimed at raising awareness about the historical and cultural significance of the renovated landmarks. These initiatives empowered local communities to take pride in their heritage and actively participate in its preservation



Repository of Built and Intellectual Heritage of the Upper-Tisza Region

In the Ukrainian-Hungarian border region we, the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Regional Development and Environmental Management Agency Nonprofit Ltd, the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Sub-Carpathia and the Hungarian Tourism Council of Zakarpattia joined forces to preserve and celebrate local culture and traditions.

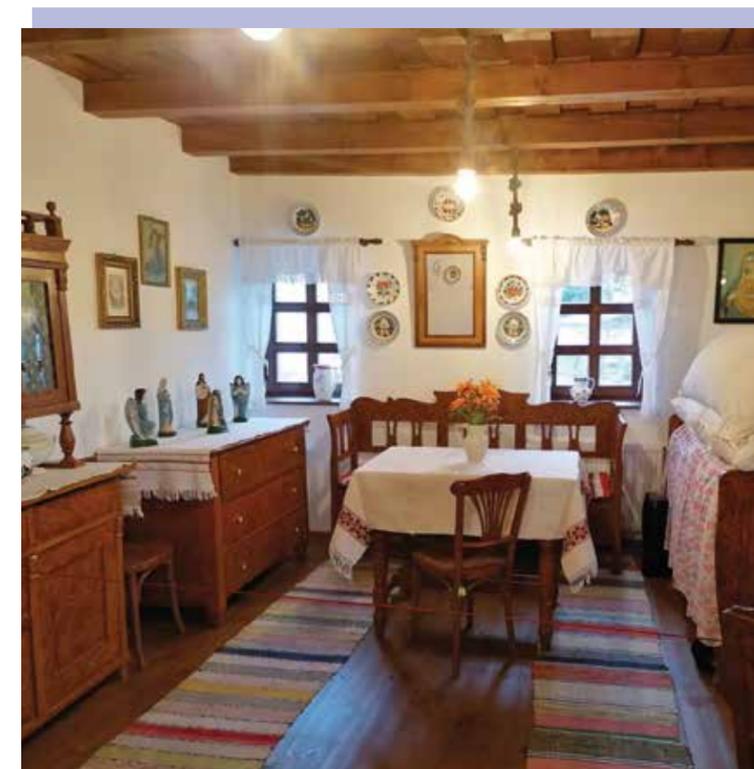
Recognizing the need for more institutions dedicated to folk culture, the project set out to establish traditional country houses and village museums, also restoring some old ones, aiming to create new tourist and cultural products integrated into the region's tourism destinations. Our focus was on establishing cultural heritage

preservation network in the Upper-Tisza region. This effort resulted in creation of four country houses on the Hungarian and four village museums on the Ukrainian side and cultural facilities, with a particular emphasis on folk craft and culinary heritage. Beyond mere preservation, these sites are envisioned as dynamic spaces for future touristic and cross-border cooperation, offering opportunities for hosting events, festivals, and workshops focused on historical and cultural heritage. To enhance tourist attraction and engagement, we developed new tourist products such as guidebooks, brochures, and a website, providing visitors with comprehensive information about the cultural richness of the region.

PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: ReBuiltHeritage
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0084
Partnership:
LB: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Regional Development and Environmental Management Agency Nonprofit Ltd (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)
B1: Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Sub-Carpathia (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B2: Hungarian Tourism Council of Zakarpattia (Berehove, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 811 804,17
Implementation period: September 2020 - November 2023

Through these initiatives, our project aimed to not only preserve local heritage but also to increase opportunities for cultural exchange, tourism development, and cross-border collaboration. The project, aptly named "Repository of Built and Intellectual Heritage of the Upper-Tisza Region," stands as a testament to the region's commitment to safeguarding its cultural legacy for future generations.

Our collaborative efforts transcended borders, bridging Hungarian and Ukrainian communities. Joint festivals, cultural exchanges, and other events fostered friendships and understanding. Visitors from both sides of the border discovered shared histories, celebrated diversity, and forged lasting connections. The "Repository of Built and Intellectual Heritage of the Upper-Tisza Region" became a symbol of unity, reminding us that culture knows no boundaries.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Creation of CB Country Houses network via the establishment or restoration of traditional village museums in the Zakarpattia region (at Muzhievo, Shalanky, Choma, and Vyshkovo) and of country houses in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county (at Kísvárda, Tiszabездéd, Tarpa and Penyige)
- Focus on preserving folk craft and culinary traditions
- Creation of cultural heritage-preserving institutions to foster cross-border cooperation
- Organizing cultural expos, fairs and craft exhibitions
- Promoting the new CB Country Houses network through awareness-raising campaigns



The cross-border cultural dialogue for the preservation of Europe's cultural heritage

In the quiet corners of Slovak-Ukrainian crossroads, our project team embarked on a mission – a mission that transcended maps and touched the pulse of our shared heritage. Here, we unravel the threads that bind us, celebrating the everyday magic woven into our traditions.

As a team committed to protecting and promoting local culture and heritage in the cross-border countryside of Slovakia and Ukraine, we set out on a collaborative adventure with a clear vision. Our goal was to protect the diverse range of customs and cultural legacies that are unique to our area while also promoting deep linkages between the people on both sides of the border.

The Cultural Centre in Jakubova Voľa village became our canvas. Within its walls, folk dances twirled, melodies echoed, and generations connected. We celebrated the spirited rhythms of our ancestors, inviting locals and wanderers to join the dance. Across the invisible boundary, we exchanged more than artefacts. We traded laughter, recipes, and whispered legends. Our shared meals tasted of nostalgia, and our hearts beat in sync with tales passed down through generations.

Through strategic infrastructure renewal, we have successfully created conducive conditions for showcasing and disseminating our rich cultural heritage. Cross-border exchanges and collaborative cultural events have played a pivotal role in deepening understanding and appreciation of our traditions among diverse audiences. These initiatives have not only fostered new friendships and relationships but have also expanded our reach, attracting more visitors and tourists to our cultural sites. The restoration of cultural and tourist infrastructure has had a tangible impact on increasing attendance and awareness of our cultural heritage. Importantly, this

has strengthened our bonds with project partners and facilitated the emergence of new collaborations within the cultural sector. Since the completion of the project, the Cultural Centre in Jakubova Voľa village has become a vibrant hub for tradition-preserving events and local artistic endeavours. It now serves as the headquarters for our local folklore ensemble and volunteer theatre group, hosting regular cultural events that draw attendees from neighbouring regions. It hosts not only events but also dreams – the dreams of young artists, the whispers of elders, and the footprints of those who seek solace in tradition.

Similarly, the enhancements made to the Termachuv tract, including the reinforcement of the embankment of the Termachuv stream, have transformed the area around Veliky Bereznyy village into a more appealing destination for tourists. The embankment, once fragile, now stands resilient. Not only has this made the area safer for locals by regulating the stream and improving flood resilience, but it has also created a picturesque space for leisure activities.

Moreover, the friendships forged through our collaboration have infused a sense of joy whenever we come together. Our friendships are seeds – seeds that may sprout into joint festivals, art exchanges, or perhaps a shared anthology of stories. This serves as a promising sign for future endeavours, as we are inspired to explore new ideas and initiatives collectively.

Positive feedback from project partners and the general public underscores the success of our efforts in preserving and promoting our cultural heritage. As a team, we are proud of the accomplishments achieved and remain committed to furthering our collaboration for the benefit of our communities.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: The cross-border cultural dial

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0082

Partnership:

LB: Jakubova Voľa village (Pečovská Nová Ves, Slovakia)

B1: Velykyj Bereznyj Village Council (Velykyj Bereznyj, Ukraine)

B2: Charitable Foundation “Center for Civic Initiatives” (Perechyn, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 922 813,83

Implementation period:

October 2019 - January 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully renewed cultural and tourist infrastructure, creating suitable conditions for the presentation and dissemination of local traditions and cultural heritage
- Raised awareness about cultural heritage and traditions, resulting in a heightened interest among a larger audience
- Attracted local residents, tourists, and visitors, fostering community engagement and providing opportunities for cultural enrichment
- Strengthened relations between partners and facilitated new collaborations in the field of cultural institutions
- Infrastructure improvements, such as the strengthening of embankments, contributed to the safety and attractiveness of cultural sites, making them more accessible for both locals and tourists

As we look to the future, we are filled with a sense of anticipation and excitement. The success of our project has sparked a renewed interest in our cultural heritage, inspiring us to dream bigger and reach further. We envision a future where our cultural heritage is not just preserved but thrives, enriching the lives of our community members and visitors alike.



We see a future where our traditions are not just remembered but lived, where every dance, song, and story is a vibrant thread in the rich tapestry of our shared culture.

Our journey has taught us that our cultural heritage is not a relic of the past, but a living, breathing part of our present and a bridge to our future. It is a source of pride and identity, a wellspring of creativity and innovation, and a cornerstone of community and connection. As we move forward, we are committed to nurturing this precious resource, ensuring that it continues to flourish for generations to come.

In the end, our mission is more than a project; it is a testament to the power of cooperation, the beauty of diversity, and the enduring appeal of our shared heritage. It is a reminder that our differences do not divide us, but rather enrich us, and that our shared heritage is a treasure to be cherished, celebrated, and shared.



Promotion of crafts and gastronomy, as relevant components of the cultural heritage of the Carpathian Euroregion

In October 2019, our collaborative effort sprang to life – a harmonious fusion of three business organizations and three universities. Our shared vision? To illuminate the hidden gems of cultural heritage and tourism potential in the Hungary-Romania-Ukraine cross-border region. Thus, the KRA'GAS project was born.

From the quaint villages of Maramureş County (Romania) to the bustling cities of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County (Hungary) and Zakarpattia Oblast (Ukraine), we embarked on a mission. Our canvas? The rich tapestry of traditional handicrafts interwoven with gastronomy – a vital part of our region's cultural fabric.

Our compass pointed to the ViaGastrocarpathia – a cross-border cultural route that transcends mere geography. With meticulous anthropological

analysis as our guide, we charted this route, inviting cultural tourists to tread its enchanting path. We interviewed over 290 individuals across our three countries, unearthing stories etched in woodcarving, pottery, weaving, and sewing.

Picture this: fifteen influencers, wide-eyed and eager, traversing our chosen locations. Each step, each handshake with local craftsmen, captured in captivating videos. These influencers became our storytellers, their lenses framing the soul of ViaGastrocarpathia.

Our Facebook page danced with life. Over 20,000 likes, a reach of 1.5 million souls, and 28,000 clicks to our route website. We shared posts – vibrant snapshots of local artisans and tantalizing culinary delights.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: KRA'GAS

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0027

Partnership:

LB: Maramures Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Baia Mare, Romania)

B1: Babeş-Bolyai University (Cluj Napoca, Romania)

B2: University of Miskolc (Miskolc, Hungary)

B3: Uzhhorod National University (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B4: Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County (Miskolc, Hungary)

B5: Transcarpathian Enterprise Support Fund "TES Fund" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 581 954,68

Implementation period:

October 2019 - September 2021



The community grew – a chorus of craft enthusiasts and gastronomes, united by a hunger for culture. Two live events further amplified the project's reach, drawing over 1,500 participants and garnering 40,000 visualizations.

Behold our treasure trove – the book "Passing a Triple Frontier". Within its pages, ten studies breathe life into traditional gastronomy and craftsmanship. From Romania's hearths to Hungary's kilns and Ukraine's workshops, we capture the past, celebrate the present, and dream of a legacy carried forward.

Our route unfolds – a symphony of flavours and textures. Villages whisper secrets, cities hum with life. Visit viagastrocarpathia.com – read, watch, immerse. Let the stories guide you, for beyond pixels lie the real proof – the heartbeat of our cultural heritage.

And so, our journey continues, as we strive to preserve and share the vibrant legacy of our shared past, ensuring that these cultural treasures endure for generations to come.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- A cultural route, ViaGastrocarpathia, was mapped to showcase crafts and gastronomy
- Fifteen influencers documented their experiences with local craftsmen
- Project's Facebook campaigns garnered over 20,000 likes and reached more than 1.5 million individuals, fostering community interest in crafts and gastronomy
- Live events organized on Facebook attracted over 1,500 participants
- Produced book "Passing a Triple Frontier," offering valuable insights into traditional gastronomy and craftsmanship in the region
- ViaGastrocarpathia website provides access to researchers' conclusions and resources, serving as a comprehensive platform for travellers to explore cultural heritage along the route



Revival of historical monuments Snina - Khust

In the heart of Snina, a historical transformation unfolded within the walls of an old manor house. This small yet significant edifice, which had stood neglected for years, became the centrepiece of a remarkable project—a project that has reached its successful conclusion.

We, the project team, embarked on a quest to preserve the historical heritage of our ancestors. The manor house was not just a structure; it was a cultural touchstone for the community. With meticulous care, we restored the manor to its original glory, guided by the expertise of the heritage office. Our commitment was to maintain the historical elements, ensuring that every restored brick and beam spoke of authenticity.

The completion of the restoration marked the beginning of a new chapter for the manor house. It emerged as a cultural attraction, offering plenty of activities aimed at engaging the youth and the wider community. The manor became a hub for craft workshops, educational lectures, and cultural events, each designed to deepen the connection with our regional heritage.

The first event to grace the newly restored manor was a painting plein air, where young artists captured the essence of the Snina region on canvas. This event set the tone for the manor's future — a future where art and history converge.

Subsequent events, including a painting competition and an exhibition, showcased the talents nurtured within the manor's walls. These events were not just displays of creativity; they were celebrations of the region's cultural narrative, attended by dignitaries and community members alike.

Over the course of 24 months, the manor house played host to a diverse array of events. From “Memories of Old Snina” to “Glimpses into History,” each gathering was a testament to the project's dedication to cultural preservation. The manor became a place where history was not only remembered but also made.

Our project fostered a spirit of collaboration among local stakeholders, enabling them to align their services and expand their tourism offerings. The manor house served as a catalyst for this unity, bringing together individuals from various backgrounds to share in the celebration of our shared heritage.

As the project drew to a close, the impact was undeniable. The manor house, once a

PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: RHSMK
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0083
Partnership:
LB: Snina Town (Snina, Slovakia)
B1: Executive Committee of the Khust Town Council (Khust, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 807 222,31
Implementation period:
 October 2019 - October 2023

forgotten relic, had been transformed into a vibrant center of cultural exchange. It stood as a symbol of what can be achieved when a community comes together to honour its past. Revitalization of the “Khust Castle Ruins” territory managed by our partners from Khust city added a valuable touristic impetus for attracting the



visitors to the cross-border region and breaths of fresh air for further development of the area. Now, with the project completed, we reflect on the journey with pride.

The Snina manor house stands side by side with Khust castle as a lasting legacy of our efforts—a place where the past is preserved, the present is enriched, and the future is inspired.

It is a testament to the power of heritage to unite and educate, to the enduring spirit of Snina – Khust connection and to the timeless value of preserving our cultural treasures for next generations.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully restored small manor house, preserving the region's historical heritage
- Transformed the manor house into a vibrant tourist destination, attracting visitors to Snina
- Engaged young people through activities like painting plein airs and workshops, fostering pride in their cultural heritage
- Organized diverse events such as painting competitions and historical tours, enriching community cultural experiences
- Collaborated with local stakeholders, enhancing community cohesion and involvement in heritage preservation

Through Art we Ruin Borders

In the heart of Europe's dynamic border region, Through Art we Ruin Borders project emerged as a standout of cultural revival and cross-border cooperation. Spanning Slovakia, Ukraine, and Hungary, this initiative aimed to rekindle historical ties and foster mutual understanding through the promotion of cultural heritage.

With borders separating Slovakia from Ukraine and Hungary, the project sought to bridge historical and economic divides, recognizing the shared history and potential for common development among these regions. At its core, Through Art we Ruin Borders aimed to promote cultural heritage as a means of bringing people together. In Michalovce (Slovakia) and Uzhhorod (Ukraine), where municipal galleries and tourist facilities were lacking, the project intervened to revitalize cultural spaces and promote tourism through innovative means.

Over nine months, the project renovated and equipped cultural monuments like the "Zlatý býk" in Michalovce and the "Owl's Nest" in Uzhhorod, transforming them into vibrant galleries. Additionally, three municipalities collaborated to develop multilingual tourist guides, offering immersive experiences along routes spanning Zemplin, Zemplén, and Zakarpattia.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: THRU-ART

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0042

Partnership:

LB: City of Michalovce (Slovakia)

B1: Department for International Cooperation and Innovations of Uzhgorod City Council (Ukraine)

B2: Informational Center for Innovation and Development "NOVUM" (Ukraine)

B3: Municipality of Sátoraljaújhely (Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 998 750,76

Implementation period:

October 2019 - December 2022

To further enhance accessibility and engagement, a mobile application titled "Zemplin region" was launched, providing users with interactive experiences and real-time event updates. The culmination of these efforts was marked by the premiere of a documentary film, "The Great Granpa," which displayed the historical connections between Michalovce and Uzhhorod.

The project's impact extended beyond infrastructure development, fostering a sense of cultural exchange and community engagement. Workshops, exhibitions, and collaborative events enriched cultural life in both Michalovce and Uzhhorod, with Hungarian partners contributing to the vibrant tapestry of cross-border cooperation.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Focused on promoting cultural heritage as a vital component of tourism development, aiming to unite cross-border regions through shared culture, art, and history
- Addressed the absence of European-standard municipal galleries and tourist information centers in Michalovce (Slovakia) and Uzhhorod (Ukraine), urging municipalities to rescue and revitalize cultural heritage monuments
- Renovated and equipped spaces of cultural monuments "Zlatý býk" in Michalovce and "Owl's Nest" in Uzhhorod for gallery purposes, providing modern facilities for cultural activities
- By creating spaces and equipment for municipal galleries, hosting cultural and tourist events, and developing smart applications and tourist guides, the project interconnected the regions of Zemplin, Zemplén, and Zakarpattia in culture and tourism
- A documentary film titled "The Great Grandpa" explored connections between Michalovce and Uzhhorod. Workshops, exhibitions, painting symposia, and creative children's camps were organized, fostering cultural exchange and collaboration



Through Art we Ruin Borders embodies the transformative power of culture in transcending borders, uniting communities, and fostering a shared sense of identity and purpose. It stands as a testament to the potential for collaboration and mutual understanding in Europe's diverse and interconnected landscape.

"Our ancestors used to say, 'The good neighbour is better than your family', a sentiment that resonates deeply in the context of Slovakia's border connections with Ukraine and Hungary. Despite the physical boundaries separating us, an inherent closeness transcends distance. The historical and economic bonds between Slovakia, Ukraine, and Hungary are vital for fostering cross-border cooperation. Our project has played a crucial role in revitalizing these ties, restoring cultural values, and promoting collaboration among regions eager to reconnect and support one another freely."

Jana Machova
Project manager



Smart Museum as a way to present cultural heritage

Embark on a journey through the heart of Europe's cultural tapestry, where the Smart Museum initiative has united six partners across Zakarpattia in Ukraine, Košice region in Slovakia, and Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén in Hungary. Together, we proudly present rich history and diverse heritage of the region through innovative approaches and transformative experiences.

In today's fast-paced world, museums face the challenge of captivating the attention of modern travellers who seek more than static displays - they crave interactive, transformative experiences. This can hardly be achieved with the „dusty“ conventional exhibitions available, lack of interactive attractions, poor conditions of the historical built assets and outdated marketing mix. What if these museums could transcend the boundaries of time, offering not just artifacts, but

immersive experiences that stir the soul? What if they could become beacons of innovation, drawing travelers from afar to witness history come alive?

To meet this challenge, we have transformed conventional exhibitions into smart, interactive experiences that offer unforgettable journeys through history. Our goal is to ignite curiosity and create beacons of innovation that draw visitors from afar.

With unwavering determination, our partnership set out to reshape the narrative. We embarked on a quest to breathe life into ancient stones, to reimagine exhibits as portals to the past, and to ignite a spark of curiosity in the hearts of all, who wander through our doors. We combined our efforts to safeguard historical and cultural sites for future generations, to make local museums

attractive, smart and interactive, as well as to unite them in mutual cross-border promotion for tourist engagement.

Through dynamic collaboration, we ignited a transformative wave. Our collective efforts birthed new exhibitions and breathed life into existing ones. We conjured a captivating historical animation film to tell the story of Palanok Castle as the first-person narrative, which is now demonstrated in the cinema hall of the castle, also established within the project. Furthermore, we created interactive websites for museums, 3D models of the partner historical sites, and historical education software, while our audio-visual guides whispered secrets to curious minds. Across platforms, our promotional videos danced into the spotlight, enticing travellers from afar. Simultaneously, we orchestrated professional



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Smart Museum
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0026
Partnership:
LB: NGO "Project Managers Association "YADRO" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B1: Mukachevo Historical Museum (Mukachevo, Ukraine)
B2: Košice Self-governing Region (Košice, Slovakia)
B3: Agency for the Support of Regional Development Kosice (Košice, Slovakia)
B4: Herman Otto Museum (Miskolc, Hungary)
B5: Castle Stewardship of Füzér (Füzér, Hungary)
EU contribution: EUR 721 501,29
Implementation period: September 2019 - August 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- New smart exhibitions created, and existing ones modernized to offer immersive experiences for visitors, transcending the boundaries of conventional museum displays
- A captivating historical animation film produced, providing a first-person narrative of Palanok Castle's story, enhancing the visitor experience
- Websites, 3D models, historical education software, and audio-visual guides developed to enhance accessibility and engagement with museum content
- Promo videos, visibility packages, and promotion campaigns launched to increase awareness and attract tourists to the partner museums
- Professional development programs, cross-border training sessions, conferences, and experience exchanges organized to empower local museum experts
- Partial renovation of the Lower Castle buildings of Palanok Castle in Mukachevo addressed the poor conditions of historical built assets, improving the overall visitor experience



development programs, nurturing the growth of museum experts.

In Ukraine, our dedicated efforts focused on the Lower Castle buildings of Palanok Castle in Mukachevo - a historic gem perched atop a 68-meter-high volcanic hill in the western Ukrainian oblast of Zakarpattia. Together, we shared experiences, best practices, and a vision - to celebrate our shared heritage, inspire future generations, and pave the way

for a borderless future. In the union of hearts and minds, lies the power to shape a world where history lives, breathes, and thrives for all eternity.

Our slogan echoes through time: "The history one can see, hear, touch, and become a part of". Join us on this transformative journey as we celebrate the past, embrace the present, and envision a future where cultural heritage knows no bounds.



52 Carpathian Lifestyle Experiences: Reinventing Traditional Work Cultures

The project "52 Carpathian Lifestyle Experiences: Reinventing Traditional Work Cultures" unfolded across the cross-border regions of Ivano-Frankivsk in Ukraine, Maramures and Satu-Mare counties in Romania, and Kosice and Prešov in Slovakia, alongside Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg in Hungary.

Despite the inherent charm and cultural richness of these areas, their traditional lifestyles and work cultures were fading into obscurity, overshadowed by modern advancements and overlooked as potential economic drivers. Recognizing this, the project aimed to breathe new life into these communities by developing and promoting unique tourist experiences rooted in their living heritage, thereby establishing the Carpathian Living Heritage Destination. In collaboration with creative tourism service

providers and local artisans, the project team created 52 market-ready products centered around intangible living heritage assets. These offerings not only provided economic opportunities for entrepreneurs but also celebrated and preserved traditional practices, fostering a deeper respect for heritage conservation.

Through meticulously designed travel packages for weekend tours, the project transformed individual life stories into captivating cultural experiences. Training sessions for service providers and regional tourism operators ensured the seamless execution of these tours, which received high praise from participants and visitors alike. To elevate the visibility of these unique experiences, the project utilized innovative

technologies, including an online museum and a mobile application showcasing Carpathian living heritage. Twenty interpretive videos brought to life the stories of living heritage custodians, while a Cross-Border Festival of Traditional Work Cultures offered firsthand experiences to over 5,000 visitors. Rich promotional literature and visual advertising, including brochures, billboards, and posters, further enticed potential visitors to explore the region's cultural offerings.

As the project concluded, an International Go52 Partners Online Forum served as a platform for stakeholders to share insights and experiences. The culmination of these efforts led to the establishment of the International Community of Go52 Heritage Weekends, uniting diverse stakeholders committed to preserving authentic lifestyles and work cultures.

Beyond its economic benefits, the project instilled a profound respect for heritage conservation and ensured the enduring legacy of cultural traditions for generations to come.

"The most important added value of the project is the creation of 13 diverse and original experiences focusing on traditions, practices, and crafts. These new offers and tips for trips have attracted more travellers to visit Košice region. Thus, the project have proved that crafts and traditions are interesting and inspiring also for present day people."

Mirka Seregova Hnatkova,
marketing expert, Slovakia

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: 52LifestyleExperiences

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0068

Partnership:

LB: Tourist Association of Ivano-Frankivsk Region (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

B1: Chamber Of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture Satu Mare (Satu Mare, Romania)

B2: Košice Region Tourism (Košice, Slovakia)

B3: Aba Tourism Association (Telkibánya, Hungary)

B4: Department for International Cooperation, Eurointegration, Tourism and Investments of Ivano-Frankivsk Regional State Administration (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 518 473,36

Implementation period:
October 2019 - July 2022

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Developed 52 market-ready products based on intangible living heritage assets across four countries
- Established the "Carpathian Living Heritage Destination Go52 Heritage Weekends" brand
- Conducted training sessions for service providers
- Created innovative e-tourism products including an online museum and a mobile application
- Organized the Cross-Border Festival of Traditional Work Cultures, attracting approximately 5,000 visitors
- Produced rich promotional literature and visual advertising
- Hosted an International Go52 Partners Online Forum



Košice Region Tourism

"The tasks implemented in the project clearly have a positive effect on the development of tourism in Ivano-Frankivsk region and contribute to increasing the tourist attractiveness of the territory, creating new opportunities for income sources in border communities, especially in rural areas. The most important thing is that within the framework of the project, we managed to turn the work culture and traditional way of life of people in the Carpathians into a tourist product that will always be of interest to both domestic and foreign tourists."

Halyna Makota,
Deputy Director, Department of International Cooperation and European Integration of Communities of Ivano-Frankivsk Regional State Administration, Ukraine



Košice Region Tourism



Košice Region Tourism

CARPATHIA UNESCO – GREEN CARPATHIA Integrated cross-border touristic route

Once upon a time, our team embarked on an audacious mission – to breathe life into the forgotten corners of four remarkable regions: Svidnik, Suceava, Siret, and Chernivtsi. These regions, often overshadowed by more popular destinations, held secrets waiting to be unveiled. Our goal was clear: to elevate the visibility and allure of cherished landmarks. How did we achieve this? By creating and promoting a captivating cross-border tourist trail that seamlessly weaves together UNESCO treasures, nationally revered cultural sites, and the rich tapestry of natural wonders dotting our landscape, along with an array of tourism services catering to every traveller’s whim.

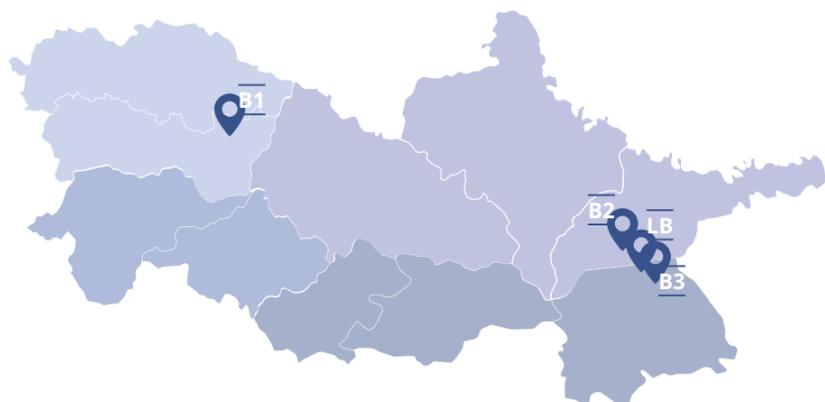
Spanning four nations – Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, and Ukraine – our project spotlighted a plethora of must-see attractions. In Siret, Romania, we stood before the venerable Church of the Holy Trinity. Its ancient stones whispered tales of voivodes, pilgrims, and silent prayers. Nearby, the NATURA 2000 protected area, Siret Lake in Rogojesti, mirrored the sky, reflecting the untouched beauty of nature. Our hearts swelled with pride as we unveiled these hidden gems.

Across the border in Slovakia’s Svidnik, we marvelled at two UNESCO-listed churches. The Church of Saint Michael the Archangel in Ladomírová, built without a single iron nail, stood

as a testament to human craftsmanship and devotion. Nearby, the Church of Saint Nicolas in Bodružal beckoned with its wooden spires, inviting travellers to step into a medieval tale. We revelled in their silent grandeur.

As the route meandered, we embraced the protected natural area known as “Horný tok Ondavy” Údolie smrti. Here, rustling leaves and babbling brooks composed a symphony of life, echoing the resilience of the land. Our footsteps blended with the whispers of centuries past. In Ukraine’s Chernivtsi, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University stood proudly – a living monument to knowledge and enlightenment. Its corridors echoed with the footsteps of scholars, poets, and dreamers. Nearby, Swan Lake in the village of Chortoryya cradled migratory birds, their wings touching the water’s surface like delicate brushstrokes. We celebrated these academic havens.

To ensure these treasures received the attention they deserved, we mapped out their connections to other attractions, creating a captivating tapestry of experiences. Our information centers sprang to life. Siret, Svidnik, Chernivtsi, and Suceava each created their info points, where passionate locals shared tales of their heritage. Tourist brunches at the target sites became lively gatherings, where flavours mingled with history. We witnessed the magic of connection.



PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: CARPATHIA UNESCO
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0092
Partnership:
LB: Siret Town (Siret, Romania)
B1: Regional Development Agency Svidnik (Svidnik, Slovakia)
B2: Department of Regional Development of Chernivtsi Regional State Administration (Chernivtsi, Ukraine)
B3: Chamber of Commerce and Industry Suceava (Suceava, Romania)
EU contribution: EUR 360 142,4
Implementation period: May 2020 - December 2023



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully raised awareness and promoted tourism in the Svidnik, Suceava, Siret, and Chernivtsi regions, which were previously overlooked by many
- A tourist route linking UNESCO monuments, cultural landmarks, and natural attractions across Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, and Ukraine was established, facilitating tourism across borders
- Significant landmarks and UNESCO-listed sites, such as churches, universities, and protected natural areas, were identified and promoted, enhancing their recognition and attractiveness to tourists
- Each partner region set up information centers to provide tourists with information about local attractions and the overall tourist route, improving accessibility and awareness
- Tourist brunches, educational initiatives for students, participation in tourist fairs, and organization of infotrips contributed to engaging tourists and fostering interest in the featured attractions
- Creation of a dedicated website and brochure provided accessible information about the tourist route, attracting visitors and generating interest in the target areas



Educational initiatives flourished. Students and pupils embarked on infotrips, exploring the past through ancient stones and vibrant traditions. Tourist fairs buzzed with excitement, as visitors tasted local delicacies and marvelled at the craftsmanship of artisans. We ignited curiosity. Our online presence flourished with a dedicated website housing a wealth of information on the trail's highlights. In addition, with the unveiling of a bespoke brochure, curiosity about the region soared.

Finally, conferences on tourism convened. Experts shared insights, debated strategies, and kindled sparks of inspiration. Together, we have ignited a tourism renaissance, shedding light on the hidden gems of our cherished landscapes for the world to discover and cherish. Our project may have concluded, but its impact continues to ripple through our communities, leaving behind a legacy of pride and prosperity.



Culture connect - cultural mobility in the border area

The COOLNET project, nestled in the heart of Europe's dynamic border area, emerged as a catalyst for cultural revitalization and cross-border harmony. Joining forces across Satu Mare County, Prešov Region, and Zakarpattia Region, the project embarked on a mission to illuminate the rich tapestry of cultural heritage that defines the region.

Recognizing museums as custodians of shared history, COOLNET aimed to bridge divides and cultivate unity. Museums scattered along the border embraced a collective vision, pooling resources to unlock their untapped potential. Together, they envisioned vibrant cross-border events that would resonate with visitors and locals alike, breathing new life into cultural tourism.

Driven by a spirit of exploration, three pioneering museums embarked on a quest to unearth the hidden gems of their respective regions. Their research formed the bedrock of COOLNET's ambitious initiatives, paving the way for a transformative cultural renaissance. At the intersection of tradition and technology, COOLNET unveiled a ground-breaking tool: a mobile application designed to showcase the region's diverse cultural landscape. This digital gateway became a beacon for cultural enthusiasts, offering immersive experiences and guiding visitors through a maze of cultural treasures. Over project implementation, COOLNET's impact rippled across the region. Three museum storage facilities were rejuvenated, traditional peasant household revived, and

ancient wooden iconostasis restored and preserved for posterity. Twelve electrifying cross-border events ignited a sense of community spirit, while two conferences and three workshops sparked dialogue and innovation. Through fifteen meticulously crafted brochures, a web of fifteen interconnected villages found their voice.

Yet, COOLNET was more than just a project – it was a testament to the transformative power of culture. It galvanized communities, fostering a sense of pride and ownership in their shared heritage. As borders blurred and connections deepened, COOLNET became a symbol of hope and resilience, illuminating a path toward a brighter future for generations to come.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Rehabilitation of three museum storages and one peasant household, alongside the restoration of a wooden iconostasis
- Organization of 12 cross-border events, 2 conferences, and 3 workshops to strengthen community ties
- Development of a phone application and a website to promote cultural tourism
- Publication of 15 brochures highlighting the cultural attractions of 15 villages



COOLNET - where culture connects, and communities thrive, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape of cultural preservation and cross-border cooperation. Under the watchful eyes of the Carpathian Mountains, COOLNET's legacy echoes through time, inspiring generations to cherish their roots and celebrate harmonious blend of cultures that defines their shared home.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: COOLNET
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0040
Partnership:
LB: Satu Mare County Museum (Satu Mare, Romania)
B1: Slovak National Museum – Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidnik (Svidnik, Slovakia)
B2: Transcarpathian Museum of Folk Architecture and Life of the Transcarpathian Regional Council (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 508 572,00
Implementation period: October 2019 - June 2023

The Cross-Border Culture Art Space

The ArtSpace project unfolded across the towns of Velke Kapusany (SK), Nyíregyháza (HU), and Berehove (UA), with a clear focus on promoting local culture and preserving historical heritage. Recognizing the neglect of cultural and historic sites, coupled with a lack of skills among cultural and tourism actors, we set out to revitalize these areas and empower local communities.

Our solution? Creation of the Cross-Border Culture and Art Space platform, which brought together border regions from Hungary, Slovakia, and Ukraine. Through training programs for cultural managers and traditional producers, along with comprehensive heritage research, we laid the groundwork for promoting the region's cultural and historic values.

natural attractions, and cultural events across the three regions, reaching 150 heritage points through our CBC ArtSpace platform. We also reconstructed the Hungarian community center in Velke Kapusany, revitalized the Perenyi Manor House in Chepivka (UA), and empowered culture and tourism actors with the skills to develop tourist products and manage cultural events. Equipping local producers with the knowledge to transform their offerings into attractive tourist products, we organized pilot and joint cultural events in CBCAS Centres, fostering collaboration and unity among painters and participants from the three regions.

Our project sparked a ripple effect beyond its immediate impact. As word spread about

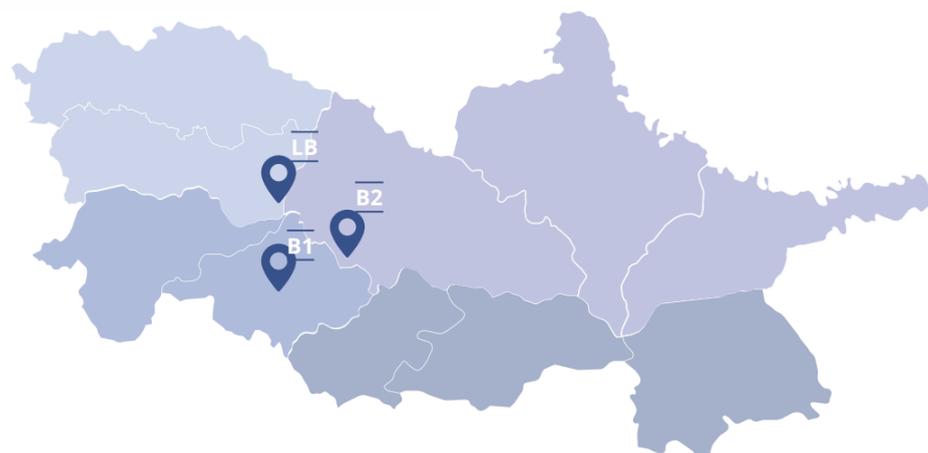
PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: ArtSpace
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/3.1/0052
Partnership:
LB: Association Velké Kapusany and Surroundings (Velké Kapušany, Slovakia)
B1: Carpathians Art and Culture Association (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)
B2: Pro Cultura Subcarpathica Non-Governmental Organisation (Berehovo, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 724 636,04
Implementation period: May 2020 - February 2023

our cross-border initiatives, neighbouring communities expressed interest in joining our efforts. We began sharing best practices, collaborating on joint events, and even exploring the possibility of expanding the CBC ArtSpace platform to include additional towns and regions. The once neglected cultural and historic sites now serve as beacons of inspiration, drawing visitors from far and wide. Our journey continues, fuelled by the belief that cultural exchange knows no boundaries. Beyond the tangible outcomes, the ArtSpace project fostered new friendships, collaborations, and discoveries. It exemplifies the transformative power of cross-border cooperation in preserving heritage and fostering cultural exchange.



Despite unforeseen challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we remained steadfast in our mission. While face-to-face meetings became impossible, we adapted and found alternative ways to achieve our goals.

The result? Establishment of Cross-Border Culture and Art Spaces in Velke Kapusany, Nyíregyháza, and Berehove, where we accomplished conducting Cultural Heritage Research, cataloguing architectural landmarks,



- PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS**
- Conducting Cultural Heritage Research, cataloguing architectural landmarks, natural attractions,
 - Creating CBC ArtSpace platform in form of an interactive map with 150 heritage points
 - Reconstruction of the Hungarian community center in Velke Kapusany
 - Revitalization of the Perenyi Manor House in Chepivka (UA), breathing new life into the historic site through events and activities
 - Empowering culture and tourism actors with the skills to develop tourist products and manage cultural events
 - Equipping local producers with the knowledge to transform their offerings into attractive tourist products
 - Organizing pilot and joint cultural events in CBCAS Centres across the three regions, with a total of 3000 participants

Promotion of cross-border historical and cultural tourism based on the heritage of Pintea the Brave

Ardudul, our cherished town nestled in the north-west of Romania, holds within its embrace a rich tapestry of history and culture, emblematic of Transylvania's essence. Our community, marked by its diversity and resilience, has witnessed pivotal moments and nurtured remarkable personalities. Among these, Ardud stands as a testament to the legacy of Pintea The Brave, a national hero whose valorous deeds echo through time.

Through the programme, our community, in collaboration with our esteemed partners from Velyatino, Zakarpattia embarked on a transformative journey. The cultural odyssey, "Promotion of cross-border historical and cultural tourism based on the heritage of Pintea Viteazul," united our efforts to celebrate the enduring legacy of Pintea and uncover the shared identity landmarks that bind our communities across borders.

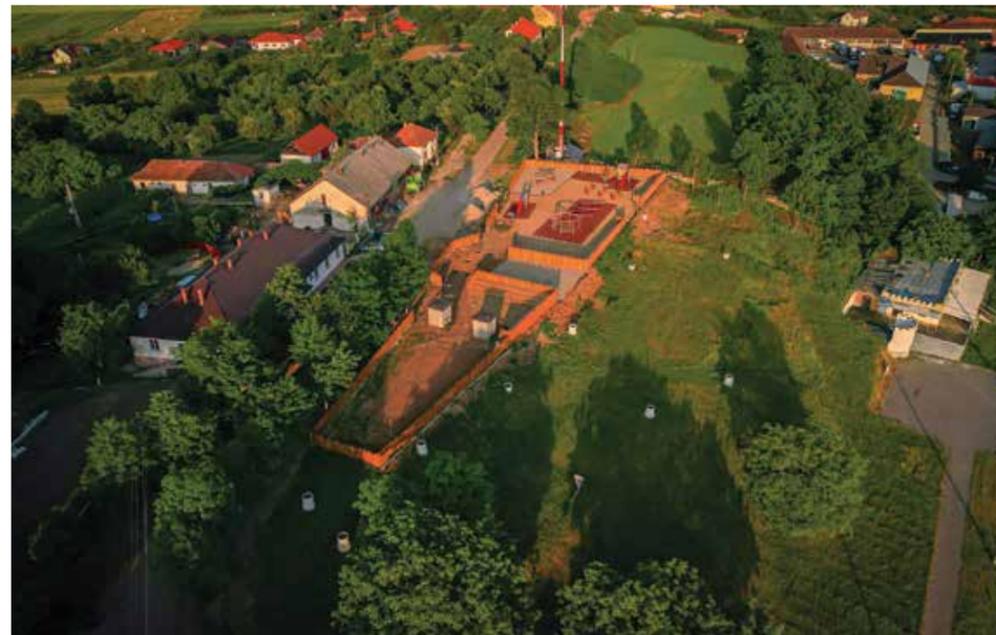
During the project's tenure, we made significant investments in enhancing the medieval Ardud Citadel and the heart of Velyatino. These efforts transformed them into beacons of cultural heritage, complete with modern recreational facilities and improved accessibility. By creating a unified tourist destination around Pintea Viteazul and other esteemed historical figures, we crafted integrated tourist packages and cultural events. Through innovative approaches like the DISCOVER ARDUD app and traditional promotional methods, we captivated and informed visitors, leaving an indelible mark on our shared heritage.

The culmination of our efforts yielded tangible results, breathing new life into the economy of Cetatea Ardud. The increase in tourist footfall, from approximately 25,000 to 32,112 annually, bolstered local businesses and heightened community engagement. Festivals like "MedievArtFest" became cherished traditions, drawing over 3,000 attendees and fostering a vibrant cultural exchange. Moreover, our

project facilitated knowledge sharing and capacity building among tourism stakeholders, empowering local communities to harness their cultural heritage for sustainable development.

As the project concluded, our commitment to preserving cultural heritage, promoting exchange, and fostering educational opportunities remains unwavering. By sharing our reports, best practices, and strategies freely, we ensure that the legacy of our endeavours endures. Through active participation in conferences and seminars, we continue to amplify our experiences, enriching diverse communities and paving the way for future collaborations.

In reflection of our shared history and cultural tapestry, the legacy of our project stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and unity. As we cherish the memories of our past endeavours, let us celebrate the enduring spirit of Ardud, a beacon of cultural heritage and a symbol of our collective identity.



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: PINTEA HERITAGE

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/3.1/0045

Partnership:

LB: Municipality of Ardud (Ardud, Romania)

B1: Vyshkovo Village Council (Vyshkovo, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 1 000 000,00

Implementation period:

May 2021 - December 2023

The journey of Ardud is an ongoing saga of resilience, innovation, and unity. As we forge ahead, our commitment to our heritage and to each other remains unshaken. Together, we will continue to write the chapters of our story, ensuring that Ardud remains a vibrant tapestry of culture and history for generations to come. Let us move forward with purpose, pride, and passion, for the spirit of Ardud is eternal.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Significant increase in tourist numbers, with an influx of visitors to the Ardud Citadel and the center of Velyatino village. This increase, from approximately 25,000 to 32,112 tourists per year, reflects the success of the project in attracting visitors to the region
- Influx of tourists generated revenue for local businesses and residents. Tourists spent money on various services such as hotels, restaurants, transportation, and entertainment, stimulating economic growth in the area
- Investments made in tourism infrastructure within the Ardud Citadel and Velyatino enhanced the attractiveness of these areas to tourists. Modern recreational locations were made available to the public, contributing to a better overall tourist experience
- Before the project, tourists typically spent around one hour in Ardud Citadel. However, after the project implementation, the time spent by tourists increased to over two hours on average, indicating a more engaging and immersive experience for visitors
- Tourism in Ardud became associated with improving the quality of life for both tourists and local residents. Tourists were provided with opportunities for rest, relaxation, and engagement in different activities, contributing to their overall well-being



Common culture in the past and today

Nestled beneath the medieval castle hill and a route to the Medieval Castle Šariš, there was a noticeable absence in highlighting heritage crafts and sustaining traditional practices. The implementation of our project in Velky Saris, Slovakia, aimed to cultivate sustainable tourism within the city and the region by celebrating our shared culture through the creation of cultural and tourist products.

Our goal was to reintroduce traditional heritage crafts, supporting local artisans and reconnecting with our cultural roots, bridging the gap between the past and the present. With traditional crafts fading into obscurity and a lack of platforms to exhibit them, our project sought to illuminate the lives of our ancestors and the pivotal role they played in shaping our region through their craftsmanship and the bustling medieval markets they frequented.

To achieve this, we embarked on extensive research to unearth the common cultural threads between our countries, focusing on traditional crafts and gastronomy. The construction of the Archeoparc, featuring three main exhibition buildings and a designated area

for local markets, served as the cornerstone of our endeavour. We curated a database of traditional craftspeople who would display their expertise at the Archeoparc, while also assembling a collection of artefacts to enrich our cultural presentations.

The completion of the Archeoparc marks a significant milestone in our journey. We have established a hub for presenting history and culture, offering visitors a glimpse into our heritage through traditional markets, crafts, and skilled artisans. Positioned along the path to the medieval castle of Saris, our Archeoparc embodies sustainable tourism, serving as a beacon for travellers seeking to immerse themselves in our shared past.

Through our project, we aspire to bring the medieval inhabitants of Veľký Šariš closer to our modern-day visitors, offering exhibitions and events that showcase our cultural evolution, culinary traditions, and the daily realities of life in the Middle Ages. Our collective past teaches us the invaluable lesson that sometimes, it's worth revisiting history to uncover timeless truths.



