

Refugees from Ukraine and volunteers from Poland at the Budomierz-Hrushiv border crossing, built with the support of the PL-BY-UA 2007-2013 Programme
photo: Krystian Klysewicz

THE CROSS BORDERER

2022 edition



PL-(BY)-UA
2014-2020

CHALLENGING TIME

Cross-border Cooperation Programme
Poland-(Belarus)-Ukraine 2014-2020

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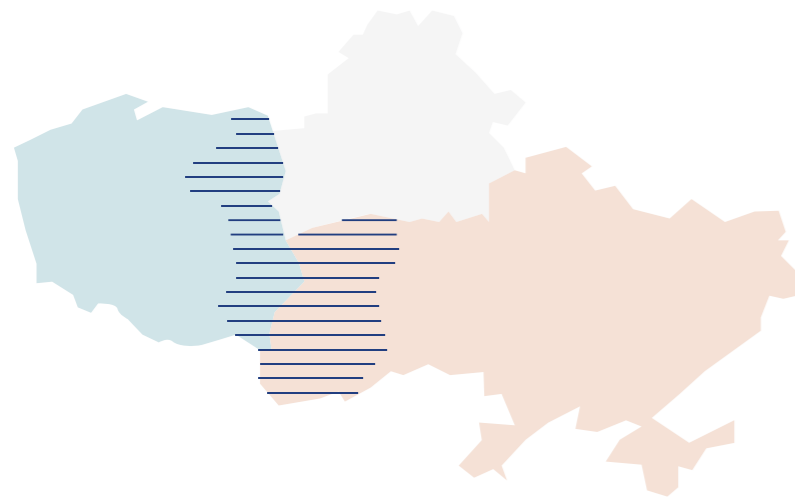
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**THIS INCREDIBLE
FORCE OF SPIRIT...**

*Interview with Ms. Eliza Dzwonkiewicz,
Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Lviv*

**FUTURE
CHALLENGES**

*Interreg NEXT Poland-Ukraine
2021-2027*



THE CROSS BORDERER

This incredible force of spirit...

Believe it or not, month by month I became more and more aware of the importance of this Programme. And finally, after 24th February 2022, all my previous observations were confirmed. Both sides, the partners on the Polish and Ukrainian sides, immediately started working together...

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Challenging time

Human bonds and friendships that know no boundaries. In this challenging time, they have resulted in a priceless wave of aid and solidarity...

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Volyn Oblast

Volyn oblast, which is now a part of what was the historical principality of Volyn, has played an important role in European history, standing at the crossroads of countries and civilizations...

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Lubelskie Voivodeship

Lubelskie Voivodeship, a region located in eastern Poland on the border with Ukraine and Belarus, surprises with the multicultural richness of its past, its rich nature, and the openness and hospitality of its people...

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Dear Friends,



On behalf of all Programme institutions I would like to express highest appreciation for all efforts to stay on the way of cross-border cooperation in the challenging time of disruption. 2022 turned our Programme upside down. Horror, dismay, disbelief – these feelings were alien to us before. As they say “a friend in need is a friend indeed” and truly our cross-border partnerships rose to the challenge of humanitarian aid and crisis management.

Ryszard Kapuściński in his “Imperium” inscribed the sad conclusion: *How many victims, how much blood and suffering, are connected with this business of borders! There is no end to the cemeteries of those who have been killed the world over in the defence of borders. Equally boundless are the cemeteries of the audacious who attempted to expand their borders. It is safe to assume that half of those who have ever walked upon our planet and lost their lives in the field of glory gave up the ghost in battles begun over a question of borders.* In our Programme the Polish-Ukrainian border has an unprecedented meaning now – on one side your country faces war, military aggression, uncertain tomorrow and on the other there is hope for tomorrow within the Union.

The more happy we are that the new Interreg Next Programme Poland-Ukraine 2021-2027 was approved on 30th November 2022 by the European Commission. We can still fight for the better future together. In total, the Commission has approved four new Interreg programmes involving 10 Member States, Ukraine, and Moldova for an amount of 533 MEUR of EU funding in 2021-2027. We are getting ready for the new challenges. It would not be rather possible in the near future to rediscover Ryszard Kapuściński’s childhood paths in Pinsk, but we have a lot to do for the Ukrainian children and youth. 2023 became the European Year of Skills to boost competitiveness, participation and talent. Let’s capitalize on the projects’ achievements, let’s cooperate to start the new Programme with energy and passion!