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Common culture
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/3.1/0057
Partnership:
LB: Veľký Šariš city (Veľký Šariš, Slovakia)
B1: Velykoluchkivska village council (Veliki Luchki, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 523 469,87
Implementation period:
 May 2021 - November 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Constructed the Archeoparc with three main exhibition buildings and a designated area for local markets
- Conducted research to connect both countries in common culture, particularly in traditional crafts and gastronomy
- Established a database of traditional craftspeople to showcase their work at the Archeoparc
- Significantly contributed to sustainable tourism by creating a space for presenting history, culture, traditional markets, crafts, and craftsmen in one location



Discovering and preservation of Jewish cultural heritage on cross-border area

Returning to the memory of Jewish history and culture is the responsibility of citizens today, presenting both a challenge and an opportunity for engaging in public dialogue about the past and its future vision. In Sighet (Romania) and Ivano-Frankivsk (Ukraine), the rich heritage of Jewish culture and history has been identified as profoundly impacting these communities.

The project addresses the low awareness of multicultural societies and mutual tolerance, hindering the preservation and promotion of common tangible and intangible cultural and historical Jewish heritage. By restoring and operationalizing historical sites connected to the Jewish heritage, developing new tourist products, organizing festivals, workshops, and exchange tours, and building a network of stakeholders, the project aims to increase awareness and promote multicultural societies.

The initiative successfully restored and operationalized two Jewish historical sites and introduced two new tourist products. Additionally, two international festivals celebrating Jewish cultures and history were hosted in Sighet and Ivano-Frankivsk, attended by 1000 people. Moreover, 600 individuals participated in 20 local site tours along the newly established "Jewish route".

Efforts to preserve and promote Jewish heritage are not just about the past; they are about creating a future where cultural understanding succeeds. The project shares inspiring stories and experiences with travel agencies, economic partners, and various stakeholders, ensuring that the legacy continues to inspire and unite communities. The newly established Jewish route tours remain active, inviting visitors to explore the rich history and heritage of these cities, engaging with and appreciating the improved Synagogue and Elie Wiesel Museum.

"The project aimed to promote local culture and preserve historical heritage, focusing on the multicultural history of the Romania-Ukrainian cross-border area, particularly the Jewish communities. By increasing awareness through research, conservation, and promotion of Jewish heritage, the project fostered mutual tolerance and appreciation for multiculturalism. Key strategies included restoring a cultural site (museum), developing a touristic product (app), promoting common heritage through cross-border activities, and building a network of stakeholders. This approach resulted in increased visitors, enhanced popularity of the Elie Wiesel Museum, and successful cultural events like the Jewish festival, workshops, and cross-border tours. The project's success was attributed to clear goals, effective teamwork, and a commitment to its purpose".

Alina Marincean

Project manager, curator Maramures Museum Elie Wiesel heritage Museum



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: JCulture
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/3.1/0031
Partnership:
LB: Department of Investment Policy, Projects, International Relations, Tourism and City Promotion of the Ivano-Frankivsk City Council (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)
B1: Maramures Museum (Sighetu Marmatiei, Romania)
EU contribution: EUR 258 970,67
Implementation period: June 2021 - August 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Aimed to rediscover and cherish the Jewish heritage in Sighet and Ivano-Frankivsk
- Historical sites directly connected to Jewish heritage, such as the Elie Wiesel Museum in Sighet and the Synagogue in Ivano-Frankivsk, were restored and operationalized to increase awareness and promote multicultural societies
- New cross-border tourist products were developed
- Two international festivals celebrating Jewish cultures and history were hosted
- 600 individuals participated in 20 local site tours along the newly established "Jewish route"
- Efforts to preserve and promote Jewish heritage continue beyond the project's duration

"JCulture project has been instrumental in strengthening our organization's mission and impact, providing invaluable insights into community needs and aspirations. It has facilitated organizational growth and capacity-building, empowering us to expand our reach, deepen our impact, and forge new partnerships. The programme has sparked renewed motivation and engagement among participants, translating into higher levels of involvement and morale. Additionally, it has served as a catalyst for generating innovative ideas and solutions, fostering a culture of diversity, inclusivity, and collaboration. Moving forward, I envision the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine programme as a catalyst for positive change, innovation, and collaboration, empowering individuals to realize their full potential and create a more just, sustainable, and prosperous future for all".

Barz Mirela Ana
Manager Muzeul Maramuresan Sighetu Marmatiei



The Ancestors Journey

ANCESTORS project embarked on a heartfelt mission to reconnect "lost" families through their descendants. With meticulous research and dedication, we have successfully orchestrated family reunions, culminating in the creation of "The Ancestors Journey" - a unique historical documentation at the national level. Carefully chosen locations serve as the backdrop for our endeavours, each intricately linked by the legacy of hardworking Slovaks and Ukrainians renowned for their craftsmanship in tinkering, glass-making, and pottery.

Slovak culture, characterized by its nomadic essence, found vivid expression across our project sites, including a historical park in Ukraine meticulously reconstructed with contributions from Liptovska Teplička, Slovakia. Our project epitomized the essence of heritage preservation, spanning from museum establishments in Slovakia to park reconstructions in Ukraine and cultural centers in Hungary.

Led by Liptovska Teplička, the "Ancestors" museum in the village emerged as a year-round cultural hub, while Velikyj Bereznyj received infrastructural support for the revitalization of its central park, a historic arboretum founded by Liptovska Teplička's ancestors.

In Hungary, the Slovak National Educational Institute saw the transformation of a complex of buildings into a cultural center for minorities, complete with an amphitheatre for outdoor cultural activities. Educational events for children and students were key components enriching the project's outreach.

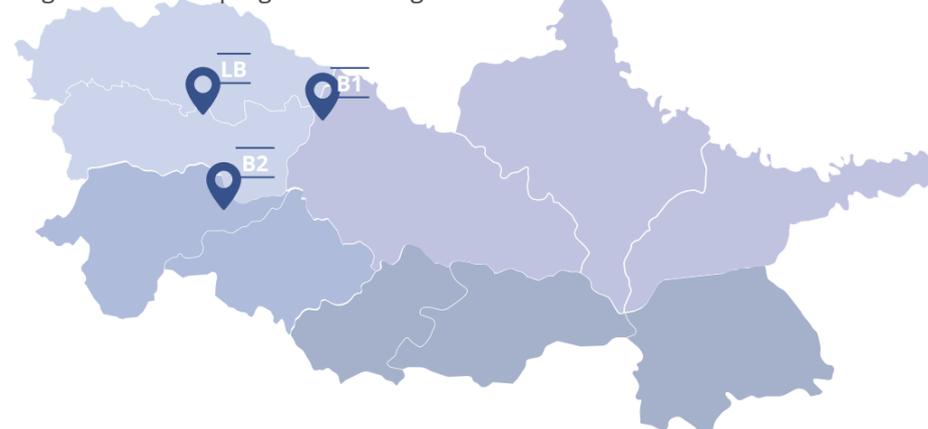
Our commitment to cultural and educational activities extended to the maintenance of museums, cultural centers, and dissemination of project outputs. Sustainability remained paramount, with plans for collaboration and the establishment of subsidiary organizations to independently manage cultural events.

Through these endeavours, we aimed not only to preserve heritage but also to foster a sense of unity and cultural enrichment among communities.

A testament to our dedication is involvement of local communities, whose participation breathed life into the ANCESTORS project. The impact of the project reached beyond the immediate cultural and familial reconnections. It spurred economic benefits through cultural tourism, drawing visitors keen to explore the historical narratives and artistic traditions showcased at our various sites. Local artisans and craftspeople found new platforms for their work, contributing to the local economies while preserving age-old techniques. This synergy between cultural preservation and economic development underscored the project's holistic approach, ensuring that heritage conservation was not only a tribute to the past but also a viable pathway for future growth.

Looking ahead, the ANCESTORS project envisions expanding its reach, incorporating more regions with shared heritage and untold stories. The foundation laid through meticulous research and community involvement sets a precedent for future initiatives aimed at cultural preservation.

By continuously engaging younger generations through educational programs and digital

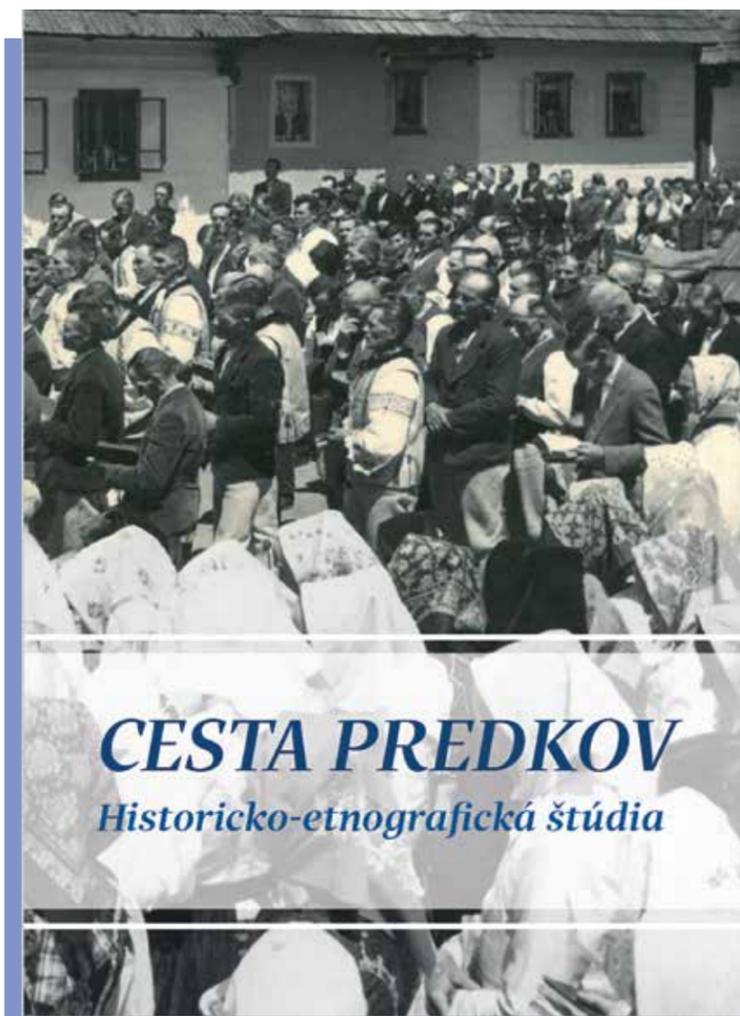


PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: ANCESTORS
ID: HUSKROUJA/1901/3.1/0003
Partnership:
LB: Liptovska Teplička (Liptovská Teplička, Slovakia)
B1: Velykyj Bereznyj village council (Velykyj Bereznyj, Ukraine)
B2: Slovak-Hungarian Bilingual Primary School and College For Minorities (Sátoraljaújhely, Hungary)
EU contribution: EUR 580 115,24
Implementation period: July 2021 - November 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Establishment of the "Ancestors" museum in Liptovská Teplička
- Reconstructing town central parks and creating cultural centers for minorities
- Maintaining museums, running cultural centers, and disseminating project outputs to the public
- Elaboration of the Ethnographic study "The Ancestors Journey" mapping the migration of families coming from Liptovská Teplička to Velikyj Bereznyj

platforms, we aim to sustain interest and involvement in heritage activities. The legacy of the ANCESTORS project is one of enduring connections, where history serves as a living, evolving narrative, continually enriching the lives of those it touches.



The thematic route of castles

In the regions of Satu Mare (Romania) and Zakarpattia (Ukraine), where castles and mansion houses stand as silent sentinels of history, the project identified a glaring need for enhanced visibility and tourist engagement. Some of these architectural gems had already undergone rehabilitation, while others languished in neglect, yet all awaited their moment to shine.

The creation of a joint cross-border thematic route emerged as a potent solution, promising to unlock the latent tourism potential of these border areas and drive economic growth. The Thematic Route of Castles embarked on a mission to elevate the touristic appeal of Satu Mare and Zakarpattia regions by fashioning a cross-border thematic route steeped in local culture and historical heritage, enriched by the latest ICT technologies, knowledge exchanges, and strategic infrastructure enhancements.

To address the challenge of bringing historical landmarks into the spotlight and fostering economic growth in the border regions, the project engaged in a multifaceted approach. It involved crafting and disseminating promotional materials such as brochures, maps, films, and a dedicated social media presence, along with a user-friendly mobile application. Additionally, the project installed two engaging playgrounds at the Hodod and Khust castles, infusing these

historic sites with newfound vitality. Furthermore, the project introduced four state-of-the-art touchscreen infokiosks at the Carei, Medieșu Aurit, Livada, and Nevitskiy castles, offering visitors immersive digital experiences. It also facilitated two enlightening exchanges of experiences for cultural institutions and tourism agencies. Additionally, a majestic entrance arch was constructed at Nevitskiy Castle in Ukraine, serving as a symbolic gateway to the region's rich heritage.

Moreover, the project developed ten captivating augmented reality scripts for castles in Satu Mare County and the Zakarpattia region. These concerted efforts led to increased tourist engagement and economic development in the regions, marking a significant step towards preserving and promoting cultural heritage for future generations.

Beyond its tangible outcomes, the Thematic Route of Castles embodies a profound narrative - a timeless tale that intertwines our past with our present and future. These castles are not mere relics of a bygone era; they are living testaments to our cultural legacy, monuments to the ingenuity and resilience of our forebears. By championing this thematic route, we are not only fostering tourism and economic prosperity but also safeguarding our cultural heritage for generations to come.

The success of the project has inspired other regions to join the thematic route of castles, with collaborative efforts underway to further promote and enhance the joint cultural heritage of the area through additional investments in rehabilitation, preservation, and promotion of castles.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Creation and promotion of a cross-border castle route through the development of brochures, maps, films, a social media page, and a mobile application
- Installation of 2 playgrounds at the castles of Hodod and Khust
- Installation of 4 touchscreen infokiosks at the castles of Carei, Medieșu Aurit, Livada, and Nevitskiy
- Organization of two exchanges of experiences for representatives of institutions active in the field of culture and tourism agencies
- Construction of an entrance arch at Nevitskiy Castle in Ukraine
- Development of 10 augmented reality scripts for castles in Satu Mare County and Zakarpattia region

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: SMAR.T.OURISM

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/3.1/0020

Partnership:

LB: Satu Mare County Intercommunity Development Association (Satu Mare, Romania)

B1: Communal enterprise "Agency of Regional Development and Cross-Border Co-operation "Transcarpathia" of Zakarpattya Oblast Council" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: Onokivska Village Council (Onokivtsi, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 336 474,42

Implementation period: June 2021 - November 2023

"This thematic route is more than just a collection of historical monuments and beautiful castles - it is a story in itself, a thread that connects our glorious past with our common present and future. These castles are not just old stones, they are testimonies to our rich cultural heritage, monuments to the wisdom and creativity of our ancestors. By promoting and supporting this thematic route, we are not only encouraging tourism and local economic development, but also protect and preserve our cultural heritage for future generations."

Pataki Csaba

President of Satu Mare County Intercommunity Development Association



Valorisation of the historical and cultural heritage through the development and promotion of the Carpathian Cultural Route

"Valorisation of the Historical and Cultural Heritage through the Development and Promotion of the Carpathian Cultural Route" project epitomizes our team's dedication to nurturing cultural tourism and preserving historical heritage in the border regions of Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia Regions in Ukraine, and Maramures County in Romania.

Our primary goal was to create an integrated cultural heritage tourism product, the Carpathian Cultural Route, which links historical and cultural sites with other attractions and services. This involved enhancing the skills and knowledge of cultural tourism representatives through training programs and promoting the route in regional and international markets via promotional materials and online platforms. We achieved significant milestones, including establishing expert groups in Ukraine and Romania, conducting analytical research and sociological surveys, developing databases and conceptual frameworks for the route, and creating branding and marketing strategies. Additionally, the project facilitated the creation of the Carpathian Cultural Route Network, equipped sites with digital tourist information

points and information boards, and organized training modules, seminars, and study tours.

Furthermore, project team significantly enhanced the infrastructure by equipping objects along the Carpathian Cultural Route in Ukraine and Romania with 20 digital tourist information points and 56 information boards. They also established a network with 51 members and organized various educational and promotional activities, including training modules, seminars, study tours, and an international online workshop that engaged 88 participants. To enhance visibility and accessibility, we developed and published trilingual catalogues, brochures, and maps of the Carpathian Cultural Route, with 8,000 copies distributed. Moreover, we launched a joint Ukrainian-Romanian website and developed a mobile application to offer visitors comprehensive information.

The HICART project significantly contributes to cultural tourism development, local heritage preservation, and the improvement of the region's image as a joint tourism destination. We expect development and promotion of the Carpathian Cultural Route to increase

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: HICART

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/3.1/0005

Partnership:

LB: NGO "Association of Economic Development of Ivano-Frankivsk (AEDIF)" (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

B1: Development Centre for Small and Medium Sized Enterprise Maramures (Baia Mare, Romania)

B2: Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 330 088,18

Implementation period:

July 2021 - October 2023



visitor numbers, boost tourism businesses along the route, and enhance the region's attractiveness to tourists. The Carpathian Cultural Route stands as a testament to the rich heritage and collaborative spirit of the border regions, offering a compelling journey through history and culture for travellers and locals alike. As we look to the future, we are committed to ensuring the sustainability and continuous growth of the Carpathian Cultural Route, fostering long-term benefits for the communities and preserving this invaluable cultural legacy for generations to come.

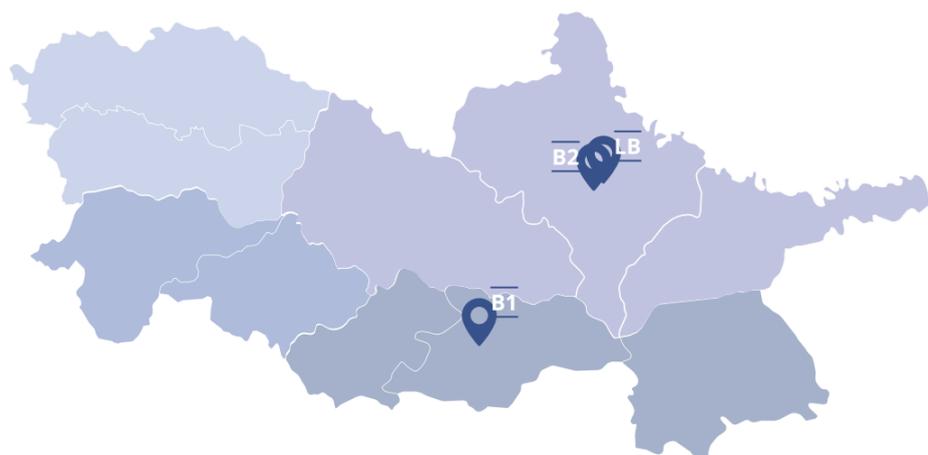
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Creation of the Carpathian Cultural Route and its recognition as a Regional Route in Romania
- Establishment of expert groups in Ukraine and Romania
- Equipping Carpathian Cultural Route objects in Ukraine and Romania with digital tourist information points and information boards
- Creation of the Carpathian Cultural Route network
- Launching a joint Ukrainian-Romanian website and mobile application for the Carpathian Cultural Route
- Organizing training modules, seminars, study tours, and an international online workshop engaging 88 participants
- Developing and distributing trilingual catalogues, brochures, and maps of the Carpathian Cultural Route, with 8,000 copies distributed

The Carpathian region offers breath-taking mountain landscapes and picturesque old buildings blending seamlessly with nature. Rich in cultural and historical heritage, the area boasts numerous museums, architectural marvels, and religious monuments, serving as venues for concerts, art exhibitions, and cultural events. These museums showcase a diverse collection spanning from prehistoric artefacts to contemporary exhibits, highlighting the vibrant Carpathian culture, folk traditions, and local flora and fauna. The Carpathian Cultural Route, linking 40 prominent sites across Ukraine and Romania, including 11 UNESCO World Heritage sites, provides a unique cross-border tourist experience steeped in history and multiculturalism.

Maria Kovaliv

Vice-chairman of the public organisation "Association of Economic Development of Ivano-Frankivsk (AEDIF)", Project Manager (Ukraine)



Development of event tourism based on local cultural and historical attractions in cooperation between Nagyecsed and Perechyn

We, the municipalities of Nagyecsed and Perechyn, joined hands to enhance event tourism by developing the infrastructure surrounding our cultural and historical treasures. Our shared goal was to safeguard our heritage, elevate its visibility, and harness its potential for economic and social prosperity.

Despite the richness of our cultural heritage, it remained largely untapped for tourism, with only a fraction being explored by visitors. Traditional approaches dominated, lacking the innovation needed to capture modern travellers' interest. The region's marketing strategies fell short in showcasing the unity and diversity of its cultural offerings, further hindered by the lack of supportive infrastructure to facilitate a seamless tourist experience.

To overcome these hurdles, we envisioned a future where new infrastructure would not only enhance accessibility but also create immersive cross-border events. The project was designed to shine a spotlight

on the distinctive cultures of Nagyecsed and Perechyn, all while preserving the integrity of their historical narrative.

With the rallying cry of "Our Past, Their Future," we began by identifying key cultural and historical sites that could serve as anchors for the development of event tourism. Investments were made to restore and modernize these landmarks, ensuring they stood as testaments to the region's storied past and bright future. An event venue was built in the historical district of Nagyecsed, at the Fairground, which, in its functional layout and infrastructure, meets the needs of today's era.

However, in its external appearance, it recalls the atmosphere of historical past and embodies the architectural features of the former Ecsedi Castle. At Perechyn, following the paving works in the yard of the Local History Museum, it became modernized by equipping with 1 information booth, 1 interior info-box, 5 TVs and 4 tablets to attract visitors to the museum and help them learn more about our city, its history and culture and our cross-border

PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: CULTURE SPACES 4 EVENT TOURISM
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/3.1/0105
Partnership:
LB: Municipality of Nagyecsed (Nagyecsed, Hungary)
B1: Perechyn City Council (Perechyn, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 721 306,12
Implementation period: July 2021 - October 2023

partnership with the Hungarian twin city, Nagyecsed in an interactive way.

The project's success hinged on cooperation between local governments, cultural institutions, and the community members. Together, we curated a series of events that celebrated the unique traditions and histories of both towns. From music festivals that echoed the ancient melodies of the land to art exhibitions that displayed the creative spirit of the people, each event was a mosaic piece in the larger picture of their shared heritage.

The results were nothing short of remarkable. The surge in tourist arrivals breathed new life

into the local economy, with visitors flocking to experience the revitalized cultural and historical sites.

The collaborative events became a melting pot of ideas and traditions, fostering a sense of unity and understanding between the communities of Nagyecsed and Perechyn.

Looking ahead, we are committed to sustaining this momentum, ensuring that our cultural treasures continue to inspire and unite us across borders.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 5417 tourists visited the region due to enhanced cultural and historical sites
- Establishment of two revitalized cultural and historical sites in Nagyecsed and Perechyn, contributing to the attractiveness of the region
- Successful organization of events such as four-four International Crafts Fairs in Nagyecsed and Perechyn, respectively, where traditions were shared through folk dances, foods and craft goods and of the Borderless Calvinistic Meeting of Szatmár in Nagyecsed
- Creation of 7 thematic videos for museum exhibitions, about 5-7 minutes long, about the historical and cultural characteristics of the nationalities living in Perechyn
- Active participation of community members in cultural preservation and tourism promotion activities



Exploration, development and promotion of common touristic values, training and networking in the cross-border area

In the heart of Europe, where the Ukrainian and Hungarian borders converge, lies a region brimming with untapped potential. The picturesque landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and warm hospitality have long been the best-kept secrets of this borderland. Yet, despite the abundance of tourist offerings, a veil of obscurity shrouded these gems. The reason? Insufficient marketing efforts and a lack of cohesive strategies to harness their collective power.

Our project team, fuelled by a shared vision, embarked on a transformative journey—one that would not only elevate our region's tourism prospects but also foster collaboration among local stakeholders.

Our story begins with a vision of unity and shared prosperity. With a deep commitment to enhancing tourism along the border, we set out to develop a joint tourism destination strategy that would serve as a guiding beacon for stakeholders on both sides. But we knew that a strategy alone would not suffice – empowerment through education was equally essential. Thus, we embarked on a comprehensive

approach, organizing two pivotal tourism conferences and workshops tailored specifically for local stakeholders. These events served as vibrant forums for knowledge exchange, networking, and inspiration. Through engaging discussions and interactive sessions, we forged strong bonds and laid the groundwork for future collaboration.

Yet, our journey did not end there. Understanding the power of digital tools in today's world, we developed e-learning materials covering essential topics such as tour guiding skills, product development, service management, and social media communication. These resources were not mere documents; they were pathways to empowerment, designed to equip local stakeholders with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in the competitive tourism landscape.

But knowledge alone is not transformative without facilitation. Thus, we trained dedicated e-learning coordinators to guide learners through the educational journey, ensuring maximum impact and understanding. Our goal was not just to disseminate information but to catalyze

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Via Tisa

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/3.1/0028

Partnership:

LB: Association of Municipalities on the Upper-Tisza Area (Fehérgyarmat, Hungary)

B1: Hungarian Tourism Council of Zakarpattya (Berehove, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 471 778,2

Implementation period:

September 2021- November 2023

action, empowering individuals to drive change within their communities.

As the workshops unfolded and the e-learning materials became accessible to all through our website, a transformation took root. Border and local stakeholders, once disparate entities, began to converge in a spirit of collaboration and mutual respect. They shared ideas, resources, and aspirations, laying the foundation for a vibrant tourism ecosystem that transcends borders.

Today, as we reflect on our journey, we see the tangible fruits of our labour. Border regions that were once overlooked are now bustling with activity, as tourists flock to explore the hidden gems nestled along the Ukrainian-Hungarian border. But beyond the numbers and statistics lies a deeper truth – a story of unity, empowerment, and shared vision.

As we turn the page to the next chapter of our journey, we do so with optimism and determination. Our mission is far from over, but with each step forward, we inch closer to our ultimate goal – a borderless world where tourism serves as a catalyst for sustainable development, cultural exchange, and global understanding.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Organized two major tourism conferences and workshops, bringing together local tourism stakeholders from both sides of the border. These events provided valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange, capacity building, and networking, fostering a sense of community and collaboration among participants
- Developed e-learning materials covering essential topics such as Basic Tour Guiding Skills, Local Product Development, Attraction and Service Management, and Social Media Communication. These materials were designed to empower stakeholders with the knowledge and skills needed to enhance their offerings and marketing efforts
- Trained e-learning coordinators who guided participants through the e-learning materials. This personalized support helped learners navigate the educational journey more effectively, leading to greater understanding and application of the knowledge gained
- During the workshops, participants received interactive assistance in developing their understanding of the designated tourism topics. Through hands-on activities, discussions, and practical exercises, participants gained valuable insights and practical skills that they could apply to their tourism operations
- Border and local stakeholders had the opportunity to get to know each other better, fostering trust, understanding, and cooperation





Environmental protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation

The border regions of Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine share rich natural resources and diverse ecosystems that are crucial for the environmental health and economic well-being of these areas. However, these regions also face significant environmental challenges, including pollution, deforestation, and the impacts of climate change. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated, cross-border approach, which is embodied in the thematic objective of environmental protection, climate change mitigation, and adaptation, specifically under Priority 6.1: Sustainable use of the environment in the cross border area - preservation of natural resources, actions to reduce GHG emission and pollution of rivers. The high value of natural resources in the region underscores the importance of sustainable environmental

practices. These practices are essential for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, mitigating climate change impacts, and preventing the pollution of rivers and other water bodies. These efforts contribute significantly to the overall quality of life, promote biodiversity, and support sustainable development.

Environmental protection and climate change mitigation are complex tasks that require robust cross-border cooperation. To achieve common goals, the programme financed **17 cross-border cooperation projects** with a total EU contribution of €17,165,284.93 contracted, representing 25% of total contracted EU funds. These projects brought together **66 beneficiaries** and they jointly implemented:

Waste Management and Infrastructure:

- Established landfill and waste sorting complex infrastructure
- Procured equipment for selective waste collection and established collection points
- Constructed waste sorting complex with sustainable waste management capacity
- Developed Electronic Monitoring Platform for efficient waste-related data management
- Continued water quality damage prevention and elaboration of remediation measures at Velykiy Bychkiv

Forestry and Conservation:

- Enhanced forest accessibility through road reconstruction and construction
- Established firefighting water reservoir and completed riverbank protection
- Built new greenhouse and transformed attic space for forestry education
- Re/constructed roads and maintained forest access
- Constructed wooden cascades in various regions
- Established new tree nursery, reforested hectares, and provided capacity-building for forest practitioners
- Identified key corridors for large carnivores and established transboundary ecological corridors
- Enhanced conservation status of habitats in the border region

Education and Awareness:

- Launched educational program reaching schools and communities
- Developed common energy concept and customized energy concepts for communities
- Organized workshops, training sessions, and established specialized energy innovation centers
- Raised environmental awareness through bat conservation efforts and workshops
- Developed educational platform EFFUSE, raising awareness about environmental issues

Pollution Mitigation and Monitoring:

- Established water quality-monitoring stations and cameras
- Initiated cross-border cooperation to address contamination and constructed water extraction and cleaning system
- Conducted assessments and implemented measures to mitigate light pollution
- Installed air pollution measuring stations and engaged schools in environmental education

Cross-border Network of Energy Sustainable Universities

As NET4SEnergy project team, we embarked on a journey spanning Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine, with a singular goal: to revolutionize energy efficiency within universities. Recognizing these institutions as pivotal players in climate change adaptation and sustainable development, we set out to transform them into beacons of environmental stewardship.

Our journey began with a clear understanding of the challenges at hand. Universities in our region were grappling with significant energy consumption levels, contributing substantially to CO2 emissions. Yet, implementing energy-saving measures proved daunting due to a myriad of obstacles - limited resources, a lack of expertise in renewable energy, and institutional inertia.

Undeterred, we created a comprehensive solution tailored to address these challenges

head-on. We installed pilot renewable energy facilities, upgraded infrastructure for more efficient energy management, and provided extensive training programs for both staff and students. Moreover, we developed bespoke energy and climate plans for each university, aligning our efforts with their unique needs and circumstances.

The results of our efforts were nothing short of remarkable. Across participating universities, we witnessed a remarkable 10% reduction in energy consumption and a corresponding 5% decrease in CO2 emissions. These achievements were not only environmentally significant but also financially beneficial, underscoring the tangible impact of our work.

Yet, beyond the numbers, it was the testimonials from university stakeholders that truly spoke

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: NET4SENERGY
ID: HUSKROUAV1702/6.1/0075
Partnership:
LB: Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)
B1: Technical University of Kosice (Košice, Slovakia)
B2: University of Miskolc (Miskolc, Hungary)
B3: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, North University Center of Baia Mare (Cluj-Napoca, Romania)
EU contribution: EUR 293 803,23
Implementation period: October 2019 - December 2021

volumes. Their enthusiastic endorsement highlighted the transformative power of NET4SEnergy, not just within campus walls but throughout the broader community. At the heart of our approach lay innovation. We deployed cutting-edge technologies such as online monitoring systems to track real-time energy consumption data and showcased the latest energy-efficient technologies through demonstration installations.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Development of an energy management system adopted and approved at partner universities
- Exchange of best practices and expertise through study trips and a brochure on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources
- Development and adoption of Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPs) by 2030 at partner universities
- Implementation of an educational program on energy management for university staff, training over 400 members (against 200 planned)
- Development and installation of tools for online monitoring of energy consumption at universities, providing real-time data on energy consumption and the effect of energy-saving measures
- Design and piloting of demonstration installations on renewable energy sources and energy-efficient technologies at university campuses

Looking ahead, our journey continues. We are committed to building on our successes, expanding our reach, and deepening our impact. Our vision extends beyond individual universities - we aim to catalyze a broader movement towards sustainability, inspiring change far beyond our project's borders.

In essence, NET4SEnergy has been more than just a project; it has been a catalyst for change. Together, we have demonstrated the transformative potential of universities as drivers of sustainable development, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to shaping a more sustainable future for generations to come.



"Universities are among the largest energy consumers in the Ivano-Frankivsk region, making our efforts highly relevant. This challenge is not unique to Ukraine; our European neighbours in Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania face similar issues. Throughout this project, we exchanged ideas and experiences with our partners, fostering mutual support and collaboration. Remarkably, for the first time, Ukrainian partners, specifically our university, took the lead in teaching European partners about energy management, sharing our expertise instead of the other way around. This achievement underscores our leadership in the field. We successfully shared our knowledge on designing active buildings, implementing cutting-edge energy management systems, and addressing the challenges posed by the pandemic, particularly energy poverty. The project not only helped us achieve our goals but also strengthened cross-border cooperation and knowledge exchange in energy management."

Maksym Karpash
Project coordinator



Ecological Assessment of Upper-Tisza River Basin to Develop the Monitoring Network and to Create an Action Plan to Protect Natural Values

Our project set out to explore the waters of the Upper Tisza and its tributaries, delving deep into the realms of water quality and ecological health. With partners spanning Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine, our mission was clear: understand, assess, and conserve the precious natural resources of our region. The primary objective was to gain comprehensive knowledge about the water quality in the Upper Tisza and its tributaries. Another critical goal was to assess the ecological status of the region, considering both aquatic life communities and species with Community importance. Promoting awareness among local communities about nature conservation was equally important.

At 55 designated sites across the region, we rolled up our sleeves and got to work. With over 250 water samples collected and 29 parameters measured, we left no stone unturned in our quest for knowledge. Guided by EU directives and international guidelines, we assessed the ecological status of our water bodies, striving to uncover the hidden secrets beneath the surface.

Our findings painted a complex picture of the health of the Upper Tisza and its tributaries. While some sections boasted pristine conditions, others faced challenges. In Ukraine, downstream from Solotvyno, we identified areas of concern

due to elevated chloride and zinc levels. In Hungary, despite organic and nutrient loads, sections below tributary mouths maintained good condition, albeit with slight salt concentration increases.

Our exploration didn't stop at water quality. We delved into the vibrant ecosystems that call these waters home. From phytoplankton to fish and macroscopic invertebrates, we surveyed over a hundred communities, uncovering the rich biodiversity that thrives in these waters. Armed with knowledge, we formulated action plans to address pollution sources and ensure sustainable management of our water resources. We developed monitoring plans to track changes over time and contribute to the Danube River Basin Management Plan.

However, our journey was not just about data and assessments. It was about connecting with our communities and raising awareness about the importance of nature conservation. Through joint trainings, online conferences, and workshops, we shared our findings and engaged with experts and the wider public alike.

As we bid farewell to this chapter of our journey, we look ahead with hope and determination. Our efforts pave the way for a more sustainable future, where the waters of the Upper Tisza flow freely, teeming with life and vitality.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: ETIMA

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/6.1/0029

Partnership:

LB: Government Office of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B1: Transylvanian Carpathia Society - Satu Mare (Satu Mare, Romania)

B2: State Ecological Inspectorate in the Transcarpathian Region (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B3: Agency of Local Development and Information Resources "Europolis" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 454 454,14

Implementation period:

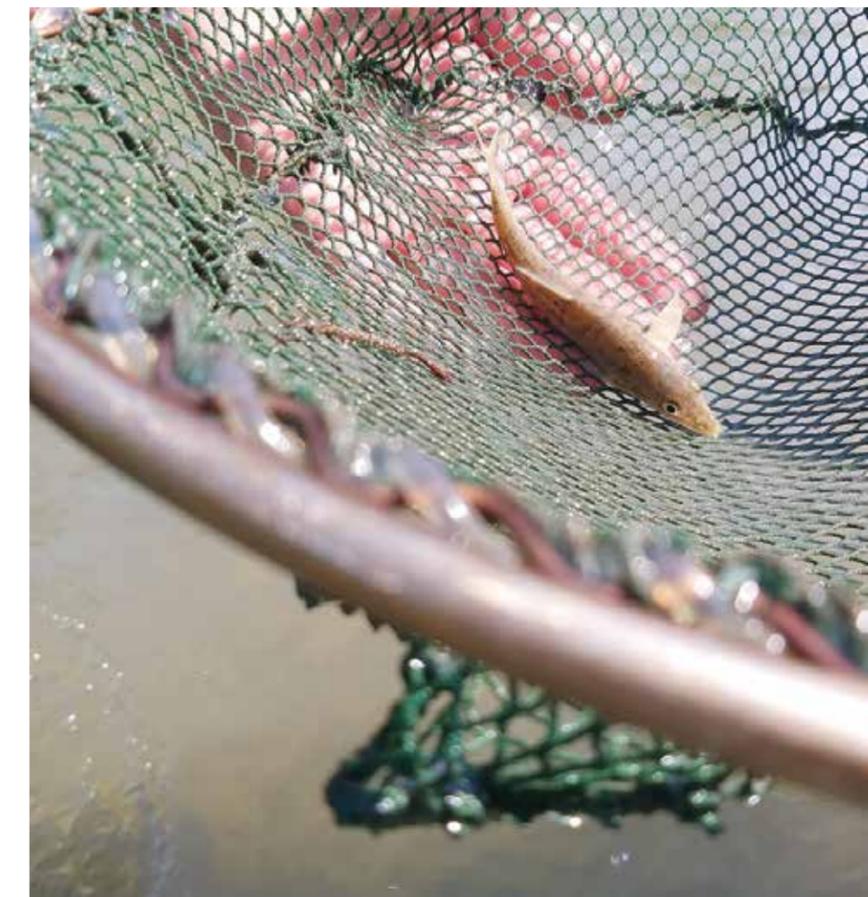
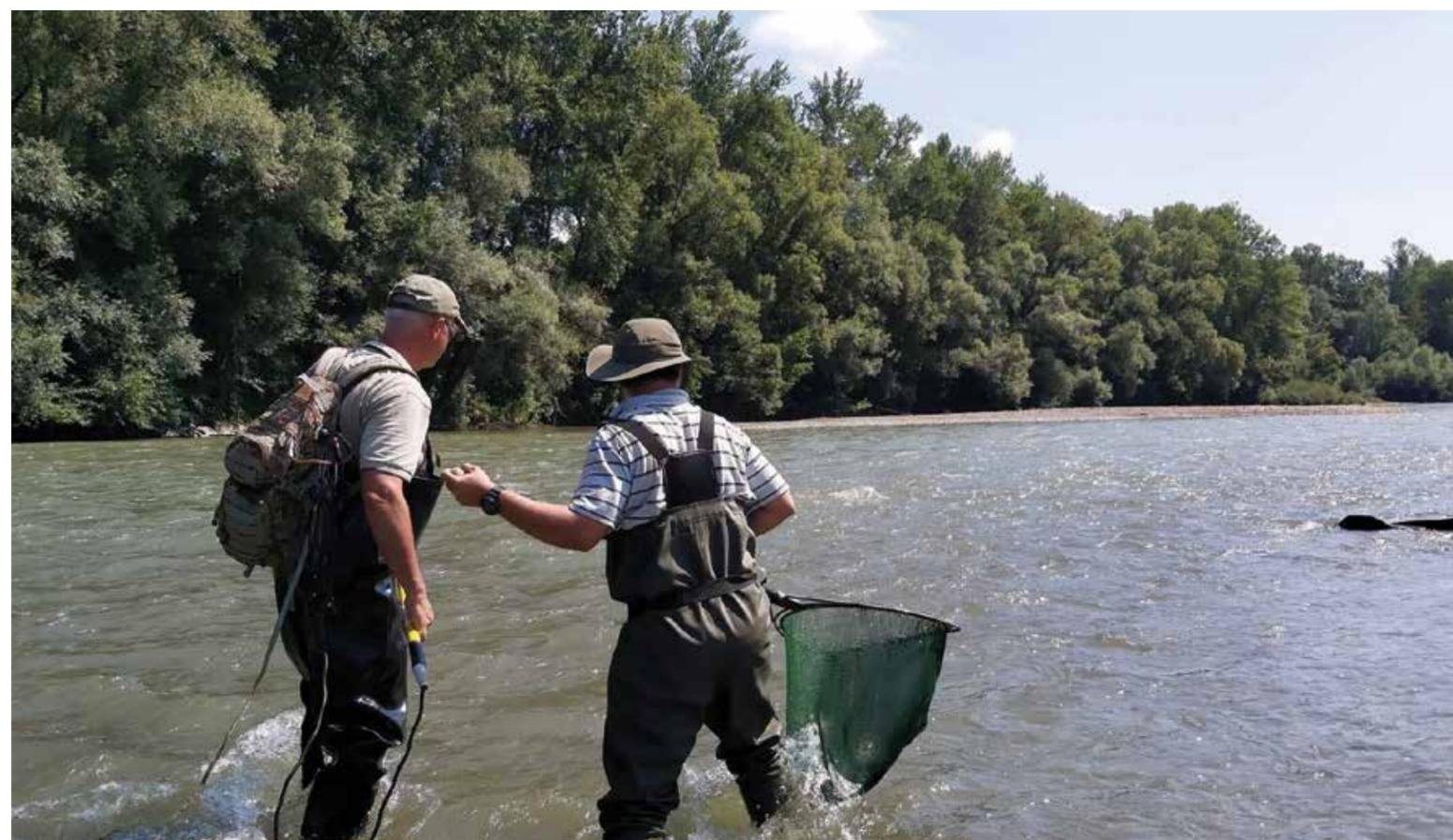
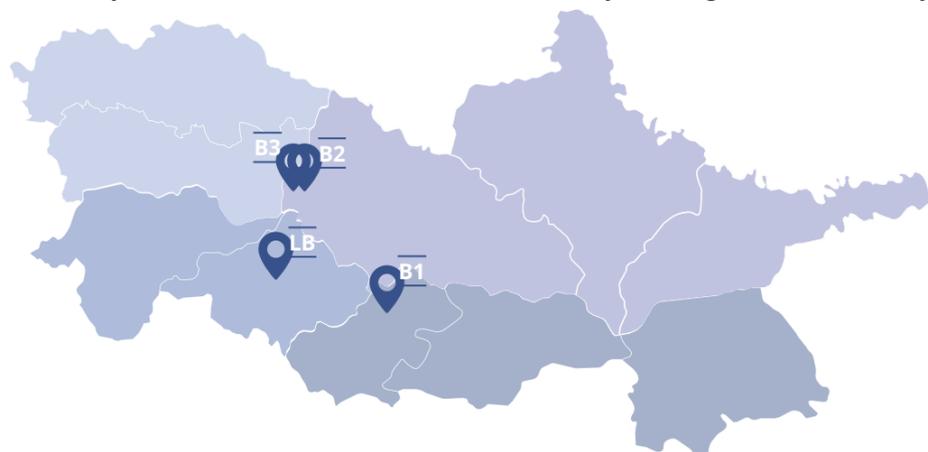
May 2020 - August 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 55 sampling sites were designated across the region, with 253 water samples collected and 29 parameters measured. The ecological assessment considered more than 5,500 results, revealing varying conditions among controlled water bodies and tributaries
- Biological surveys included sampling of phytoplankton, fish, macroscopic invertebrates, and benthic diatoms at multiple river sections, revealing insights into the region's biodiversity
- Based on the assessment data, an action plan was developed to address pollution sources, propose measures for wastewater discharges, and formulate monitoring plans for future water quality and ecological state tracking
- Surveys of fish, macroscopic invertebrates, Eurasian otters, and Eurasian beavers informed the development of a common management strategy for cross-border ecological corridors, aiming for long-term biodiversity preservation
- Nature conservation awareness promoted through joint trainings, awareness-raising programs, online conferences, and professional workshops, involving local communities and experts

"Although water quality preservation has not been within our authority's purview since 2014, the project illuminated the imperative for holistic conservation efforts. Notably, the creation of an ecological-nature protection value cadastre stands out as a key achievement, facilitating the formulation of joint management strategy for cross-border ecological corridors".

Illés Zsolt Rozinka,
Project manager, Head of the Environmental Protection, Nature Conservation and Waste Management Department of the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Government Office



New Energy Solutions in Carpathian area

As energy costs soar, the need for sustainable solutions becomes ever more pressing. In the heart of our settlements, state and self-government owned buildings stand as pillars of potential, ripe for transformation through energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives. NESiCA project took place across Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine, focusing on environmental protection and adapting to climate change. With rising energy costs, the project addressed the urgent need for sustainable energy solutions in public buildings.

Our journey began with the careful selection of settlements, cities, and buildings. We engaged local leaders, experts, and project partners in meaningful discussions, setting the stage for a collaborative revolution in energy use. We conducted thorough energy efficiency audits of city-owned buildings, culminating in the issuance of energy certificates. These audits serve as a blueprint for future projects, ensuring that our progress towards sustainability is both well documented and replicable. Continuous cooperation with project partners has been our cornerstone. We have held events, trainings, and study tours to share knowledge and best practices, establishing a network of expertise. This has led to the creation of energy innovation centers and teams of experts who provide advice on sustainable energy and climate change.

The results of our work are clear. We have prepared energy efficiency studies for three municipalities, launched an environmental awareness campaign, and penned a Memorandum of Understanding that solidifies our collective commitment.

The reconstructions and energy efficiency measures we have implemented have yielded tangible savings. These resources, once bound to energy bills, are now free to enrich our communities in myriad ways.

NESiCA project has not only enhanced ecological connections across borders but

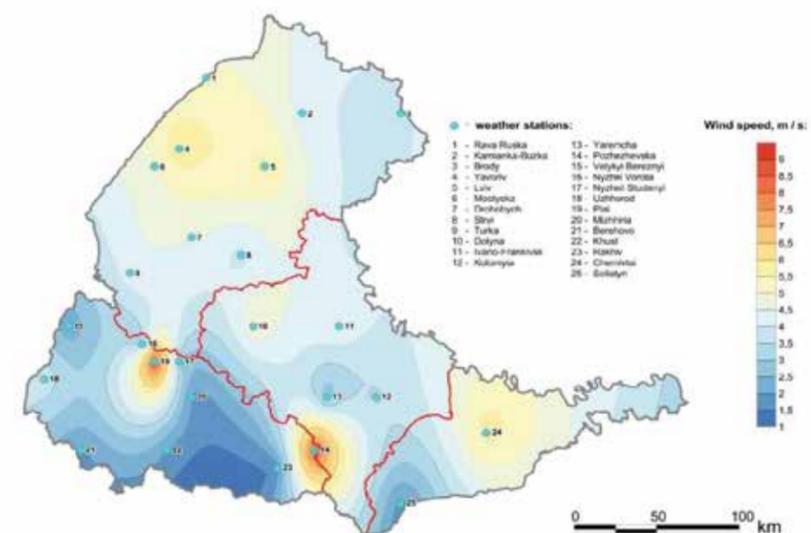
also supported better habitat management for key wildlife species. This has brought a range of ecosystem services to local communities. Moving forward, we aim to continue educating and preparing future generations on the use of clean energy sources, building on the infrastructure and knowledge established by NESiCA.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 15 communities actively involved in the project activities
- 3 memorandums of collaboration signed for future cross-border cooperation
- 1 common energy concept developed for the cross-border area
- 12 customized energy concepts for all communities
- 25 studies, energy performance certificates, and energy audits for community buildings
- Over 40 workshops and training sessions organized for students, experts, and the population
- 5 specialized energy innovation centers established, with qualified staff and professional equipment
- 20 students from Uzhhorod National University trained in energy efficiency fields
- At least 12,000 people benefited from the project's results through various informational materials



Map of average wind speed in the Carpathian region of Ukraine (at the altitude 100 m)



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: NESiCA
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/6.1/0014
Partnership:
LB: Uzhhorod National University (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B1: Self-government of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)
B2: Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava (Suceava, Romania)
B3: Non-Governmental Organization "European Initiatives Centre" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B4: Technical University of Kosice (Košice, Slovakia)
B5: University of Nyiregyhaza (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)
EU contribution: EUR 994 236,56
Implementation period: May 2020 - May 2023

"NESiCA project stands as a landmark initiative for Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, uniting diverse professionals and top energy experts to address the pressing energy challenges of our time. It has been instrumental in providing crucial information to the cross-border communities about enhancing building energy efficiency and adopting clean energy sources. Most importantly, project has proven that education is a powerful tool for achieving sustainable development."

Constantin Ungureanu
 Project manager, Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava
 – NESiCA Partner



2. BEST SOLUTIONS IN CARPATHIAN REGION in Ukrainian



3. Electronic version of the map NESiCA



4. Electronic version of the Joint Concept "Eco-Smart Energy-Carpathia" in English



4. Electronic version of the Joint Concept "Eco-Smart Energy-Carpathia" in Ukrainian



Raising environmental awareness in local communities by joint conservation of bats in cross border regions of Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine

The BAT4MAN project took place in the cross-border regions of Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine, focusing on environmental conservation, with an emphasis on bat protection. Bats, enigmatic nocturnal flyers, symbolize the tranquillity and silence of our churches and chapels. Unfortunately, their numbers have been declining in recent years, so we have decided to take responsibility for their conservation. Thanks to the dedication of our team and the support of the broader community, we have achieved remarkable results. The bat population in our sacred buildings has stabilized, contributing to the preservation of this vital part of our cultural heritage.

The project's first step involved a thorough survey of the area and monitoring of bats in attics. This phase helped us gain a better understanding of their environment and needs. Education is crucial for protection. We conducted workshops and lectures for the community to spread awareness about the importance of bats and their role in ecosystems.

Together, we carried out attic restoration to ensure they remain safe sanctuaries for this endangered population. Through attic cleaning and various technical measures, we improved the environment that allows them to live and reproduce without disturbance. The BAT4MAN project achieved remarkable results despite the pandemic, fostering a

positive change in attitudes toward bats. The project raised environmental awareness with exhibitions, publications, workshops, reaching the local population effectively. Most importantly, it succeeded in shifting perceptions about the value of bats. The project demonstrates that nature conservation and religious heritage can go hand in hand, reminding us of the connection between nature and humanity.

The final beneficiaries are local communities, as well as youth who are more open-minded. Feedback from these groups has been positive, as they have gained greater environmental awareness through our exhibition, workshops, and educational materials. The target audience for bat conservation in sacred buildings includes various interested parties and groups: owners and administrators of buildings, researchers and conservationists, authorities and heritage management, etc.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully stabilized bat populations in sacred buildings across the cross-border regions of Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine, ensuring their continued presence and conservation
- Raised environmental awareness among local communities through workshops, exhibitions, and publications reaching a significant number of individuals with information about the importance of bats in ecosystems
- Significant progress made in attic restoration and habitat improvement measures, resulting in safer and more suitable living conditions for bats, contributing to their long-term survival and reproduction
- Installation of bat-boxes and sustained support for bat-friendly initiatives by local communities demonstrate increased community engagement and support for bat conservation efforts
- Participants acquired valuable skills and knowledge in bat conservation, attic restoration

Participants were acquired valuable skills and knowledge in bat conservation. Our team have gained experience in research, attic restoration, education, and collaboration with local communities. Participants witnessed an increased awareness and greater appreciation for bats, recognizing their vital role within the ecosystem, leading to a more environmentally conscious outlook. Participants may become active advocates for bat conservation and actively engage in raising awareness about the issue.

Ensuring the protection of bat colonies has a long-term positive effect on local ecosystems. By cleaning up the attics, we have not only helped the bats, but also forged closer links with local communities, owners and authorities. After project completion, the impact includes sustained community engagement in conservation efforts, continued use of educational materials and ongoing support for bat-friendly initiatives, demonstrating the lasting influence of the project's activities.

The main result of the project is a transformed community perspective, with increased awareness and support for bat conservation, evidenced by the installation of bat-boxes, sustained educational efforts, and a more environmentally conscious local population. Protecting bats in the attics has a positive impact on both bats and the community. Some of the main effects include improved shelter options, preservation of bat populations to maintain balanced ecosystems and a healthy environment.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: BAT4Man

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/6.1/0021

Partnership:

LB: E-Consult Association Satu Mare (Satu Mare, Romania)

B1: Institute of Ecological and Religious Studies (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: Slovak Bat Conservation Society (Bardejov, Slovakia)

B3: Birdlife Hungary (Budapest, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 404 671,56

Implementation period:

March 2020 - August 2022



"The support provided by the programme has been instrumental in overcoming challenges, including navigating through unforeseen obstacles such as the pandemic and war. Through collaborative efforts, the project has strengthened ties with local communities, building owners, researchers, conservationists, public authorities, and heritage managers, fostering a spirit of cooperation and shared commitment to environmental conservation".

Sike Tamás

President of the E-Consult Association Satu Mare

Way out of EnergyTrap - more consciously for less energy

In the face of the escalating problems of greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, we found ourselves in a world where countless devices have become integral parts of our daily lives, each demanding substantial amounts of electricity. This reality unfolded during a critical transition to green energy carriers, a shift that threatened to cause energy shortages across Europe.

Recognizing the urgent need for energy efficiency, we sought innovative solutions. We identified children and youth as the ideal demographic to engage in this endeavour. Through awareness-raising trainings, we motivated students and teachers to actively participate in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We enlightened them about the significance of energy conservation at school and at home, the promotion of renewable energy sources, and the preservation of natural resources.

Our project, which has now concluded, made a significant impact. It altered the attitudes of students and teachers towards energy consumption, contributing to a reduction in energy use and fostering adaptation to climate change. Over 1000 students and teachers took part in environmental actions and awareness-raising activities.

One of the project's innovative features was the "Way out ENERGYTRAP room", a 21st-century mobile facility designed to meet the needs of Generation Y. This interactive playground, equipped with physical and digital tools, served as an escape room where energy-saving best practices and energy production and use were taught to the students and teachers involved in the project.

We established a network for energy education among the new generations across the three partner countries. This network, supported by various events, visits, and sustainable energy conferences, laid the foundation for sustaining

the results and continuing the activities initiated by the Leader Partner and all partners, involving professional institutions and schools.

We developed an online platform featuring awareness-raising readings, online games, and quizzes on energy saving and renewable energies, which furthered the project's objectives. As a result of the project, participants had the opportunity to learn about environmental issues and renewable energy sources in an engaging and playful manner. We also published a multilingual illustrated awareness-raising brochure, providing students with practical tips on how to be more environmentally conscious. The ultimate beneficiaries of the project's activities were the students and their families who participated in its implementation. Their attitudes underwent significant changes. Our experience demonstrated that environmental

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Way out of EnergyTrap

ID: HUSKROUJA/1702/6.1/0138

Partnership:

LB: ENEREA Észak-Alföld Regional Energy Agency Nonprofit Limited Liability Company (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B1: Non-Governmental Organization "European Initiatives Centre" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: Regional Innovation Agency (Košice, Slovakia)

EU contribution: EUR 302 409,68

Implementation period:

July 2020 - December 2022

education empowered young people to apply the knowledge they acquired through the project in their daily lives. We aimed to foster environmentally conscious behaviour and responsible lifestyles, while encouraging young people to be open-minded and proactive.



Through active environmental education, students gained valuable knowledge related to the topic, making them more receptive to environmentally conscious behaviour. Improving energy efficiency remained a key objective of our operations, and we continued to view awareness raising as a crucial tool, as environmental knowledge is best developed at a young age.

The main outcome of our interventions was that, through the active participation of students and teachers in the project, we inspired individuals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We raised awareness, prepared them for energy saving in schools and homes, and heightened their understanding of the importance of conserving natural resources while promoting energy from renewable sources. This project has now concluded, but the seeds it has sown continue to grow, shaping a greener future for us all.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully influenced the attitudes of both students and teachers towards energy consumption, leading to a shift towards more conscious energy usage and environmentally responsible behaviour
- Over 1000 students and teachers actively engaged in environmental actions and awareness-raising activities, indicating a high level of involvement and interest in the project
- Creation of the "Way out ENERGYTRAP room" provided an innovative and interactive platform for educating participants on energy-saving practices and demonstrating renewable energy concepts
- Facilitated the establishment of a cross-border network for energy education, promoting collaboration and knowledge exchange among partner countries
- Online platform was developed to complement traditional training methods, providing accessible resources such as readings, games, and quizzes on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources
- Publication of a multilingual illustrated brochure offered practical tips and guidance to students, further reinforcing environmental awareness and sustainability practices
- Emphasis on environmental education has empowered young people to adopt environmentally conscious behaviours, laying the groundwork for sustained energy efficiency and environmental stewardship



Open borders for wildlife in the Carpathians

The majestic landscapes and rich biodiversity of ENI Carpathians, spanning the borders of Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine, urgently require protection from escalating threats. Habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation pose significant risks to biodiversity, not only globally but also in the ENI Carpathian region, where natural resource pressures are intensifying, compounded by economic growth initiatives.

What if cross border cooperation could contribute to conservation of common natural values on a landscape level, demolishing the negative effects of country borders on habitats and wildlife species? Imagine a world where the lines that divide us become the ties that bind us together in a shared mission.

Together, we have embarked on a journey to ensure connectivity beyond borders for wildlife through cooperation, field research, policy work,

and, not least, communication and education. We have identified key ecological corridors of transboundary interest for large carnivores as umbrella species, within an expansive 4 million hectares, using a jointly developed harmonized methodology.

Actively involving local communities, we have developed and implemented sets of management measures designed to preserve the mosaic landscape, vital as both shelter and sustenance during the vegetative season for bears, serving as an umbrella species. We have broadened the natural food variety and curtailed human-wildlife conflicts, championing the safeguarding of ecological corridors in each nation. Furthermore, we have successfully heightened awareness and devised an educational program underscoring the critical role of biodiversity in the sustainable development of local communities.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: OBWIC

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/6.1/0010

Partnership:

LB: WWF Romania – Filiala Maramureș Association (Baia Mare, Romania)

B1: Slovak Ornithological Society/BirdLife Slovakia (Michalovce, Slovakia)

B2: NGO Rakhiv EcoTur (Rakhiv, Ukraine)

B3: Aggtelek National Park Directorate (Jósvafő, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 1 395 784,63

Implementation period: October 2019 - July 2022

Over the course of 34 months, we have identified a network of transboundary ecological corridors in the ENI HUSKROUA Carpathians, covering approximately 73,000 hectares, based on the use of harmonized methodology. In the RO-UA border region, we have effectively implemented five sets of management measures, enhancing

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Identification of key corridors for large carnivores across 4 million hectares using a harmonized methodology
- Development and implementation of 5 sets of measures to improve corridor favourability
- Established network of transboundary ecological corridors covering approximately 73,000 hectares
- Enhanced conservation status of over 300,000 hectares of habitats in the RO-UA border region
- Over 970 stakeholders co-developed strategic documents for corridor protection
- Launched 1 educational programme, involving 4 schools and reaching 500,000 people

the conservation status of over 300,000 hectares of habitats. More than 970 stakeholders have actively participated in shaping strategic documents for the protection of ecological corridors. An educational initiative has been launched, involving four schools and reaching a half-million individuals.

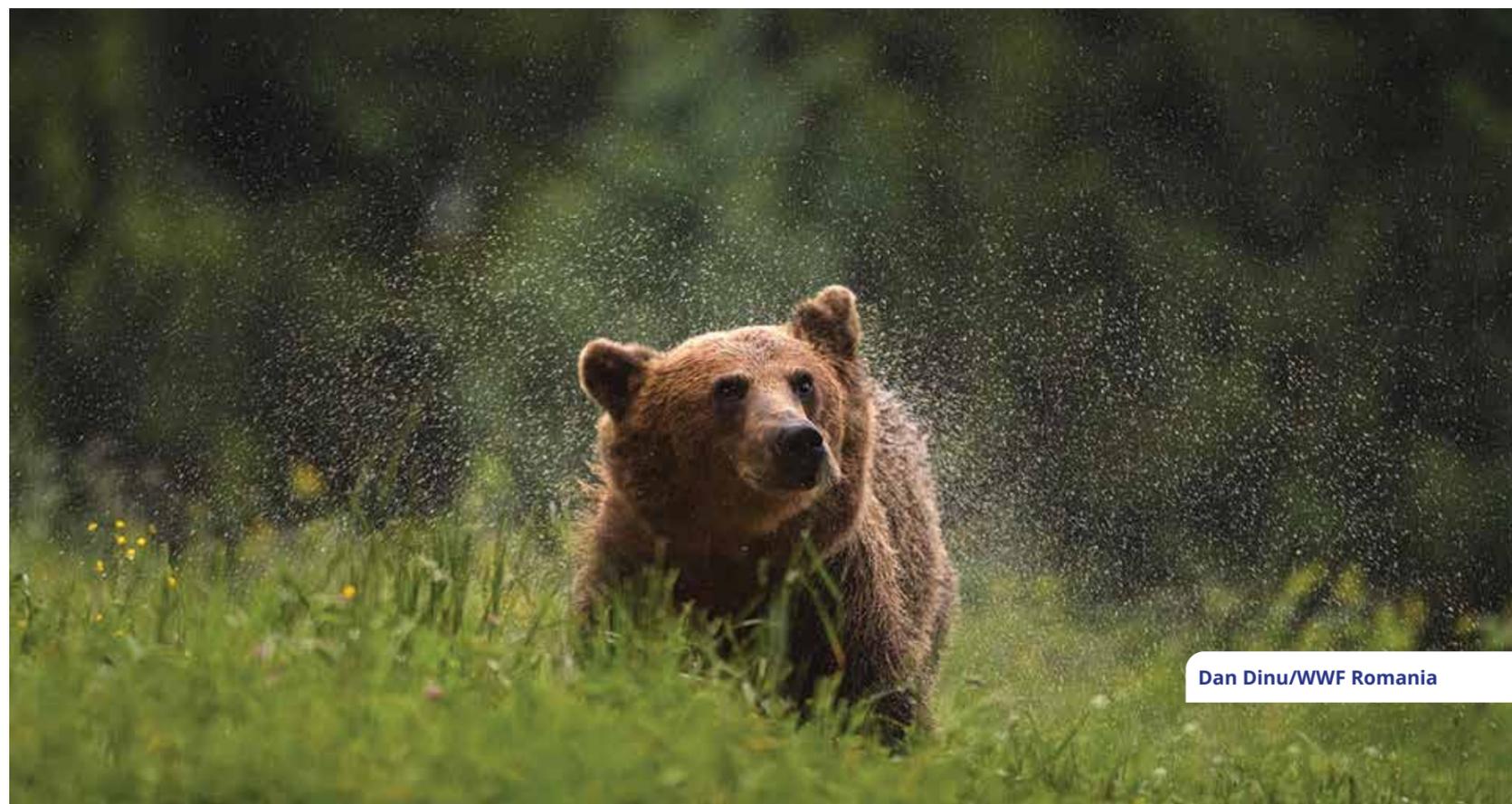
The project has not only improved cross-border ecological connectivity in the HUSKROUA region and beyond but also supported integrated habitat management for wolves, brown bears, and lynxes. As we create optimal conditions for these species, local communities stand to gain from an extensive array of ecosystem services.



“The programme has significantly contributed to achieving our goals of promoting biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. By providing a platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange, it has enabled us to address key challenges such as habitat fragmentation and human-wildlife conflicts more effectively.

Overall, our experience with the programme has been positive and rewarding. We are grateful for the opportunity to be part of this collaborative effort and look forward to continuing our work together to safeguard biodiversity and support thriving communities in the HUSKROUA region”.

Alexandra Puscas
Project manager



Dan Dinu/WWF Romania



Matei Pleasa/WWF Romania

Environmental Assessment for Natural Resources Revitalization in Sotolvyno with an overarching view to preventing the further pollution of the Upper-Tisza Basin through the preparation of a complex monitoring system

Once upon a time, in the heart of Zakarpattia Oblast, Ukraine, lay a place called Sotolvyno. However, this wasn't your ordinary town – it was perched on the edge of an ecological precipice. Let us spin you the yarn of how we, as a community, rallied to save our land and water.

Sotolvyno Salt Mine had seen better days. Its shafts collapsed, forming sinkholes and landslides. The exact cause? A mystery. Years of mining had taken their toll, leaving the mine like a gaping sinkhole, threatening not just the town but the entire Upper-Tisza Basin. Imagine water from here seeping into the Tisza River – a disaster waiting to flood Zakarpattia and neighbouring Hungary, even echoing across Europe.

With a sense of urgency and purpose, we, along with our partners, embarked on a comprehensive assessment of the situation. Through meticulous research encompassing geology, hydrogeology, and structural analysis, we sought to unravel the complexities lurking beneath the surface.

Armed with insights gleaned from our investigations, we set out to develop REVITAL I, a state-of-the-art monitoring system tailored to the unique needs of Sotolvyno. This innovative system serves as our vigilant guardian, providing real-time data on groundwater quality and geological stability, empowering us to make informed decisions in safeguarding the environment.

However, our journey didn't end with the creation of REVITAL I. Recognizing the power of collaboration, we forged alliances with experts from across the globe, pooling our collective expertise and resources to tackle this formidable challenge head-on.

Guided by a shared vision of sustainability and environmental stewardship, we meticulously crafted a strategic plan outlining actionable steps towards Sotolvyno's restoration. Rooted in a commitment to leaving behind a healthier, more resilient environment for future generations, this plan serves as our roadmap towards lasting change.

Yet, as with any endeavour of significance, our path has been punctuated with obstacles and setbacks. Nevertheless, fuelled by unwavering determination and the spirit of collective action, we pressed onward, undeterred by the challenges that lie ahead.

In closing, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to the success of the REVITAL I

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Conducted thorough assessments to identify and understand the environmental threats posed by the collapsing salt mine shafts and the formation of karst sinkholes and landslides in Sotolvyno
- Developed a sophisticated monitoring system (REVITAL I) to continuously track environmental parameters such as groundwater quality, geological stability, and pollution spread. This system enabled real-time data collection and analysis, aiding in decision-making and environmental management
- Conducted extensive research and fieldwork to gather data on the environmental conditions of Sotolvyno, including geological, hydrogeological, and hydrochemical studies. This data was analyzed to assess the extent of environmental damage and identify areas requiring remediation
- Conducted geophysical surveys within and outside the minefield to assess geological stability and hydrological conditions. These investigations provided valuable insights into the underlying causes of environmental degradation and informed remediation strategies
- Developed a strategic concept outlining key activities, results, and recommendations for the rehabilitation and future development of the Sotolvyno region. These recommendations formed the basis for sustainable environmental management and long-term resilience

project. Together, we have laid the groundwork for a brighter, more sustainable future – one where nature thrives, communities flourish, and hope endures. The mining industry may have crumbled, but hope sprouts. A chance to revive Sotolvyno, away from old mines, treading lightly where people dwell.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: REVITAL I

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/6.1/0072

Partnership:

LB: Tisza European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Limited Liability (Kisvárdá, Hungary)

B1: University of Miskolc (Miskolc, Hungary)

B2: Sotolvyno City Hall (Sotolvyno, Ukraine)

B3: Municipality of Sighetu Marmatiei (Maramureş, Romania)

B4: Technical University of Kosice (Košice, Slovakia)

B5: Institute of Geological Sciences of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Kiev, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 968 235,81

Implementation period:

September 2019 - August 2023



"Through the REVITAL I project, we embarked on a vital mission to restore Sotolvyno—a town teetering on the edge of ecological disaster. Armed with data, geophysical studies, and unwavering determination, we mapped out solutions. Our vision? To revive not just Sotolvyno but also the health of the entire Upper-Tisza Basin. Together, we turned the page, writing a new chapter—one where nature's gifts are honoured."

SESZTÁK Oszkár
Chairman of the General Assembly of the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Committee
Chairman of the TISA EGTC



Energy Recovery from Municipal Solid Waste by Thermal Conversion Technologies in Cross-border Region

Through the EnyMSW project, we fostered strong cooperation among specialists from three partner universities, extending collaboration to stakeholders in the border regions of Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine. Our aim was to provide technical support for estimating the energy potential of municipal solid waste (MSW) and address related technical aspects.

While the concept of converting waste to energy is not new, successful application to specific cities or regions requires thorough research to demonstrate feasibility. Therefore, we conducted comprehensive studies to assess the energy potential of MSW in Maramureș, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Prešov, focusing on waste currently landfilled.

Data collection on available municipal solid waste in the project regions was the initial step towards determining its energy potential for conversion into usable energy. Waste samples underwent thorough processing to assess

their energy characteristics. Within a year, we established a dedicated laboratory for this purpose, conducting useful experimental interventions that demonstrated the efficiency of energy recovery from MSW.

To streamline project management and data analysis, we developed an "Electronic Monitoring Platform." This tool facilitated efficient tracking and analysis throughout the project duration. Additionally, we engaged stakeholders through meetings and conferences, with over 200 participants contributing to knowledge exchange and awareness.

Our findings confirmed the satisfactory energy characteristics of landfilled waste in the project regions, indicating its potential for energy recovery through incineration. Overall, the EnyMSW project exemplified effective collaboration and contributed to advancing sustainable waste management practices.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: EnyMSW

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/6.1/0015

Partnership:

LB: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, North University Center of Baia Mare (Cluj Napoca, Romania)

B1: Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

B2: Technical University of Kosice (Košice, Slovakia)

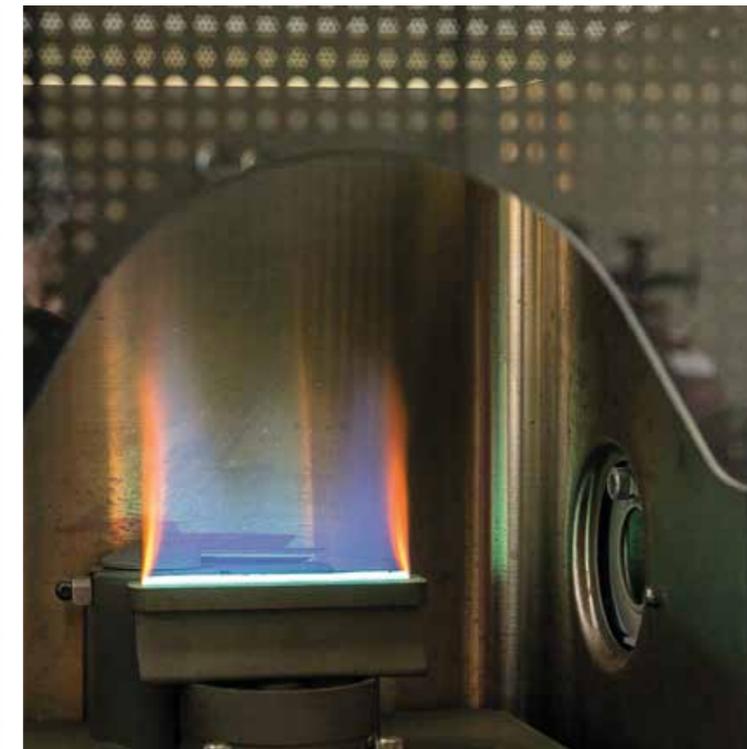
EU contribution: EUR 260 450,66

Implementation period:

November 2019 - December 2020

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully quantified the energy potential of municipal solid waste (MSW) in the targeted regions, providing valuable data on the amount of waste available for energy conversion
- Through comprehensive research and experimentation, assessed the feasibility of energy recovery from MSW using thermal conversion technologies. This included evaluating the suitability of incineration for converting solid waste into energy
- Developed the "Electronic Monitoring Platform" for efficient data management. This tool enhances the capacity for monitoring and analyzing waste-related data, contributing to better-informed decision-making
- Conducted laboratory experiments to demonstrate the efficiency of energy recovery from MSW using thermal conversion technologies. These experiments provided empirical evidence of the feasibility and effectiveness of such methods
- Equipped a laboratory to facilitate experimental interventions. This infrastructure enables ongoing research and testing related to waste-to-energy technologies
- Organized meetings and conferences with over 200 participants, serving as platforms for knowledge sharing and dissemination of findings



Regional Center for Training and Monitoring of the Environmental Impact of Electrical Installations

We, a team from the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca and the Northern University Center of Baia Mare in Romania, in collaboration with the Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas in Ukraine, proudly embarked on a groundbreaking project. Our journey spanned across the Maramureş and Satu Mare counties, as well as the Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia Oblasts, with a mission to foster environmental protection and climate change adaptation.

Our journey began with the recognition of a lack of understanding among communities in the region regarding the environmental implications of electricity. We embarked on a comprehensive environmental education program and awareness campaign, guided by measurements, studies, and the exchange of best practices. Our collective goal was to establish a regional Center for training and monitoring the environmental impact of electrical installations, fostering cross-border collaboration between experts from Romania and Ukraine.

As a team, we collaborated closely, bringing together multidisciplinary expertise from both countries to implement a series of joint activities. Notably, 120 students from partner universities participated in specialized training programs, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to address the cross-border impact of electricity production, distribution, and usage. Furthermore, we worked diligently to create a comprehensive database documenting various environmental parameters emitted by different types of electrical installations in the region.

Our partnerships with organizations interested in energy-related environmental impacts were instrumental in advancing our mission. We established specialized laboratories in Baia Mare and Ivano-Frankivsk to analyze pollution resulting from electrical installations.

Additionally, we developed educational resources, including a specialized book and laboratory guide in multiple languages, to share our findings with stakeholders.

Throughout the project, we prioritized raising awareness among students, energy sector specialists, ecologists, and environmental authorities. Our efforts culminated in a series of impactful workshops, scientific communication sessions, and international conferences, engaging a diverse array of stakeholders. Notably, 199 students participated in workshops and scientific communication sessions held in Baia Mare and Ivano-Frankivsk, while 160 participants from 5 countries convened at the International Scientific and Practical Conference in Ivano-Frankivsk. The closing conference of the project and the associated workshop saw a robust attendance of 312 participants, including teaching staff, representatives from public and private organizations, pupils, and students.

As our project reached its conclusion, we did not just leave behind a database filled with valuable data. We sparked a movement—a commitment to protect our environment and embrace sustainable practices. Through our unwavering commitment and collaborative spirit, we cultivated a profound understanding of the environmental impacts associated with electricity among a broad spectrum of participants. Our educational

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CRIMIGE

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/6.1/0022

Partnership:

LB: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, North University Center of Baia Mare (Cluj Napoca, Romania)

B1: Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 245 373,76

Implementation period:

March 2020 - February 2023

initiatives extended beyond academic institutions to include local communities, fostering a culture of sustainability and environmental stewardship. By engaging with local schools, community groups, and governmental organizations, we facilitated a deeper appreciation of the need for environmental protection and climate resilience. This grassroots approach not only heightened awareness but also empowered individuals and communities to take actionable steps towards a more sustainable future.

Looking forward, the legacy of our project lies in the robust networks we have built and the enduring impact of our educational resources. The established laboratories and the comprehensive database continue to serve as invaluable tools for ongoing research and monitoring of environmental parameters.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 120 students from two partner universities participated in the specialized training programme
- Created a comprehensive database, encompassing measured values of electric and magnetic fields, radiation, noise, and vibrations generated by different categories of electrical installations in the region
- Established partnerships with various organizations interested in the environmental impact of energy systems
- Equipped two specialized laboratories for the determination of various forms of pollution resulting from electrical installations, located in Baia Mare and Ivano-Frankivsk
- Created a specialized book in English, Romanian, and Ukrainian, along with a laboratory guide in Romanian and Ukrainian, focused on the impact of electrical installations on the environment
- 199 students participated in workshops and student scientific communication sessions in Baia Mare and Ivano-Frankivsk.
- 160 participants from 5 countries attended the International Scientific and Practical Conference held in Ivano-Frankivsk.
- 312 participants attended the closing conference of the project and the associated workshop, including teaching staff, representatives from public and private organizations, pupils, and students



Our partnerships with organizations across borders ensure that the exchange of knowledge and best practices will persist, driving continuous improvement in environmental protection strategies. By laying a strong foundation for future projects and collaborations, we have set a precedent for cross border cooperation in tackling the environmental challenges posed by modern energy systems. Our shared vision and efforts have not only addressed current issues but have also paved the way for innovative solutions to emerge, fostering a more sustainable and resilient environment for generations to come.

"Despite initial challenges, including a pandemic lockdown at the outset, our project emerged as a success story. We swiftly adapted to virtual collaboration, transforming the obstacle of remote work into an opportunity for more frequent and efficient communication. This shift from in-person to online meetings fostered a deeper connection among team members, ultimately uniting us as one cohesive team ready for future endeavours. We extend heartfelt gratitude to our colleagues and partners for their dedication and contributions to the project's triumph."

Yaroslav Adamenko
Project manager B1

"The involvement in the implementation of this successful project led to a series of benefits for the partner university communities, by creating and strengthening friendship and collaboration relations, as well as in terms of setting up the Regional Center for Training and Monitoring the Environmental Impact of Electrical Installations. In addition, the state-of-the-art equipment, purchased during the implementation of the project, adds value to the teaching and research activities carried out at the Technical University of Cluj Napoca."

Mihaela Stet
Project manager LB

"The project facilitated an essential collaboration to protect the environment in our region."

Environmental expert

Roads to Healthy Forests: resilient, adaptive, diverse and sustainable forests in cross-border region of Ukraine and Slovakia

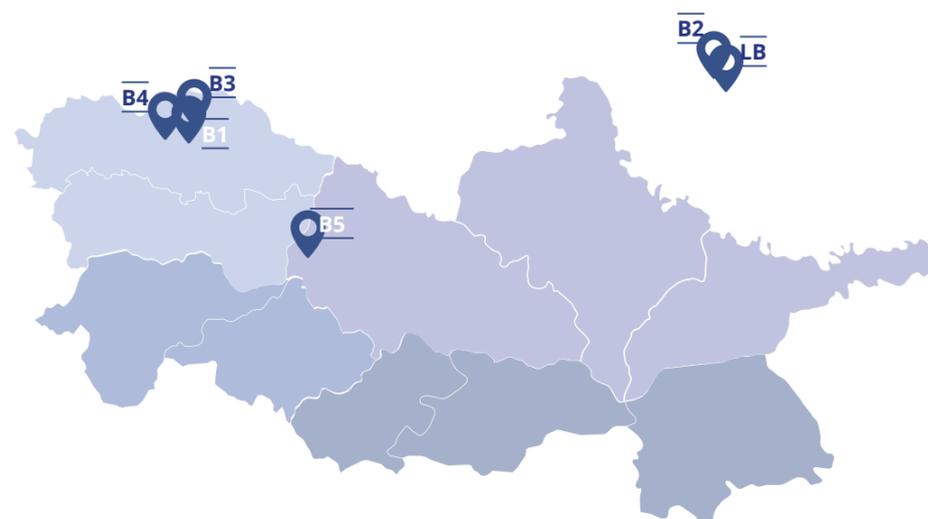
Climate change, an imminent and formidable threat to the future of forests in Europe, has been casting a long shadow over tree growth and regeneration, and causing an alarming rate of tree mortality in the Carpathian region. Recognizing the urgency of this issue, we, along with our partners put improving the capacity to adapt to climate change at the top of our agenda. We understood that these shared challenges needed to be addressed jointly through targeted adaptation measures. This understanding led us to convene a series of meetings and brainstorming sessions, where we devised a comprehensive set of activities aimed at mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Our shared mission was clear and ambitious: to bolster the resilience and adaptability of Carpathian forest ecosystems to climate change impacts, with a particular focus on the Slovak-Ukrainian cross-border region. To achieve this, we divided our efforts into three specific objectives, each addressing a different aspect of the problem, but all contributing to our overarching goal of making a tangible difference in the fight against climate change.

The first objective was to improve the accessibility of forest areas affected by climate change. We recognized that ensuring safe access to the damaged forest sections was paramount for effective intervention and recovery efforts. To this end, we undertook extensive infrastructural work, which included the reconstruction of several forest roads near Spišska Bela city, the fire-safety access road by Forests of Kežmarok City, and the construction of new forest roads and bridges for Vyhoda Forestry. We also constructed a brand new firefighting water reservoir spanning 0.6 hectares and completed riverbank protection to halt an existing landslide by Vyhoda forestry. In addition, we built a new greenhouse for the forest nursery for Uzhhorod Forestry and converted an attic into a space for forestry education and history for

Spišska Belá. In total, we either constructed or reconstructed more than 18 km of roads, creating a robust infrastructure network that would facilitate our future efforts.

Our second objective extended beyond infrastructure. We aimed to transform the damaged forests into more sustainable, uneven-age, and multi-species stands that could adapt to the changing climate and support natural regeneration. To achieve this, we undertook a range of activities such as forest regeneration, fencing of young forests to protect them from game, coating young trees with repellent (Cervacol) to protect them from deer, and weed cutting. We also tended and cleaned forest stands, ensuring their health and vitality. Overall, we planted more than 239,000 seedlings, fenced more than 1.7 km of forest, cut weeds on more than 250 hectares, tended and cleaned more than 654 hectares of area, and wrapped trees on 28.46 hectares. These efforts not only helped restore the damaged forests but also made them more resilient to future climate change impacts.



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Roads to Healthy Forests

ID: HUSKROUA/1701/LIP/009

Partnership:

LB: Uzhhorod forestry enterprise branch of the State specialised enterprise "Forests of Ukraine" (Kiev, Ukraine)

B1: State Forest of Tatra national park (Tatranská Lomnica, Slovakia)

B2: Vyhoda forestry enterprise branch of the State specialised enterprise "Forests of Ukraine" (Kiev, Ukraine)

B3: Spišská Belá Forests Ltd. (Spišská Belá, Slovakia)

B4: The Forests of the City of Kežmarok (Vysoké Tatry, Slovakia)

B5: NGO Agency for sustainable development of the Carpathian region "FORZA" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 3 171 483,12

Implementation period:

December 2019 - December 2023

Our third objective focused on enhancing the professional capacity of foresters and raising public awareness about forests and climate change impacts. We believed that bringing foresters together was crucial for success. We dedicated time for planning know-how exchanges through personal meetings between forest experts. We held several joint field trainings in Slovakia and Ukraine, which fostered high-level contacts and impacted future cooperation. We also organized practical training for forestry students and exchange stays for Slovak and Ukrainian youth.

The State Forest of Tatra National Park created two demonstration areas in Javorová dolina and Babia dolina, complete with guides for visitors. A comprehensive forest status survey was carried out on these demonstration areas, which included an assessment of the state of forest ecosystems and a forecast of their future development.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Reconstruction of multiple forest roads including Čierny potok, Vojenská, and Suchý potok near Spišská Bela city, and the fire-safety access road Trasa by Forests of Kežmarok City, enhancing access to damaged forest sections
- Construction of new forest roads Ludvykivska and Svichivska, along with the building of three bridges for Vyhoda Forestry, facilitating safer passage through forested areas
- Establishment of a new firefighting water reservoir spanning 0.6 hectares and completion of riverbank protection measures to mitigate landslide risks
- Construction of a new greenhouse for forest nursery purposes for Uzhhorod Forestry and the transformation of attic space into a facility for forestry education and history in Spišská Belá
- Overall, more than 18 kilometers of roads re/constructed and 45 kilometers maintained, significantly enhancing accessibility to forested areas
- 84 meters of riverbank protection and a 50,000 m³ water polder established
- 11 wooden cascades built in the Prešov, Zakarpattia, and Ivano-Frankivsk regions
- A new tree nursery established, producing 100,000 resilient seedlings annually on 1.9 hectares
- Reforestation and protection of young trees carried out on an area of 1,224 hectares
- At least 85 forest practitioners benefited from 10 capacity-building events, including activities at two demonstration sites
- Newly set-up Demonstration and Education Center "Forest and Climate" serves as an innovative hub, constructed with CO₂-neutral materials to reduce GHG emissions



As we reflect on our completed project, we are filled with a sense of pride and accomplishment. We believe that our efforts have made a significant contribution to the fight against climate change and its impacts on the forests of the Carpathian region.

Although the project has ended, the lessons we learned and the changes we implemented will continue to benefit the forests and the communities that depend on them. Our story is one of cooperation, dedication, and a shared commitment to creating a more resilient and sustainable future for our forests. We remain committed to the cause and will

continue to strive for a sustainable future. Our journey may have reached a milestone, but our mission continues. We look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, confident in our ability to make a difference. Together, we can create a future where our forests thrive, our communities prosper, and our planet is healthier. This is our commitment, our promise, and our ongoing mission.

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climate change and its impacts on the forests of the Carpathian region. Although the project has ended, the lessons we learned and the changes we implemented will continue to benefit the forests and the communities that depend on them. Our story is one of cooperation, dedication, and a shared commitment to creating a more resilient and sustainable future for our forests.

While the tangible results of our efforts, such as the improved infrastructure, regenerated forests, and enhanced professional capacity of our foresters, are crucial, the true impact of our work lies in the strengthened relationships

and shared sense of purpose we have fostered. The collaborative spirit that has emerged from this initiative will serve as a strong foundation for future initiatives. Our project has proven that when we come together, we can overcome even the most daunting challenges posed by climate change.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the possibilities that the future holds. We are already exploring new projects and partnerships to continue our mission. The knowledge and experience gained from this project will be invaluable as we expand our efforts to other regions facing similar challenges. We are committed to continuing our work, adapting our strategies as needed, and always striving to make a positive impact. Together, we can create a future where our forests thrive, our communities prosper, and our planet is healthier. This is our commitment, our promise, and our ongoing mission.



Carpathian Forest Schools – a Pilot Cooperation for Nature Protection and Environmental Education

In the heart of the Carpathian mountains, where biodiversity thrives, a cross-border tale unfolds. We, the stewards of nature, embarked on a mission—a pilot project called Carpathian Forest Schools.

In Maramureş County (Romania) and Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast (Ukraine), our forests faced peril. Unsustainable logging threatened their delicate balance. The youth, once guardians, dwindled. Migration loomed. We needed a sustainable path.

To address these issues, we established two pilot Forest Schools, where we integrated interactive and outdoor learning into the curriculum, engaging students in the exploration of local nature and sustainable forestry practices. In Maramures Mountains Nature Park (Romania), we birthed the Forest School. Children stepped outdoors, learning amidst ancient trees. Interactive, immersive—nature became their classroom. In Vyhoda Forest School (Ukraine), we expanded opportunities. Students explored local ecosystems, ecological culture, and sustainable forestry practices. Environmental responsibility bloomed.

Our achievements were significant, as we developed infrastructure and educational tools to educate children and youth about the environment, empowering them to become informed stewards of nature. In Ukraine, our partners created an innovative outdoor education area near the Shyrkovets Wetland, offering

immersive experiences and educational opportunities. Additionally, interpretative panels were installed to deepen visitors' understanding of the local ecosystem and its importance for climate change mitigation. Our project also focused on interpreting natural heritage to raise awareness of forest ecosystem fragility and human impact. In Romania, we constructed an interactive wilderness pavilion near the Vyhoda Narrow Gauge Railway Heritage Centre, providing insights into the underground world of Carpathian forests and highlighting the importance of conservation efforts.

We armed children with knowledge. Interpretative panels connected them to wetlands, biodiversity, and climate change. At the Vyhoda Narrow Gauge Railway Heritage Centre, an underground forest world came alive. Human impact? Revealed. Our trusty vehicle roamed Maramureş Mountains, promoting preservation. Animated films sparked global awareness. Interpretive films celebrated Carpathian forests' secrets.

Moreover, we equipped Forest Schools with state-of-the-art facilities, including classrooms and outdoor education equipment, enhancing the educational experience for students. Through campaigns, workshops, and social media outreach, we engaged over 759 participants and reached more than 42,000 individuals, fostering biodiversity conservation awareness and inspiring youth-driven initiatives. Our educational materials, integrated into the curriculum of the Carpathian Forest Schools,

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CARPATHIAN FOREST SCHOOLS

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/6.1/0053

Partnership:

LB: Tourist Association of Ivano-Frankivsk Region (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

B1: Department of Regional Development and Construction of Dolyna District State Administration (Dolyna, Ukraine)

B2: NFA ROMSILVA – Administration of Maramures Mountains Nature Park (Viseu de Sus, Romania)

B3: VYHODA Village Council (Vyhoda, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 605 100,15

Implementation period: October 2019 - July 2022

reached approximately 540 participants, complementing traditional textbooks with practical nature studies. We culminated our efforts with a cross-border forest tent camp and an international conference, where experts shared experiences and best practices, paving the way for future conservation endeavours.

Today, the Forest Schools continue to operate, serving as influential hubs for environmental education and community involvement. They stand as a testament to the transformative power of education in nurturing environmental stewardship and promoting sustainable development in the Carpathian region. Through our collective efforts, we have laid a foundation for ongoing environmental conservation, ensuring the protection of this precious natural heritage for generations to come.



“Having built a wildlife infrastructure in Shyrkovets wetland and a pavilion on the territory of the Heritage Center, Vyhoda community established its status as a pilot of innovations in using the potential of natural heritage for local development and further improved its image as an ecologically responsible community. Project activities also contributed to the expansion of the Vyhoda Forest School activities, in particular by furnishing classes, installing equipment and preparing educational materials for school students. Hundreds of school groups and families with children enjoy being in the area and are now able to enrich environmental knowledge through their personal experiences and impressions.”

Sergiy Andrusyak, Director, Vyhoda Narrow Gauge Railway Heritage Centre, Ukraine

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Established two pilot Forest Schools in the Carpathian mountain regions of Maramureş County, Romania, and Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Ukraine
- Integrated interactive and outdoor learning into the extracurricular education of school children, fostering environmental responsibility and appreciation for biodiversity
- Developed educational infrastructure and tools, including outdoor education areas, interpretative panels, and interactive wilderness pavilions, to inform children and youth about the environment
- Engaged over 759 participants through various initiatives, including environmental workshops, summer camps, and social media campaigns, with a reach of more than 42,000 individuals online
- Culminated with an international conference, facilitating collaboration among experts in environmental education and paving the way for future biodiversity conservation efforts
- Continued operation of the Forest Schools as influential centers for environmental education, showcasing the transformative power of educational initiatives in accelerating nature conservation efforts and garnering community support



Establishing a transboundary water quality monitoring network in the Upper-Tisza River Basin with further developing and upgrading the joint Hungarian-Ukrainian hydrographic telemetering system

We, at TiszaMonitorNet, embarked on a mission to safeguard the lifeline of our region—the majestic rivers of the Upper-Tisza Basin. Our goal was not just to monitor but also to protect, to not just observe but to act. We envisioned a network that would bridge borders and blend technologies, ensuring every drop of our river tells a story of purity and vigilance.

Water quality protection of transboundary rivers is a collaborative responsibility of the countries involved. However, existing water quality monitoring stations in the Upper-Tisza River basin have ceased operations, leaving

a critical gap in online water quality data availability. Moreover, information on river pollution incidents from upstream countries is often inadequate and delayed, hindering timely response efforts.

Once upon a time, the Upper-Tisza River Basin was dotted with monitoring stations, guardians of water quality, funded by grants of yesteryears. However, as time passed, these sentinels fell silent, and the rivers whispered without listeners. Vital data on water quality ceased to flow, and when spills occurred upstream, the news arrived like a delayed echo, days too late.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: TiszaMonitorNet
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/6.1/0016

Partnership:

LB: Upper-Tisza Regional Water Directorate (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B1: Tisza River Basin Water Resources Directorate (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 1 153 008,00

Implementation period:

May 2021 - December 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 5 new water quality-monitoring stations and 11 cameras established
- Info communication developments for timely alerts
- Online data transfer every 5 minutes for immediate pollution response
- Real-time data fed into FETIVIZIG's early warning centre and national hydrologic information system

We responded to this silence with a symphony of innovation. We constructed a network, not of bricks and mortar, but of data and determination. Our ensemble included 5 new water quality-monitoring stations and 11 vigilant water quality cameras. Together with an early warning system powered by the latest info communication technology, we ensured that our rivers would never go unwatched again.

The result? A transformation from a tapestry of gaps and delays to a canvas of clarity and timeliness. Our monitoring and early warning system became the heartbeat of the Basin, pulsing with data every 5 minutes, keeping the watchful eyes of FETIVIZIG and our Ukrainian partners ever-ready to leap into action at the slightest sign of trouble.

The data streams we unleashed now flow swiftly into FETIVIZIG's early warning centre in Nyíregyháza, cascading into the national hydrologic information system, ready at the fingertips of decision-makers and stakeholders alike.

But we did not stop at just setting a new standard for ourselves. TiszaMonitorNet stands as a testament at the international stage – a model of what can be achieved when nations unite for the noble cause of water quality protection.



3rd Phase of the project: „Water quality damage prevention and elaboration of remediation measures at Velykiy Bychkiv in Ukrainian-Hungarian Cooperation” – Continue Remediation

In the heart of Zakarpattia, Ukraine, lies a region scarred by the remnants of its industrial past. The once-thriving Wood Chemical Company at Velikij Bichkiv, now defunct, left behind a legacy of environmental degradation, threatening our community's very existence. But from the ashes of this crisis arose a beacon of hope – a collaborative project aimed at reclaiming our land and restoring its natural splendour. Discovery of dangerous contamination, including pollutants like phenol, BTEX, PAH compounds, and Petroleum Hydrocarbons, sent shockwaves through our community. The proximity of the contamination to the transboundary River Tisza and River Shopurka posed a grave threat to our water supply and ecosystems. With resolve and urgency, we knew action was imperative to safeguard our environment and livelihoods.