Andrzej Stodki
Head of the Joint Technical Secretariat

Dear Friends... – welcome speech

CHALLENGING TIME

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Youth Education Campaign “Creative, innovative, active”
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PORTRAITS OF REGIONS

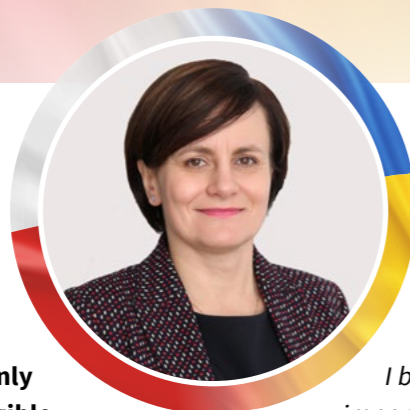
Volyn Oblast – *At the crossroads of countries and civilizations*
Lubelskie Voivodeship – *On the trails of history, nature and multinational culture*

CLOSING MEDLEY

A silent plea for help – project story
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THIS INCREDIBLE FORCE OF *spirit...*

Interview
with *Ms. Eliza Dzwonkiewicz*
Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Lviv



THE CROSSBORDERER: The 20th anniversary of our Programme is approaching. How do you assess its impact on the development of the Ukrainian-Polish borderland? Not only the tangible one, but also the intangible one – the interpersonal one?

ELIZA DZWONKIEWICZ: From the very beginning, as soon as I started my diplomatic service in Ukraine in October 2019, field visits at the invitation of local authorities and NGOs became an important part of my activity. Each time I prepared for such a meeting, I would receive materials from my colleagues on what we were visiting. I quickly realised that most of the materials contained similar information, i.e. that the projects were funded by the PL-(BY)-UA Programme. On the spot, I met people who proudly talked about the positive effects of the project. And then there was also this interpersonal dimension. Names of Polish partners were mentioned, memories

of joint meetings, activities, and it was clear that warm, cordial relations had been established. Believe it or not, month by month I became more and more aware of the importance of this Programme. And finally, after 24th February 2022, all my previous observations were confirmed. Both sides, the partners on the Polish and Ukrainian sides, immediately started working together. Assistance flowed wherever cross-border projects had previously worked together. It was amazing, no one was waiting for official channels to distribute aid to Ukraine, contacts were instant, direct, friendly. In conclusion – both dimensions are important. The PBU Programme has had over the years, unlike virtually all others, several characteristics that determined its success. Firstly, there were often hard investments; secondly, a long-term perspective, which is so often lacking in activities financed by

other means; and thirdly, the principle of reciprocity, i.e. something is created in Ukraine but also in Poland, which has an extremely strengthening effect on the sustainability of the project and its recognition on both sides of the border. The material dimension, however, is only a means to change the interpersonal dimension, to remove barriers that have been created in these places for decades. The direct Polish-Ukrainian neighbourhood should be an impulse for the development of the border municipalities, and undoubtedly your Programme is conducive to this.

Your diplomatic service in Lviv came at a time of particular challenges, including the pandemic and Russia's aggression against Ukraine. How, in your opinion, did these events affect the life of the Ukrainian-Polish border region and mutual contacts?

Difficult times have the characteristic of making us a little tired and discouraged, highlighting existing difficulties, but also creating opportunities to emerge from these troubles in a better position and with a greater awareness of the possibilities of solving problems. They harden the spirit, make us stronger. Undoubtedly, both the pandemic and the war are traumatic phenomena for border areas. At the same time, however, they unleashed a unique determination and will to maintain relations between people, between the state and regional authorities of Poland and Ukraine, which led to a rapid improvement and facilitation of procedures, showed new possibilities for increasing the capacity of the movement of people and goods on our common border (a sine qua non for the development of these areas), new possibilities for action in the borderland. They also proved once again how important these areas are. In addition to the economic dimension, the cultural dimension should also be borne in mind - the Russian aggression reinforced in an unusually clear and blunt manner the conviction that more efforts should be made to overcome the differences that divide us, especially in the field of our difficult common history.

Our Programme's project partners have rushed to spontaneously help war refugees. The Polish Consulate in Lviv has also joined in similar activities. What kind of aid has been and will be needed in western Ukraine?