In 2010, we embarked on a journey of cross-border cooperation, uniting stakeholders from Hungary, Ukraine, and beyond. Together, we undertook rigorous investigations to uncover the extent of the contamination and identify its sources. This initial phase laid the foundation for subsequent remediation efforts, setting the stage for a collaborative endeavour of unprecedented scale.



The journey towards environmental recovery was fraught with challenges, but with each obstacle, we grew stronger. In the second phase of the project, spanning from 2013 to 2014, with the support of the previous quadrilateral ENPI CBC Programme, Hungarian experts played a pivotal role in constructing a state-of-the-art water extraction and cleaning system. This innovative solution, tailored to the unique needs of our region, marked a turning point in our battle against contamination.

Undeterred by setbacks, we forged ahead with renewed determination. In 2021, the project entered its third phase, focusing on modernizing and expanding our remediation efforts, supported by the present ENI CBC Programme. Through comprehensive surveys and meticulous upgrades to our cleaning system, we enhanced our capacity to combat contamination. The addition of new production wells and post-cleaning adsorption containers bolstered our arsenal, ensuring no stone was left unturned in our quest for environmental restoration.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: VEBYCORE

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/6.1/0029

Partnership:

LB: Government Office of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B1: Velykiy Bychkiv Village Council (Velykiy Bychkiv, Ukraine)

B2: Non-governmental Organization "Agency of Local Development & Information Resources "Europolis" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 570 717,65

Implementation period: June 2021 - May 2023

The numbers speak volumes about our achievements. Since the commissioning of the remediation system in 2014, we have cleaned a staggering 78,800 m³ of water and treated 170 m³ of contaminated soils. These quantifiable results underscore our commitment to tangible, lasting solutions.

However, our impact extends beyond statistics – it is measured in cleaner waterways, healthier ecosystems, and improved quality of life for our community.

"The project marked the third phase of our remediation efforts, aiming to clean up the area and raise environmental awareness across Transcarpathia and our county. Despite the complexities of the war situation, our coordinated efforts with participating organizations and partners ensured the successful completion of planned tasks and implementation of investments in Ukrainian territory. This underscores the project's significance as a success story, demonstrating tangible progress in environmental conservation amidst adversity."

Illés Zsolt Rozinka,
Project manager, Head of the Environmental Protection, Nature Conservation and Waste Management Department of the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Government Office

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Cross-border cooperation initiated in 2010 to address contamination from the former Wood Chemical Company
- Investigation and elimination of pollution sources to prepare a comprehensive remediation plan
- Construction of a water extraction and cleaning system by Hungarian experts in 2013-2014 with HUSKROUA ENPI CBC Programme support
- Continuous operation of the cleaning system since December 5, 2014, customized to local needs
- Modernization of the cleaning system in the third project phase in 2021, already with the HUSKROUA ENI CBC Programme support
- Treatment of contaminated soils using biological methods and removal of polluted materials
- Dissemination of best practices among environmental experts through online conferences and case studies
- 78,800 m³ of water cleaned since the commissioning of the remediation system
- Reduction in the size of the contaminated area and concentration of various hydrocarbon compounds in water
- Improved water quality and ecosystems of rivers, securing local drinking water supplies
- Enhanced quality of life and health for local residents, allowing the use of water from shallow wells and surface waters
- Improved investment potential in the cleaned-up territory for further usage



As we reflect on our journey, we do so with pride and gratitude. Together, we have demonstrated the power of cooperation and resilience in overcoming adversity. We envision a future where our rivers run clear, our land thrives with biodiversity, and our community flourishes in harmony with nature. Our story is not just one of remediation; it is a testament to the unwavering spirit of those who refuse to accept the status quo and instead choose to forge a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Our project will be remembered as more than just a remediation effort — it's a testament to the power of collective action in the face of adversity. We eagerly anticipate the future, knowing that our journey towards environmental stewardship is far from over. Together, we have laid the groundwork for a greener, healthier tomorrow, and our legacy will endure for generations to come.

Cross-border interventions to reduce air pollution and improve air quality

In September 2014, we, the European Border Cities European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Limited Liability, embarked on a journey to address a pressing concern: air pollution in our shared region. With unwavering commitment, we, alongside our founding members - the Municipality of Nyíregyháza and the City Council of Satu Mare (Romania)- set out to make a difference. Guided by the leadership of Dr. Ferenc Kovács, Mayor of Nyíregyháza, and Gábor Kereskényi, Mayor of Satu Mare, we forged ahead with determination and a shared vision for a healthier environment.

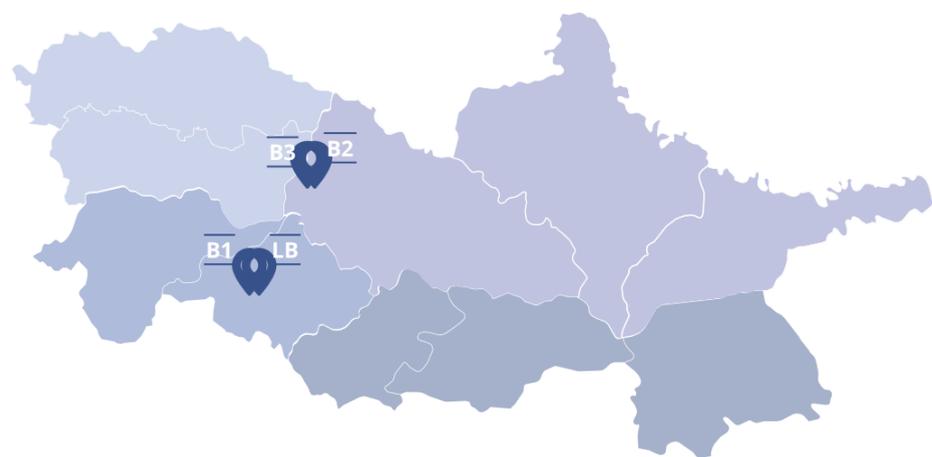
Under our collective stewardship, we implemented the "CrossBordAir" project, aimed at reducing air pollution and improving air quality in Satu Mare, Uzhgorod, and Nyíregyháza, ultimately benefiting our entire region. Recognizing the gravity of the situation, particularly concerning particulate matter (PM) pollution, we resolved to take decisive action, targeting the root causes, including residential heating and urban transportation emissions.

One of our proudest achievements was the development and installation of state-of-the-art air pollution measuring stations. In collaboration with Green Lab Hungary Engineering Office Ltd., we calibrated these stations for PM10 and PM 2.5, ensuring accurate monitoring and data collection. With an investment exceeding 77,000 Euros, these technological marvels stand as a testament to our dedication to environmental stewardship.

Furthermore, we innovated mobile measuring equipment, providing agility in data collection, storage, and transmission. By strategically deploying sixty devices across Nyíregyháza, twenty in Satu Mare, and twenty in Uzhgorod, we deepened our understanding of air quality dynamics, laying the foundation for targeted interventions. In addition to our technological advancements,

we prioritized community engagement and public awareness. Through a series of enlightening lectures, we empowered our fellow citizens to take ownership of their environmental impact. Moreover, our pedestrian-friendly audit, guided by the acclaimed CityWalk methodology, shed light on urban design's role in air quality. Based on these insights, we crafted a comprehensive proposal package for pedestrian-friendly development, advocating for sustainable urban planning practices.

Furthermore, we demonstrated our commitment to environmental sustainability through the planting of 150 saplings across Satu Mare, Uzhgorod, and Nyíregyháza. These green initiatives not only enhance our cities' beauty but also serve as natural solutions to mitigate harmful particulate matter emissions. As we reflect on our journey, we are filled with pride at what we have accomplished together. We celebrate cleaner air, healthier lives, and strengthened bonds across borders. Our commitment echoes beyond the project's lifespan. Let's breathe easy, together! Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in our



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CrossBordAir

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/6.1/0058

Partnership:

LB: European Border Cities European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Limited Liability (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B1: Government Office of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B2: Department for International Cooperation and Innovations of Uzhgorod City Council (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B3: Fund for the Development of Cross-Border Cooperation and Special Economic Zones (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 371 557,23

Implementation period:

August 2021- November 2023

dedication to environmental protection and cross-border cooperation. We are committed to expanding our efforts, incorporating innovative technologies and fostering deeper community engagement to ensure the sustainability of our region.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Installation of a new air pollution measuring station specifically calibrated for PM10 and PM 2.5, providing accurate data for monitoring air quality in Satu Mare, Uzhgorod, and Nyíregyháza. This enhances the ability to track pollution levels and implement targeted interventions
- Development and deployment of mobile measuring equipment for on-the-go measurement, data collection, storage, and transmission. This allows for a more comprehensive understanding of air quality across different areas and facilitates data-driven decision-making
- Planting 150 saplings across the project area to increase the absorption of harmful particulate matter, contributing to the improvement of air quality and the overall environmental health of the region
- Organization of lecture series aimed at raising public awareness about air quality issues and the importance of pollution reduction measures. Additionally, conducting a pedestrian-friendly audit helps engage local communities in the project and encourages active participation in environmental initiatives
- Development of an IT platform for data collection, database creation, real-time data processing, analysis, visualization, and report generation. This provides stakeholders with valuable insights into air quality trends and facilitates evidence-based policy-making



Carpathian Star Way

In the quiet expanse of our Dark Sky Parks—Poloniny in Slovakia, Zakarpattia in Ukraine, and Bükk in Hungary—a celestial symphony unfolds. Yet, amidst the cosmic dance, an earthly challenge looms: light pollution. The unintended glow of artificial lights disrupts our nights, obscuring the stars and affecting our environment.

In our quest to safeguard the natural beauty of our shared region, we embarked on an ambitious project focused on monitoring and mitigating light pollution. Guided by our passion for environmental preservation and fuelled by collaboration across borders, we set out to make a tangible difference in our communities.

Our project spanned several key objectives, each aimed at raising awareness, gathering data, and implementing solutions to combat the detrimental effects of light pollution. From the tranquil Dark Sky Parks of Poloniny in Slovakia to the enchanting Zakarpattia Dark Sky Park in Ukraine and the breathtaking Bükk Starry Sky Park in Hungary, we worked tirelessly to monitor and protect these havens of natural darkness.

Recognizing the profound impact of light pollution on quality of life, we engaged with

local authorities and communities in the Prešov Self-Governing Region of Slovakia, the Zakarpattia Oblast of Ukraine, and the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County of Hungary. Through educational initiatives and public outreach efforts, we endeavoured to shed light on the importance of preserving our night skies for future generations.

Our efforts extended beyond mere awareness raising as we delved into the scientific realm of ecosystem preservation. Collaborating with national parks such as Poloniny in Slovakia, Uzhansky in Ukraine, and Bükk in Hungary, we explored monitoring possibilities and strategies for eliminating light pollution from these precious natural habitats.

Central to our project was the establishment of monitoring stations equipped with cutting-edge technology for tracking light pollution levels. From the majestic peaks of Kolonické sedlo and Runina in Slovakia to the serene landscapes of Stučica and Derenivka in Ukraine, and the picturesque vistas of Kisgor in Hungary, these stations stood as sentinels of our commitment to environmental stewardship.

But our journey was not solely focused on data collection; it was also about fostering dialogue and fostering understanding. Through a series of professional seminars, we delved into the

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CSW
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/6.1/0044
Partnership:
LB: Vihorlat Observatory (Humenné, Slovakia)
B1: Uzhhorod National University (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B2: Institute of Development of Carpathian Region (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B3: Rónaőrző Society for Nature Protection (Debrecen, Hungary)
B4: Uzhansky National Nature Park (Veliky Berezny, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 609 899,34
Implementation period: July 2021 - December 2023

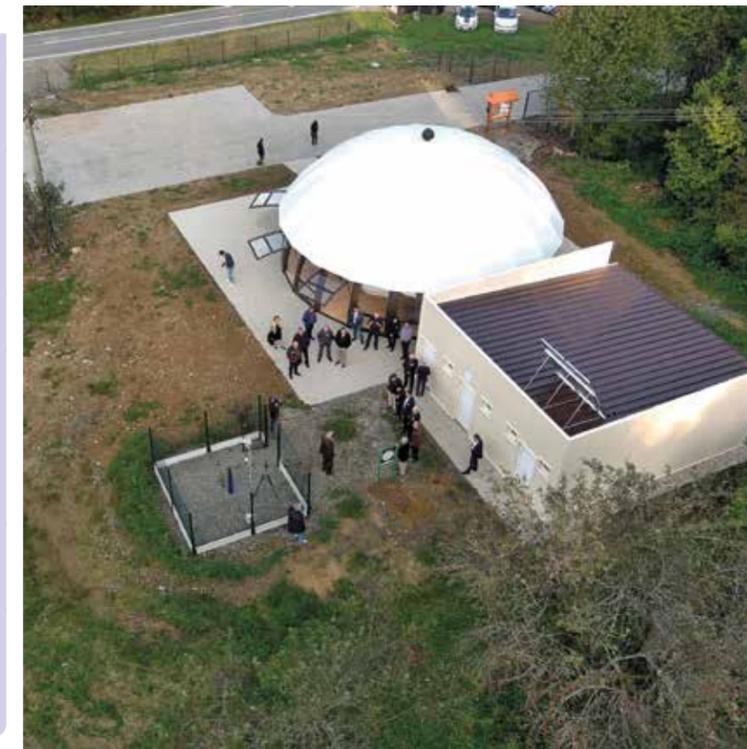
multifaceted aspects of light pollution, from its effects on energy consumption to its implications for human health. We engaged with over 1800 individuals, sharing insights and fostering a sense of collective responsibility for our natural surroundings.

Monuments and churches often bask in unnecessary light. Our motto echoes: "For what man creates in God's honour, let us not overlook what God created for man." Together, we reclaim the night, honouring both our creations and the cosmic wonders above.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Implemented monitoring of light pollution levels in renowned Dark Sky Parks including Poloniny in Slovakia, Zakarpattia in Ukraine, and Bükk in Hungary
- Conducted assessments of light pollution's impact on ecosystem quality and explored monitoring possibilities for its elimination in national parks such as Poloniny in Slovakia, Uzhansky in Ukraine, and Bükk in Hungary. These assessments provided valuable insights into the ecological consequences of light pollution and informed strategies for its mitigation
- Established 5 LPMS (Light Pollution Monitoring Stations) for stationary monitoring of light pollution levels
- Developed a methodology for the collection and analysis of stationary and mobile measurements of light pollution. Additionally, organized 4 professional seminars covering topics such as light pollution measurement, energy-saving practices, and the impact of light pollution on human health. These seminars facilitated knowledge exchange and capacity building among stakeholders
- Established 3 information centers to engage the public on light pollution issues. These centers provided valuable resources and educational materials to raise awareness about the importance of dark skies
- Organized 2 project conferences and 54 information days dedicated to addressing light pollution issues. These events provided platforms for dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders, with over 1800 individuals participating in discussions and workshops



Environment For the Future by Scientific Education

Environmental degradation and people's inattention to the needs of nature are not diminishing; on the contrary, they are becoming more and more evident, particularly in the relatively polluted areas connecting the Uzh watercourse in Ukraine and the Laborec river in Slovakia. The degradation of these vital waterways underscores the urgency of educating the younger generation about environmental conservation and fostering a deeper connection to nature.

Recognizing this imperative, we initiated a project for the scientific education of young students in the field of environmental inquiry, with the active support of scientists from universities. Through a rigorous selection process, we engaged over 30 pupils from 7 diverse schools across both countries, ensuring

a broad representation of perspectives and backgrounds. These students became the heart of our initiative, embarking on a journey to study the state of three distinct sites along the two rivers, situated close to the border. Over the course of 15 eco-training sessions and 6 workshops, we did not just impart theoretical knowledge; we immersed students in hands-on, experiential learning, combining theory with practical scientific work. Through field observations, experiments, and data collection, students gained a profound understanding of the intricate ecosystems surrounding the waterways. With meticulous care, we compiled all the observations and findings into a series of educational materials, enriched by the invaluable contributions of practitioner teachers and feedback from the fieldwork participants.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: EFFUSE

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/6.1/0075

Partnership:

LB: Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice (Košice, Slovakia)

B1: Uzhhorod National University (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: Institute of Development of Carpathian Region (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 364 099,41

Implementation period:

August 2021 - December 2023

These materials, spanning diverse formats such as guides, interactive modules, and multimedia presentations, were designed to bridge the gap between scientific research and public understanding, making complex environmental concepts accessible and engaging.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Engaged over 30 pupils from 7 different schools in both Ukraine and Slovakia
- Conducted 15 eco-training sessions and 6 workshops, providing hands-on experience in scientific inquiry and environmental study
- Compiled observations and findings from fieldwork into a series of 7 educational materials
- Designed educational materials to support outdoor education and increase understanding of environmental issues related to river ecosystems
- Established educational platform EFFUSE, serving as a repository for educational materials. Platform accessible in English, Ukrainian, and Slovak languages, enhancing accessibility and reach
- Raised awareness about environmental issues among pupils and wider communities
- Facilitated cross-border meetings and activities for effective exchange of expertise

In just 29 months, our efforts bore fruit as we created a comprehensive set of 7 educational materials, each tailored to support outdoor education and bring the work of scientists in the field of environmental problematics of rivers closer to the public. Central to our mission was the establishment of the educational platform EFFUSE, a dynamic hub that democratizes access to knowledge and resources, empowering educators and students alike to explore, learn, and take action in the realm of environmental conservation. Our project did not end with the creation of educational materials; it sparked a ripple effect of collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Through cross-border meetings and project activities, we fostered an environment conducive to the exchange of expertise in environmental education, laying a stable

foundation for ongoing cooperation. This synergy culminated in the EFFUSE joint educational platform, now available in English, Ukrainian, and Slovak languages, with plans for further expansion and enhancement using cutting-edge instruments and resources procured during the project. As we reflect on our journey, we are not just celebrating our achievements but also looking ahead with optimism and determination. The EFFUSE platform stands as a testament to our commitment to environmental education and conservation, serving as a catalyst for change and a beacon of hope for future generations. Together, we are not just recognizing the needs of nature; we are actively working to preserve and protect it, ensuring a sustainable future for all.



Zero Waste: Theory for Everybody, Practice for Everyone in the Cross-Border Region

In the serene village of Yanoshi, nestled within Ukraine's Zakarpattia region, a silent revolution is underway. Here, amid the rolling hills and verdant forests, a groundbreaking initiative known as "ZeroWaste: Theory for Everybody, Practice for Everyone in the Cross-Border Region" is reshaping the landscape of waste management. This is a story of collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to environmental stewardship that transcends borders.

Waste management has long been a pressing issue in Zakarpattia, with insufficient facilities and overwhelmed landfills plaguing the region. Despite these challenges, hope has emerged in the form of international cooperation and innovative approaches to waste management. Recognizing the importance of addressing these issues, the Zero Waste project aimed to revolutionize waste management practices in the region by drawing upon the expertise of the European Union and leveraging international programs.

At its core, the Zero Waste project represented a beacon of hope for communities across Zakarpattia. By fostering cross-border

cooperation and sharing best practices, the project aimed to create a sustainable, environmentally conscious waste management system that benefited every resident of the region. The vision was ambitious yet attainable: to safeguard the region's natural beauty and protect the health of its communities for generations to come.

Central to the project's mission was the construction of a state-of-the-art landfill in Yanoshi, Ukraine. This landfill, equipped with the latest technology and infrastructure, served as a safe and efficient repository for the region's household waste. However, more than just a practical solution to waste disposal, the landfill represented a commitment to environmental stewardship and the preservation of Zakarpattia's natural heritage.

The journey towards a greener future began with the commencement of construction on the waste sorting complex and landfill. From administrative buildings to equipment washing facilities, each component of the infrastructure was meticulously planned to ensure the effective management of waste. With 27 collection points established across the region, selective

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Zero Waste

ID: HUSKROUA/1701/LIP/006

Partnership:

LB: Tisza European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Limited Liability (Kisvárd, Hungary)

B1: Communal enterprise "Agency of Regional Development and Cross-Border Co-operation "Transcarpathia" of Zakarpattia Oblast Council" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Regional Development and Environmental Management Agency Nonprofit Ltd (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 5 000 000,00

Implementation period:

January 2023 - December 2023

waste collection became a reality, empowering communities to participate actively in waste reduction efforts.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Zero Waste project was its emphasis on cross-border cooperation. Recognizing that environmental issues transcend political boundaries, the project facilitated collaboration between stakeholders



from across Europe. In a final conference held in Yanoshi, stakeholders gathered to celebrate the achievements of this groundbreaking initiative. With funding allocated from the European Neighbourhood Instrument's Cross-border Cooperation Programme, the project laid the foundation for a greener, more sustainable future for the region and beyond.

Through seminars, educational tours, and awareness campaigns, the project fostered a culture of environmental consciousness among residents, ensuring that the principles of Zero Waste endured for generations to come. As waste management facilities took shape and attitudes towards waste evolved, the region stood poised on the brink of a transformative era in environmental sustainability.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Construction of Landfill and Waste Sorting Complex: Construction has commenced on a landfill for waste disposal and a waste sorting complex. The infrastructure includes various elements such as administrative buildings, sewage reservoirs, workshops, and equipment washing facilities
- Equipment for selective waste collection procured, and a network of 27 collection points established for solid household waste. 81 containers installed for selective waste collection, facilitating better waste management practices
- Establishment of Waste Management Association
- Waste sorting complex has a designed capacity of 30,000 tons per year, meeting the waste production of the Berehove district. Its service life is estimated to be at least 25-30 years, ensuring sustainable waste management practices



As the Zero Waste project continued to evolve, its impact on cross-border cooperation became increasingly evident. By fostering partnerships and sharing knowledge, the project became a model for international collaboration in addressing environmental challenges. With each success, the project strengthened the bonds between communities and paved the way for a more sustainable future.

One of the key achievements of the project was the establishment of the Association of Local Government Bodies of the Berehove District. This association served as a catalyst for

change, providing organizational support for the waste management complex and paving the way for future initiatives in environmental sustainability. By working together, local governments could pool resources and expertise to tackle common challenges more effectively.

The significance of the project extended far beyond Ukraine's borders. Through its emphasis on cross-border cooperation, the project fostered dialogue and collaboration between stakeholders from across Europe. In a world increasingly interconnected by

environmental issues, initiatives like Zero Waste demonstrated the importance of working together to find solutions that benefited all. In conclusion, the Zero Waste initiative stood as a testament to the power of collaboration, innovation, and shared commitment to environmental stewardship. By bringing together stakeholders from across borders, the project laid the foundation for a greener, more sustainable future for the region and beyond. As the journey continued, the Zero Waste project served as an inspiration for communities to work together towards a cleaner, more sustainable world.

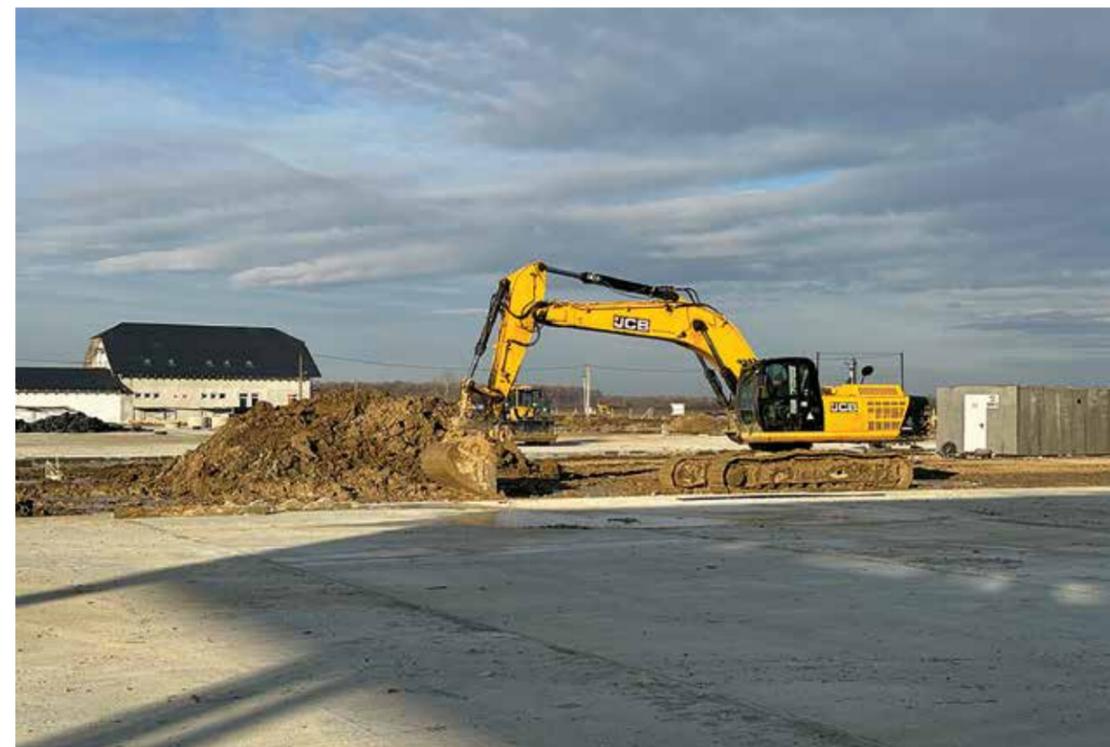
One of the most pressing environmental problems in Zakarpattia is the issue of solid household waste disposal. Due to its geographical location, this problem has a highly negative impact on the sanitary condition of border areas of neighbouring countries and on Ukraine's international image.

With the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary and the European Union's Tisza River Basin Association, a Waste Management Strategy for Zakarpattia Oblast until 2030 has been prepared. The goals and objectives include creating conditions to improve the living standards of the population by implementing a systematic approach to waste management at the regional level, reducing waste generation, and increasing its processing and reuse, meeting both EU requirements and national and international legislation. The challenges here are very serious.

The "Zero Waste" project was launched to address at least some of these issues. The construction of the waste sorting complex is nearing completion. Under the guidance of the Tisza European Office for Transboundary Cooperation, the Waste Management Association has been established in Zakarpattia to organize and support the complex's activities.

We hope that with the assistance of the Hungarian side, utilizing our experience, and with the strong financial support of the European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross-border Cooperation Program "Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020," we will be able to create more opportunities for waste sorting in Zakarpattia Oblast and further processing it.

Oscar SHESTAK
Chairman of the General Assembly
of the County Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg Committee
Chairman of the Tisza European Office
for Transboundary Cooperation





Improvement of accessibility to the regions, development of sustainable and climate-proof transport and communication networks and systems

Due to the geographical and infrastructural characteristics of the Programme area—including remote and rural regions, inadequate transportation networks, and varying climatic conditions—the accessibility of these regions poses a significant challenge for the mobility of persons and goods. Climate change further exacerbates these challenges by increasing the frequency and severity of weather-related disruptions. Therefore, there is a critical need for sustainable, resilient, and climate-proof transport to ensure continuous and reliable connectivity.

The Programme recognizes the critical importance of improving accessibility to regions and developing

sustainable, climate-proof transport. Under Priority 7.1: Development of Transport Infrastructure to improve the mobility of persons and goods, a significant focus has been placed on modernizing transport systems, enhancing connectivity, and promoting eco-friendly mobility solutions.

Under this priority, **10 cross-border cooperation projects** were funded, with a total of €11,893,532.66 million in EU allocation contracted. The cooperation among **40 project beneficiaries** led to significant improvements in the region's transport infrastructure. These enhancements have facilitated smoother, safer, and more efficient mobility for both people and goods. The funded projects included the following:

Road Infrastructure:

- Modernized and restored road surfaces on both Slovak and Ukrainian sides
- Reconstructed and improved 19.943 km of roads
- Marked and signposted a 17-km cycling route between Uzhhorod and V. Selmenci

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure:

- Installed 14 new e-charging locations with 18 charging stations
- Expanded charging infrastructure from 104 to about 250 locations
- Established a Green Energy Hub near Uzhhorod

Training and Education:

- Provided municipal space planning assistance for 30 municipalities
- Conducted training sessions for border region representatives
- Introduced innovative transportation approaches through small aviation development

Public Awareness and Engagement:

- Developed a comprehensive Joint Cross-Border Mobility Plan
- Organized the VeloForum 2021 conference
- Established a joint web tool

Cycling Infrastructure:

- Reconstructed a 4,350 km bicycle path
- Installed 10 bike points in Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia
- Developed cross-border bicycle routes and footbridges

Through collaborative efforts and strategic investments, the Programme laid foundation for a more accessible, sustainable, and resilient transport in the region. These initiatives not only enhance mobility but also contribute to regional prosperity and environmental sustainability. The continued focus on improving transport infrastructure is essential for fostering economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental stewardship in eligible regions. The Programme's commitment to innovation and sustainability will ensure long-term benefits for both the environment and the local communities.

Development and modernization of the access infrastructure to the Romanian-Ukrainian border crossing point from Tarna Mare-Hyzha

In the sprawling landscape of cross-border cooperation, we are proud to share the success story of our project. Led by Tarna Mare Commune in partnership with Korolevo Commune (Ukraine) and the Territorial Administrative Unit Satu Mare County, our initiative was propelled by a shared vision of improving accessibility and fostering sustainable development in the border area.

In the wake of historical transitions and geopolitical shifts - Soviet Union's dissolution - we witnessed significant challenges at the Romanian-Ukrainian border. In the 90s, the Romanian-Ukrainian border nestled between Tarna Mare in Satu Mare County, Romania, and Hija in Zakarpattia Region, Ukraine, bore witness to a border crossing point. However, Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007 led to its suspension due to inadequate road and customs infrastructure, failing to meet Schengen requirements. Outdated infrastructure and regulatory disparities hindered mobility and economic development. Recognizing the urgent need for change, we embarked on a journey to modernize the Tarna Mare-Hija border crossing point.

With the support of the programme, we turned our vision into reality. Our primary focus was the modernization of access infrastructure spanning 2,859 km, symbolizing a significant step towards fostering cross-border trade and cooperation.

Yet, our project was not just about building roads. It was about empowering communities and fostering sustainable development. Through targeted training sessions and thematic seminars, we equipped local representatives with the knowledge and skills essential for growth and prosperity.

One of our hallmark achievements was the establishment of three thematic seminars, focusing on teamwork, border security awareness, and the promotion of business partnerships. These initiatives served as catalysts for fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation within the border region.

As the road infrastructure neared completion, national authorities from Romania and Ukraine commenced procedures for customs infrastructure modernization, paving the way

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: DEMOINROUA

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/7.1/0064

Partnership:

LB: Tarna Mare Commune (Tarna Mare, Romania)

B1: Korolevo Village Council (Korolevo, Ukraine)

B2: Territorial Administrative Unit of Satu Mare County (Satu Mare, Romania)

EU contribution: EUR 964 564,59

Implementation period:

September 2019 - February 2023

for the eventual reopening of the Tarna Mare-Hija border crossing point. The project's legacy extends far beyond physical improvements, symbolizing a testament to the power of collaboration in fostering sustainable development and cross-border prosperity.

As we reflect on our journey, we are reminded of the profound impact that collective action can have in shaping a brighter future for border communities. Together, we have laid the groundwork for enhanced mobility, economic vitality, and mutual understanding, affirming our commitment to building bridges - both literal and metaphorical - across borders.

The success of our project is a beacon of hope and a model for future cross-border collaborations. It demonstrates that through shared goals, strategic partnerships, and a commitment to overcoming historical and infrastructural barriers, transformative change is possible. As we move forward, we remain dedicated to fostering these relationships and continuing to support initiatives that drive sustainable development and regional stability. Our journey has shown that when communities unite with a common purpose, they can transcend boundaries and create lasting legacies of progress and cooperation.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully completed development and modernization of access infrastructure at the Tarna Mare-Hija border crossing point, laying the foundation for improved border management and cross-border mobility
- Through development and modernization of 2.859 km of road infrastructure, including 1.696 km on the Romanian side, project aimed to facilitate easier movement of people and goods between Romania and Ukraine
- Conducted training sessions for representatives from each partner, aiming to increase cohesion among communities on both sides of the border. Seminars covered topics such as team building, border crime regulations awareness, and business partnership development



GreenWheels: Ecotransport of the Future - Today !

Driving change across borders, our team embarked on a visionary project aimed at revolutionizing cross-border mobility through eco-friendly transport solutions. In an era defined by environmental urgency and a quest for sustainable development, our initiative stood as a testament to innovation and dedication.

As a consortium of three non-governmental organizations passionate about modern and innovative logistic infrastructure, we joined forces to tackle key challenges hindering the development of climate-proof transport. Our partnership, comprising the Lead Beneficiary – NGO “Factory Investment Projects” from Ukraine, the First Contact Centre based in Michalovce, Slovakia, and the KIUT Regional Development Association from Hungary, pooled expertise and resources to drive meaningful change.

We recognized that climate-proof transport faced a significant hurdle—low public awareness of its benefits. Moreover, cross-border e-vehicle traffic suffered due to inadequate charging infrastructure in the region.

Identifying low public awareness and inadequate cross-border e-vehicle traffic as primary obstacles, we set ambitious goals. Our overarching objective was to create conducive conditions for the cross-border mobility of people and goods through the development of accessible, free public infrastructure in the border regions.

With this mission in mind, we delved into action, introducing a comprehensive suite of solutions. We established a network of cross-



border public charging stations, strategically positioned to facilitate seamless travel for e-vehicle users. Alongside, we inaugurated the Green Wheels innovation technology center, featuring an e-charging hub powered by solar energy, strategically located on the international route near Uzhhorod.

Recognizing the importance of public awareness, we conducted extensive research on the eco-friendly transport market and launched an information campaign, highlighting the myriad benefits and prospects of eco-transport. Additionally, we forged crucial local and international partnerships in the border regions, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange.

However, our efforts did not stop there. Acknowledging the significance of municipal planning, we provided invaluable assistance in space planning for 30 municipalities in the border regions of Slovakia, Hungary, and Ukraine. Our recommendations, rooted in sustainable mobility principles, aimed to guide stakeholders in future infrastructure development initiatives.

The results of our project were nothing short of remarkable. We proudly unveiled the Green Energy Hub, a pioneering initiative featuring advanced fast-charging capabilities and solar energy integration, capable of servicing seven vehicles simultaneously. This hub not only provided essential charging services but also effectively redirected transit flows away from Uzhhorod, alleviating pressure on the town's transport system.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: GreenWheels
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/7.1/0041
Partnership:
LB: Factory of Investment Projects (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B1: First Contact Center - Michalovce (Michalovce, Slovakia)
B2: KIÚT Regional Development Association (Záhony, Hungary)
EU contribution: EUR 847 674,16
Implementation period: August 2020 - November 2023

Moreover, our expansion of the e-vehicle infrastructure included 14 new e-charging locations across three countries, significantly enhancing regional mobility. The burgeoning adoption of e-vehicles in the cross-border region was evident, with over 2000 cars registered in Zakarpattia by the project's conclusion.

The increase in charging stations, from 104 to approximately 250, underscored our commitment to addressing the growing trends in e-vehicle usage. Furthermore, our recommendations on infrastructure planning and development for e-transport needs provided invaluable guidance to municipalities, empowering them to embrace sustainable mobility practices.

The GreenWheels project not only achieved its goals but also laid the groundwork for future advancements. As we move forward, expanding charging infrastructure and enhancing vehicle technology will be pivotal in sustaining e-vehicle usage across East Slovakia, Hungary, and Zakarpattia.

What do our stakeholders think?

“The advantages of e-mobility for a region include reduced CO2 emissions, less noise, improved air quality, fuel costs savings, and an opportunity to promote e-mobility as a sustainable and environmental alternative to conventional automobiles.”

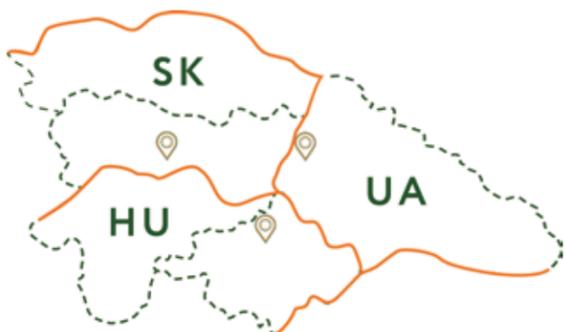
Despite the huge existing challenges and restrictions of interstate mobility, the number of people traveling by e-transport has increased and will continue to grow.

The increase of the e-vehicles number, their improved quality and one-charge distance, accessibility of service infrastructure – these are the key factors for a switch to eco-friendly transport.

Each kilometre of an e-vehicle travel contributes to achieving the region’s independence from fossil fuels. Let’s join the trend for an environmental and sustainable future!

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully established network of cross-border public charging stations, totalling 14 new e-charging locations with 18 charging stations for 38 connectors across three countries. This infrastructure significantly enhances regional mobility for e-vehicle users
- Construction of a Green Energy Hub near Uzhhorod. Powered by solar energy and equipped with advanced fast-charging capabilities, it serves seven vehicles simultaneously. It not only provides charging services but also helps redirect transit flows away from Uzhhorod, thus alleviating traffic congestion in the town
- Provided assistance in municipal space planning for 30 municipalities in the border regions of Hungary, Slovakia, and Ukraine. Recommendations on infrastructure planning and development for e-transport needs were developed, aiding stakeholders in future initiatives
- Contributed to a substantial increase in the adoption of e-vehicles in the target region. The number of registered e-vehicles in Zakarpattia grew from 266 in 2019 to over 2000 by the end of 2023, with an additional increase of 150 cars each month. This growth underscores the project's success in promoting eco-friendly transport
- Expansion of charging infrastructure from 104 charging locations at the start of the project to about 250 by the end demonstrates tangible progress. This expansion is crucial for accommodating the growing number of e-vehicles on the roads and in settlements within the target region



Overcoming barriers: improving the mobility of residents of the border region of Transcarpathia (Ukraine), Maramures (Romania) and Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg (Hungary)

In the pursuit of fostering stronger ties and seamless connectivity among our border regions, UA-RO-HU MOBILITY project embarked on a transformative journey to improve the mobility of residents in Zakarpattia (Ukraine), Maramures (Romania), and Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg (Hungary). With a shared vision of enhancing accessibility and efficiency, our team embarked on two distinct yet equally impactful initiatives aimed at revolutionizing transportation infrastructure and connectivity within our communities.

In Maramures County, Romania, the call for change echoed through the valleys and over the hills: the public transportation system was a relic of the past, and it was time for a revival. Recognizing the pressing need for modernization, our team embarked on a mission to overhaul the public transport system, ensuring efficient and eco-friendly travel solutions for all. We sought not just to update but to revolutionize, to create a system that was not only efficient but also kind to the earth. As we set to work, the entire county became

a canvas for innovation. Buses that once groaned and rattled now purred with vitality. Gone were the days of creaky seats and the gamble of unreliable schedules. We pursued efficiency with a relentless spirit, and it was not long before our passengers took notice. They boarded with ease, alighted with a smile, and spread the word: traveling in Maramures had become a joy.

However, our vision did not stop at the buses. We saw potential where others saw mere transit points. Four bus stations, once mundane waypoints, were transformed into hubs of possibility. Here, we tested the limits of what public transport could be. We adjusted, fine-tuned, and refined until these stations stood as beacons of progress, not just within the county but as a model for others to follow. These stations became more than just places to wait—they were gateways to new opportunities, connecting people not just to places but to a brighter future. In the vibrant city of Vinogradiv, Ukraine, traffic jams choked the life out of the city

center. We knew we had to act. So, we reconstructed streets, replaced utilities, and revitalized the central square. Once plagued by traffic jams, the city center now breathes freely. The introduction of one-way traffic has banished congestion, allowing life to flow smoothly. The project's impact reverberates through the transformed streets and squares

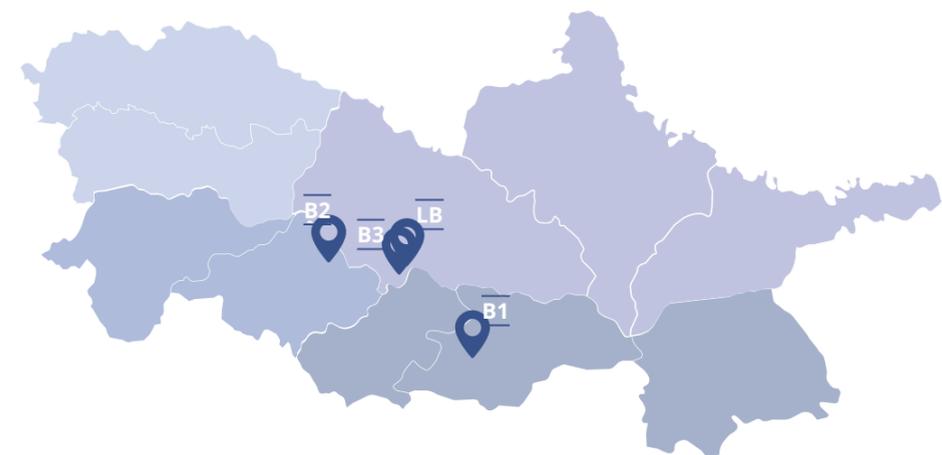
of Vinogradiv, now adorned with modern urban design, vibrant lighting, and accessible spaces for all, including those with disabilities. From the revitalized pedestrian zones to the lush greenery adorning the cityscape, every aspect of the reconstruction embodies our commitment to fostering prosperity and connectivity within our communities. The addition of two enchanting light-music fountains serves as a testament to the city's newfound vibrancy and charm, captivating residents and tourists alike. As we reflect on the journey of UA-RO-HU MOBILITY project, we take pride in the tangible

and enduring impact it has had on our border regions. Through innovative initiatives and collaborative efforts, we have not only enhanced mobility and connectivity but also nurtured a sense of unity and pride within our communities. Looking ahead, we envision a future where seamless mobility enriches every aspect of daily life, propelling our region towards greater prosperity and inclusivity. With the success of our efforts serving as a beacon of hope and inspiration, we stand ready to embrace the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead, united in our shared commitment to building a brighter tomorrow for all.

PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: UA-RO-HU Mobility
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/7.1/0076
Partnership:
LB: Vynohradiv City Council of the Transcarpathian region (Vynohradiv, Ukraine)
B1: Maramures County Council (Baia Mare, Romania)
B2: Municipality of Barabás (Barabas, Hungary)
B3: Municipal Enterprise "Center of Investment and Development" Vynohradiv City Council of the Transcarpathian region (Vynohradiv, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 1 332 309,83
Implementation period: September 2019 - December 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 1.1 km of roads reborn
- Nearly 11,000 m² of pedestrian zones revitalized
- Essential utilities like water and gas pipelines meticulously replaced
- Over 7 km of cables laid to power a brighter future
- Rolled out a modernized public transport system across the county, setting a new standard for travel
- Transformed four pilot bus stations into testaments of modern technology and design
- Fostered a vision where seamless mobility is not just a convenience but a catalyst for regional prosperity



Modern Border Infrastructure - Successful Carpathian region

Our journey with MOBI – Modern Border Infrastructure – has been nothing short of transformative. As we reflect on the project's completion, we are proud to have revolutionized cross-border mobility in the Carpathian region, creating a sustainable platform that enhances the flow of people and goods while minimizing environmental impact.

Imagine a region where citizens no longer face hours of travel for mere kilometers due to challenging border crossings. That was our reality, a reality we were determined to change. Through MOBI, we embarked on a mission to bridge the transportation gaps in the border regions of Ukraine, Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania. We recognized the enormity of this task, drawing inspiration from successful EU cross-border structures in the area, which showed us that these transport infrastructure gaps could and should be solved. This was particularly true in peripheral, outermost, mountain regions, most of them borderlands, both in primary and secondary networks.

In response, we developed a Joint Cross-Border Mobility Plan, collaborating closely with local authorities and transportation institutions on both sides of the border. This plan included regional strategies for transportation and border infrastructure, as well as the development of railway services, international aviation services, and more. Our aim was clear: to improve the flow of passengers and goods while greatly supporting sustainable mobility patterns within the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine cross-border region.

The MOBI Cross-Border Mobility Plan consisted of 13 main sections: Project Partners, Motivation,

Strategic Context, Vision-2040, 7 Key Directions for Mobility Development and Improvement, Transition to Alternative Fuels, Conclusions, and Next Steps. It addressed key challenges and projects related to active mobility, railway networks, public transportation, road networks, waterways, air transport, and border crossings. This comprehensive plan provided a strategic framework for our efforts, guiding us towards effective solutions and sustainable development.

Central to our efforts was the establishment of a sustainable informational and institutional platform. Our joint web tool for cross-border cooperation and interactive mapping, www.mobi.iardi.org, aimed to increase public and business awareness, as well as the number of passengers using public transport. It also informed the general public about the existing transport infrastructure, cross-border mobility conditions, and public transportation routes. Infrastructural enhancements were at the core of our endeavours. Our project included reconstruction of a 4,350 km bicycle path on the Tiszabökény-Péterfalva road section. This was a crucial road section in terms of meeting the needs of target regions in developing tourist infrastructure for visitors traveling from Hungary through the border crossing point between Hungary and Ukraine, Tiszabecs (Hungary) - Vylók (Ukraine), utilizing the bicycle path leading to the border crossing point, Velyka Palad (Ukraine) - Kispalád (Hungary). As a result of effective connectivity and increased visitor numbers, an increase in economic activity was expected, including an increase in the provision of tourism services to visitors in the medium and long term. These improvements were not just about convenience; they sparked economic growth and bolstered tourism, breathing new life into local economies.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: MOBI

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/7.1/0023

Partnership:

LB: International Association of Regional Development Institutions (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B1: Service for Restoration and Infrastructure Development in Zakarpattia oblast (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: Self-government of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B3: Košice Self-governing Region (Košice, Slovakia)

B4: Maramures County Council (Baia Mare, Romania)

B5: Territorial Administrative Unit of Satu Mare County (Satu Mare, Romania)

EU contribution: EUR 946 782,00

Implementation period:

March 2020 - October 2023

Additionally, we undertook feasibility studies and technical studies for reconstruction, providing necessary information about transport and border infrastructure. Experts now have a strong informational and institutional base for effective cooperation within the CBC Mobility Plan, aimed at the synergy of county-level mobility plans on different sides of the border.



Looking back, we can proudly say that we have made a significant impact on the cross-border mobility in the Carpathian region. The "MOBI" project has truly been a journey of success and

achievement, equipping the Carpathian region with the tools and infrastructure needed for effective cross-border mobility, paving the way for a brighter, more interconnected future.

"This project has significantly impacted our organization by fostering expert networking and promoting sustained information exchange between border regions. Development of the Cross-Border Mobility Plan and infrastructure harmonization has sparked new mobility initiatives and the opening of cross-border points. With the financial support, we have been able to address challenges and achieve our goals, particularly in the development of the Joint Mobility Plan and infrastructure implementation in Zakarpattia. The support from the programme has been invaluable, helping us navigate through restrictions and risks during Martial Law in Ukraine, ensuring effective implementation of our project."

Nataliya Nosa-Pylypenko, Executive Director of International Association of Regional Development Institutions

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully developed comprehensive Joint Cross-Border Mobility Plan focusing on transportation and border infrastructure. This plan integrates regional plans for each border region and addresses key challenges such as long waiting times at border crossings, dependence on private vehicles, and the need for multimodality and modern means of transportation
- Undertaken significant infrastructure improvements, such as the reconstruction of a 4,350 km bicycle path on the Tiszabökény-Péterfalva road section, feasibility studies for access roads to prospective border crossing points, and development of cross-border bicycle routes and footbridges
- Established sustainable platform through the development of a joint web tool (www.mobi.iardi.org) for cross-border cooperation and interactive mapping. This platform aims to increase public and business awareness, inform about transport infrastructure and mobility conditions, and promote the use of public transport
- Improved connectivity and increased visitor numbers through enhanced infrastructure are expected to stimulate economic activity, particularly in the provision of tourism services in the medium and long term

Cross-border green transport network

In collaboration with our esteemed partners in Baia Mare, Romania; Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine; Michalovce, Slovakia; and Nyirgyhaza, Hungary, we embarked on a transformative initiative: creation of a green transportation network. Our collective vision was to establish electric charging stations in each partner town, fostering sustainable clean transport and combating climate change.

By strategically locating charging facilities for electric vehicles, our aim was to incentivize individuals to choose eco-friendly alternatives over traditional fossil fuels. These electric vehicle charging stations not only facilitated cleaner transportation but also played a vital role in reducing CO2 emissions, contributing to a healthier environment for all.

Throughout the project, we diligently communicated the purpose, outcomes, and funding sources via various channels including press releases, radio broadcasts, television coverage, and joint online and offline meetings. Our concerted efforts were focused on raising awareness and garnering support from the community, fostering a sense of ownership and participation in our shared sustainability goals.

With careful consideration, we selected prime locations for our charging stations, ensuring accessibility in areas with significant commercial and tourist activity. By doing so, we aimed to maximize convenience for electric vehicle users and promote uptake among both residents and visitors alike.

Upon the commissioning of our stations, we celebrated this milestone through widespread dissemination via print and online press releases, TV announcements, and media coverage. The community was well-informed, and our efforts gained visibility, further reinforcing the importance of sustainable transportation initiatives.

As the project drew to a close, we witnessed a remarkable transformation. The number of passengers using electric vehicles surged from around 2,000 to over 30,000, underscoring the tangible impact of our commitment to sustainability. This exponential growth in electric vehicle adoption signifies a significant step towards a greener future.

Buoyed by these positive results, Baia Mare made a strategic decision: to extend the network of electric charging stations. Presently, nine additional fast stations, financed by

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CGTN

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/7.1/0063

Partnership:

LB: Executive Committee of Ivano-Frankivsk City Council (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

B1: Charitable Organization Charitable Foundation Teple Misto (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

B2: City of Michalovce (Michalovce, Slovakia)

B3: The Municipality of Baia Mare (Baia Mare, Romania)

B4: Municipality of Nyiregyhaza with County Rights (Nyiregyháza, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 252 724,94

Implementation period:

October 2019 - March 2021

the Environmental Fund Administration, have been operationalized. Our unwavering commitment to further expansion reflects our dedication to sustainable development and clean transportation practices.

In closing, we express our sincere gratitude to our esteemed partners. Together, we have laid the foundation for a cleaner, more sustainable transportation network, and we eagerly look forward to achieving even greater milestones in the days ahead.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully established network of electric charging stations in Baia Mare, Romania; Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine; Michalovce, Slovakia; and Nyirgyhaza, Hungary, promoting green transportation
- Aimed to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower CO2 emissions
- Purpose, results, and funding sources widely publicized through various media outlets, enhancing public knowledge and support
- Network of charging stations in 11 different cities in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine consisting of 19 units strategically placed in areas with high commercial and tourist activity to maximize accessibility and convenience
- Substantial increase in electric vehicle usage, with the number of passengers using electric vehicles rising from approximately 2,000 to over 30,000
- Organization of Local Rally was held According to the Addendum Rally was hold only in Ukrainian cities with total length 550 km



Bike AcceNT: Bicycle Accessibility Networking Territories

Reflecting on the journey of the "Bike AcceNT: Bicycle Accessibility Networking Territories" project, we are proud of the transformative impact we have had in enhancing cycling infrastructure and promoting sustainable transportation in the Slovak-Ukrainian cross-border region.

As we, the Center for Social and Business Initiatives, along with our partners, embarked on this ambitious journey, our goal was crystal clear: to enhance the accessibility of the Slovak-Ukrainian cross-border region for cyclists. This was not just about laying down paths; it was about creating a network that would stand as a testament to transboundary mobility and the importance of bicycles as a sustainable mode of transport.

The cooperation was the cornerstone of our success. With the Agency for Sustainable Development of the Carpathian Region "FORZA" in Ukraine and the Prešov Bicycle Group Boneshaker and Ptrukša village in Slovakia, we forged a partnership that was as strong as the steel frames of the bicycles we sought to champion. Our journey was characterized by an integrated and holistic approach, spanning national policy,

regional planning, and grassroots interventions. This innovative strategy empowered us to address challenges at multiple levels, ensuring long-term sustainability and resilience in the face of external risks.

Our achievements were many and varied. We produced a series of thematic videos that addressed crucial topics like cyclist safety and cycle marking in cross-border areas, which not only educated but also inspired. We installed bike points across Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia, offering cyclists safe havens for rest and repair. In Ptrukša, we set up an informational system that served as a beacon, guiding cyclists through their journeys.

The 17-km-long cycling route between Uzhhorod and V. Selmenci was marked and signposted, a ribbon of possibility that stretched across the landscape. We developed a technical study for Prešov and Košice regions, detailing over 3500 km of cycle routes, and a methodology for cross-border signposting that promised seamless journeys.

Our strategic planning did not stop there. We crafted the Ivano-Frankivsk Region Bicycle Infrastructure Development Concept and a

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Bike AcceNT
ID: HUSKROUJA/1702/7.1/0060

Partnership:
LB: Center for Social and Business Initiatives (Yaremche, Ukraine)

B1: Prešov Bicycle Group Boneshaker (Prešov, Slovakia)

B2: NGO Agency for Sustainable Development of the Carpathian Region "FORZA" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B3: Ptrukša Village (Ptrukša, Slovakia)

EU contribution: EUR 323 604,16

Implementation period:
September 2019 - February 2022

network of long-distance bicycle routes for Zakarpattia, tools that would empower local governments, businesses, and NGOs to continue our work.

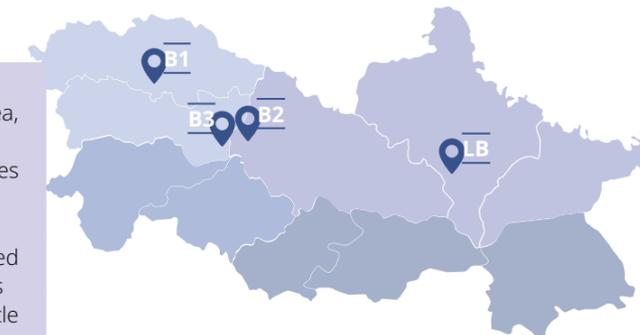
The VeloForum 2021, a cycling conference held in Uzhhorod, became a melting pot of ideas and innovations. Experts from around the world gathered to share research, practical solutions, and best practices, all aimed at fostering sustainable development through cycling.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Produced 5 thematic videos focusing on cyclist safety, cycle marking in the cross-border area, cyclotourist routes around the Schengen border, and interesting sights around
- Installed 10 bike points in Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia for providing safe and comfortable places for cyclists to rest, make small repairs, and seek shelter during inclement weather
- Set up a bike point and informational system in Ptrukša for navigation, rest and bicycle repairs
- Marked and signposted a 17-km cycling route between Uzhhorod and V. Selmenci. This included the installation of special signs and information stands to facilitate navigation for cycling tourists
- Developed a technical study for Prešov and Košice regions, outlining a total of 3532.5 km of cycle routes. Also developed a methodology for cross-border signposting
- Created Ivano-Frankivsk Region Bicycle Infrastructure Development Concept and a network of long-distance bicycle routes in Zakarpattia. These documents contain maps of bicycle routes, reports on stakeholder engagement, descriptions of individual bicycle routes, and recommendations for local governments, businesses, and NGOs
- Organized the VeloForum 2021 conference in Uzhhorod, focusing on "Cycling as a Key to Sustainable Development of Territories." The conference featured 50+ experts from Ukraine and abroad presenting speeches, research, practical solutions, and best practices to cycling infrastructure planners, local government representatives, and cycling activists
- Organized 2 cross-border bicycle rides along the EU border in Zakarpattia and Košice regions. Additionally, conducted practical training on the basics of marking and signing cycle tourism trails

And as the wheels turned, so did the pages of our story. Cross-border bicycle rides along the EU border in Zakarpattia and Košice region became symbols of unity and cooperation, while practical training sessions on the basics of marking and signing cycle tourism trails equipped the next generation of cyclists with the knowledge to explore new horizons. As the project reached its conclusion, the

message was clear and resonant: Improving Local Livelihood by Enhancing Cycling Infrastructure! This was not just a slogan but a call to action, a reminder that every pedal stroke is a step towards a greener, more connected world. The Bike AcceNT project may have ended, but its legacy continues to roll on, inspiring all bike lovers to take the path less travelled, for it is the path that leads to a sustainable future.



"Thanks to robust collaboration between project partners and beneficiaries from Ukraine and Slovakia, along with ongoing Program support, the project has laid the groundwork for enhanced cross-border mobility. By developing essential documents, it paves the way for hromadas to enhance cycling infrastructure and fosters communities committed to sustainable development and environmental preservation."

Ivan Zinoviev, project director, chairman of Center for social and business initiatives (Yaremche, Ukraine)



Modernization of the road connection between the Presov region and the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine

Nestled amidst the verdant landscapes of Slovakia's Prešov region, the road II/558 winds its way through quaint villages and picturesque countryside. Here, our journey began—a testament to the enduring spirit of collaboration and progress. Our shared commitment was clear: to unlock the full potential of cross-border connectivity.

In the initial stages of our endeavour, we encountered a myriad of challenges. The road, once riddled with potholes and uneven surfaces, posed a significant barrier to efficient travel and economic growth. Bridges, essential lifelines for local communities, were in dire need of modernization. Safety concerns at border crossings hindered the seamless flow of goods and people. However, undeterred by these obstacles, we forged ahead with determination and resolve.

Through the support of the programme and the dedication of our team, the landscape began to change. What were once rough patches of road transformed into smooth thoroughfares, facilitating smoother travel experiences for commuters and tourists

alike. With upgraded safety measures and modernized infrastructure, the project became a catalyst for regional development and prosperity.

Crossing the border into Ukraine, our mission continued along the P53 and H13 roads. Here, too, the impact of our efforts was profound. By revitalizing key transportation corridors, we not only enhanced trade and commerce but also strengthened the bonds of friendship and cooperation between neighbouring communities.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: PREZAK

ID: HUSKROUA/1701/LIP/001

Partnership:

LB: Roads Administration of Presov Self-governing Region (Presov, Slovakia)

B1: Service for Restoration and Infrastructure Development in Zakarpattia oblast (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 3 732 212,43

Implementation period:

December 2019 - August 2023



Our project is more than just bricks and mortar. It symbolizes the triumph of unity over division, of progress over stagnation. It serves as a guiding light for a brighter future, where borders are not barriers but gateways to opportunity.

The territory involved in the project spanned both the Slovak and Ukrainian sides. On the Slovak side, the road II/558, stretching 8.373 km from Stakčín to Ulič, was a joint I/74 road leading to the border crossing at Ublá - Malyj Bereznyj. Meanwhile, on the Ukrainian side, the P53 road connected Ublá - Malyj Bereznyj to the H13 road junction (2.8 km in length), and the H13 route extended from Malyj Bereznyj to Dubrynych (8.77 km in length).



The road infrastructure in this region had long suffered from a low standard. Potholes, uneven surfaces, and inadequate safety measures hindered local and tourist activities. The crossing of the border lacked predictability and speed, affecting both people and goods. The quality and thickness of the road networks fell short on both sides of the border.

Consider a scenario where the connection between Slovakia and Ukraine across the border could be strengthened through support from the European Union. Our project was dedicated to turning this vision into reality. First, we repaired the H-13 Lviv-Sambir-Uzhhorod road on the Ukrainian side. Simultaneously, on the Slovak side, we reconstructed sections of the II/558 road in Príslop and Ulič. Additionally, we modernized bridge crossings and repaired the P-53 access road to the “Malyi Bereznyi - Ubl'a” international border crossing point.

In just 24 months, we transformed the road surface, significantly increasing traffic intensity and improving cross-border mobility. The total length of reconstructed roads amounted to 19.943 km. Before the project began, the average number of vehicles on the H-13 road and the II/558 road per day was 4,143 (as evidenced by 2017 data). After the project's implementation, according to 2022 data, this number surged to 10,814.

Thanks to the successful execution of our project, transport links between Ukraine and EU countries have significantly improved. The country's economic development accelerated, traffic flow enhanced, and road safety bolstered. As we reflect on the journey thus far, we are filled with profound gratitude for all those who contributed to its success. From dedicated project teams and local stakeholders to supportive communities and visionary leaders,

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Modernization and restoration of road surfaces on both the Slovak and Ukrainian sides. Specifically, repairing the H-13 Lviv-Sambir-Uzhhorod road in Ukraine and reconstructing sections of the II/558 road in Slovakia, along with modernizing bridge crossings and repairing access roads to the international border crossing point
- Successfully repaired road surfaces, reconstructed road sections, and modernized bridge crossings. This resulted in a significant increase in traffic intensity and improved cross-border mobility for both people and goods
- Total length of reconstructed roads amounted to 19.943 km, spanning both the Slovak and Ukrainian sides of the border
- Before the project commenced, the average daily number of vehicles on the H-13 and II/558 roads was 4,143. However, after the project's implementation, this number surged to 10,814 vehicles per day by 2022, indicating a substantial increase in traffic flow

our achievements stand as a testament to the power of collective action and shared purpose. Looking ahead, we remain committed to building on our progress and expanding the horizons of possibility. New projects beckon on the horizon, fresh challenges await, and we stand poised on the threshold of a new era of cooperation and innovation.

Here's to the road ahead—may it be paved with promise, lined with opportunity, and illuminated by the enduring spirit of collaboration. For in the journey of progress, there are no shortcuts, only milestones to be celebrated and dreams to be realized. Together, we will continue to shape a future filled with hope, prosperity, and boundless possibility.



“The project tackled common challenges by modernizing existing road communications, facilitated by the long-standing Slovak-Ukrainian partnership. We aimed to enhance accessibility in border regions, optimize connections to major road networks, and upgrade transport infrastructure leading to the border. In addition, effectively addressed cross-border issues, reducing negative impacts and eliminating barriers to border access.”

Juliana Fecušová, project manager,
Roads Administration of Prešov self-governing region



Modernization of the road connection between the Presov region and the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine – 2. stage

Before we dive into the sequel, let's revisit the origins—the whispers that set the stage. The PREZAK project, our inaugural act, promised smoother journeys, economic prosperity, and shared dreams. Side by side, we toiled, bridging gaps, and laying foundations. The road surface trembled under the weight of our collective aspirations.

We embarked on the PREZAK 2 project with a vision of enhancing connectivity and fostering economic growth. Our goal was clear: to improve the road infrastructure between Slovakia and Ukraine, facilitating smoother and more efficient cross-border travel.

In Slovakia, we focused on the 3.318-kilometer section of the II/558 road, stretching from Topoľa crossing to Kolbasov and further to Ruský Potok crossing. This segment is part of the I/74 artery that leads to the border crossing at Ubla–Malyj Bereznyj. The need for modernization was evident, as the road had deteriorated over time, hindering local and cross-border traffic.

On the Ukrainian side, our attention turned to the H13 road, particularly the 1.8-kilometer stretch in Dubrynychy. This road is a crucial link from Ubla to Perechin and Uzhhorod, and its upgrade was essential for improving the regional infrastructure.

Over the course of 24 months, we worked diligently to repair and reconstruct these critical

road sections. Our efforts were not limited to laying asphalt; we also aimed to strengthen the road network's quality and safety standards.

The results of our work were significant. Traffic intensity on the transformed roads increased dramatically, with the average number of vehicles per day rising from 4,931 to 10,814 after the project's completion, according to 2022 data. This increase not only demonstrated the project's success in enhancing mobility but also indicated a positive impact on local and tourist activities.

The modernization and restoration of these roads, supported by the programme, have been a testament to the power of cooperation. The improved transport links have accelerated economic development, increased traffic flow, and enhanced road safety.

In conclusion, PREZAK project and its subsequent phases represent a collective effort to build not just roads but also opportunities for future growth and cooperation between nations. As the sun dips below the horizon, we stand at the crossroads. PREZAK sequel continues—a bridge between nations, a testament to unity. Our legacy? Not just asphalt and steel, but the promise of a brighter tomorrow. The road, once mere pavement, now echoes with the footsteps of those who dared to dream beyond borders.

PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: PREZAK 2
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/7.1/0055
Partnership:
LB: Roads Administration of Presov Self-governing Region (Presov, Slovakia)
B1: Service for Restoration and Infrastructure Development in Zakarpattia oblast (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 1 401 165,19
Implementation period: July 2021- October 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 5.118 km of roads reconstructed, comprising sections of the II/558 road in Slovakia and the H-13 road in Ukraine. This modernization significantly upgraded the road infrastructure on both sides of the border
- Significantly improved cross-border mobility for both people and goods between the Prešov region of Slovakia and Zakarpattia region of Ukraine
- Substantial increase in traffic intensity on both the H-13 road in Ukraine and the II/558 road in Slovakia. The average number of vehicles per day more than doubled from 4,931 (in 2020) to 10,814 (in 2022) after the completion of the project



Improving accessibility and mobility in the SK-UA cross-border region

In the heart of the Eastern Carpathians UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, Poloniny National Park and Užhansky National Park serve as focal points for our project, aiming to tackle the challenge of insufficient cycling infrastructure to bolster tourism in underdeveloped areas. The peripheral regions of these parks faced a notable challenge: a scarcity of cycling paths, which limited the potential for tourism despite the areas' inherent promise for growth.

Recognizing the need for enhanced accessibility and tourism development, we embarked on the ambitious task of building a network of hiking trails, with the Poloniny Trail as our flagship project, connecting natural and cultural landmarks across three neighbouring states. As part of the Carpathian Mobility project, we took concrete steps to address this issue by constructing the first kilometers of cycling trails

(6.5 km) on both sides of the border, establishing cycling rest areas in Slovakia, marking over 240 km of existing trails in Ukraine, and organizing educational activities and conferences to raise awareness. Additionally, we installed cycle counters to gather valuable data on cyclist numbers, crucial for future planning. Our efforts yielded tangible results, including the construction of the first stage of the Poloniny Trail (4.6 km) and the Užanský Trail (1.8 km), clearance and marking of 240 km of cycling trails in the Užansky National Park, and the development of 14 small infrastructure elements. Moreover, we engaged with the community through 8 public events and crafted 3 strategic documents for further development, while laying the groundwork for marketing communication through a modern logo and design manual.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Carpathian Mobility

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/7.1/0054

Partnership:

LB: Prešov Self-Governing Region (Prešov, Slovakia)

B1: Velykyj Bereznyj Village Council (Velykyj Bereznyj, Ukraine)

B2: Interregional Centre of Cross-Border Cooperation (Perechyn, Ukraine)

B3: Forests of the Slovak Republic, state enterprise, Banská Bystrica (Banská Bystrica, Slovakia)

B4: Municipality of Stakčín (Stakčín, Slovakia)

B5: Municipality of Ulič (Ulič, Slovakia)

EU contribution: EUR 1 092 497,80

Implementation period:

June 2021 - December 2023

The Carpathian Mobility project has successfully demonstrated the impact of cross-border cooperation in developing cycle tourism and fostering economic growth. It has set a precedent for public administration and local stakeholders to work together towards a sustainable and economically prosperous future.

The success of the Carpathian Mobility project is a testament to the power of strategic planning and collaborative efforts in overcoming regional challenges. Moving forward, the focus will shift towards expanding the existing network, maintaining the infrastructure, and continuously engaging with the local

communities to ensure sustainable growth. Future plans include extending the cycling trails further into both parks, enhancing the connectivity between natural and cultural landmarks, and promoting eco-friendly tourism. By leveraging the data collected from the cycle counters, we aim to tailor our developments to meet the needs of cyclists, ensuring a user-friendly and enjoyable experience. The project stands as a model for similar initiatives in other underdeveloped areas, proving that with dedication and cooperation, substantial progress can be achieved, ultimately transforming the region into a thriving hub for cycle tourism.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Construction of the first stage of the Poloniny Trail (4.6 km) and the Užanský Trail (1.8 km), laying the foundation for a network of cycling trails in the region
- Clearance and marking of 240 km of cycling trails in the Užanský National Park, improving accessibility for visitors
- Establishment of 14 elements of small infrastructure, enhancing the overall cycling experience
- Organization of 8 public events with a total attendance of 500 participants, fostering community engagement and awareness
- Development of 3 strategic documents for further tourism development, providing a roadmap for sustainable growth
- Creation of modern marketing communication tools, including a logo and design manual for the Poloniny Trail, facilitating promotion and branding efforts
- Installation of cycle counters on both sides of the border, providing valuable data on cyclist numbers and usage patterns



Carpathian Small Aviation – new approaches for mobility of persons and goods in Carpathian region

In the verdant expanses of the Carpathian region, where the borders of Romania, Ukraine, Hungary, and Slovakia converge, the Carpathian Small Aviation project took flight. This initiative soared beyond conventional transport methods, offering a sky-high solution to the region's unique geographical challenges.

The Carpathian landscape, with its rolling hills and scattered settlements, presents a picturesque yet formidable barrier to land-based travel. Highways are scarce, and the journey between points is often long and arduous. But where roads end, our ambition takes wing. The project proposed a novel idea: why not leap over these obstacles using small aviation?

Small aviation is a staple in Western Europe's mobility, yet it remained untapped in our region. We saw potential in the skies – a way to bypass lengthy border waits and transform hours of travel into mere minutes. Our vision was clear: utilize existing airports, engage communities to establish airfields, and weave a network of shared experiences and resources.

We surveyed every airport, no matter how small, and fostered connections that spanned across borders. Airport directors from Nyíregyháza, Uzhhorod, and Satu Mare united in Nyíregyháza, symbolizing a new era of cooperation. Test flights traced the invisible lines that divide our lands, proving that the sky holds no barriers.

Our journey was not without turbulence. War in Ukraine cast a shadow over our plans, closing Ukraine's airspace and grounding our aspirations. Yet, we adapted, turning our focus to festivals that celebrated small aviation.

A network emerged, connecting pilots, airports, and mayors. Together, we created a practical guide for establishing airfields, a VFR guide for pilots, and a Small Airports Concept. These documents are not just pages; they are blueprints for a future where small aviation redefines cross-border mobility.

As we stand at the threshold of tomorrow, we look to the skies with hope. New airfields will dot the landscape, festivals will bring us together, and pilots will soar on the wings of training and innovation. Our objective remains steadfast: to create a sustainable platform for effective cross-border mobility, leveraging the sky as our path to a connected future.

PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: Carpathian Small Aviation
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/7.1/0053
Partnership:
LB: Satu Mare International Airport (Satu Mare, Romania)
B1: Communal enterprise "Agency of Regional Development and Cross-Border Co-operation "Transcarpathia" of Zakarpattia Oblast Council" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B2: International Association of Regional Development Institutions (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)
B3: Regional Development Association for the Carpathian Euroregion (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)
B4: Regional Innovation Agency (Košice, Slovakia)
EU contribution: EUR 999 997,56
Implementation period: November 2021 - December 2023



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Introduced innovative approaches to transportation by leveraging small aviation development for the mobility of people and goods in border regions
- Pilot communities in Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and Ukraine empowered through training on creating landing strips and aerodromes, fostering local involvement and collaboration in the development of small aviation infrastructure
- Two airports acquired new equipment and improved their infrastructure, enhancing their capacity to support small aviation activities and promote cross-border mobility
- Web-based tools and platforms were developed to provide communities and pilots with necessary information regarding flights, directions, possibilities, educational sessions, and demonstration flights, thereby enhancing accessibility and awareness of small aviation opportunities
- Established flight-sharing platform for pilots in the Carpathian region
- Despite challenges such as airspace restrictions due to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the project laid the groundwork for future development, organized small aviation festivals and engaged local settlements to promote awareness and interest in small aviation





Common challenges in the field of safety and security

The region is prone to natural hazards like floods and landslides, particularly near rivers such as the Tisza. Effective geomonitoring and early warning systems are essential to mitigate these risks. The increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events due to climate change pose significant challenges for disaster preparedness and response. Coordinating emergency responses across borders requires harmonized procedures and effective communication channels, as differences in national policies and practices can hinder swift joint action during emergencies.

Due to the geographical and natural characteristics of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Programme area—characterized by extensive forest reserves, significant river systems with considerable seasonal variations in water flow, and mountainous regions—the potential impact of environmental disasters poses a substantial risk to the local population and businesses. Climate change is likely to exacerbate these risks, increasing the frequency and severity of such disasters. In response, local and regional strategies are essential to prevent the aggravation of climate-related problems, mitigate local impacts, and adapt to anticipated changes. Moreover,

Flood Protection and Infrastructure Development:

- Arranged Valea Săcăturii Creek over 970 meters for flood protection
- Enhanced flood protection infrastructure along the Tisza river basin through dike refurbishment, channel reconstruction, and bank consolidation
- Improved road structure and household sewerage over 1.2 km
- Constructed two transverse bridges, 16 access bridges, and drainage systems
- Created a basis for further development of flood protection systems and water scarcity mitigation measures in the Uzh River basin
- Established a dedicated Flood Protection Center for emergency coordination
- Enhanced disaster intervention capabilities and facilitated effective joint intervention efforts across borders

uncontrolled industrial emissions could lead to accidental emergencies with serious cross-border consequences. Recognizing the significant risks posed by environmental disasters, the Programme allocated 18% of the funds to Priority 8.1: Support to joint activities for the prevention of natural and man-made disasters and joint action during emergency situations. This priority aims to enhance the preparedness of authorities and residents in the border region to manage emergency situations caused by natural disasters such as floods, fires, avalanches, and landslides, as well as industrial accidents that generate cross-border pollution impacts. Additionally, the priority seeks to improve the effectiveness of environmental monitoring activities.

During the 2014-2020 period, the programme funded **12 cross-border cooperation projects** with more than €12,633,169.43 of EU funding. These initiatives brought together **52 beneficiaries**. The cooperation between project beneficiaries, including the sharing of experiences and the integration of existing systems, has led to increased effectiveness in forecasting, monitoring, and managing disasters. This collaborative approach has substantially reduced the risk of disasters in the region, enhancing the resilience and safety of the border communities. Project partnerships collaborated on:

Emergency Communication and Coordination:

- Established a fully digitalized emergency communication network covering Zakarpattia
- Created an Integrated Command Center in Maramureş for emergency response coordination
- Developed the first civilian-technical rescue base in cooperation of local directorates of Red Cross, churches and municipalities in the border region

Equipment Procurement and Preparedness:

- Acquired intervention equipment, electronic warning sirens, and electric generators
- Procured specific laboratory equipment for genetic analysis of blood samples to combat African swine fever

Climate Strategy and Dissemination Efforts:

- Successfully prepared a comprehensive climate strategy for the Upper Tisza river catchment area
- Conducted extensive dissemination efforts, including informational articles, printed materials, eco-benches, and eco-educational trainings

Overall, the joint efforts under Priority 8.1 have significantly strengthened disaster prevention and management capabilities in the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Programme area, contributing to the safety and security of the region's inhabitants and the protection of its natural and industrial environments.

In the pursuit of safety and security within the thematic objective of supporting health development in the border region of Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine, several common challenges emerge, echoing the complexity of cross-border cooperation and holistic healthcare advancement. Coordinating and harmonizing efforts across diverse regulatory frameworks and administrative procedures inherent to each participating country poses a significant challenge. This complexity necessitates cohesive strategies that transcend geopolitical boundaries to address health-related issues effectively, including disparities in healthcare infrastructure, service accessibility, and resource allocation.

Moreover, the region faces persistent threats from cross-border health hazards, such as infectious diseases, environmental pollution, and inadequate healthcare access

in remote areas. These threats are exacerbated by factors such as population movement, economic disparities, and climate change. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that integrates public health interventions, infrastructure development, and community engagement across borders. Additionally, ensuring the resilience of health systems to withstand emergencies, such as pandemics or natural disasters, remains a critical priority for enhancing safety and security in the region. Under Priority 8.2, the programme financed **20 cross-border cooperation projects** with a total EU allocation of €13,007,206.95 contracted, representing 19% of total contracted EU funds. These initiatives aimed to bolster healthcare infrastructure and equipping with the highest standard of medical devices, enhance cross-border knowledge transfer, and address the region's health challenges comprehensively, involving **53 beneficiaries**.

Healthcare Infrastructure Enhancement:

- Established CF Center within IF Children's Hospital, equipped with modern tools and staff
- Procured essential medical equipment for facilities to enhance capabilities and ensure patient safety
- Rebuilt radiology departments and renovated facilities to accommodate new equipment, improving service delivery

Disease Management and Early Detection:

- Established CF patients Registry for international collaboration and timely interventions
- Screened and diagnosed cases for cancer and other diseases, enabling early treatment

Cross-Border Collaboration:

- Facilitated cross-border collaboration, fostering exchange of knowledge and resources between institutions
- Strengthened professional connections between medical professionals from different countries

Community Support and Empowerment:

- Increased parental involvement in patient care and provided support to families with children in need
- Established Sure Start Children's Homes, providing tailored support to families in marginalized communities

Improvement in Emergency Care:

- Enhanced emergency care capabilities through equipment procurement and infrastructure upgrades
- Developed standardized procedures and protocols for emergency care, improving patient outcomes

Professional Development and Training:

- Conducted educational events and online training sessions for healthcare professionals to enhance skills
- Provided therapy sessions and professional training on infectious disease management and microbiological practices
- Organized joint workshops and professional trainings for experience exchange and skill enhancement



In addition to the previously mentioned initiatives, €500,000 from the savings of the Programme budget have been allocated for humanitarian projects in Ukraine. These funds were allocated without a competition, through a direct award, for the following needs:

Support to Vulnerable Populations:

- Procured 320 "Suitcases into the Future" distributed to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and local students, each containing vital supplies for academic and daily life
- Delivered 3,614 food packages to the local families, including elderly, offering comfort and nutrition
- Conducted 1,341 therapy sessions with the new Neurofeedback and BEMER equipment, coupled with mental health consultancy for those affected by the war
- Provided direct support to approximately 6,000 IDPs in Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia regions, including the distribution of non-perishable food, essential household and hygiene kits, firewood, fuel briquettes, and carbon-monoxide detectors

Medical Equipment and Healthcare Enhancement:

- Procured 4 medical equipment units to enhance the therapy center's capabilities
- Procured and distributed 26 pieces of advanced medical equipment to three hospitals in Zakarpattia, potentially benefiting approximately 39,000 people and notably improving health services in the region, especially in neonatal care

Infrastructure and Food Processing:

- Established a freeze-drying kitchen equipped with 5 freeze-dryers to process and send food to those near active war zones



Cooperation for effective response

In the Upper-Tisza region, we, a consortium of dedicated cross-border organizations prioritized disaster management and environmental protection. The borderlands between Hungary and Ukraine, a mosaic of cultures and histories, had become a battleground against increasingly ferocious floods. Confronted with the escalating threat of floods, our project's goal was to fortify the region against the ravages of water, safeguarding communities and ecosystems alike.

We recognized that the rising waters did not respect borders or barriers; they were a shared adversary that demanded a united front. Thus, we resolved to forge a rapid response unit, a beacon of cooperation and resilience. This unit would not only respond to emergencies but also embody the spirit of cross-border cooperation, a testament to the strength found in unity.

Our vision was clear: to cultivate a well-equipped, well-trained team capable of coordinating protection efforts across the region. We envisioned joint training programs and workshops, a fertile ground for the exchange of experiences, and the creation of headquarters that would serve as nerve centers for our operations.

As we delved into the implementation of our project, we witnessed the transformation of individuals into a formidable collective force. Our training programs and workshops became arenas of learning and growth, where theoretical knowledge met practical application. We trained 15 imitators who, in turn, became the torchbearers of our mission, imparting first aid training and psychosocial support to those who would stand on the front lines. The knowledge we amassed was not kept within the walls of our headquarters; it rippled outwards, reaching volunteers, firefighter associations, and rescue teams across Ukraine and Romania. They learned the intricacies of disaster prevention, flood rescue, and the compassionate treatment of those in distress. Through this knowledge transfer, we sparked the creation of new competences and operational units, ready to rise to the occasion when disaster struck.

Our achievements were not just theoretical; they were tangible and measurable. Specifically, 170 participants at the Transcarpathian Reformed Church acquired new skills. Berehove District Organization of the Ukrainian Red Cross witnessed the training of 100 members. Meanwhile, an impressive 602 participants at

PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: COPE
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.1/0125
Partnership:
LB: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Directorate of Hungarian Red Cross (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)
B1: Local government of Vagashuta village (Vágáshuta, Hungary)
B2: Transcarpathian Reformed Church (Berehovo, Ukraine)
B3: Berehove District Organization of Ukrainian Red Cross (Berehovo, Ukraine)
B4: Romanian Red Cross Satu Mare Branch (Satu Mare, Romania)
EU contribution: EUR 534 900,71
Implementation period: July 2020 - October 2021

the Romanian Red Cross Satu Mare Branch emerged as community guardians.

We equipped ourselves with the tools of the trade, from first aid kits to technical rescue devices. We built an online platform that would serve as a digital arsenal, ensuring that our resources were meticulously catalogued and ready for deployment.

At the headquarter of the Hungarian Lead Beneficiary, in Nyíregyháza, we established a logistical warehouse, a hub of coordination and supply. At its branch in Vásárosnamény, we breathed new life into a disaster management base, fortifying it as a bulwark against calamity. In addition, in the neighbouring Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, in Vágáshuta, we pioneered the first civilian-technical rescue base, a place where local heroes could hone their skills and prepare for the challenges ahead.

We did not stop at infrastructure; we revitalized our headquarters, transforming them into bastions of readiness and response. We engaged in public preparedness activities, sowing the seeds of awareness and action within our communities.

Our story is one of triumph over both floods and barriers. United, we are a force of nature, driven to protect lives and preserve environments. We are inspired by the belief that our actions today create a legacy of resilience for future generations.

Now, as we reflect on our journey, we see a region transformed—a landscape where rivers once threatened now flows in harmony with well-prepared communities. Our collaborative efforts have not only mitigated the impacts of natural disasters but also forged a legacy of solidarity and preparedness. The bonds we have strengthened and the knowledge we have shared ensure that the Upper-Tisza region stands as a beacon of resilience, ready to face the future's challenges with unwavering unity and determination.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 870+ participants trained in disaster prevention, management, and response
- Establishment of a rapid response unit and new operational units for disaster management
- Infrastructure upgrades including logistical warehouses, rescue bases, and renovated headquarters
- Development of an online platform for assistance and coordination.
- Enhanced cross-border collaboration and community resilience against natural disasters



Joint activities for the prevention of natural disasters in the transboundary Uzh river basin

Frequent floods, water scarcity, and the impacts of climate change have posed significant challenges in the Uzh River basin, necessitating collaborative efforts between Ukrainian (UA) and Slovakian (SK) water management authorities. As a team, we recognized the urgency of addressing these issues and embarked on a joint initiative to enhance resilience and mitigate risks in our shared catchment area.

With the support of the Programme, we seized the opportunity to develop and implement the FloodUZH project, aimed at tackling the escalating threats in our region. Drawing upon the EU Flood Directive, we applied innovative approaches such as modeling, flood hazard and risk mapping, and the formulation of flood risk mitigation plans to lay the groundwork for coordinated water resource management and spatial development on both sides of the border.

Throughout the project's duration, which spanned 48 months, we achieved significant milestones. We enhanced spatial and hydrological data covering the transboundary basin of the Uzh River, spanning 1854 km², providing invaluable insights into flood risks and vulnerabilities. Meticulously, we developed a total of 996 flood hazard and risk maps, empowering relevant authorities and local communities with vital information for effective flood protection planning and organization. In our efforts to bolster resilience against future water scarcity, we focused on the Zakarpattia regional center of Uzhhorod. Here, we developed design documentation for a regulating weir on the Uzh River, marking a significant milestone in enhancing water retention capabilities and resilience against water scarcity.

We executed a comprehensive communication plan, comprising over 90 informative articles, 2600 printed materials, establishment of 8 eco-benches with gadget charging facilities, hosting of 28 eco-educational trainings, and organizing 22 events, including meetings, conferences, and workshops.

As a result, FloodUZH project has left a lasting impact on our region. We have laid a robust groundwork for the continued development of flood protection systems and the mitigation of water scarcity impacts in the Uzh River basin. Furthermore, we have fostered an integrated river basin approach, enhancing collaboration and coordination between UA and SK authorities.

"HUSKROUA ENI CBC Programme significantly improved our water management in the Tisza River Basin. As the Tisza River Basin Water Resources Directorate, responsible for water management and flood protection, we successfully implemented vital aspects of our mandate. Despite budget constraints, programme provided invaluable resources, including the development of 2D flood models and comprehensive flood mapping for the transboundary Uzh basin, greatly enhancing our flood forecasting abilities."

Kysil Oleg

Head of the Tisza River Basin Water Resources Management Authority, Project Coordinator



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: FloodUZH-

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.1/0005

Partnership:

LB: Tisza River Basin Water Resources Directorate (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B1: Slovak Water Management Enterprise, state enterprise (Banská Štiavnica, Slovakia)

B2: Uzhhorod Interrayon Department of Water Management (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B3: Department for International Cooperation and Innovations of Uzhgorod City Council (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B4: Non-Governmental Organization EKOSFERA (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

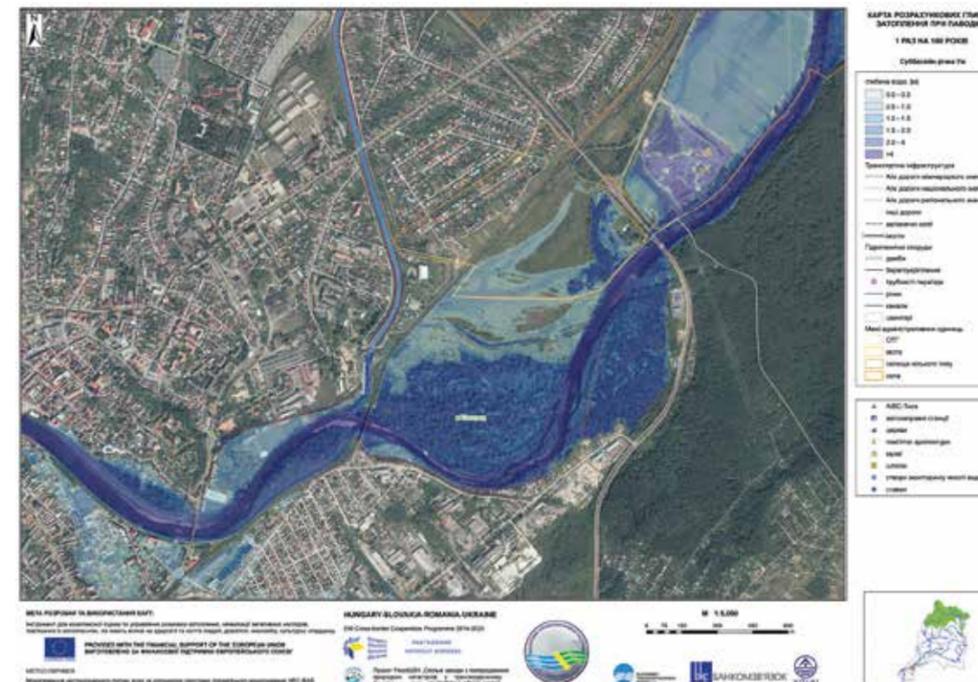
EU contribution: EUR 1 034 196,21

Implementation period:

September 2019 - August 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Enhanced spatial and hydrological data covering 1854 km² of the Uzh River basin
- Developed 996 flood hazard and risk maps, distributed to relevant authorities and local communities
- Elaborated design documentation for the regulating weir on the Uzh River in Uzhhorod
- Extensive dissemination efforts, including 90 informational articles, 2600 printed materials, 8 eco-benches, 28 eco-educational trainings, and 22 events (meetings, conferences, workshops)
- Strengthened cooperation and knowledge exchange through joint meetings, workshops, forums, and study tours involving water management specialists, decision-makers, and community representatives
- Created a basis for further development of flood protection systems and water scarcity mitigation measures in the Uzh River basin, as well as improved integrated river basin management along the Ukraine-Slovakia boundary waters



During public events, particularly the closing conference, we highlighted the significance of our project's outcomes. We emphasized that the practical materials and knowledge acquired through our project have empowered water management specialists, decision-makers, and communities in the Uzh River basin to effectively mitigate and adapt to climate change. These outcomes provide momentum for future cross-border cooperation projects aimed at the sustainable development of border areas.

Our efforts touched lives. Farmers, families, and decision-makers felt the ripple effect. FloodUZH is not just a chapter—it is a catalyst. Our shared waters bind us, and our commitment endures.

Strengthening of cross-border safety by joint measures aimed at flood and inland water prevention in the interfluves of Tisza-Tur rivers

In the heart of Europe, where the Tisza and Tur rivers intertwine, lies a region that has weathered both abundance and adversity. Ukraine and Hungary share this land—a land where the same waters that nourish the soil can, without warning, turn into a destructive force, leaving behind a trail of floods and droughts. Our journey begins here, where water is both a lifeline and a formidable foe. The interfluves of the Tisza and Tur rivers have witnessed the wrath of extreme weather conditions. Communities along these banks have grappled with the paradox of water scarcity amidst fertile lands. It was clear that a unified response was needed—a response that transcended borders and harnessed collective wisdom.

Recognizing the gravity of this challenge, water managers from both nations embarked on a mission to fortify their defences against the whims of nature. The call was clear: to strengthen professional cross-border cooperation, to bolster investments in flood protection organizations, and to enhance technical capacities. It was a call to unite against a common adversary—the unpredictability of the elements.

In response, Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine programme extended a hand of solidarity, offering technical assistance and support for joint activities aimed at preventing natural and man-made disasters. The goal was not just to mitigate the negative impacts but to turn the tide in favour of safety and security.

With a clear roadmap delineated, SAFETISZA initiative embarked on a multifaceted approach to fortify the region's defences. The project began with assessment, identifying the weak points in the existing system of flood protection and the hydrotechnical structures that stood as silent guardians of the region. With precision and care, the teams worked to reinforce these critical points, ensuring that they could withstand the trials to come.

The reconstruction of 9.5 km of the Tisza flood protection dike in Ukraine and the refurbishment of channels spanning 6.7 km in Hungary marked the second phase of the project. The construction of bank consolidation stretching 910 m in Ukraine and a sluice in Hungary followed, each a piece in the intricate puzzle of regional safety.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: SAFETISZA

ID: HUSKROUA/1701/LIP/003

Partnership:

LB: Tisza River Basin Water Resources Directorate (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B1: Non-Governmental Organization EKOSFERA (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: Upper-Tisza Regional Water Directorate (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B3: Vynohradiv Interrayon Department of Water Management (Vynogradovo, Ukraine)

B4: Berehovo Rayon State Administration (Berehovo, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 3 714 876,00

Implementation period:

August 2019 - November 2023

The final stroke in this masterpiece of engineering and cooperation was the establishment of a local Flood Protection Center in Ukraine. Alongside this, the acquisition of maintenance techniques and the construction of a dike maintenance road extending 5.65 km in Hungary solidified the region's defences.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Through extensive reconstruction efforts, including dike refurbishment, channel reconstruction, and bank consolidation, the project significantly bolstered the flood protection infrastructure along the Tisza river basin. This has resulted in heightened resilience against high floods, offering increased safety to communities residing in the region
- Acquisition of maintenance equipment and the construction of a dike maintenance road have enhanced the technical capacities of local authorities and stakeholders. This enables more efficient and effective responses to flood-related challenges, ensuring the longevity and functionality of the implemented infrastructure
- Establishment of a dedicated Flood Protection Center serves as a centralized hub for emergency coordination and proactive measures. This facilitates swift responses to potential flood threats and enables the implementation of preventive measures to mitigate risks effectively
- Completion of the Tisza flood protection line has directly benefited numerous settlements, safeguarding approximately 33,000 inhabitants from the devastating impacts of high floods. This has not only ensured their safety but has also contributed to the overall well-being and quality of life within the region
- By mitigating the risks associated with flooding, the project has created a conducive environment for socio-economic development within the Tisza river basin. Communities can now pursue economic and social activities with greater confidence, leading to improved livelihoods and overall prosperity
- Project's success has garnered recognition and appreciation from various stakeholders, including local authorities and high-level officials. Their acknowledgment underscores the significance of cross-border cooperation and collaborative efforts in addressing complex challenges and ensuring the safety and security of communities

Over the implementation period, SAFETISZA project achieved what once seemed a distant dream. The Tisza flood protection line was completed, stretching 32 km, with reconstructed works of 9.5 km of the Tisza flood protection dike, complete with bank consolidation. This Herculean effort now shields 14 settlements in Ukraine and 5 in Hungary, safeguarding the lives and livelihoods of 33,000 inhabitants from the centennial flood.