This fantastic surge of energy and strength of Polish hearts, which we witnessed directly from virtually the very beginning of the war, motivated us to work almost non-stop around the clock. We gave no thought to the motivation to be part of this incredible force of spirit, not to waste the potential. From the beginning, we worked so that this spontaneous help could develop into a permanent, institutionalised movement. An institution such as ours cannot take on tasks of a helpful, permanent nature in the way that institutions and organisations set up for this purpose do. We carry out consular tasks, of which assistance is also a part.

Above all, however, we treat our activity as a flywheel. We do something once, involve partners, establish a model for action and then go back to our core tasks. We often act reactively, in situations that require our involvement. We have serious Ukrainian institutional partners, we work well together, we advise each other, we complement each other, we support each other. A very serious challenge at the moment is to organise the kind of assistance that will enable the people of Ukraine to survive the coming winter. Particular care must be given to internally displaced persons, who often live in difficult conditions. However, the effects of the rocket attacks on the energy infrastructure are affecting a significant proportion of the population in Ukraine today. For many of them, their financial situation has deteriorated; the lack of electricity supply deforms their existence. Schools are often unable to work normally, we all spend a lot of time in shelters, evenings are cold and dark. The most urgent need, therefore, is for various power supply equipment, generators, fuel for them, batteries. No less important are various battery-powered equipment, radios, lamps, torches. At the state level - support is needed to rebuild this infrastructure that is being targeted, providing new equipment. In the longer term, aid should be directed towards the facilitation of mutual economic ties between our countries. As a result of this large-scale aid campaign, Polish entrepreneurs, local government officials and activists have very accurately recognised both the opportunities and the deficits of the Ukrainian economy, in particular of the Polish-Ukrainian border areas, where hundreds of large and thousands of small businesses have been relocated from the east and south of Ukraine, while on the Polish side, opportunities have opened up, but also challenges, in terms of improving logistics and production in various variants of cooperation with Ukraine.

So what challenges will future project partners – institutions and organisations from both sides of the border – have to face, soon? Could the war, regardless of its outcome, affect the implementation of these projects?

The war is a fact and obviously affects the implementation of Polish-Ukrainian projects, disrupting even the planning process, introducing uncertainty and shortening the perspective. I would nevertheless encourage you to pay particular attention to the long term and to those actions which strengthen our joint resilience to changing conditions and at the same time encourage us to look at the Polish-Ukrainian neighbourhood as – I repeat – an asset, not an obstacle to development. Western Ukraine has been a relatively unindustrialised area for years, and the Black Sea has been the main channel for Ukrainian trade – the war is already changing this and these changes are set to intensify.

The 2021-2027 Programme will have around 170 MEUR for projects in 10 border regions of Poland and Ukraine. Is this a lot or a little? What will be the main needs in these areas?

Undoubtedly, such an amount gives an opportunity to have a noticeable impact on the development of the borderland. What this impact will be – this already depends, apart from objective factors, on the creativity and work of those who will plan and implement the projects. There are some themes that come to mind already today. To date, we do not have a serious centre for the exchange of thoughts, ideas on Polish-Ukrainian mutual relations. The war and post-war period must be based on rethinking, talking and discussing many topics that we have shied away from. I dream of the creation of a centre for Polish-Ukrainian dialogue, in a beautiful, revitalised location. No less important is investment in logistics, in civil protection, especially in the context of involving local communities, as in the example of the volunteer fire brigades, whose development we regularly support on the Ukrainian side. I am convinced that entrepreneurs and local government officials in the process of Polish-Ukrainian talks are best placed to quickly and appropriately identify local and regional areas for cooperation – within the framework of the priorities outlined by the Programme.

The priorities of the new Programme stemming from the EU Cohesion Policy are: ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH, TOURISM, COOPERATION and BORDERS.

Which of these do you consider to be the most urgent in the common borderland and why?

From my perspective, it is clear that these were chosen not by chance. And although the BORDERS priority seems to be the natural leader in the borderland, looking ahead, there is room for development in each of these areas and if we want to achieve tangible results in a few years' time, we need to give equal attention to the others. Nothing will happen by itself.

We started with some good news, so here is something optimistic for the end. The year 2023 is expected to see the completion of important investments within our Programme, including: a tuberculosis hospital in Zakarpattya, a partially restored observatory on Mount Pip Ivan in the Carpathians and a police administration centre in Lviv. We are counting on a strong delegation from both countries. Can we also count on your presence?