As the First Deputy Head of the Zakarpattia Regional State Administration, Myroslav Biletskyi, and other dignitaries stood before the reconstructed Tisza river dike, their words echoed the sentiment of gratitude and pride. The SAFETISZA project, they proclaimed, was a shining example of successful cross-border cooperation—a symbol of what can be achieved when international partners unite for the common good.

In the wake of SAFETISZA's success, the region emerges fortified against the specter of calamity, poised to embrace a future characterized by resilience, prosperity, and shared prosperity. The significance of our project extends beyond mere infrastructure enhancement; it catalyzes a ripple effect of positive socio-economic change. With enhanced flood protection measures in place, communities are liberated from the shackles of perpetual uncertainty, fostering an environment conducive to sustainable development and growth.



The safeguarding of vital agricultural lands, residential areas, and critical infrastructure not only secures livelihoods but also facilitates the expansion of economic activities, spurring investment and job creation across the region.

Moreover, collaborative ethos underpinning SAFETISZA serves as a blueprint for future cross-border initiatives, transcending geographical boundaries to foster enduring partnerships built on trust, mutual respect, and shared objectives. As nations unite in the face of adversity, bridging divides and pooling resources, the potential for collective progress knows no bounds.

In the realm of environmental stewardship, SAFETISZA project stands as a testament to the imperative of harmonizing human development with ecological preservation. By fortifying flood protection measures and mitigating

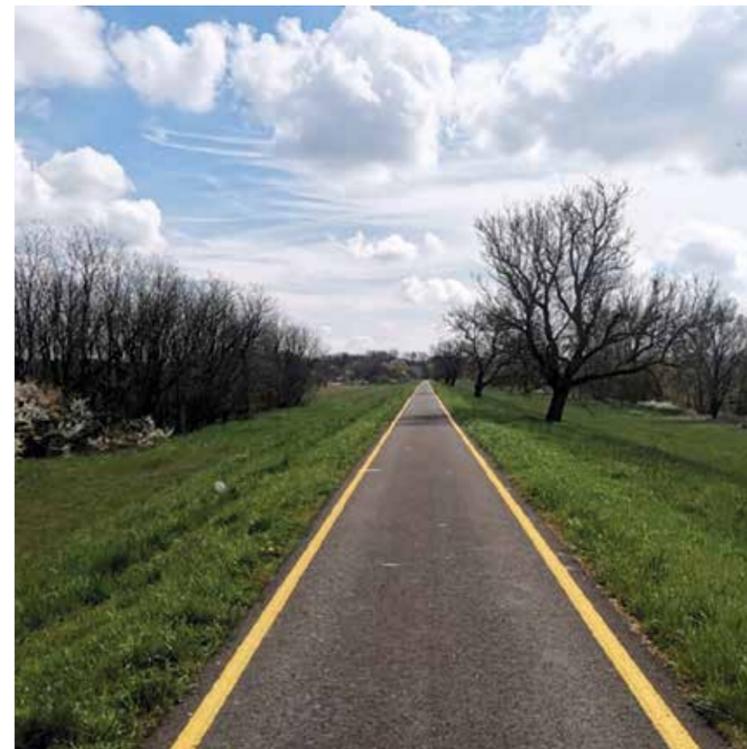
the risk of environmental degradation, the project exemplifies a holistic approach to sustainable resource management, ensuring the long-term viability of the Tisza river basin for generations to come.

As we reflect on the transformative impact of the initiative, we are reminded of the power inherent in collaboration, innovation, and unwavering determination. In the face of daunting challenges, we have witnessed the triumph of solidarity over adversity, as communities unite to confront shared threats and forge a path towards a brighter, more resilient future.

In conclusion, SAFETISZA project stands as a testament to the transformative potential of cross-border cooperation in addressing the complex challenges posed by climate change and environmental degradation. Through strategic investments in flood protection

infrastructure, technical capacity building, and collaborative endeavours, our initiative has not only safeguarded vulnerable communities but also catalyzed a broader paradigm shift towards sustainable development and resilience. As we celebrate the successes of SAFETISZA, let us reaffirm our commitment to collective action, recognizing that by working together, we can overcome even the most formidable of challenges and build a future defined by prosperity, security, and shared prosperity.

Today, as the waters of the Tisza flow with a gentle assurance, SAFETISZA project stands as a testament to human ingenuity and the enduring spirit of collaboration. It is a legacy that will be told for generations to come, a tale of a region that stood firm against the tides and emerged stronger, together.



“Programme enabled us to enhance our water management complex, crucial for flood protection in the Tisza basin. With limited state funds, this program was instrumental in realizing vital infrastructure projects, safeguarding 19 settlements across borders.”

Kysil Oleh, Project coordinator

Participation in the programme significantly elevated our specialists' professional skills. Through project involvement, our experts gained hands-on experience in modern technologies and techniques, enhancing their proficiency in water and flood management.”

Chipak Volodymyr, Project technical expert

“Collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders was indispensable in achieving project goals effectively. Constant communication and involvement of stakeholders not only facilitated project implementation but also elevated their professional capacities, enabling them to act as partners. The support from programme was invaluable. Their constant assistance and expertise ensured smooth project realization, demonstrating a genuine interest in addressing project-related challenges promptly and effectively.”

**Maryna Skral, Project manager,
the Head of the International Cooperation Division of Tisza River Basin Water
Resources Directorate**

Common Development of Volunteer Disaster Intervention Capability

In today's rapidly evolving social, industrial, and environmental landscapes, the imperative to prepare for disasters and respond swiftly to emergencies has become increasingly apparent. The challenges posed by indicated risks necessitate a proactive approach to disaster intervention and the enhancement of emergency response capabilities for the populace. As these risks continue to escalate in scale and complexity, addressing them requires a concerted effort to leverage societal resources more effectively, augment capacities, and embrace innovative integrated approaches.

Volunteer organizations play a crucial role in disaster management and response efforts, yet they often encounter obstacles in building capacity and acquiring necessary resources. Recognizing this gap, our project, operating in the north-eastern Carpathian region, embarked on a mission to address these challenges by expanding volunteer intervention capabilities through collaboration, innovation, and strategic partnership.

Our approach was comprehensive and multifaceted, aimed at not only developing equipment but also focusing on the expansion of human resources. By modernizing existing intervention capacities and establishing new, well-prepared volunteer forces, our goal was to significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster response efforts in the region. Collaborating with the Zemplén Regional Disaster and Civil Defence Association, we secured support from the HUSKROUA 2014-2020 program, enabling us to pursue our objectives with vigour and determination.

Working closely with a diverse array of stakeholders, including volunteer and religious organizations, as well as local governments, we

adopted a pragmatic, task-oriented development strategy. This collaborative approach yielded tangible results, significantly improving security and resilience in the region. By fostering cross-border cooperation and synergy, we established networks for volunteer intervention that facilitated faster, more coordinated responses to disasters, ultimately saving lives and minimizing damage.

Our project activities encompassed a wide range of initiatives, including the establishment of disaster response networks, the implementation of joint preparedness programs, the coordination of preventive activities, and the enhancement of intervention infrastructure. Additionally, we made strategic investments in technology and equipment procurement, ensuring optimal utilization and cost-effectiveness in our efforts.

The successful implementation of our project serves as a model for others, inspiring community members to support their fellow citizens through volunteer efforts. By fostering cross-border cooperation, we have strengthened disaster management

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CODE VDIC

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.1/0035

Partnership:

LB: Zemplén Region Civil Protection and Disaster Management Association (Sátorajújhely, Hungary)

B1: Volunteer Firefighter Association Pálháza (Pálháza, Hungary)

B2: Municipality of Kráľovský Chlmec (Kráľovský Chlmec, Slovakia)

B3: Town of Seini (Seini, Romania)

B4: Babeş-Bolyai University (Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

B5: Transcarpathian Reformed Church (Berehovo, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 847 630,69

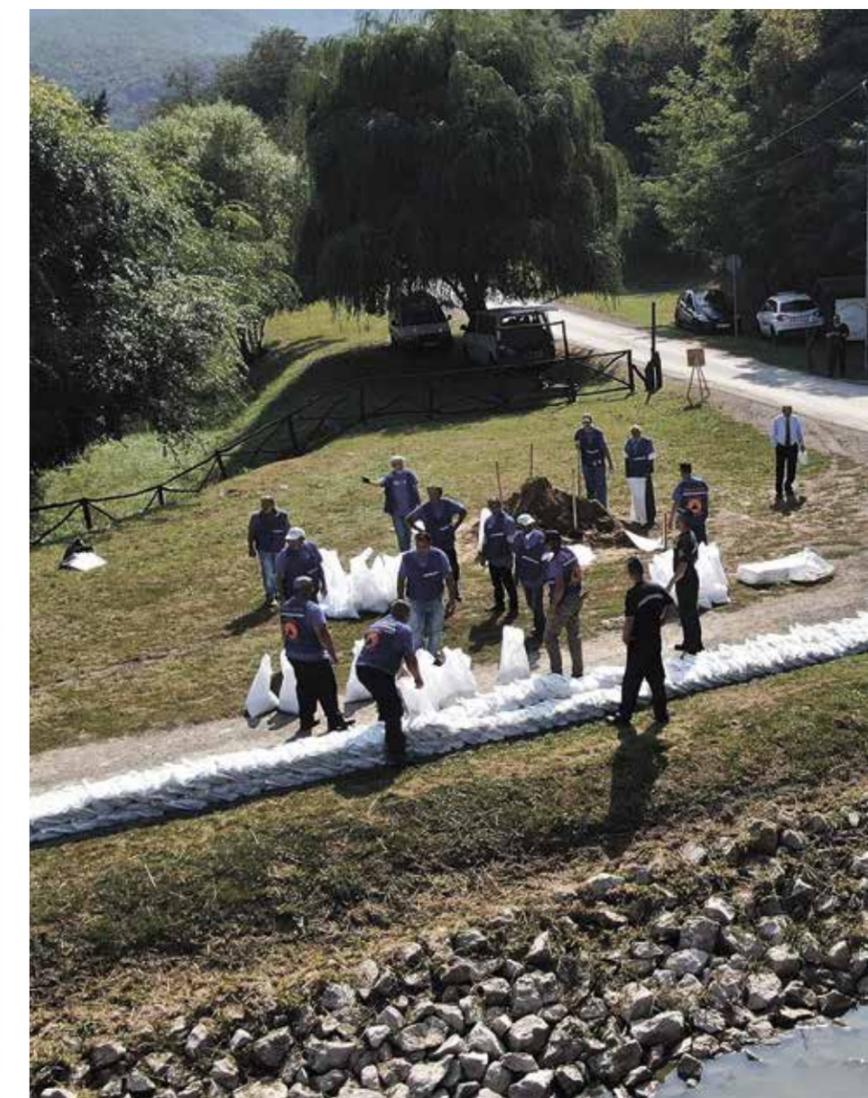
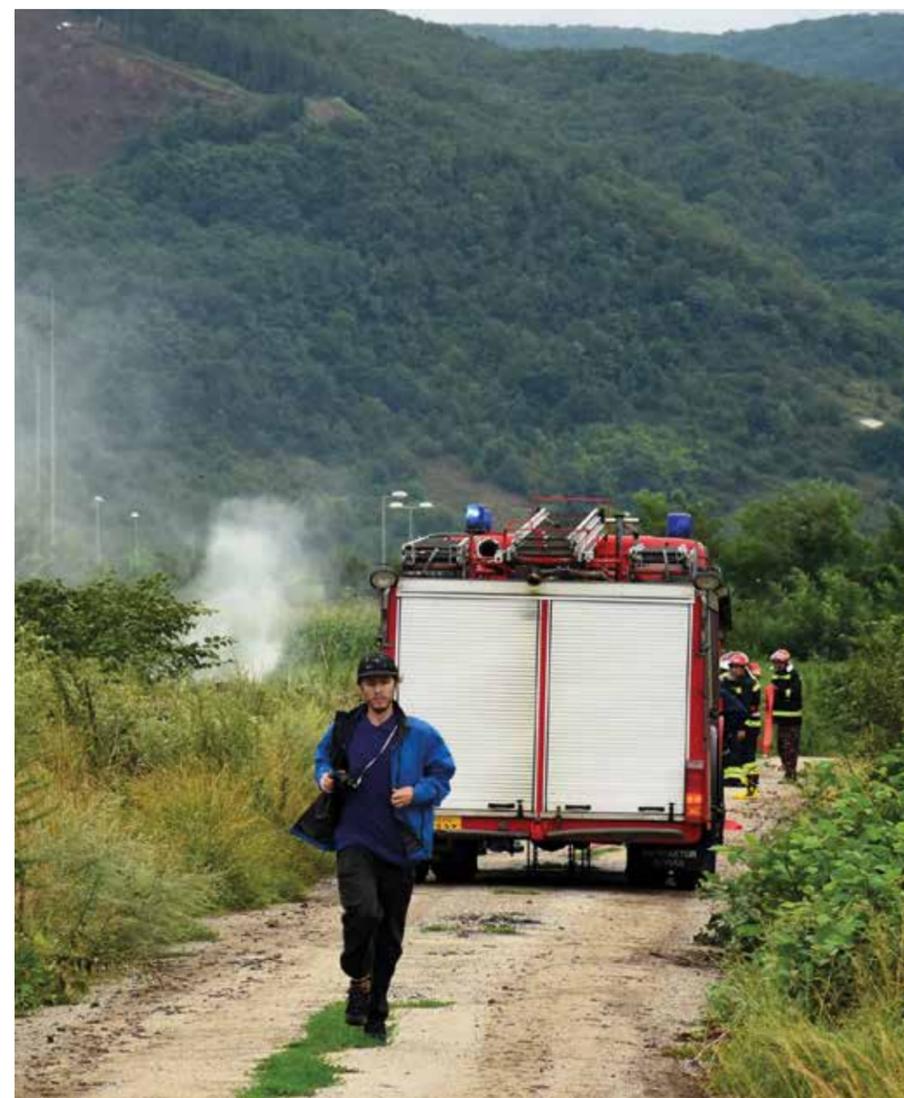
Implementation period: September 2019 - January 2022

capabilities and increased public awareness of emergency preparedness. We believe that this noble task will continue to attract citizens willing to take risks for the greater good. Together, we are building a safer and more resilient future for our communities.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Enhanced disaster intervention capabilities: through targeted expansion of human resources and modernization of existing intervention capacities, the project significantly improved the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster response efforts
- Cross-border collaboration: project facilitated effective joint intervention efforts across national and regional borders, enabling higher-level and faster responses to disasters
- Establishment of Disaster Response Networks: creation of the Carpathian Region Disaster Event Response and Mitigation Network fostered coordination and cooperation among volunteer organizations and local governments
- Implementation of joint preparedness programs aimed at enhancing the region's capacity to respond to disasters effectively
- Strengthened intervention infrastructure: investments in technology and equipment procurement, guided by system-wide procurement guidelines, resulted in the optimization of intervention capacities.
- Increased public awareness



Together, prepared for emergency situations

TOGETHER project unfolded in neighbouring cross-border areas flanking the Romanian-Ukrainian border, nestled along the banks of the Tisa River. Moisei Commune in Maramures County, Romania, and its counterpart, Sotolvyno Commune in the Tyachiv District of the Transcarpathian Region, Ukraine, formed the epicenter of this collaborative effort. As the Lead Beneficiary, Moisei Commune joined forces with Sotolvyno Commune and Sotolvyno City Council, forging a resilient partnership dedicated to addressing common challenges.

This initiative directly aligns with the objectives of the HUSKROUA programme, focusing on tackling shared safety and security concerns, particularly in mitigating the impact of natural and man-made disasters. The cross-border region faces recurrent floods, fires, and snowfall-induced hazards, posing significant risks to the environment, communities, and local economies. Moreover, the project encountered additional hurdles, including administrative reorganization in Ukraine, the COVID-19 pandemic, energy crises, and the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Ukraine, amplifying the complexity of the effort.

For Moisei Commune, one pressing issue stemmed from the Valea Săcăturii Creek, which posed a threat during periods of heavy precipitation, jeopardizing infrastructure and community safety. Building on the success of a previous project, the team proposed comprehensive measures to manage flood risks, including stream channelization and drainage enhancements.

The project's cornerstone lays in fostering a collaborative ethos, exemplified by the amalgamation of expertise and resources from both communities. Through shared experiences, joint activities, and innovative solutions, the Moisei-Sotolvyno partnership navigated the challenges with resilience and determination. The acronym "TOGETHER" epitomized the spirit

of unity and solidarity that underpinned their collective efforts, transcending geographical boundaries and cultural differences.

The culmination of this initiative yielded tangible results. Moisei Commune witnessed significant infrastructure improvements, including creek regularization, bridge construction, road enhancements, and sewerage systems, effectively mitigating flood risks. Similarly, Sotolvyno Commune benefited from essential equipment acquisitions and capacity-building initiatives, bolstering their resilience to emergencies.

As we reflect on the journey, we extend our gratitude to all stakeholders who contributed to this transformative effort. Their unwavering support, ingenuity, and dedication were

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: TOGETHER

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.1/0034

Partnership:

LB: Moisei Commune (Moisei, Romania)

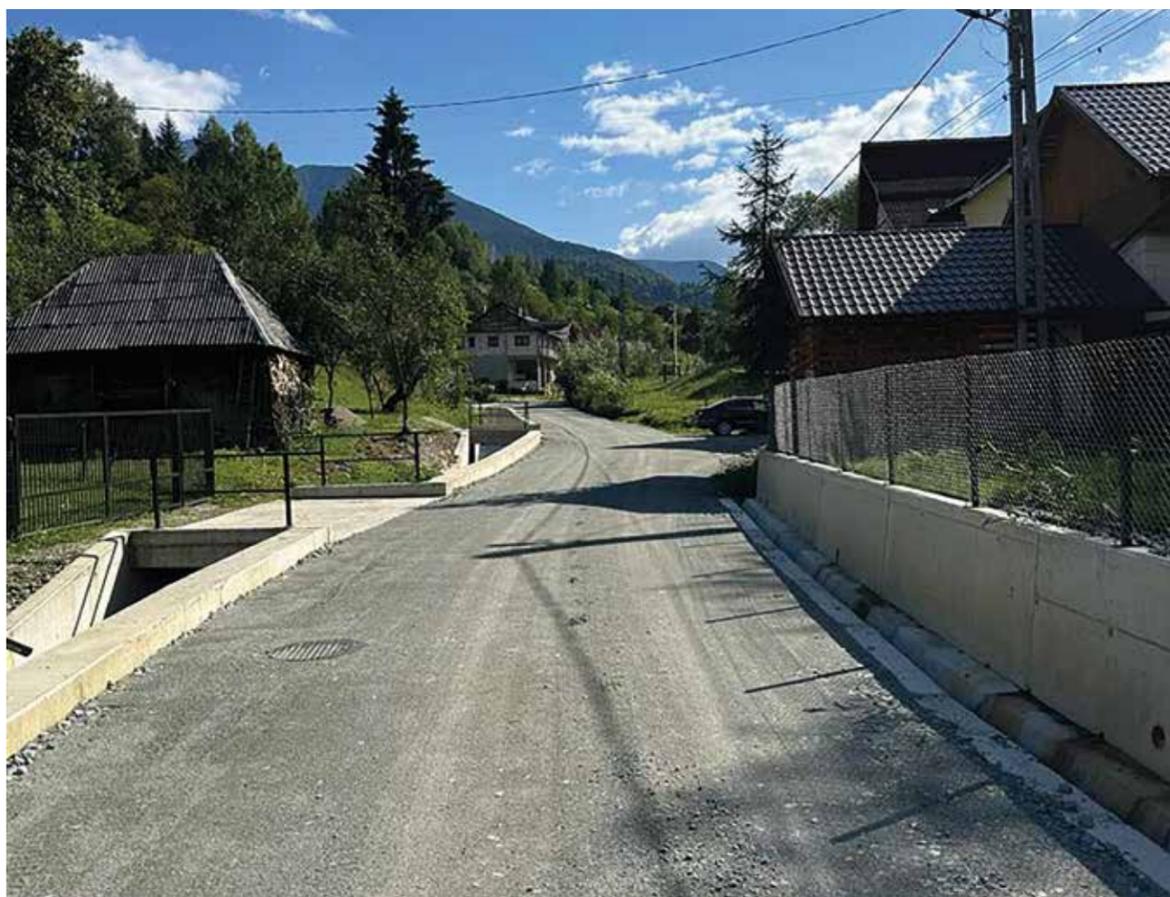
B1: Sotolvyno City Hall (Sotolvyno, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 1 057 926,04

Implementation period:

April 2020 - December 2023

instrumental in overcoming formidable obstacles and realizing our shared vision. Looking ahead, we eagerly anticipate our continued involvement in future projects, poised to build on this foundation of collaboration and resilience. Together, we have proven that with unity and determination, anything is possible.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Moisei Commune, Romania:

- Arrangement of Valea Săcăturii Creek over 970 meters for flood protection
- Construction of two transverse bridges, 16 access bridges, and drainage systems
- Improvement of road structure and household sewerage over 1.2 km
- Acquisition of intervention equipment, electronic warning sirens, and an electric generator

Sotolvyno Commune, Ukraine:

- Implementation of road cadastre system and acquisition of machinery and equipment
- Provision of training services and organization of partnership activities



Cross-border cooperation of non-governmental and public intervention and rescue teams

In the scenic region of Satu Mare county, right at the crossroads of Hungary and Ukraine, the Tarsolt community embarked on an ambitious project to elevate their emergency management capabilities. This initiative, a collaborative effort from four partner organizations, has redefined emergency management standards in the region.

The project started with a clear vision: to create a robust system capable of managing emergencies with precision and efficiency. As a team, we aimed to construct a framework that would not only endure over time but also adapt to the evolving nature of emergencies.

Empowering volunteer firefighters stood at the core of this initiative. Training became its

cornerstone. We immersed volunteer firefighters from Tarsolt and the surrounding areas in a comprehensive program that spanned a broad spectrum of skills. They mastered alpine rescue techniques, honed their GPS navigation skills under pressure, learned to administer life-saving first aid, and became adept at handling complex equipment. These volunteers have now become versatile responders, ready for any crisis.

The training sessions served as more than just learning opportunities—they became a crucible for forging teamwork. Training side by side, the volunteers developed a strong bond of trust and unity, knowing they could count on each other when it mattered most. They received both theoretical and practical

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CROSS-COOP

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.1/0126

Partnership:

LB: Tirsolt Commune (Tirsolt, Romania)

B1: Csenger City Council (Csenger, Hungary)

B2: Solotvyno City Hall (Solotvyno, Ukraine)

B3: Camarzana Commune (Comarzana, Romania)

EU contribution: EUR 549 373,42

Implementation period:

November 2019 - November 2021

training in handling specific emergencies like fires, alpine rescues, floods, rescuing people, and providing first aid. This comprehensive training significantly boosted their capacity and effectiveness in managing emergencies.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Accumulated new knowledge and operational capabilities for managing emergencies
- Purchased specialized equipment for emergency situations, improving response capacity
- Conducted theoretical and practical training for volunteer firefighters in alpine technique, GPS orientation, first aid, and correct equipment usage
- Implemented joint exercises between partners, increasing proficiency in handling fires, alpine rescues, floods, and rescues
- Acquired terrain intervention vehicles, fire trucks, and other equipment, enhancing rescuer safety and reducing intervention time

Workshops that brought together participants from various sectors played a crucial role in developing a unified strategy for emergency management. These sessions became a hub of innovation, where we shared experiences, debated strategies, and built a collective vision for a safer community.

The project reached a significant milestone with the acquisition of specialized vehicles and equipment. Each partner entity received cutting-edge resources, including versatile off-road vehicles and advanced fire trucks—symbols of our community's dedication to safety.

These vehicles, outfitted with the latest technology, enabled response teams to traverse challenging terrains and swiftly reach those in need. The equipment, chosen for its reliability and user-friendliness, allowed rescuers to perform their duties confidently.

As the project unfolded, its impact became evident. Emergency response time has shortened, operational efficiency increased, and, most importantly, the safety of both rescuers and those they saved significantly improved.

The CROSS-COOP initiative is more than a mere project; it stands as a testament to the power of unity and preparedness. It tells the story of a community uniting to confront the uncertainties of the future, armed with knowledge, equipped with tools, and bound by an unwavering spirit of cooperation.

"The programme has been instrumental in fostering a robust collaborative platform among municipalities, public, voluntary, and professional organizations, significantly enhancing our ability to address the diverse challenges posed by natural and anthropogenic emergencies. Through a concerted effort, project partners, alongside various collaborators, have worked tirelessly to implement a comprehensive Cooperation Plan, expanding our capabilities in environmental protection and public safety. Furthermore, this project marks a significant milestone in our collaborative journey, empowering us to effectively manage emergencies. With newfound knowledge and operational capabilities, coupled with the acquisition of specialized equipment, our community's resilience in the face of emergencies has substantially strengthened. Access to project funds has undoubtedly catalyzed positive change, benefitting our community in profound ways."



Grigore Pop, Project manager



Extension of the operational "Space Emergency System" towards monitoring of dangerous natural and man-made geo-processes in the HU-SK-RO-UA cross-border region

Climate change knows no borders, affecting geographical regions like the Upper Tisza River Basin with increasing severity. Recognizing the urgent need for collaborative action, we launched the GeoSES project to address the challenges of climate change and mitigate the risks of natural disasters in the cross-border area.

At our core, we aimed to develop a comprehensive strategy for climate adaptation and disaster prevention in the Upper Tisza River catchment area. Through our joint efforts, we focused on climate change analysis, forecasting, and sharing best practices to raise awareness and build resilience in the region.

One of our primary objectives was to reduce the risks of natural disasters by geo-monitoring dangerous landslide processes and mudflows in the Tisza River Valley. By implementing innovative forecasting techniques, we sought to prevent unexpected flooding of rivers caused by heavy storms in cross-border areas.

Furthermore, we aimed to develop a common innovation strategy for the prevention of environmental disasters and the adoption of climate change measures in the Carpathian region. This comprehensive approach addressed the increasing frequency of ecological disasters observed in the Carpathian Euroregion, where landslides and other hazardous events pose significant threats to communities and infrastructure.

To achieve our goals, we implemented an integrated geo-monitoring system (GeoSES-MS), consisting of a WebGIS portal and a mobile application. Through satellite-based radar imagery and advanced geodetic techniques, we collected crucial data on deformation patterns and landslide risk areas, enabling informed decision-making and risk mitigation efforts. Collaboration with local authorities, state agencies, and private firms was instrumental in

gathering essential information and conducting geo-monitoring activities. By harnessing the expertise of partners from Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, and Ukraine, we developed risk maps and decision-making tools to guide spatial planning and disaster management efforts in the region.

The successful implementation of our project underscores the importance of cross-border cooperation in addressing the complex challenges of climate change and disaster prevention. As climate change continues to threaten vulnerable regions, projects like GeoSES serve as models for collective action and resilience-building initiatives that transcend national boundaries.

Moving forward, the lessons learned will inform future efforts to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climate change, ensuring the safety and well-being of communities across

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: GeoSES

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.1/0065

Partnership:

LB: Uzhhorod National University (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B1: Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice (Košice, Slovakia)

B2: Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, North University Center of Baia Mare (Baia Mare, Romania)

B3: Budapest University of Technology & Economics (Budapest, Hungary)

B4: Self-government of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 844 294,68

Implementation period:

December 2019 - December 2022

borders. By thinking and acting together, we can safeguard our natural and built heritage and build a more resilient future for generations to come.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully prepared comprehensive climate strategy for the Upper Tisza river catchment area
- Conducted Adaptation Assessment, which identified vulnerabilities and opportunities for adaptation
- Facilitated knowledge exchange and shared best practices related to climate adaptation and mitigation
- Short film was produced to raise awareness about climate change and its impact on the region. It served as a powerful tool for raising awareness among the public, decision-makers, and stakeholders. It highlighted the urgency of climate action and emphasized the need for cross-border cooperation
- Public events served as platforms for disseminating information and engaging communities

"Looking back at the project's completion, disaster management remains a critical concern as we continue to face various methodological phenomena. Over the years, its importance has only grown in the daily lives of citizens, especially in Maramureş County, where past events have threatened both property and lives. As a first-line Public Institution previously engaged in emergencies, the Institution of the Prefect of Maramureş appreciates the significant contribution this project has made in highlighting the monitoring of natural disasters. We extend our congratulations to the academic community for their proactive initiative in implementing this project, aimed at reducing disaster risks and providing a comprehensive strategic perspective".

Rudolf Stauder
Prefect of Maramureş County



"Reflecting on the continued importance of disaster preparedness and response, the Maramureş County Council has initiated numerous projects over time to safeguard the well-being of its residents during emergencies. Today, cross-border cooperation stands as a crucial aspect for effectively addressing such challenges, particularly in prevention efforts. It is heartening to see representatives from Hungary, Ukraine, and Slovakia gathered at this International Workshop, signaling our collective commitment to collaborative action. Interregional projects like this one play a pivotal role in enhancing our ability to respond swiftly to risks. I wholeheartedly welcome and encourage participation in this project focused on emergency prevention and protection, inviting all to seek our support in developing and implementing initiatives in this vital area. Congratulations on your initiative and dedication to this important cause."

Ionel Bogdan
President of Maramureş County Council



Complex flood-control strategy on the Upper-Tisza catchment area

The DIKEINSPECT project stands as a testament to collaborative effort and innovation in tackling the pressing challenge of flood risks in the Upper Tisza River Basin. With a focus on the shared interests of five neighbouring regions – Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Zakarpattia, Košice and Maramureş - the project aimed to minimize flood risk through meticulous analysis of dikes and critical flood plains with different investigation methods. In a landscape increasingly affected by extreme weather events and the unpredictable impacts of climate change, the absence of efficient flood prevention and management strategies posed a significant threat. Compounded by the lack of harmonized inspection methodologies for flood defenses and prone areas, the need for cross-border cooperation became imperative.

laboratory and geophysical measurements, we carried out a comprehensive topographic survey of the dams and a survey of the biota in the floodplain.

The results of the project activities play a key role in preparing activity plans for further flood protection activities, particularly dam upgrades. Despite challenges such as obtaining permission to geophysical measurements and flight certificates and approvals for border flights, the project persevered, conducting investigations on selected Tisa sections and analyzing the gathered data. The insights gleaned from these efforts enriched the methodology of flood prevention activities in the Upper Tisza Basin, paving the way for a more resilient response to future flood events.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: DIKEINSPECT

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.1/0088

Partnership:

LB: University of Miskolc (Miskolc, Hungary)

B1: Upper-Tisza Regional Water Directorate (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B2: Berehovo Interrayon Department of Water Management (Berehovo, Ukraine)

B3: Maramures County Council (Baia Mare, Romania)

B4: Technical University of Kosice (Košice, Slovakia)

B5: Green Valley Association (Sighetu Marmatiei, Romania)

EU contribution: EUR 862 739,97

Implementation period:

June 2021 - December 2023

At its core, the project exemplified the power of transboundary collaboration, bringing together stakeholders from four countries to create a shared vision and coherent mechanism for dike management in the Upper Tisza region. By recognizing rivers as natural units that transcend national boundaries, the project underscored the importance of collective action in navigating the evolving forces of nature.

As the project concludes, it leaves behind a legacy of knowledge and cooperation, offering a clearer understanding of river dynamics, dike management, and the intricate interplay between human interventions and natural landscapes. Through its endeavours, DIKEINSPECT has charted a path towards resilience and sustainability, reminding us of our responsibility to adapt and harmonize with the timeless rhythms of nature.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successful development of a harmonized methodology for inspecting flood defenses and flood-prone areas in the Upper Tisza catchment area
- Identification of critical sections of dikes using topographical drones, detailed geophysical measurements, drillings and geotechnical analyses enhancing understanding of flood risk areas
- Developed Action plan for the flood protection strategy
- Developed Management policy for Hungary
- Training sessions conducted for key stakeholders, ensuring a more resilient response to future flood events

The project's vision unfolded through the development of a comprehensive methodology for inspecting flood defenses and flood-prone areas, coupled with innovative technologies and cross-border collaboration. The development of a harmonised methodology for the monitoring of dikes and floodplains, involving water professionals and universities, allow the linking of practice and science in the field of flood prevention. Based on this methodology, critical sections of the dike system were investigated using complex methods.

The project implemented a series of activities and measurements that build on each other. We utilized geophysical methods to identify critical dam sections over several kilometres. We conducted detailed, high-resolution geophysical measurements on the critical sections and took soil samples by drilling to determine soil mechanical and geotechnical parameters. We used the results of the laboratory analyses as the basis for hydrodynamic models to determine the rate of seepage through the dike and for geotechnical numerical models to determine the stability of the dikes. In addition to the



Cross-border harmonized response to risks and disasters

In the dynamic landscape of the Programme area, where natural and manmade disasters pose frequent threats, local administrations often grapple with insufficient resources and coordination. Recognizing this pressing challenge, three neighbouring communities – Moftin (RO), Vásárosnamény (HU), and Vyshkovo (UA) – embarked on a collaborative journey to bolster disaster protection and response capabilities.

Pooling their efforts, three administrations crafted a joint project proposal, which garnered support from the ENI HUSKROUA CBC Programme. With a shared commitment to fostering cross-border cooperation, the partners set out to equip local firefighting units with essential resources and enhance their preparedness through training and awareness initiatives.

Each partner invested in specialized equipment tailored to their unique needs, empowering their firefighting units to respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies. In Moftin, the establishment of an Instruction Center not only provided a centralized hub for professional training but also symbolized the community's dedication to proactive disaster management. A cornerstone of the project was the promotion of cross-border professional interaction among firefighters. Through joint exercises and workshops, over 60 local firefighters from the three communities honed their skills and strengthened their collaborative spirit, laying the foundation for a more coordinated response to disasters across borders.

However, the true impact of the project lies in its tangible results and measurable outcomes. Thanks to the concerted efforts of the partnership, response capabilities were significantly enhanced, with a notable reduction in response times observed. Quantifiable metrics, such as the number of drills conducted and the proficiency levels achieved by participating firefighters, attest to the project's success in building a more resilient and prepared firefighting force.

Moreover, the project's outreach efforts extended beyond the firefighting community, engaging over 1500 adults and 1500 children from local schools in awareness-raising activities. By imparting valuable information on preventive and protective measures, the project fostered a culture of safety and resilience within the local communities.

The legacy of cross-border collaboration and enhanced disaster preparedness endures. The knowledge and resources gained are poised to sustainably benefit the communities for years to come, ensuring that the spirit of cooperation and resilience remains steadfast in the face of future challenges.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: RESCUE GUARD
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.1/0089
Partnership:
LB: Moftin Commune (Moftin, Romania)
B1: Vásárosnamény Local Self-Government (Vásárosnamény, Hungary)
B2: Vyshkovo Village Council (Vyshkovo, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 614 191,55
Implementation period: June 2021 - May 2023

Through unity and proactive measures, the partnership exemplifies the transformative power of collaboration in safeguarding lives and livelihoods across borders.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Each partner acquired specialized equipment tailored for local-level disaster response, addressing significant shortages previously experienced by dedicated local services
- Establishment of an Instruction Center in Moftin provided a centralized facility for professional training of volunteer firefighters, enhancing their skills and readiness
- Firefighting units from the three settlements engaged in joint exercises and workshops, fostering cross-border professional interaction and skill development
- A variety of awareness-raising events, including information campaigns and school programs, were organized in each location, reaching over 1500 adults and 1500 children
- Over 60 local firefighters from the three communities participated in cross-border professional interactions facilitated by the project

Early Warning and Joint Preparedness for Emergency Situations at Romanian-Ukrainian border

The project's genesis lies in the shared recognition of common challenges in safety and security faced by communities residing along the border. With the objective of fortifying cross-border emergency response mechanisms, the project sought to harness synergies between Romanian and Ukrainian entities to enhance preparedness and mitigate risks. At its core, project aimed to ameliorate the average response time to emergencies, thereby bolstering the region's resilience to natural and man-made disasters.

A pivotal aspect of the project lays in addressing the pressing issue of resource scarcity, particularly concerning professional firefighting personnel. Against the backdrop of a mounting number of emergency situations, local intervention teams, known as Volunteer Services for Emergency Situations (VSES), emerged as linchpins in the

region's emergency response framework. In Romania, these teams were established at the grassroots level, empowering communities to respond swiftly and effectively to a spectrum of emergencies, including forest fires, floods, and missing persons incidents. In parallel, efforts were underway in Ukraine to initiate similar local teams, albeit in the nascent stages of development.

The project's efficacy hinged on fostering seamless cooperation and knowledge exchange across the border. Recognizing the interconnectedness of the region's safety landscape, training initiatives were designed to transcend geopolitical boundaries. Volunteer teams underwent rigorous instruction encompassing first aid, GPS orientation, and flood intervention protocols. By equipping participants with these vital skills,

the project sought to bridge gaps in emergency preparedness and cultivate a culture of resilience that transcended national borders.

Crucially, the project served as a conduit for cross-border solidarity, fostering bonds of trust and camaraderie among stakeholders. Joint exercises, conducted on both sides of the border, provided a platform for collaborative learning and scenario-based training. Here, project partners, alongside volunteer teams, NGOs, and professional firefighters, converged to simulate emergency scenarios, applying their newly acquired skills in real-time settings.

Moreover, the project underscored the imperative of shared learning and best practice dissemination. Insights gleaned from successful interventions and regulatory frameworks were meticulously catalogued and disseminated through bilingual guides, ensuring accessibility to a broad audience. By codifying lessons learned and institutionalizing best practices, the project aimed to catalyse a virtuous cycle of continuous improvement in cross-border emergency response.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: WARN

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.1/0079

Partnership:

LB: Tarna Mare Commune (Tarna Mare, Romania)

B1: 4th Fire and Rescue Unit of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine in Zakarpattia Region (Berehove, Ukraine)

B2: Municipality of Ardud (Ardud, Romania)

B3: Informational Center for Innovation and Development "NOVUM" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 457 551,51

Implementation period:

June 2021 - October 2023



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Improved intervention capacity and reduced response time to emergencies through training and equipment endowment
- Comprehensive training in first aid, GPS orientation, and specialized techniques for emergency interventions
- Empowerment of local intervention teams to handle complex emergency cases confidently

As the spectre of climate change looms large, exacerbating the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, the project's relevance assumes heightened significance. Against this backdrop, investing in cross-border cooperation and community resilience emerges as an imperative.

By harnessing the collective wisdom and expertise of stakeholders on both sides of the border, the project epitomizes the transformative potential of transnational collaboration in safeguarding lives and livelihoods against emergent threats.



COMAND - Synchronization of Operational Emergency Situations in Border Region

The COMAND project aims to revolutionize the management and coordination of emergency situations in the border regions of Maramureş and Zakarpattia, enhancing prediction, operational efficiency, and intervention quality. Maramureş and Zakarpattia boast diverse geographical complexities, making them susceptible to various natural and anthropic events.

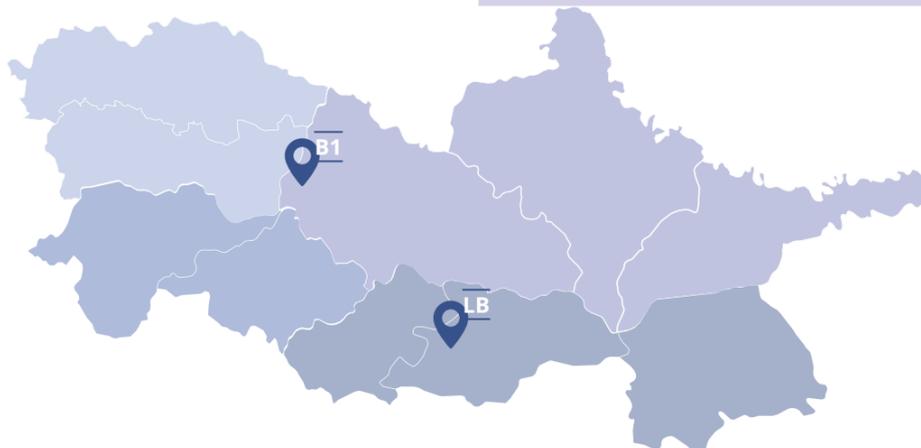
The Maramureş and Zakarpattia regions present unique geographical challenges, with a diverse range of natural and anthropic events occurring frequently. To address this, our project sought to modernize the communication infrastructure in Zakarpattia, ensuring comprehensive coverage, while simultaneously establishing an integrated command center in Maramureş. The objectives were clear: upgrade communication infrastructure to transition from analog to digital networks in Zakarpattia, enabling seamless communication across the entire region, and establish an integrated command center in Maramureş for the management and coordination of emergency responses.

The purpose was multi-faceted: facilitate timely and high-quality transmission of critical information regarding fires, accidents, and disasters, enabling swift deployment of resources for emergency mitigation; enable prompt alerts and effective management of intervention teams directly from the emergency site; and foster seamless information exchange among rescue units and other relevant services during emergency situations.

Through the diligent efforts of our team, we achieved significant milestones. We successfully implemented a fully digitalized emergency communication network in Zakarpattia, Ukraine, ensuring robust connectivity throughout the region. Simultaneously, we established an Integrated Command Center in Maramureş, Romania, equipped with cutting-edge technology for effective emergency response coordination. Furthermore, we deployed a

mobile telecommunications station to ensure uninterrupted communication flow, enhancing operational efficiency.

In addition to infrastructure enhancements, we conducted two experience exchange seminars and practical exercises in emergency response scenarios in Maramureş, Romania, and Zakarpattia, Ukraine. These initiatives facilitated knowledge sharing and capacity building among stakeholders, further strengthening our collective ability to respond to emergencies effectively.



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: COMAND

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.1/0059

Partnership:

LB: Maramures County Council (Baia Mare, Romania)

B1: The Main Department of State Emergency Service of Ukraine in Transcarpathian region (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 1 500 000,00

Implementation period:

July 2021 - December 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Establishment of a fully digitalized emergency communication network covering the entire Zakarpattia region in Ukraine
- Creation of an Integrated Command Center in Maramureş, Romania, equipped with state-of-the-art technology to effectively coordinate emergency responses
- Deployment of a mobile telecommunications station to ensure uninterrupted communication flow, particularly in remote or disaster-affected areas
- Organization of two experience exchange seminars and practical exercises focused on emergency response in Maramureş, Romania, and Zakarpattia, Ukraine



By modernizing communication infrastructure and establishing a centralized command center, the COMAND project has significantly enhanced the capacity to respond to emergencies effectively, ultimately ensuring the safety and security of communities in the border regions of Maramureş and Zakarpattia.

“We have happily and satisfactorily completed our project in the field of emergency response coordination! Words cannot express the intensity of the project events, but I can say for sure that the effort and commitment of our joint team was outstanding. We consider the end of the project as the beginning for a better future, a cross-border team ready to collaborate and with the right tools for action”.

Oana CHIOREAN
Project manager



BioSecurity" - joint action in emergency situations in case of the identification of dangerous and widespread infections in Carpathian region

With the alarming spread of African swine fever, establishing robust cooperation among professional institutions became paramount. The project's primary goal was to empower communities and key stakeholders, including farmers and hunting organizations, with comprehensive guidelines integrated into a unified biosecurity framework. By equipping trained professionals with the knowledge and resources needed to effectively manage outbreaks, the project sought to mitigate the impact of dangerous infections in border regions.

As part of its contribution, D.S.V.S.A. Maramureş procured specific equipment such as PCR RT, enabling genetic analysis of blood samples from domestic and wild pigs. These samples,

collected from high-risk border areas susceptible to the spread of diseases like African swine fever, provided crucial insights for prompt and targeted responses.

Moreover, participating in collaborative projects like "BioSecurity" represented a significant professional milestone, not only due to the acquisition of essential laboratory equipment but also through the invaluable exchange of information among project participants. This exchange fostered new opportunities for addressing common biological challenges swiftly and effectively, ultimately contributing to the region's overall biosecurity and resilience.

The "BioSecurity" project, spanning 29 months, was highly impactful for MARAMURES SANITARY VETERINARY AND FOOD SAFETY DIRECTORATE, showcasing effective teamwork and tangible achievements like equipping the Molecular Biology and Genetic Analysis laboratory with a Real-Time PCR System. Collaboration extended beyond institutions to include the University, County Association of Sports Hunters and Fishermen, and Environmental Guard, with activities conducted in border communities of Maramures. Noteworthy was the partnership with experts from the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Cluj Napoca, potentially leading to scientific publications on African swine fever. Surprisingly positive was the collaboration with partners from Hungary, Slovakia, and Ukraine, exceeding expectations in professionalism and human quality. Support received from the programme was invaluable, facilitating the successful completion of project tasks.

Liliana Crisan
Communication manager "BioSecurity"



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: BioSecurity
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.1/0010

Partnership:

LB: Zakarpattia Regional State Laboratory of "DERZHPRODSPOZHY VSLUZHBA" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B1: Veterinary Health and Food Safety Institution Maramures (Baia Mare, Romania)

B2: Regional Innovation Agency (Košice, Slovakia)

B3: Non-Governmental Organization "European Initiatives Centre" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B4: KIÚT Regional Development Association (Záhony, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 615 488,65

Implementation period: July 2021 - November 2023



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Procured specific laboratory equipment, such as PCR RT, enabling genetic analysis of blood samples from domestic and wild pigs in high-risk border areas affected by the spread of African swine fever
- Advocated for dissemination of guidelines and instructions integrated into a common biosecurity system for professionals and stakeholders in border regions, including farmers and hunting organizations



Transfer of know-how and creation of Cystic Fibrosis Centre to ensure better care for Cystic Fibrosis patients in Ivano-Frankivsk Region

In the heart of Eastern Europe, where healthcare disparities persist, lies Ivano-Frankivsk (IF) region of Ukraine. Here, cystic fibrosis (CF) patients and their families struggle with a lack of access to modern care standards. Today, thanks to our initiative, that narrative has shifted.

Cystic fibrosis is an incurable rare disease that significantly shortens the life expectancy of CF patients and profoundly impacts the daily lives of their families. Despite strides in healthcare across Europe, CF treatment in Ukraine falls short of meeting European standards, leaving patients and families grappling with inadequate care and support.

Recognizing this disparity, we embarked on a collaborative effort to revolutionize CF care in the region. Our vision was simple yet ambitious: establish a state-of-the-art CF Center within the IF Children's Hospital and bridge the gap between Ukrainian practices and European excellence. This center would serve as a beacon of hope, offering cutting-edge care and unwavering support to CF patients and their families.

Over the course of four years, amidst challenges ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to regional conflicts, our project unfolded. We, a dedicated team of doctors and physiotherapists, underwent rigorous training, equipping ourselves with the skills and knowledge needed to provide top-tier care. Our educational events drew in 1491 participants, enriching the local healthcare landscape with insights and expertise. Finally, the IF Children's Hospital underwent a transformation, emerging with a fully equipped CF Center poised to change lives.

Today, the legacy of our initiative lives on. The CF Center stands as a testament to what is possible when communities unite in pursuit of a

common goal. Patients from across Ukraine now have access to world-class care, while families find solace in a support system tailored to their needs. Beyond borders, the ripple effects of our project continue to be felt, with the establishment of the European CF Registry opening doors to collaboration and knowledge-sharing on a global scale.

Reflecting on the journey, Ukrainian healthcare professionals express gratitude for the opportunity to grow and evolve alongside their patients. Parents of CF patients echo these sentiments, praising the project for instilling hope and empowerment in their lives.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: SK UA CF CARE

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0008

Partnership:

LB: Slovak Cystic Fibrosis Association (Košice, Slovakia)

B1: Municipal non-profit enterprise Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Children's Clinical Hospital of Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Council (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

B2: Charitable Organization "Charitable Foundation Research Innovations in Medicine "RIMON" (Kiev, Ukraine)

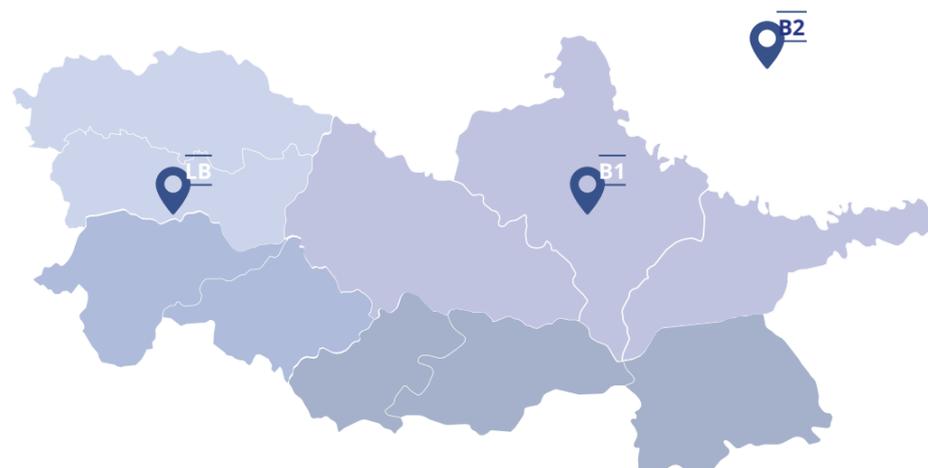
EU contribution: EUR 258 817,59

Implementation period:

September 2019 - August 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Creation of the CF Center within IF Children's Hospital. It serves not only the Ivano-Frankivsk region but also patients from other regions of Ukraine. Equipped with modern diagnostic tools and staffed by trained professionals, CF Center ensures that CF patients receive high-quality care
- 1491 participants attended project educational events. These events focused on improving knowledge and skills related to CF care and therapy
- Ukrainian doctors and physiotherapists gained valuable insights, especially in working as a multidisciplinary team and implementing modern chest physiotherapy techniques
- Establishment of the CF patients Registry as part of the European CF Registry opened doors to the international CF community. This connection facilitates collaboration, knowledge sharing, and best practices
- Opening of new CF Center has changed doctors' attitudes toward CF treatment. They now approach the disease with greater expertise and dedication
- Parents of CF patients have also become more actively involved in daily care, recognizing the importance of proper nutrition and regular home physiotherapy



"CO "Charitable Foundation Research Innovation in Medicine "RIMON" is highly honoured and proud to be involved in HUSKROUA ENI Cross-border cooperation programme as one of the Beneficiary. Participation in application, holding and reporting this project provides our company and staff a unique experience in realising such international cooperation programmes and helps us to develop this direction of company activities. But most important it gave us opportunity to be tangential not only in improving lifestyle, well-being and quality of medical help to CF patient, but even save lives."

RIMON, Nataliya Pryanykova, president

"The innovative and added value is the creation of new CF Center with CF patients registry for children in Ivano-Frankivsk, properly furnished and equipped improved the daily care and treatment and access to new life-saving treatment for CF children and young people. Personally my main victory is that we completed the implementation of all planned activities during hard and challenging pandemic and war time."

CF Association, Katarina Stepankova, chairwoman

"Thanks to this project, on the basis of pulmonology department, by reorganizing rooms with a separate entrance, carrying out repair work, installing quartz lamps, oxygen points according to modern requirements, furnishing this ward - Cystic fibrosis center was created. On February 28, 2023, the CF Center was officially opened, and cystic fibrosis patients from our and other regions are begin examined and treated."

Ivano-Frankivsk Children's Hospital, Monika Makian, pulmonologist



Prevention of cancer in four hospitals across four countries

As a dedicated project team, we embarked on a profound journey—one that transcended borders and united hearts. Our mission: to combat the pervasive threat of cancer that loomed over our communities. With one in two people in the European Union facing this daunting reality, we rallied under the banner of the Prevention of Cancer Diseases in Four Hospitals of Four Countries project - 4DAGMEG4. Guided by the visionary leadership of Szent Damján Greek Catholic Hospital, our purpose was crystal clear: early detection saves lives.

The staggering statistics weighed heavily on us. Annually, cancer claims 1.3 million lives in the EU alone. Armed with this knowledge, we fortified our resolve to confront this silent epidemic head-on. Under the guidance of Director-General Henrik Dénes Hegyi, we delved into the heart of the matter. Our strategy? A threefold approach: enhance healthcare quality, empower individuals, and acquire vital equipment.

Among the shadows cast by cancer, breast cancer emerged as a formidable adversary. Women bore the brunt of its impact, making them our primary focus. We strategically deployed resources to improve screening capabilities. The acquisition of mammography devices and ultrasound machines marked a significant milestone in our journey toward comprehensive preventive care.

Our mission extended beyond procurement. We recognized that shifting attitudes toward proactive healthcare was equally crucial. Through targeted screenings and educational campaigns, we endeavoured to empower individuals—arming them with knowledge and encouraging early action.

The pandemic disrupted our world, but our commitment remained unyielding. We adapted to virtual platforms, ensuring continuity in our efforts to safeguard lives. Amidst the chaos, our project emerged as a beacon of hope, offering solace to those in need.

Today, as we reflect on our achievements, we take pride in the lives we have touched and the futures we have safeguarded. With 1,395 screenings conducted and 62 cases diagnosed, our impact reverberates across borders. Each diagnosis represents a second chance at life, a testament to the efficacy of early detection.

In the battle against cancer, every moment counts, and every action matters. Together, united against tumour diseases, we stand stronger than ever before.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: 4DAGMEG4

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0086

Partnership:

LB: St. Damjan Greek Catholic Hospital (Kisvárd, Hungary)

B1: Hospital of Kralovský Chlmec (Kráľovský Chlmec, Slovakia)

B2: Municipality of Carei (Carei, Romania)

B3: Municipal Nonprofit Enterprise „Medical Preventive Institution of Myghirya Region Hospital of Myghirya District Council of Transcarpatian Region” (Mizhgirya, Ukraine)

B4: St. Damjan Greek Catholic Hospital (Kisvárd, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 932 043,34

Implementation period:

July 2020 - February 2022



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Conducted 1,395 screenings, leading to the diagnosis of 62 cases for the first time. These diagnoses enabled timely interventions, offering affected individuals a renewed chance at life and underscoring the pivotal role of early detection in mitigating the burden of cancer
- Targeted educational campaigns and informative materials empowered individuals to take proactive measures towards their health. By fostering a culture of awareness and responsibility, equipped communities with the knowledge and tools necessary to safeguard their well-being, paving the way for long-term prevention and healthier lifestyles
- Acquisition of three mammography devices and four ultrasound machines bolstered healthcare infrastructure, enabling implementation of effective secondary prevention activities. These vital tools facilitated comprehensive screenings near individuals' places of residence, ensuring the early detection of warning signs and prompt initiation of treatment
- Rebuilding of the radiology department at the Kráľovský Chlmec Hospital in Slovakia exemplifies our shared commitment to elevating healthcare standards and enhancing access to quality care across borders
- Facilitated cross-border collaboration, fostering the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and resources



Health4all! Capacity building in the health care system providing for children with special needs

The project titled "Health4all! Capacity building in the healthcare system providing for children with special needs" was a collaborative effort between the Nyíregyháza Hidden Treasures Down Syndrome Association and the Berehove District Maltese Charity Service from 2019 to 2021. This initiative aimed to address the critical need for healthcare services for children with special needs in the region.

Both the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county and the Zakarpattia region face significant challenges, particularly concerning impoverished families. When a child with special needs joins such families, their situation becomes even more difficult. The project sought to provide comprehensive care for these children, including early intervention, professional

training, and the creation of inclusive spaces. Over the project duration, 344 children received more than 14,000 therapy sessions from professionals in Nyíregyháza and Berehove. Additionally, the facilities of the organizations underwent complete renovation and modernization to better serve the community.

The joint project exceeded expectations, providing critical support to children with special needs and their families. Despite the difficulties caused by the coronavirus, partners managed to include far more children into their therapy programs and to provide much more activities than they have planned. Post-covid problems were also handled in frame of the project. Capacity development of services and screenings at

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Health4all!

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0047

Partnership:

LB: Hidden Treasures Down Syndrome Association (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B1: Malteser Charity Organization in Berehovo Region (Berehovo, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 869 235,46

Implementation period:

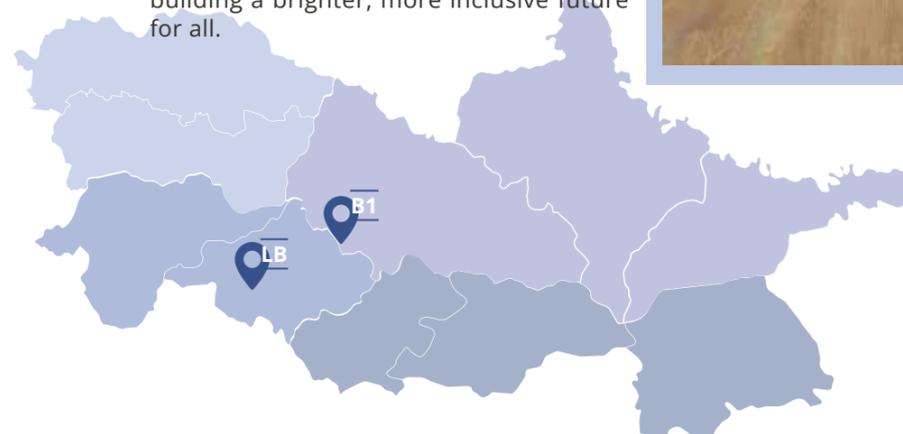
October 2019 - December 2021

the counselling points have made a high quality, effective service available for more people in need of service which have given a prognosis of a long term improving tendency of health measures even after implementing the Project. Although the project officially

concluded in 2021, the partnership between the Nyíregyháza association and the Berehove charity service continues. They maintain regular communication and actively seek opportunities for future collaboration.

With the support of the Berehove organization, the Nyíregyháza association welcomes children affected by the conflict, ensuring they received free therapy and activities in the renovated Nyíregyháza facility. This exemplifies the dedication of the organizations to provide essential services even in challenging circumstances.

The collaborative efforts of these organizations have filled a significant gap in healthcare services, not only in the region but throughout their respective countries. Their work remains indispensable, providing hope and support to children with special needs and their families. Looking ahead, they remain committed to building a brighter, more inclusive future for all.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Professionals in Nyíregyháza and Berehove provided over 14,000 therapy sessions to 344 children
- Renovated and modernized their facilities, enhancing service delivery
- 6 professionals of the Hungarian Lead Beneficiary got a certificate of Clinical Course in Neurofeedback and 3 professionals of the Ukrainian Beneficiary got a certificate of Neurofeedback training
- Created two websites, five short films, a small handbook of the healthcare program and lots of further information materials
- Despite the war in Ukraine prompting the departure of many citizens, including families raising children with disabilities, the project continued to provide essential support. The association in Nyíregyháza welcomed these children and offered them free therapy and activities in the renovated facility



Joint initiatives for health development and sustainability in the area Sighetu Marmatiei – Rakhiv

Our tale unfolds in the picturesque region of Maramureş, nestled within the Carpathian Mountains. Here, time seems to slow down, and traditions echo through the valleys. But beneath the serene surface lies a pressing need—a need for improved healthcare services. Health care is one of the greatest achievements of civilization. Caring for others makes us truly human. Our project, which focused on increasing diagnostic capacity and medical intervention in the Maramureş and Zakarpattia regions, has successfully concluded. We set out with clear goals and have achieved them through our collective efforts and dedication.

We began with the most time-consuming task: increasing the capacity for diagnosis and therapy by purchasing essential medical equipment. This equipment was procured for various departments, including obstetrics-gynecology, neonatology, radiology and imaging, ophthalmology, diabetes and psychiatry, surgery, and the intensive care unit. In total, we equipped these departments with 95 new units.

Next, we focused on enhancing the professional skills of medical staff through three joint workshops, which saw the participation of more than 60 healthcare professionals. These workshops fostered cooperation in managing infectious and epidemiological diseases related to pregnancy and infancy, pre- and postnatal care, neonatal rehabilitation, and monitoring vital functions.

Additionally, we conducted two public campaigns to raise awareness about childbirth, titled Parents' School Weekend, in Sighetu Marmatiei and Rakhiv, with 200 participants. Through these

campaigns, we highlighted crucial aspects of family life, healthy living, and child rearing. Topics such as pregnancy, natural and gentle birth, breastfeeding, the magic hour, and the importance of skin-to-skin contact were central themes, promoting reflection and awareness among participants.

These initiatives have significantly strengthened our medical teams, creating a more professional and cohesive healthcare environment. The final beneficiaries of our project are the general population, who now have access to improved medical services and highly skilled medical personnel. The medical staff who attended the seminars, as well as those using the newly acquired equipment, also benefit greatly. Participants of the Parents' School Weekend expressed their appreciation for the initiative and its execution.

Our seminars served to refresh and update the knowledge of medical staff in the field of childbirth. Specifically, the seminar on infections associated with pregnancy and childbirth introduced new treatment protocols and investigation methods. The workshop on neonatal resuscitation played a critical role in enhancing the capabilities of professionals in both hospitals.

During the pandemic, our public campaign helped to reinforce the importance of normalcy and fundamental human values. The equipment purchased in the midst of the pandemic was crucial for accurate diagnoses, reducing the need for patients to travel over 60 km to other hospitals for investigations.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Initiatives for health

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0106

Partnership:

LB: Sighetu Marmatiei Municipal Hospital (Sighetu Marmatiei, Romania)

B1: Rakhiv District Hospital (Rakhiv, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 884 590,56

Implementation period:

October 2019 - May 2021

The collaboration between our hospitals has led to the conception of a new project, ensuring continued cooperation and improvement. The hospital in Rakhiv, now equipped with an emergency reception unit thanks to our project, has been further supported by additional equipment funded by the Ukrainian state, proving vital in the current war context.

The endowment of our two hospitals stands as the most significant achievement, marking the highest level of equipment seen in over 30 years. This has increased trust in the medical services provided and greatly improved the well-being of the communities we serve.

We are proud of what we have accomplished together. Our journey may have ended, but the impact of our collective efforts will resonate for years to come. Together, we have made a difference—one that transcends borders and reminds us of our shared humanity.

As the Carpathian valleys echo with gratitude, we look forward to a future where our united efforts continue to nurture and heal these communities.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Purchased 95 units of medical equipment for various departments: Obstetrics-Gynecology, Neonatology, Radiology and Imaging, Ophthalmology, Diabetes, Psychiatry, Surgery, and Intensive Care Units
- Conducted 3 joint workshops with over 60 participants focusing on infectious and epidemiological diseases related to pregnancy and infancy; pre and postnatal care; neonatal rehabilitation and vital function monitoring
- Held two public campaigns, "Parents' School Weekend," in Sighetu Marmatiei and Rakhiv, with 200 participants
- Equipment purchased during the pandemic facilitated accurate diagnoses and attracted patients who previously travelled over 60 km for medical investigations
- The hospital in Rakhiv now has an emergency reception unit, aided by project equipment and additional devices funded by the Ukrainian state, crucial during the ongoing war
- Comprehensive equipment upgrade, the first in over 30 years, boosted public trust in medical services

"Thanks to the HUSKROUA project, we became a hospital of local importance with an emergency reception unit. There are only 200 such units in Ukraine, and just 8 in Zakarpattia."

Hospital Director in Rakhiv

"The exchange of experience was invaluable. We organized a workshop before the pandemic, which was our first such event, and collaborating with partners from Sighetu Marmatiei was fantastic. Although we participated online during the pandemic, we learned a lot from our Romanian colleagues and look forward to more joint projects."

Doctor in Rakhiv

"We attended the Parents' School Weekend last year. Emphasizing both parents' involvement was more important than we realized. Our daughter is now 1 year old, and the seminar was very useful. We learned about introducing food, teaching her to walk, and other essential parenting skills."

Final Beneficiary (expecting parents)

"The seminar provided useful information and a wonderful book I read daily as my baby grows. I was pregnant then, and now I am a happy mother."

Final Beneficiary (pregnant woman attending Parenting School)



Infectious diseases have no borders

In our journey with the IDHB project, we have witnessed first-hand the transformative power of cross-border cooperation in strengthening healthcare resilience. As a team dedicated to enhancing diagnostic capabilities and fortifying patient care, we embarked on a mission to confront the relentless threat posed by infectious diseases.

From the outset, we recognized that pathogens respect no boundaries. Whether it is the rapid spread of COVID-19 or the persistent challenge of existing infectious diseases, our communities are interconnected in the face of health crises. With this in mind, our partnership, led by the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Teaching Hospital, united healthcare institutions across borders to confront this shared challenge head-on.

One of the foundational pillars of our project was the comprehensive assessment of healthcare services in the field of infectology and microbiology. Through meticulous analysis, we identified critical areas for improvement and crafted a roadmap for action. This process culminated in the development of informal training documentation, laying the groundwork for capacity building and knowledge dissemination.

In June 2021, our efforts bore fruit as we convened in Nyíregyháza for an immersive training experience. Hospital infection control, infection-related methodologies, pediatric infectious disease management, COVID care protocols, antibiotic policies, and vaccination strategies took center stage, empowering healthcare professionals with the latest insights and best practices.

In the following month, our focus shifted to the practical aspects of laboratory diagnostics. From bacteria cultivation methods to laboratory algorithms, from the utilization of the EUCAST

system to rapid diagnostic and automation techniques, our training sessions provided a hands-on learning experience that enriched the expertise of our healthcare workforce.

In parallel with our educational initiatives, our project also spearheaded significant advancements in equipment procurement and infrastructure development. At the heart of our efforts lay the acquisition of a cutting-edge mass spectrograph device, revolutionizing the landscape of pathogen identification. With the ability to identify bacterial and fungal species at the species level within days, rather than weeks, this technology represented a quantum leap in diagnostic efficiency.

Additionally, our endeavours extended to the enhancement of laboratory facilities and infrastructure. From the installation of double-column water softening devices to ensure the optimal performance of laboratory equipment to the renovation of the Infectious Disease Department at the Regional Children's Hospital in Mukachevo, our interventions aimed to create environments conducive to healthcare excellence.

Meanwhile, in Uzhhorod, our partnership facilitated the implementation of critical upgrades, including the installation of a water purification system and the reconstruction of the centralized bacteriological laboratory building. These initiatives not only bolstered diagnostic capabilities but also laid the foundation for sustained healthcare resilience in the face of infectious diseases.

Through the IDHB project, we set out to expedite pathogen identification and improve therapeutic interventions. With unwavering determination, we acquired state-of-the-art microbiological equipment, empowering healthcare professionals to diagnose infectious diseases with unprecedented speed and accuracy. In our hospitals, the acquisition of

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: IDHB

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0080

Partnership:

LB: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Hospitals and University Hospital (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B1: Municipal Noncommercial Enterprise "Regional Children's Hospital" (Mukachevo, Ukraine)

B2: Municipal Enterprise "Regional Clinical Infectious Disease Hospital" of Zakarpattia Regional State Council" (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 998 798,74

Implementation period:

September 2019 - February 2022

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Establishment of a three-member partnership led by the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Teaching Hospital
- Acquisition of a microbiological mass spectrograph and essential reagents for rapid diagnostics and modernization of air-conditioning and laboratory equipment at the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Teaching Hospital
- Renovation of the infectious disease department at the Municipal Noncommercial Enterprise "Regional Children's Hospital" in Mukachevo
- Creation of a new bacteriological laboratory at the Municipal Enterprise "Regional Clinical Infectious Disease Hospital" of Zakarpattia Regional State Council
- Conducting professional training sessions for healthcare professionals from Mukachevo and Uzhhorod hospitals, covering various aspects of infectious disease management and microbiological practices

microbiological mass spectrographs heralded a new era of diagnostic precision, enabling us to swiftly identify and treat pathogens threatening our communities.

Our journey was not without its obstacles. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic tested our resolve, forcing us to adapt our strategies in the face of unprecedented challenges. Yet, through adversity, our commitment to enhancing patient safety and infectious disease prevention remained unwavering. We pivoted to virtual platforms, ensuring the continuity of project activities despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic.

As we navigated the complexities of procurement and logistics, we remained guided by a singular purpose: to fortify our healthcare infrastructure and safeguard the well-being of our communities. Renovations and equipment upgrades breathed new life into our infectious disease departments, creating environments conducive to healing and innovation. The tangible impact of our

efforts resonated not only with healthcare professionals but also with the communities we serve.

Looking ahead, our journey with the IDHB project continues to inspire hope and resilience. As we explore future initiatives

and opportunities for collaboration, we remain steadfast in our commitment to advancing healthcare excellence across borders. Together, we stand united in our mission to confront infectious diseases, knowing that our collective efforts will pave the way for a healthier and more resilient future.



Intensive care for future

In the bustling corridors of the County Emergency Hospital in Satu Mare and the Regional Children's Hospital in Mukachevo, a transformative journey began. As we embarked on the "Intensive Care for Future" project, our mission was clear: to bridge gaps in healthcare services, especially for the most vulnerable among us - newborns and children.

Set against the backdrop of the programme, our collaboration aimed to address common challenges in safety and security while prioritizing the improvement of health status. With unwavering dedication, we endeavoured to intensify cooperation between healthcare units in Zakarpattia and Satu Mare county, striving to enhance preventive activities, healthcare accessibility, and social programs for citizens in the border area.

Our journey began with a realization - a need to develop and promote medical services tailored to the unique needs of newborns and children. Armed with determination and a vision for change, we embarked on a path of innovation and compassion. From the necessity for new, innovative equipment to the desire to improve post-hospitalization care, our resolve only grew stronger.

Every step we took was guided by a shared commitment to find efficient and functional solutions. Through collaborative efforts, we aimed to elevate medical services for newborns and children in intensive care units and neonatal intensive care units. It was a journey fuelled by hope and driven by the belief that every child deserved a chance at a healthier, brighter future.

Along the way, we encountered challenges - none more daunting than the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, with resilience and perseverance, we adapted. We embraced online platforms, turning adversity into opportunity. Despite the post-pandemic price increases and logistical hurdles, we remained steadfast in our pursuit of progress.

Our efforts bore fruit, as evidenced by the tangible results we achieved. The infrastructure of medical equipment in both hospitals saw significant improvement, providing essential resources for patient care. Through internships and study visits, we empowered 84 employees, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to deliver high-quality care. Practical brochures on newborn care were disseminated, bridging the gap between medical professionals and families.

As we reflect on our journey, we are filled with gratitude - for the partnerships forged, the obstacles overcome, and, most importantly, the lives touched. Inspired by the smiles of those we've served, we look ahead with optimism. New projects beckon - new opportunities to make a difference.

PROJECT DETAILS

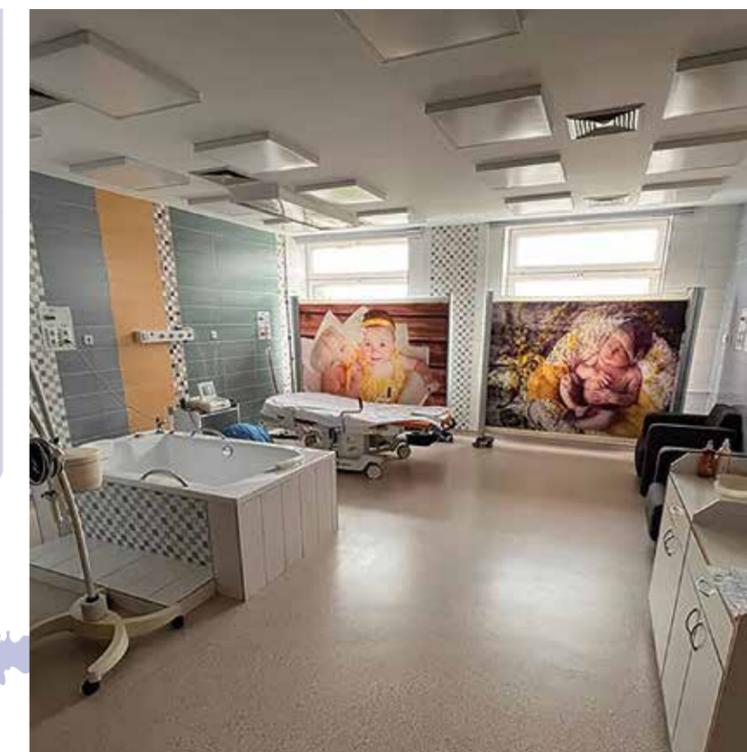
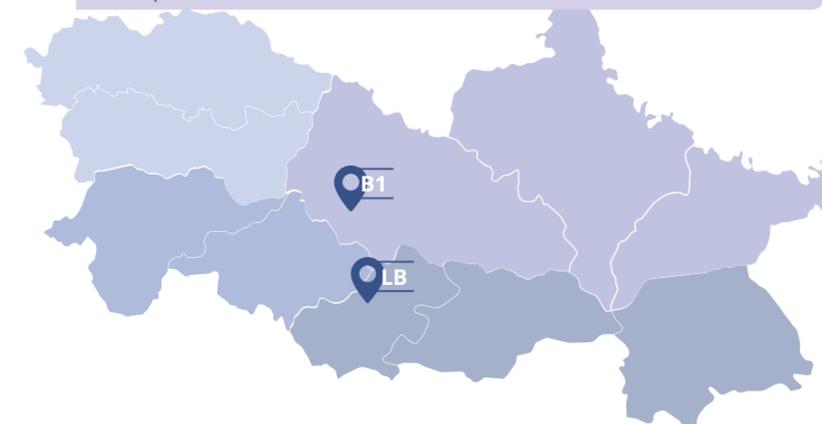
Acronym: ICF
ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0108
Partnership:
LB: Satu Mare County Emergency Hospital (Satu Mare, Romania)
B1: Municipal Non-commercial Enterprise "Regional Children's Hospital" of Zakarpattia Regional Council (Mukachevo, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 990 000,00
Implementation period: December 2019 - November 2023

Our journey of care continues - a testament to the power of cooperation, compassion, and the unwavering belief that every child deserves a chance to thrive. Together, we pave the way for a brighter, healthier future - one newborn, one child at a time.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Procurement of high-performance medical equipment for both County Emergency Hospital in Satu Mare and Regional Children's Hospital in Mukachevo - mechanical ventilation devices, radiographic tables, monitors, anaesthesia pumps, ultrasound machines, EKGs, and defibrillators. This helped equip the hospitals with the necessary resources to provide improved healthcare services
- Human resource development through internships and study visits, benefitting 84 trained employees
- Elaboration and distribution of practical brochures on newborn care, totalling 2600 printed copies disseminated. These brochures aimed to educate both medical professionals and families on caring for newborns, particularly those with special needs
- Despite challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic price increases, project management team overcame obstacles with patience and perseverance



SIGMED RO-UA – Cooperation for Patients' Safety

In a joint effort, Romania and Ukraine launched the SIGMED RO-UA project to tackle the critical issues of antibiotic resistance and patient safety in healthcare facilities. Our ambitious initiative aimed to address the growing concerns surrounding antibiotic usage and the associated rise in resistant bacterial strains, which pose significant challenges to healthcare system.

Antibiotic resistance is a crisis, exacerbated by the overuse and misuse of antibiotics. As bacteria evolve to resist existing treatments, common infections become harder to treat, leading to prolonged illnesses, higher healthcare costs, and increased mortality. We recognized the urgent need to improve practices of health units and strictly adhere to established antibiotic therapy guidelines to mitigate these risks and protect patient health.

To spearhead this initiative, a multidisciplinary team of clinicians, microbiologists, infectious disease specialists, epidemiologists, and clinical pharmacists came together, united by a common goal: to champion best practices in antibiotic therapy. The team developed the "Guide to Good Practices in Antibiotic

Therapy," a comprehensive document setting forth "golden standards" for antibiotic selection, combination, and administration. The guide provides clear, evidence-based recommendations designed to optimize antibiotic use, minimize resistance, and enhance patient outcomes.

The creation of this guide was a collaborative effort involving field experts who worked closely with healthcare professionals from the participating hospitals. Their combined expertise and unwavering commitment ensured that the guide was thoroughly aligned with the latest research and clinical evidence in antibiotic therapy. The process involved extensive consultations, rigorous review of current practices, and a commitment to adopting innovative strategies to combat antibiotic resistance effectively.

The high point of this collaborative effort was marked by a conference held in Viseul de Sus. This event was a significant milestone, as it was here that the medical community first laid eyes on the Guide to Good Practices in Antibiotic Therapy. Specialists from three Romanian hospitals and two Ukrainian hospitals attended, fostering an environment of cross-

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: SIGMED RO-UA

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0118

Partnership:

LB: CREST ASSOCIATION (Satu Mare, Romania)

B1: National Authority of Quality Management in Healthcare (Bucharest, Romania)

B2: Uzhhorod Municipal Maternity Hospital (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B3: Uzhhorod Municipal Children's Clinical Hospital (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B4: Fund for the Development of Cross-Border Cooperation and Special Economic Zones (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 948 136,53

Implementation period:

March 2020 - November 2023

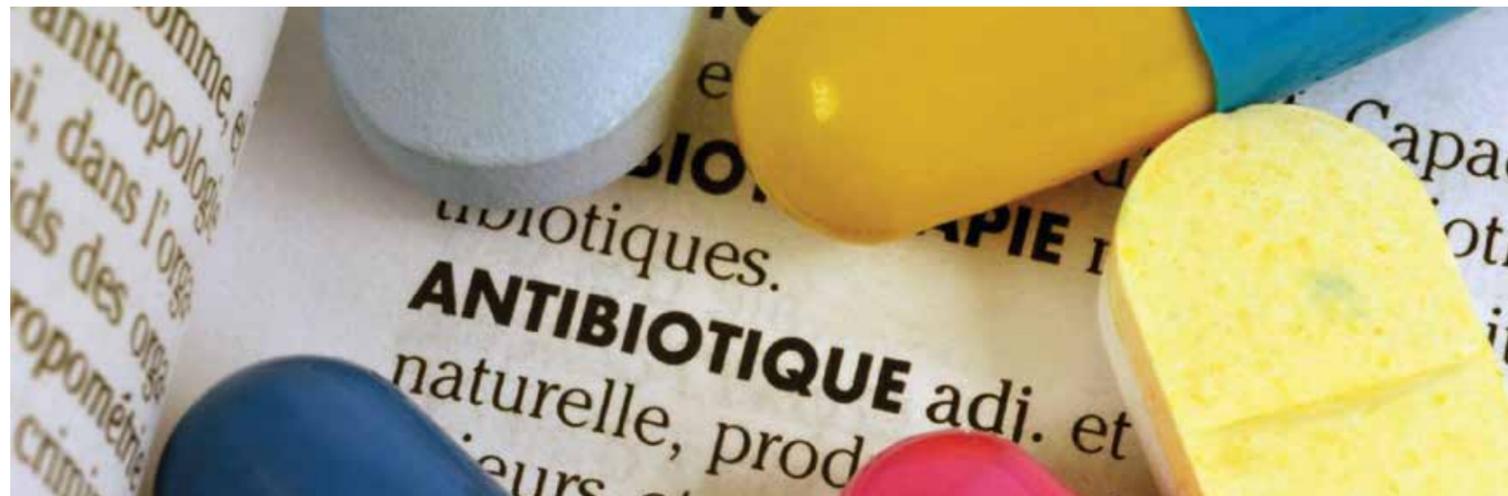
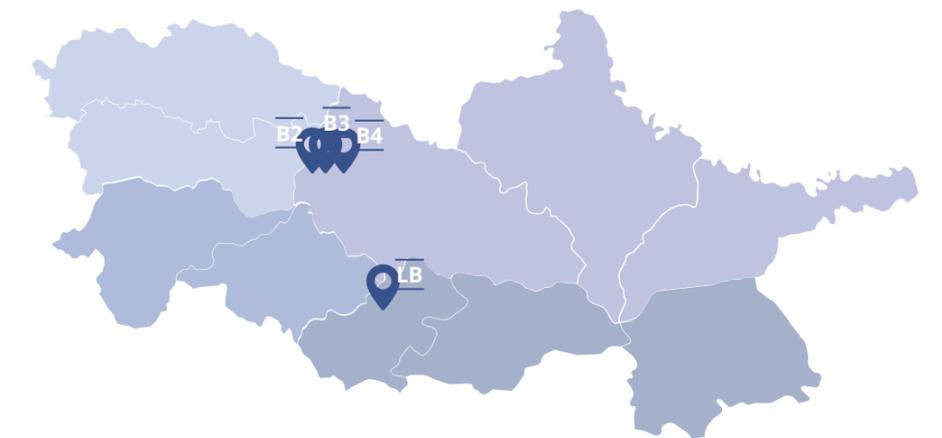
border knowledge exchange and collaboration. The conference provided a platform for sharing insights, discussing challenges, and exploring solutions, further strengthening the bond between the two nations in their fight against antibiotic resistance.

The steps taken by the SIGMED RO-UA project, though they may seem modest on the surface, have a profound impact on patient safety and healthcare quality. By equipping healthcare professionals with the tools and knowledge to optimize antibiotic therapy, the project plays a crucial role in reducing the prevalence of antibiotic-resistant infections. This initiative not only enhances the immediate quality of care but also contributes to the long-term sustainability of healthcare systems in both countries.

As the SIGMED RO-UA project reached its completion, the participants reflected on their achievements with a deep sense of pride. Their commitment to patient-centered care and excellence in antibiotic therapy practices has set a new standard for healthcare collaboration across borders. This project serves as a precedent for future endeavours, demonstrating that through dedication, cooperation, and adherence to best practices, it is possible to safeguard patient health and combat the looming threat of antibiotic resistance.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Facilitated collaboration between expert specialists and healthcare professionals from participating hospitals
- The Guide of Good Practices in Antibiotic Therapy elaborated and disseminated to medical professionals during a conference organized in Viseul de Sus. Specialists from three hospitals in Romania and two in Ukraine attended the conference, where they gained valuable insights into effective antibiotic therapy practices



SIGMED RO-UA II – Patient safety in surgical procedures and transfusions

The "SIGMED RO-UA II – Patient Safety in Surgical Procedures and Transfusions" project unfolded in Satu Mare county, Romania, and Zakarpattia region in Ukraine, within the healthcare sector. Focused on enhancing the capacity of five urban/municipal hospitals along the Romania-Ukraine border, our project aimed to ensure patient safety in critical clinical processes such as blood transfusions, surgical procedures, anaesthesia, and intensive therapy.

Hospitals in this border region grapple with significant challenges in patient safety, stemming from the absence of standardized protocols, limited resources, and fragmented efforts. Complications from surgeries, anaesthesia, and blood transfusions have led to heightened morbidity, mortality, and strain on healthcare systems. Addressing these challenges, our project prioritized the development of a safety culture, encouraging the communication of adverse events to identify causes and devise patient-focused solutions.

Our approach encompassed evidence-based practices, harmonized guidelines, and the provision of essential equipment and training. By fostering cross-border cooperation, we aimed to enhance healthcare services, mitigate inequities, and fortify regional stability.

The project executed various activities including tailored training programs for healthcare professionals, collaborative development of medical protocols, provision of high-performance equipment, and establishment of cross-border institutional cooperation. These initiatives were aimed at enhancing patient safety, averting adverse events, and elevating the quality of care in targeted hospitals.

Through our efforts, over 90 healthcare professionals received training, harmonized guidelines were developed and implemented, and public events were conducted to raise awareness and disseminate project outcomes. Our pioneering healthcare initiative transcended borders, transforming patient safety standards across hospitals in the Romania-Ukraine border region. By empowering healthcare professionals with the latest techniques and protocols through comprehensive training programs, the project ensured frontline workers were equipped to navigate clinical scenarios with confidence and precision.

Joint development of best practice guidelines tailored to the region's unique needs was a cornerstone of the project. Expert coordination resulted in comprehensive guides for implementing patient blood management standards and harmonized risk management protocols in critical areas like surgical processes, anaesthesia, and intensive therapy.

Healthcare professionals adopting new knowledge and guidelines led to reduced complications and post-operative infections. Standardized protocols improved patient blood management, decreasing untreated pre-operative anaemia and transfusion-related complications.



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: SIGMED RO-UA II

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.2/00100

Partnership:

LB: CREST ASSOCIATION (Satu Mare, Romania)

B1: Fund for the Development of Cross-Border Cooperation and Special Economic Zones (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: MUNICIPAL NON-PROFIT ENTREPRISE "CENTRAL MUNICIPAL CLINICAL HOSPITAL" OF UZHGOROD CITY COUNCIL (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B3: Municipal non-commercial enterprise "Uzhhorod city multidisciplinary clinical hospital" of Uzhhorod city council (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 733 452,18

Implementation period:

September 2021 - December 2023

This fostered transparency and accountability, allowing for better handling of adverse events. Professionals felt empowered, emphasizing the project's success in addressing healthcare challenges through collaboration.

Moving forward, we plan to broaden our initiatives, involve more stakeholders, and use technology to improve patient safety and healthcare outcomes in the Romania-Ukraine border region. We aim to promote patient-centered care for a lasting impact on healthcare delivery.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully enhanced capacity of five urban/municipal hospitals along the Romania-Ukraine border to ensure patient safety in critical clinical processes such as blood transfusions, surgical procedures, anaesthesia, and intensive therapy
- Over 90 healthcare professionals underwent intensive training in various aspects of healthcare quality management, clinical audit, patient blood management, surgical safety, and anaesthesia. This empowered frontline workers with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate complex clinical scenarios with confidence and precision
- Facilitated joint development of best practice guidelines tailored to the unique needs of the cross-border region. These guidelines included protocols for patient blood management and risk management in surgical processes, anaesthesia, and intensive therapy. Implementation of these guidelines standardized practices and improved patient safety outcomes
- Implementation of training programs and standardized protocols led to a reduction in post-operative complications across the targeted hospitals. Healthcare professionals reported decreased rates of post-operative infections, indicating improved surgical safety and infection control measures
- Prevalence of untreated pre-operative anaemia decreased, and evidence-based transfusion practices led to fewer transfusion-related complications
- Successful collaboration between Romania and Ukraine fostered improvements in healthcare services, reducing inequities and strengthening regional stability

Improving health care services in social facilities

In the heart of Košice and Zakarpattia regions, amidst unprecedented challenges, we, the dedicated team behind the project, emerged as a beacon of hope. Our mission: to elevate the health and well-being of clients in social services facilities, even in the face of adversity.

Together with our partners we could create an efficient team. However, we have encountered unprecedented obstacles as COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical turmoil started.

Thus we had to swiftly adapt our strategies, embracing online platforms for training sessions and resource procurement. This agile response ensured continuity in delivering essential services to vulnerable populations, despite disruptions in access to resources. At our core, we remained steadfast in our mission to enhance therapy services and create optimal conditions for activities in social care facilities. Through strategic investments and targeted interventions, we aimed to uplift the overall well-being of our clients. Our online training sessions emerged as a cornerstone of our approach, empowering

employees across 13 social services facilities in Košice with invaluable skills and knowledge. Covering vital topics such as communication strategies, conflict management, and individual planning, these sessions equipped frontline workers with the tools needed to provide high-quality care in challenging circumstances.

Furthermore, procurement of medical equipment, including wheelchair stair climbers and state-of-the-art disinfection tools, bolstered the capabilities of participating facilities. This investment not only ensured a safe environment for clients but also enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare delivery. Our partners also succeeded to procure various devices and equipment aiding in treating clients and rehabilitation of patients, which was later handed over to Uzhgorod City Territorial Center of Social Services, Medical Social Rehabilitation Center "Path of Life", NGO "Happy kids" and Charitable Fund "Vse Mozhlyvo".

Despite the hurdles encountered along the way, we successfully completed three online

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: SOCIAL HEALTHCARE

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0019

Partnership:

LB: Košice Self-governing Region (Košice, Slovakia)

B1: Transcarpathian Regional Center for Social and Labor Rehabilitation and Professional Orientation (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B2: Department for International Cooperation and Innovations of Uzhgorod City Council (Zakarpattia, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 339 069,72

Implementation period:

November 2019 - April 2023

training sessions and procured essential equipment for participating facilities. Testimonials from stakeholders echo the sentiment of tangible impact, citing noticeable improvements in service quality.

Our project's story serves as a testament to the power of determination and collective action, illuminating a path forward towards a brighter, healthier future for all.

"...During all of our meetings and training sessions, I discovered new sides of myself that I hadn't seen before. Each time I left my comfort zone in the best sense of the word and slowly, step by step, I became myself. And that, for me, is the best thing I'm leaving this project with..."

"...We all enjoyed getting to know new people, getting new impressions from everyone telling us about their lives, their victories over their ills. And in these days spent together, I am grateful to Lesya, Karina and the whole team, who put a lot of effort to make us a holiday, to give us unforgettable moments of happiness, good ideas, cheer for the future, which includes the main goal of the project "I can, and YOU can..."

Vikusya Lysyuk

Ivan Fanchak



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Procurement of essential medical equipment, including wheelchair stair climbers and disinfection tools, to enhance facilities' capabilities and ensure a safe environment for patients
- Successful completion of three online training sessions and procurement of essential equipment for participating facilities, despite unforeseen challenges
- Online training sessions addressed critical areas such as communication strategies, conflict management, and individual planning, empowering employees of 13 social services facilities in Košice with valuable skills and knowledge



Joint initiative to improve the quality of life of children with oncological diseases in the Transcarpathian, Košice and Prešov regions

In the heartland of our compassion, caring for sick children is not just a mission; it is the pulse of our destiny. Driven by this commitment, we aimed to improve the quality of children's cancer treatment in Slovakia and the Zakarpattia region of Ukraine. Our project activities followed two main tracks: enhancing medical treatment by providing new healthcare equipment to participating hospitals and healthcare facilities, and facilitating the exchange of experience and best practices among experts, oncologists, and healthcare staff.

Our efforts succeeded in providing the Ukrainian expert community with a very useful and practical set of contacts and communications with their Slovak counterparts. This exchange of experience laid the foundation for developing psychosocial and treatment rehabilitation for children in the Zakarpattia region of Ukraine. Following our mission to bring improvements to public health, the project enhanced access to effective treatment opportunities, client-oriented services, and prevention programs. A new network of experts and healthcare workers was created on both sides of the Slovakia-Ukraine border, enabling the free exchange of experience and expertise. This cooperation is crucial for creating a supra-national platform for treating complicated cases.

Throughout the project, participants gained advanced expertise from leading Slovak and Czech specialists. They had numerous opportunities to discuss specific case studies in Zakarpattia and arrange follow-up consultations regarding relevant treatment protocols. This collaboration significantly improved the prospects for young patients, who now have better access to diagnostics and treatment comparable to those available elsewhere in Europe. The project enabled both partner organizations to understand the needs of our target group: children with cancer from the Zakarpattia region, whose families lack the

financial resources available in Slovakia or the Czech Republic. By purchasing the necessary medical and rehabilitation equipment, we directly improved the quality of healthcare, psychological, and social support provided. Our project had a substantial impact on its target groups, with significant improvements in healthcare provision in the Zakarpattia region. We provided access to treatment protocols and consultations with European paediatric oncology experts, opening opportunities for future meetings at conferences and expert forums, both in-person and online. Additionally, the project fostered exceptional cooperation between the partners, which we plan to continue in the future.

From the Ukrainian partner's perspective, the project received immense support from the Slovak partner, enabling us to achieve all our goals. The expertise of doctors across Ukraine improved through exchanges with Slovak and other specialists.

We shared information on the main manifestations of oncopathologies through

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: JIQL

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0127

Partnership:

LB: Light of Help Non-profit Organization (Košice, Slovakia)

B1: Council for the Protection of the Rights of Patients and Medical Workers (Mynay, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 295 316,56

Implementation period:

November 2019 - October 2021

webinars and an international conference. This was the first time a project of this nature was implemented in the Zakarpattia region, meeting modern global standards for social, medical, and psychological rehabilitation for children with cancer.

The specialized and much-needed equipment we purchased significantly advanced our ability to diagnose and treat paediatric cancer patients.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Equipped hospitals and healthcare facilities with modern medical devices
- Procured 5 sets of specialized and much-needed medical equipment for diagnosing and treating children with cancer for institutions in Zakarpattia
- Acquired 11 modern medical devices for the oncological and anesthesiological wards in the Children's Hospital in Košice, significantly enhancing healthcare delivery in Eastern Slovakia
- Facilitated the exchange of experience and best practices among medical professionals, including oncologists and healthcare staff by conducting numerous training sessions, webinars, and an international conference
- Established a robust network of experts and healthcare workers across the Slovakia-Ukraine border, promoting ongoing exchange of expertise and collaboration
- Enhanced access to effective treatment, client-oriented services, and prevention programs for children with cancer
- Directly improved healthcare, psychological, and social support for children in Zakarpattia, addressing the needs of families with limited financial resources
- Provided access to European treatment protocols and facilitated consultations with paediatric oncology experts, enhancing the treatment quality for young patients in Zakarpattia
- Children in both regions now have better access to diagnostics and treatment comparable to standards in Europe



From the Slovak partner's perspective, the project provided immense value to our primary beneficiaries. We acquired modern medical equipment for the Children's Hospital in Košice, enhancing healthcare in Eastern Slovakia. Children with cancer in both Slovakia and Ukraine now receive more timely and relevant healthcare and assistance, substantially improving their lives. The collaboration fostered through this project has been outstanding, and we look forward to continuing our partnership in the future.

In conclusion, our project successfully met its objectives by providing essential medical equipment, enhancing professional expertise, and fostering cross-border collaboration. The ultimate beneficiaries, children with cancer in Slovakia and Ukraine, now have better prospects for timely and effective treatment. Our combined efforts have made a significant difference, and we remain committed to continuing this vital work to improve paediatric oncology care.



Joint initiatives and solutions in addressing health in the cross-border Romania-Ukraine

In the picturesque borderlands where Romania's Maramureş region meets Ukraine's Ivano-Frankivsk, the "Health beyond Borders" initiative unfolded like a delicate blossom. Our shared vision was clear: to enhance healthcare across borders, transcending boundaries and fostering collaboration. At its core, this project aimed to bridge gaps in medical resources, weaving a tapestry of healing that spanned Sighetu Marmatiei, Romania, and Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.

Our journey began with a stark realization: the scarcity of medical equipment and the absence of effective cooperation mechanisms between healthcare providers. On both sides of the Romanian-Ukrainian divide, communities grappled with inadequate resources, leaving critical and chronic care hanging in the balance. To tackle this challenge head-on, the project unfolded a multifaceted approach. We did not merely introduce shiny new technologies; we built bridges between healthcare professionals. Our carefully crafted plan equipped local medical facilities with 70 pieces of vital equipment, but our greatest investment was in people. Sixty-five dedicated medical staff underwent intensive training, not only mastering the intricacies of the new technologies but also embracing a culture of collaboration and shared learning.

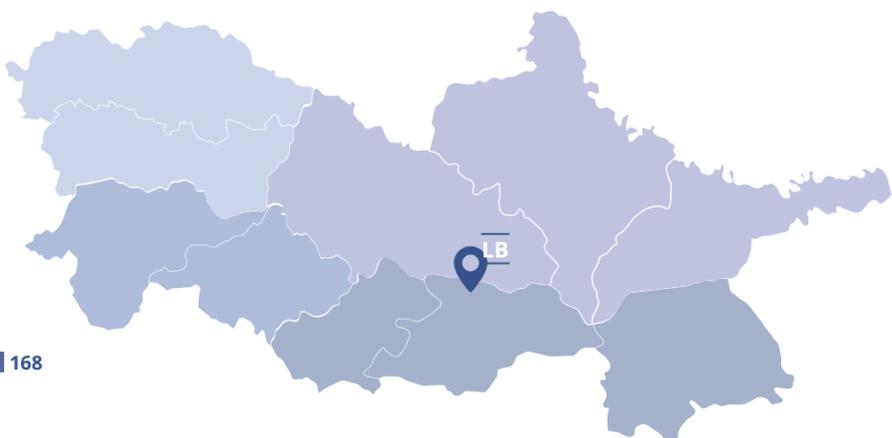
The impact was profound. Imagine bustling hospital corridors now adorned with state-of-

the-art machinery. Healthcare workers, armed not only with medical knowledge but also with a newfound spirit of cooperation, moved with purpose. This was not just about numbers on a spreadsheet; it was about lives transformed and futures safeguarded.

The results spoke volumes. Patient intake surged from 80,000 to 92,000 annually, a testament to the enhanced capacity and efficiency of our healthcare system. But beyond the statistics lay the true measure of success: the voices of those on the frontline. Testimonials poured in, gratitude echoing through hospital wards. Amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare workers found newfound confidence. They navigated crises with skill, delivering quality care - a direct result of our project's investments.

Our journey does not end here. Inspired by our collective triumphs, we stand at the threshold of possibility. The seeds of collaborative health initiatives have taken root, and we nurture them with determination. Our commitment remains unwavering: to sustain and expand our cross-border partnerships, to continually raise the banner of healthcare excellence, and to face our shared challenges with a united front.

Together, we have woven a tapestry of healing - a testament to what humanity can achieve when borders blur, and hearts beat as one.



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Health beyond borders

ID: HUSKROUA/1702/8.2/0105

Partnership:

LB: Sighetu Marmatiei Municipal Hospital (Sighetu Marmatiei, Romania)

B1: Ivano-Frankivsk City Central Clinical Hospital (Kiev, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 866 407,24

Implementation period: October 2019 - May 2021

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Introduction of 70 new pieces of essential medical equipment significantly bolstered the infrastructure of local healthcare facilities in Sighetu Marmatiei, Romania, and Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. This upgrade directly contributed to improving the quality and efficiency of healthcare services provided in the regions
- Tangible increase in patient handling capacity, with the number of patients served annually rising from 80,000 to 92,000—a notable 15% increase. This expansion translated into better access to healthcare for individuals residing in the Maramureş and Ivano-Frankivsk regions, addressing a critical need in both communities
- Through specialized training programs, 65 medical staff members received enhanced skills and knowledge. This investment in human resources not only improved the capabilities of healthcare professionals but also fostered a culture of collaboration and shared learning across borders
- Amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project demonstrated its adaptability and responsiveness. By facilitating the exchange of healthcare practices and protocols, particularly in pandemic management, it helped build a more resilient healthcare system

"I'm very excited to work in hospital that is so modern, developed and equipped. Great that hospital found such a pleasant partner and made big changes together."

Nurse at Ivano-Frankivsk City Central Clinical Hospital

"I appreciate cooperation we created. We planned a lot in 2019, but COVID-19 made its corrections. Still, I remember how both teams handled the issues and successfully implemented the project. This project improved our reputation and status on the national level. We are still sharing its great results with other UA hospitals."

Taras Maslyak,
Ivano-Frankivsk City Central Clinical Hospital,
Project Coordinator

"Thanks to the new equipment we received a good opportunity to save more lives. The project itself was very crucial for the hospital in the pandemic time as it provided quality equipment to minimize the spread of infections. We purchased the equipment for the Ivano-Frankivsk hospital in the months of February 2020, marked by the outburst of the pandemic."

Doctor at Ivano-Frankivsk City Central Clinical Hospital

"I only visit this hospital for consultation or treatment. I think this is the best hospital in Ivano-Frankivsk region. Thanks to every employee of this hospital!"

Patient at Ivano-Frankivsk City Central Clinical Hospital



Cross-Border Knowledge Exchange on Minimal Invasive Surgery Method and Modern Care

Picture this: a virtual corridor spanning Hungary and Ukraine, where medical professionals exchanged insights, techniques, and compassion. It is CBC-OPERATION project. Its mission? To elevate minimally invasive surgical methods and redefine patient care. As the project's digital tapestry unfolded, it wove together expertise, resilience, and hope—bridging borders even when physical presence was impossible due to the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Central Hospital and University Teaching Hospital in collaboration with the Endre Novák Subcarpathian County Clinical Hospital fostered an environment of shared learning and expertise. Our collective efforts enhanced the application of surgical techniques, bolstered the safety and success of procedures, and expanded treatment options for patients. Throughout the project's tenure, we organized nearly 40 lectures across 8 events, facilitating a rich exchange of knowledge and experience.

Our partnership enabled us to equip both Ukrainian and Hungarian teams with state-of-the-art medical and communication devices, including a laparoscopic tower for each, a

C-shaped X-ray image intensifier, and a video conference system, all of which align with contemporary standards.

The hospital in Miskolc, a pioneer in minimally invasive surgical procedures within the country, shared its valuable expertise with the Ukrainian colleagues, who reciprocated with insights into other types of interventions. The exchange was not limited to equipment; it was a profound learning experience, particularly in the care of thoracic surgeries and lower extremity injuries.

Despite the challenges posed by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which hindered physical interaction, our unwavering dedication enabled us to achieve our project objectives through virtual means. The acquired equipment not only elevated the standard of patient care but also facilitated the treatment of the heightened caseload resulting from the war situation in Ukraine.

The high-value equipment acquired significantly uplifted patient care standards, and the professional workshops enriched the knowledge base of specialists from both institutions. These tools, now integral to the

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: CBC-OPERATION

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.2/0091

Partnership:

LB: Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Central Hospital and University Teaching Hospital (Miskolc, Hungary)

B1: "Municipal Non-profit Enterprise "Andrii Novak Transcarpathian Regional Clinical Hospital" of Transcarpathian Regional Council " (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 417 054,73

Implementation period:

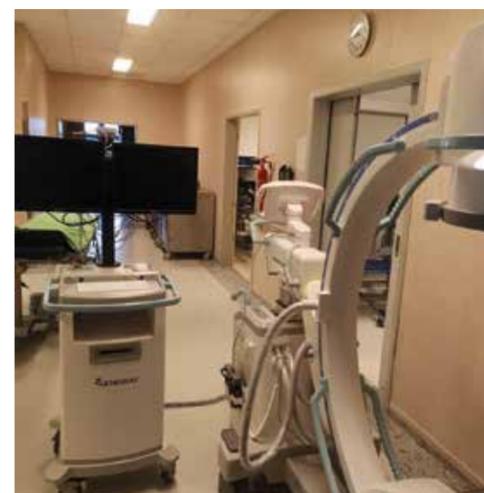
July 2021 - December 2022

traumatology and general surgery departments, have expedited and enhanced patient care for regional cases. Notably, the laparoscopic tower and C-curved X-ray have been instrumental in managing the increased caseload arising from the war at our Ukrainian partner facility.

Beyond equipment acquisition and knowledge exchange, we aimed to develop a protocol for minimally invasive techniques applicable to gunshot wounds. Through the concerted efforts of both hospitals, this protocol was not only completed but also translated into English, Ukrainian, and Hungarian.

Beyond machines and protocols, our project birthed a robust alliance. We envision a future where borders blur, and expertise flows freely. In this tale of resilience and cooperation, we celebrate not just equipment but the bonds forged across borders. Our journey continues, fuelled by the spirit of healing without boundaries.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the CBC-OPERATION project, we recognize that our work transcends the confines of traditional medical collaboration. It embodies a commitment to solidarity and innovation in the face of adversity.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Enhanced application of minimally invasive surgical techniques, thereby improving the safety and success rates of procedures. This advancement in techniques contributed to better treatment options for patients
- Eight events organized during the project duration, comprising nearly 40 lectures. These events facilitated the exchange of expertise between the participating institutions, fostering professional development in the field
- Both Ukrainian and Hungarian partners benefited from the acquisition of modern medical and communication devices, including a laparoscopic tower, C-shaped X-ray image intensifier, and video conference system. These tools bolstered the hospitals' capabilities in delivering state-of-the-art care
- Obtained high-value equipment elevated the standard of patient care in traumatology and general surgery departments. This resulted in faster and higher-quality care for patients, particularly amid the increased caseload caused by the war situation in Ukraine
- Developed protocol for the application of minimally invasive techniques in treating gunshot wounds. This protocol, completed through joint cooperation, was translated into three languages to facilitate its dissemination and implementation
- Exchange of experiences and expertise led to a growth in theoretical and practical knowledge among specialists from both institutions. This mutual learning contributed to the professional development of healthcare professionals involved



Integrated solutions for improvement of health care and prevention services in cross border area

In the Romanian-Ukrainian border territory, outdated healthcare equipment, inadequate linkages between services, and poor understanding of patient needs contribute to substandard healthcare outcomes. Recognizing these challenges, we proposed a comprehensive approach to improve healthcare services. By collaborating with local partners, we aimed to address infrastructure gaps, enhance service delivery, and promote preventive healthcare practices.

Health CBC project focused on three key areas: infrastructure improvement, capacity building, and community engagement. We aimed to transform healthcare delivery by upgrading facilities, providing essential medical equipment, and empowering stakeholders through training and awareness initiatives.

Project team began by conducting thorough health studies in each partner locality to identify specific needs and priorities. Based on the findings, we initiated infrastructure improvements, including the reconstruction and equipping of health centers, acquisition of emergency ambulances, and procurement of

vital diagnostic equipment such as MRI machines. Concurrently, we organized health screenings and workshops to engage stakeholders, promote health literacy, and encourage preventive healthcare behaviours.

Team's efforts yielded tangible results, with the reconstruction of one health center, acquisition of one ambulance, and procurement of an MRI machine. These investments significantly



"Who saves a life saves a whole world"

Sobius Mariana Monica
Mayor of Tarna Mare Commune

"The implementation of this project gave the inhabitants of the commune a chance for a healthy life in their community."

Silaghi Sergiu
Mayor of Santau Commune



enhanced healthcare access and quality for the community. Additionally, our engagement efforts led to the participation of 300 individuals in health screenings and the training of 30 stakeholders, fostering community involvement and capacity building.

Through our collaborative approach, we have made significant strides in improving healthcare services in the cross-border area. Looking ahead, we remain committed to sustaining these improvements and expanding our impact to benefit more communities. Our project exemplifies the transformative power of cross-border cooperation in addressing healthcare challenges and improving public health outcomes.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Health CBC

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.2/0032

Partnership:

LB: Santau Commune (Satu Mare, Romania)

B1: Tarna Mare Commune (Tarna Mare, Romania)

B2: Municipal Non-Commercial Enterprise "Vynohradiv District Hospital" of Vynohradiv Town Council of the Transcarpathian Region (Vynohradiv, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 1 000 000,00

Implementation period:

June 2021- December 2023

"For us, implementation of this project meant giving an extra chance at life to the inhabitants of our commune and neighboring communes. Thus, more than 10,000 inhabitants of the cross-border area will benefit from prompt and quality emergency medical services!"

Sobius Mariana Monica
Mayor of Tarna Mare Commune

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully reconstructed and equipped a communal health center in Santau, addressing the critical need for modernized healthcare facilities in the Romanian-Ukrainian border territory
- Ambulance equipped with essential medical equipment for emergency interventions acquired for Tarna Mare Commune
- MRI machine procured by Vynohradiv Municipal Hospital
- Conducted a health workshop engaging and training 30 stakeholders from the partner localities
- Organization of three medical screening actions, Health Days, engaged 300 individuals from the target localities



Modernisation of Cystic Fibrosis Centers in Košice and Ivano-Frankivsk

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is an incurable rare disease that not only shortens the life expectancy of CF patients but also profoundly affects the daily lives of their families. In Ukraine's Ivano-Frankivsk (IF) region, as well as in Slovakia's Košice and Prešov regions, CF care has fallen short of European standards.

CF care in Ukraine lacks the multidisciplinary approach essential for optimal patient outcomes, a gap exacerbated by ongoing challenges including war and resource constraints. To address this pressing issue, we aimed to revolutionize CF care in these regions, despite the challenging circumstances. Our solution involved the establishment of three modernized CF Centres – two in Slovakia and one in Ukraine. These centres would be equipped with state-of-the-art medical technology and staffed by skilled healthcare professionals trained in modern CF treatment approaches.

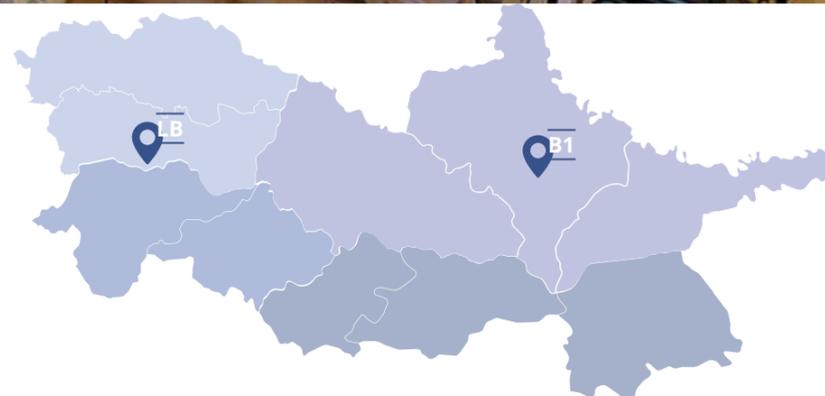
Through the procurement of cutting-edge medical equipment and technology, we transformed existing facilities into modern spaces capable of delivering high-quality CF care to patients from the targeted regions. Over 280 healthcare professionals and CF family members participated in educational events, where they acquired essential knowledge and skills in modern CF care practices, including multidisciplinary team collaboration and advanced physiotherapy techniques.

We developed and translated the CF HERO app into Ukrainian, providing CF children with a playful yet effective tool for managing their daily therapies. Additionally, through advocacy efforts, we secured access to innovative life-saving treatments for CF patients in both Slovakia and Ukraine.

Establishment of three modernized CF Centres significantly improved the standard of care for CF patients in the targeted regions. Testimonials

from healthcare professionals and CF associations attest to the tangible impact of our efforts on patient outcomes and quality of life.

Our vision is one of sustained progress and growth, with a focus on continued education and the adoption of modernized care practices in CF Centres. By implementing new knowledge and skills, we aim to ensure ongoing improvements in CF care and ultimately provide CF patients with a brighter future.



PROJECT DETAILS
Acronym: MODE CF SK UA
ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.2/0011
Partnership:
LB: Slovak Cystic Fibrosis Association (Košice, Slovakia)
B1: Municipal non-profit enterprise Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Children's Clinical Hospital of Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Council (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)
EU contribution: EUR 205 497,75
Implementation period: June 2021 - October 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Three modernized CF Centres successfully established, including two in Slovakia and one in Ukraine. These centres are equipped with cutting-edge medical technology to ensure high-quality care for CF patients
- A total of 280 healthcare professionals and CF family members participated in educational events aimed at enhancing their knowledge and skills in modern CF care practices. These initiatives have empowered participants to implement advanced treatment approaches and provide comprehensive care to CF patients
- Translation and implementation of the CF HERO app in Ukrainian have revolutionized the management of CF therapies for children. This innovative tool has enabled CF patients to engage in their daily treatments in a playful manner, leading to increased adherence and satisfaction among patients and their families
- Purchase of state-of-the-art medical equipment, including diagnostics tools, monitoring devices, and chest physiotherapy equipment, has significantly enhanced the infrastructure and capabilities of CF Centres. Patients now have access to personalized spirometers and PARI-oPEP devices for home use, further improving their overall care experience

“The innovative aspect and added value lie in the complexity of modernizing equipment and furniture in hospitals housing CF Centres. During the multidisciplinary team training, we utilized the new space of the CF Center at IF, bringing together all stakeholders simultaneously. This approach offered a fresh perspective on multidisciplinary CF teamwork, emphasizing the importance of centralized team care and therapy within CF Centres.”

CF Association, Katarína Štěpánková, chairwoman

“Training of specialists of multidisciplinary team, patients and their family members in aspects and skills of care is an important component of successful achievement of goals, the staff of the department has significantly improved knowledge and skills and uses them practically. Thanks to CF HERO app, designed for CF children, patients take their medications, perform all procedures on time and with satisfaction, parents can more easily monitor their therapy. Over the years of our cooperation, children and their parents began to smile, because their physical and psychological condition improved thanks to new knowledge and the implementation of all advice and procedures.”

Ivano-Frankivsk Children's Hospital, Monika Makian, pulmonologist



Sure Start Children's Home - Cross-border Cooperation Programme

In Ukraine, institutional system entrusted with safeguarding infants and supporting struggling families remains only partially developed, with few professionals available for continuous case monitoring. Recognizing this gap, Sure Start Children's Homes (SSCHs) in the Berehove district, set out to address these challenges. Drawing inspiration from the successful methodology of SSCHs in Hungary, these initiatives aim to empower young mothers and their children by imparting skills and competencies crucial for social integration and a healthy lifestyle.

Families with infants in Berehove district confront a multitude of obstacles hindering their children's development. Issues such as low family income, substandard living conditions, inadequate nutrition, heightened disease prevalence, and premature health deterioration are further exacerbated by the ongoing war

in the country. In Yanoshi, a settlement within the Berehove district, the plight of parents and their children in marginalized communities is particularly severe compared to the district's capital.

In response to these challenges, Hungarian Interchurch Aid and ADVANCE Transcarpathian Advocacy and Training Centre joined forces in a project to offer professional assistance in early development and neonatal care.

Thus, a new chapter of Sure Start Children's Homes unfolded in Yanoshi, Zakarpattia. This institution pledged to replicate the successes of the initial Ukrainian SSCH in Berehove, providing comprehensive support to children and parents within a similar context.

Each day at the institution begins with a nutritious breakfast for the children, accompanied by

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: Sure Start

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.2/0061

Partnership:

LB: Hungarian Interchurch Aid (Budapest, Hungary)

B1: ADVANCE Transcarpathian Advocacy and Development Center (Berehovo, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 334 284,19

Implementation period:

June 2021 - December 2023

parents exchanging ideas and strategies related to parenting and household challenges, while also benefiting from advice from the institution's professionals. Following breakfast, developmental sessions with various thematic focuses ensue: ranging from musical activities and games to enhance fine motor skills, to arts and crafts. These sessions not only benefit the children but also equip parents with valuable skills and

solutions to the myriad of challenges they face in raising their kids.

The impact of this assistance is profound, if not always easily quantifiable. Mária Fischer, project manager for the Sure Start Children's Homes project at ADVANCE, shares a poignant example: "If our physiotherapist hadn't gone the extra mile to help the child, they may have never learned to crawl or walk. The child's mother faces mental health challenges and comes from a very difficult background, but through regular visits here, she has made significant strides in parenting and providing for her child."

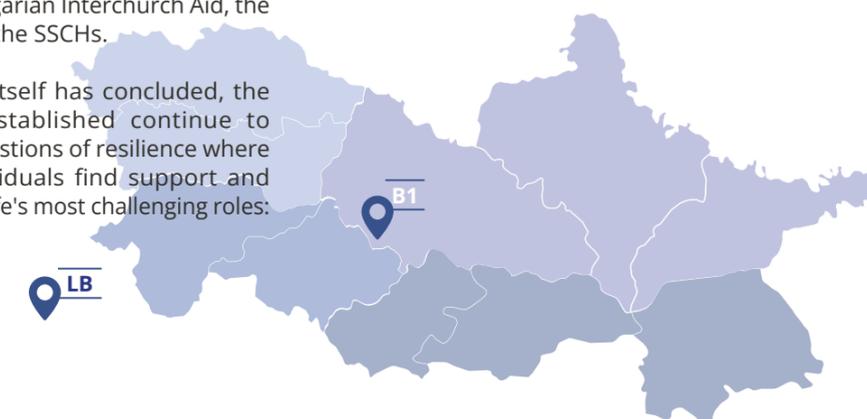
"As a project team deeply committed to the well-being of families, particularly those with newborns and young children, we are honoured to witness the transformative effects of our initiative within the SSCHs. Our project, born from a dedication to addressing critical health needs, serves as a lifeline to local communities and internally displaced persons (IDPs) seeking refuge in the region. Through expanding programme services and offering essential counselling in

the most disadvantaged settlements, we are not merely bridging gaps but fostering hope and resilience. Through strategic collaboration with ADVANCE Transcarpathian Advocacy and Development Centre, our Ukrainian partner, and the dedicated efforts of our teams at Hungarian Interchurch Aid, we have not only delivered vital services but also facilitated integration, community cohesion, and paved the way for sustainable change." Eszter Sebok, project coordinator at Hungarian Interchurch Aid, the lead beneficiary of the SSCHs.

While the project itself has concluded, the communities it established continue to thrive, serving as bastions of resilience where marginalized individuals find support and guidance in one of life's most challenging roles: parenting.

"We're proud of our project's reach, extending support to young mothers and children in 15 Berehove region settlements. Despite challenges like the onset of war, our adaptable team continued to provide vital services, including support for internally displaced persons. We also successfully adjusted plans, finding a new location for the second Ukrainian Sure Start Children's Home in Yanoshi amidst rising inflation."

Project team



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Established Sure Start Children's Homes (SSCHs) in the Berehove district, drawing inspiration from successful methodologies in Hungary
- Targeted families with infants in the Berehove district, particularly in marginalized communities like Yanoshi, to provide tailored support and assistance, addressing issues such as low income, poor living conditions, and health challenges exacerbated by war
- Provided complex support to children and parents, encompassing nutritional, developmental, and psychosocial aspects. Daily routines included nutritious breakfasts for children and opportunities for parents to exchange ideas and receive advice from professionals
- Multidisciplinary team comprising a kindergarten teacher, paediatrician, and physiotherapist conducted developmental sessions for children, empowering parents with valuable skills and solutions to parenting challenges
- Despite the challenges of quantifying results, testimonials highlighted significant progress made by children and parents, demonstrating the value of the assistance provided in improving outcomes for families
- Beyond the project's duration, the communities established by SSCHs continued to flourish as resilient support networks for marginalized individuals, serving as valuable resources for parents navigating the complexities of parenting



Implementation of new standards and technologies for surgical treatment of central nervous system diseases in cross-border region

In a remarkable stride towards improving neurosurgical care, our collaborative project between Ukraine and Hungary achieved its primary objectives. We aimed to reduce postoperative complications and mortality rates, while enhancing the quality of life for patients undergoing neurosurgical procedures. As we reflect on the culmination of our project, we embark on a storytelling voyage that encapsulates the essence of our shared mission and the transformative impact it has had on patient lives.

Our story begins with a vision to transcend boundaries and reshape the landscape of neurosurgical care. United by a common goal, medical professionals from Ukraine and Hungary embarked on a journey fuelled by passion and commitment. With a steadfast determination to enhance patient outcomes, we set our sights on introducing cutting-edge advancements and fostering collaborative learning opportunities.

Through immersive professional trainings, we created a platform for cross-cultural learning, where insights flowed freely, and experiences were shared without borders. From intricate surgical techniques to the nuances of patient care, each interaction enriched our collective understanding and strengthened the bonds of our partnership.

At the core of our project lies the integration of advanced neuronavigation systems – a testament to our commitment to precision and innovation. With state-of-the-art technology at our fingertips, we embarked on a journey to redefine surgical accuracy and efficiency. The implementation of these systems heralded a new era in neurosurgical practice, where operations became not just procedures, but intricately choreographed symphonies of healing. We issued a scientific publication, jointly developed by experts from both countries. This comprehensive publication delves into difficult

and rare examples of central nervous system pathologies, explores the intricacies of utilizing intraoperative neuronavigation, and sheds light on innovative approaches, thereby advancing the understanding of complex neurosurgical procedures.

As our project reached its conclusion, the impact reverberated far beyond the confines of our hospitals and clinics. Patients, once burdened by the weight of neurological ailments, now found solace in the promise of safer treatments and improved outcomes. Reduced operation times, minimized complications, and enhanced quality of life became the hallmarks of our collective efforts, echoing the transformative power of collaboration in healthcare.

The final beneficiaries of our project are the patients in Ukraine and Hungary who have received or will receive high-quality services through the introduction of the latest technologies. The renewed equipment and trained professionals have greatly impacted the level of satisfaction with medical services. The main result of our project is the possibility of treating as many pathologies as possible with minimally invasive methods, including technologies that allow for the clear and accurate identification of the pathology. Minimally invasive surgeries, accompanied by neuronavigation,



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: NSDNeuro

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.2/0074

Partnership:

LB: Uzhhorod National University (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

B1: University of Debrecen Medical Center (Debrecen, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 763 757,64

Implementation period:

June 2021 - December 2022

allow for surgery to be performed as safely as possible, with minimal blood loss and for a minimal time. This also reduces the time of anaesthesia, which is a huge plus for the patient, the surgical team, and the hospital.

As we bid farewell to this chapter of our journey, we leave behind a legacy of excellence and inspiration. Though our project may have concluded, the impact of our efforts will resonate for years to come, shaping the future of healthcare in our communities and beyond. Our project will be remembered not just for its achievements, but for the spirit of collaboration and compassion that fuelled its success. As we turn the page to new beginnings, we carry with us the lessons learned, the friendships forged, and the lives forever changed by our shared dedication to healing and innovation.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Conducted two professional trainings to facilitate experience exchange among partner organizations and provide educational opportunities for participating students. This has enhanced expertise and skills in neurosurgery
- Provided educational opportunities for participating students, enhancing expertise and skills in neurosurgery
- Both partner organizations have been equipped with state-of-the-art neuronavigation systems. These systems have played a crucial role in treating patients with various neurological conditions
- Issued a scientific publication, jointly developed by experts from Ukraine and Hungary. This comprehensive publication delves into difficult and rare examples of central nervous system pathologies, explores the intricacies of utilizing intraoperative neuronavigation, and sheds light on innovative approaches, thereby advancing the understanding of complex neurosurgical procedures
- Strengthened professional connections and experience exchange between Ukrainian and Hungarian medical professionals
- Improved standards of medical care in neurosurgery in the border regions of Ukraine and Hungary and overall patient outcomes and quality of life post-surgery

"Neuronavigation ensures the highest level of safety in operations, allowing surgeons to check the position of their instruments in real time. This is particularly valuable when removing tumours from functionally critical areas of the brain, such as the brain stem. Thanks to the NSDNeuro project we can now perform these advanced surgeries on patients not only from the Transcarpathian region but from all over Ukraine."

**Volodymyr Smolanka, Project Manager,
Rector of the State Higher Educational Institution
Uzhhorod National University**

"This project has marked a significant advancement in neurosurgical treatment. Beyond improving the accuracy and efficiency of surgeries, we aim to share our experience and the knowledge we've accumulated with colleagues worldwide."

**László Novák, Director of the Department of Neurosurgery
at the University of Debrecen Clinical Center**



TBC have no borders

In a world where infectious diseases transcend borders, the importance of collaborative efforts in healthcare cannot be overstated. In the heart of Eastern Europe, where borders blur and communities intertwine, we embarked on a transformative journey with the TBCHB project. As a team of healthcare professionals from Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Teaching Hospital in Hungary and the Regional Children's Hospital in Mukachevo, Ukraine, we faced a daunting challenge: tuberculosis, a relentless foe that knows no boundaries.

Our story begins with a shared commitment to improve healthcare outcomes and foster cross-border collaboration. Led by Dr. Attila Szűcs, our Director General, we forged a partnership grounded in mutual respect and a shared vision for a healthier future.

From the outset, we encountered obstacles that tested our resolve. The COVID-19 pandemic swept across the globe, disrupting lives and livelihoods. Yet, undeterred by adversity, we adapted our strategies and embraced innovative solutions to navigate the challenges of the new normal.

Amidst the chaos of a global health crisis, another threat loomed on the horizon: war in neighbouring Ukraine. As tensions escalated, we remained steadfast in our dedication to advancing healthcare across borders, determined not to let geopolitical turmoil derail our mission. With funding from the programme, TBCHB project took flight. Armed with state-of-the-

art diagnostic equipment and a shared sense of purpose, we set out to combat tuberculosis with renewed vigour.

In Mukachevo, the Regional Children's Hospital underwent a remarkable transformation. Outdated facilities gave way to modernized infrastructure, while cutting-edge laboratory equipment empowered our team to detect and treat tuberculosis with unprecedented precision.

Every step of the way, our collaboration transcended geographical boundaries and cultural differences. Together, we worked tirelessly to shorten diagnosis and treatment timelines, improve patient outcomes, and restore hope in communities ravaged by tuberculosis.

As the TBCHB project drew to a close, its impact reverberated throughout the region. With each life saved and every family spared the anguish of tuberculosis, we witnessed the power of unity and resilience in the face of adversity.

Inspired by the success of TBCHB project, we look to the future with renewed optimism and determination. Together, we will continue to break down barriers, forge new paths, and build a brighter tomorrow for all.

In the end, our story is not just about tuberculosis—it's about the transformative power of collaboration, the resilience of the human spirit, and the enduring promise of a world where healthcare knows no borders.

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: TBCHB

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.2/0067

Partnership:

LB: Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Teaching Hospital (Nyíregyháza, Hungary)

B1: Municipal Noncommercial Enterprise "REGIONAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL" (Mukachevo, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 847 610,48

Implementation period: July 2021 - August 2023



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Training series for pulmonology specialists from the Mukachevo hospital on TB diagnosis and treatment
- Acquisition of a floor mounted digital X-ray equipment, a multi-purpose digital R/F X-ray system equipment and a direct digital recording station for 1 chest (SEF) at the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Teaching Hospital
- Acquisition of an advanced X-ray and laboratory diagnostic equipment, including a bronchoscope device at the Regional Children's Hospital in Mukachevo
- Renovation of facilities in Mukachevo to accommodate new equipment and provide a conducive environment for healthcare workers

"Device development is very important, but it is at least as important to be able to create a quality environment for healthcare workers and patients. We assembled the digital X-ray machine purchased during the TBCHB project, and renovated the premises, so our radiologists can work in a new environment."

Erzsébet Biró, director of the Subcarpathian County Children's Hospital in Mukachevo

"During implementation, by providing professional guidance and developing disease prevention and detection methods - primarily on the Ukrainian side - the project contributed to reducing the spread of infection, by modernizing radiological detection options on both sides of the border. We improved our outdated X-ray diagnostic park - with digital, low-radiation devices, which are much more efficient and can help in making more precise diagnosis, with lower radiation exposure."

Unfortunately, by the time the epidemic threat receded and the situation seemed to be normalizing, the TBCHB project also faced a significant external risk factor, as the Russian-Ukrainian war began in February 2022. During these periods, our institution strove with all its might to strengthen the partnership not only in terms of project implementation, but also in everyday health care, and to help Ukraine in receiving refugees. Border crossings became more difficult, so the project's professional meetings returned to the online space, and equipment purchases in Ukraine were also at risk, as some suppliers were located in the immediate war zone. Knowing that the spread of infections - and thus of TB - can accelerate with the appearance of the influx of refugees, we considered it even more important to successfully implement our project."

Attila Szűcs, director general of the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County Teaching Hospital (Hungary)



Cross-border cooperation for the care of high-risk patients

In the summer of 2021, our journey began under the banner of 2HOSP1BORHIGHRISK project. As a collaborative effort between St. Damjan Greek Catholic Hospital in Kisvárdá, Hungary, and our esteemed Ukrainian partner, the Communal non-profit enterprise Uzhgorod District Clinical Hospital of Uzhgorod, we embarked on a mission to elevate emergency medical care to new heights.

From the very beginning, we, the project team, envisioned not just a physical transformation but a holistic enhancement of emergency care. Our Hungarian team, spearheaded a transformative renovation project within our Emergency Department. With a dedicated budget of nearly €467,000, we revitalized and expanded our facilities, creating a welcoming environment designed for efficiency and patient comfort.

The newly renovated department boasts state-of-the-art infrastructure, including a covered ambulance station, triage examination room, waiting area, and barrier-free restrooms. These improvements facilitate streamlined patient flow and ensure prompt attention to those in need. Moreover, we equipped our department with essential medical devices, investing nearly €100,000 in cutting-edge equipment ranging from bedside ultrasound devices to advanced resuscitation technology.

Throughout the project, our collaboration extended beyond physical renovations and equipment procurement. We worked hand in hand with our Ukrainian counterparts to develop standardized professional procedures and protocols. Together, we refined protocols for accident victims, cerebrovascular diseases, chest pain, and triage processes, fostering a culture of excellence in emergency care.

While our Hungarian team focused on enhancing emergency care facilities, our Ukrainian partners undertook vital renovations and equipment acquisitions at Uzhgorod District Clinical Hospital. Through joint efforts, we elevated the standard of care on both sides of the border, ensuring that patients receive the highest quality treatment irrespective of nationality or location.

As the project unfolded, we witnessed profound transformations in our hospitals and communities. Patient safety and comfort became paramount, while medical personnel experienced improved working conditions. The impact of our collaboration extended far beyond the confines of our hospitals, radiating a sense of security and reassurance to all who sought our care.

One of the most enduring legacies of our project is the bond forged between our institutions. Our successful cooperation laid the foundation

PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: 2HOSP1BORHIGHRISK

ID: HUSKROUA/1901/8.2/0070

Partnership:

LB: St. Damjan Greek Catholic Hospital (Kisvárdá, Hungary)

B1: Municipal non-commercial enterprise "Uzhgorod City Multidisciplinary Clinical Hospital" of Uzhgorod City Council (Uzhhorod, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 823 359,45

Implementation period: July 2021 - August 2023

for future endeavours, exemplifying the power of partnership in achieving shared goals. Buoyed by our success, we eagerly anticipate further collaborations under the Interreg Next Programme, confident in our ability to effect positive change.

Looking ahead, we envision a future defined by enhanced emergency care capabilities, empowered by cutting-edge technology and unwavering commitment. With each passing day, our hospitals stand ready to confront new challenges, secure in the knowledge that together, we can make a difference. In better conditions, with better instruments, we are poised to save more lives and uphold the sanctity of human health. For in the realm of emergency medicine, even one life counts.

"Arriving at the hospital is always daunting, whether as a patient or a loved one. In these moments of vulnerability and fear, the quality of patient care and the hospital environment are crucial. Renovated units not only make patients and their families feel safer but also enhance the effectiveness of medical staff. This project will benefit countless patients in need of emergency care for years to come."

**Mr. Henrik Dénes Hegyi, general director,
St. Damjan Greek Catholic Hospital**



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Remarkable transformation in the Emergency Department at St. Damjan Greek Catholic Hospital. Through renovation and expansion efforts, crucial facilities were added, including a covered ambulance station, triage examination room, and barrier-free restrooms. These enhancements not only improved patient care efficiency but also fostered a welcoming and accessible environment for all
- Procured essential devices such as bedside ultrasound machines, defibrillators, operating lamps, and advanced resuscitation technology. These acquisitions empowered medical professionals to conduct timely diagnostic and therapeutic interventions, ultimately leading to improved patient outcomes and enhanced emergency care capabilities
- Development of four standardized professional procedures and protocols. These protocols covered various aspects of emergency care, including the treatment of accident victims, cerebrovascular diseases, chest pain, and the triage process
- Significant upgrades at the Uzhgorod District Clinical Hospital in Ukraine. Partial renovation of reception departments and intensive care units, coupled with the acquisition of 25 units of medical equipment, significantly elevated the standard of patient care and improved working conditions for medical personnel. Restored operating rooms and advanced equipment have enabled diagnostic procedures and resuscitation actions to be performed at a qualitatively higher level, contributing to enhanced patient recovery and staff satisfaction



Together for a Better Future

For nearly three decades, the Malteser Charity Service has been a pillar of support in the Berehove Region of Zakarpattia, Ukraine. Their unwavering mission: to extend a helping hand to those in dire need—be it the impoverished, the elderly, or the disabled.

In 2023, in collaboration with the Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta, a new chapter began with the launch of a compassionate initiative aptly named “Together for a Better Future.” This project emerged as a response to the urgent needs wrought by war.

The overarching goal of this initiative was to address the urgent needs arising from the war emergency in our region. We focused on three key areas: providing therapeutic support to traumatized children with special needs, offering emergency assistance to war-affected youth pursuing higher education, and ensuring the sustainable preservation and distribution of locally produced food aid.

Our project was designed to tackle various challenges head-on, offering tailored solutions: Firstly, we expanded upon the successes of previous ENI project (Health4All!) to enhance therapy services for children with special needs, extending our reach to include internal refugees and children traumatized by the war.

Secondly, we provided start up support to war-affected Ukrainian youth embarking on tertiary studies, equipping them with essential items for campus life, such as bedding and kitchenware.

Thirdly, leveraging the resources of the Berehove area, we established a food preservation and distribution system to deliver humanitarian aid to harder-hit regions lacking reliable power and adequate food storage facilities. Additionally, we extended our assistance to the elderly population in the area who found themselves in dire circumstances due to the war.

Through these initiatives, we aimed to provide immediate relief to the most vulnerable segments

of our community: the disabled, internally displaced persons (IDPs), isolated elderly, and those residing near war-affected areas.

Over the course of four months, which can be considered short but a very intensive period, the continuous provision of volunteers was an essential part of the project. The Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta has organised and sent two volunteers per week to Berehove to help us achieve the objectives. We successfully distributed essential supplies to internally displaced persons and students, provided nourishment to the elderly, enhanced therapeutic services with new medical equipment, and offered numerous therapy sessions and mental health consultations. Additionally, establishment of a freeze-drying kitchen facilitated the dispatch of food to those residing near active warzones, exemplifying the project’s comprehensive approach to aiding those affected by the conflict.

While these accomplishments provided immediate relief, our commitment to long-term support remains unwavering. We pledge to continue serving the most vulnerable members of our community, drawing strength from the gratitude and joy reflected in the faces of those we assist.

Together, we forge ahead, guided by the belief that even in the darkest times, acts of kindness and compassion can illuminate the path to a brighter future.



PROJECT DETAILS

Acronym: HUSKROUA/2301/8.2/01

ID: Better Future

Partnership:

LB: Malteser Charity Organization in Berehovo Region (Berehovo, Ukraine)

B1: Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta (Budapest, Hungary)

EU contribution: EUR 249 774,94

Implementation period:

September 2023 - December 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 320 “Suitcases into the Future” distributed to IDPs and local students, each containing vital supplies for academic and daily life
- 3,614 food packages delivered to the local elderly, offering comfort and nutrition
- 4 medical equipment units acquired to enhance our therapy center’s capabilities
- 1,341 therapy sessions conducted, coupled with mental health consultancy for those affected by the war
- A freeze-drying kitchen established, equipped with 5 freeze-dryers, to process and send food to those near active warzones



Ukraine Humanitarian Assistance - multisectoral humanitarian assistance in Western Ukraine

Approximately 261,000 displaced people have sought refuge in the Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia regions of Ukraine due to the ongoing war. However, many of these individuals face challenges in providing for their families, while social and healthcare services struggle to meet their needs.

To address these pressing issues, the lead beneficiary, Hungarian Interchurch Aid, collaborated with ADVANCE Transcarpathian Advocacy and Development Centre, NGO Social Center "ETALON," and community leaders to identify vulnerable displaced communities and healthcare institutions. The project aimed to provide direct support to displaced individuals

through in-kind aid and equip hospitals with necessary devices to create safe, humane environments for them.

The humanitarian aspect of the programme provided essential assistance to 6,000 internally displaced individuals (IDPs) across the two regions. Non-perishable food, household and hygiene kits, firewood, fuel briquettes, and carbon-monoxide detectors were distributed to alleviate the hardships faced by those affected by the war. Additionally, 26 pieces of advanced medical equipment were procured for three hospitals in Zakarpattia, improving healthcare services for approximately 39,000 people.

PROJECT DETAILS

Title: Ukraine Humanitarian Assistance - multisectoral humanitarian assistance in Western Ukraine

ID: HUSKROUA/2301/8.2/02

Partnership:

LB: Hungarian Interchurch Aid (Budapest, Hungary)

B1: ADVANCE Transcarpathian Advocacy and Development Center (Berehovo, Ukraine)

B2: NGO Social Center «ETALON» (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine)

EU contribution: EUR 249 999,85

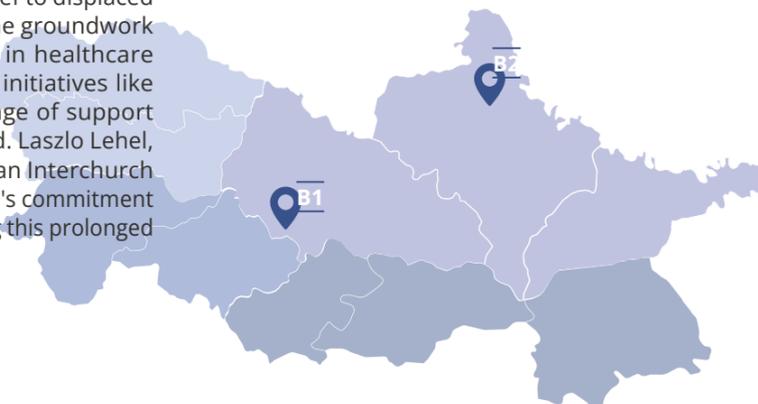
Implementation period:

September 2023 - December 2023



The collaborative efforts of the organizations offered crucial aid and support to those experiencing hardship during the war. The provision of heating materials helped displaced families stay warm throughout the heating season, while food, hygiene products, and household items contributed to a dignified holiday period around the New Year. Furthermore, gaps in neonatal care were addressed through the donation of equipment to hospitals in Zakarpattia.

While providing immediate relief to displaced people, the project also laid the groundwork for long-term improvements in healthcare services. As the war persists, initiatives like these send a powerful message of support and solidarity to those affected. Laszlo Lehel, President-Director of Hungarian Interchurch Aid, reaffirmed the organization's commitment to assisting those in need during this prolonged crisis.



"I can attest to the significant impact of the medical equipment provided through this project. It has enhanced our capacity to provide quality healthcare services to our patients, particularly children and mothers in need."

Dr. Vitaliy Buryshyn, medical director of the Rakhiv District Hospital

"Overall, this project has made a tangible difference in our region, improving the well-being of those affected by the conflict and the economic crisis. We are grateful for the support of the European Union and the opportunity to implement this vital initiative."

Maria Fischer, managing director of ADVANCE

"In retrospect, the impact of this project transcends mere assistance; it symbolizes hope and resilience in times of adversity. For the IDPs benefiting from this initiative, it allows them to navigate the challenges of winter with dignity and security."

Lesia Aronets, president of ETALON

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Direct support provided to approximately 6,000 IDPs in Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia regions, including distribution of non-perishable food, essential household and hygiene kits, firewood, fuel briquettes, and carbon-monoxide detectors
- Procurement and distribution of 26 pieces of advanced medical equipment to three hospitals in Zakarpattia, benefiting approximately 39,000 people, notably improved health services in the region, especially in neonatal care





PARTNERSHIP WITHOUT BORDERS

We would like to thank all of the contributors who made this publication possible.

The interviews in the publication have either been conducted by e-mail or in written form, in English or in national language. Due to space constraints, style and translation, some of the interviews may contain minor alterations.