Of course you can! I am really happy when great ideas and projects are finalised. I always treat this moment as a small (and sometimes large) victory. So you can count on both my presence at events, but also on media support in informing about ongoing projects. We are very happy to have the opportunity to participate in valuable projects. This builds both the Polish potential and the Polish image – both in our consular district and more broadly in Ukraine.

We already welcome and thank you for the interview.



CHALLENGING TIME



24th February 2022 will go down as a sad date in the memory of all of us and in the nearly 20-year history of the Programme. The Russian aggression tragically marked the fate of Ukraine and the Ukrainians, and became a real test of Polish-Ukrainian relations and an exam for the Programme itself and its projects. However, the involvement of the Programme experts and cross-border project partners proves that we are emerging victorious from this battle.

From the very first days of the war, the Programme's institutions have been committed to adapting the Programme to the new conditions: making the implementation of projects, the eligibility of expenditures and the rules of public procurement easier, so that the results can also serve refugees from war zones. Programme staff and the entire Centre for European Projects were also directly involved in relief operations. Project partners also rose to the challenge. What is more, their assistance and involvement went far

beyond the purely project-based framework. Although the effects of the projects and the Programme can be measured in kilometres of roads, water and sewage systems built, the number of buildings constructed, equipment purchased or events and training sessions organised, all these activities have an added value that cannot be measured or valued in any way - human bonds and friendships that know no boundaries. In this challenging time, they have resulted in a priceless wave of aid and solidarity....

Project HCS

Joint initiative of the Mazovian Specialist Hospital in Ostrołęka and Lviv Regional Children’s Clinical Hospital “OHMATDYT” as increase of accessibility of health care services in the scope of modern surgery

During the war the hospital became the most important place in the region for treatment of injured children from different parts of Ukraine. Thanks to the equipment purchased within the project, high precision surgery operation became possible.

Project TwinMonasteries

The twin monasteries: Węgrów and Rava-Ruska – using the potential of the heritage of Reformati Order for development of tourism and socio-cultural life in Poland and Ukraine

The premises of the former Reformati order in Rava-Ruska, which had been renovated within the project, are used for accommodation of refugees from other oblasts of Ukraine. Polish partners regularly send humanitarian aid, in particular foodstuffs and hygienic items to Rava-Ruska.

Project BEC

The Borderland of Equal Chances

Project partners have assisted over 200 Ukrainian families with children with disabilities to get to the EU. Polish partner – Step by Step Association for Help Disabled Children – assists them in finding a long-term stay in Poland or other countries. They also send humanitarian aid to Kremenets on regular basis.

Project CBC4animals

Rzeszów and Vynohradiv – animal-friendly cities

Being the largest animal shelter in the west of Ukraine, Vynohradiv centre became a place where refugees from other regions could temporarily leave their dogs. It also provides free chipping and vaccination of dogs for Ukrainian refugees traveling to Europe. The Polish partner of the project – the Animal Protection Organization in Rzeszów – donated 250 chips free of charge and supported the animals with food and medication.

Project K&K:PolUA

Księżpol & Kristinopol: ethno+geo=perspective

“Narodnyy Dim” in Chervonohrad was turned into a humanitarian aid centre. People also come here to make camouflage nets, which are used by Ukrainian military. Partners from Księżpol help their Ukrainian partners with humanitarian aid and basic nets. Also, many Ukrainian refugees have been accommodated in Księżpol with the assistance of Ukrainian partners. In March, a concert “Solidarity with Ukraine” took place in Księżpol community.

Project TwoTowers

New life of the old city: revitalization of monuments of historical and cultural heritage of Lutsk and Lublin

Lublin City Council has been providing help to its partner city, Lutsk from the first days of war. Lublin became a logistical hub for humanitarian aid from Europe. 5 trucks with food, medicines, medical equipment and other essential items has been sent to Lutsk. Project teams from Lutsk and Lublin have been involved in the logistics of the assistance.

Project HealthOnTheBorderPLUA and RBO team

Together for saving lives. Integrated Polish-Ukrainian system of first aid in the area of the border

Through the Bieszczadzki Powiat – the Polish partner of the project – the Rzeszów Branch Office of the Programme donated support for the refugees: blankets, warm hoodies and tourist towels from the Programme’s promotional material resources. The set went to mothers and children fleeing war through the Krościenko-Smilnitsa border crossing.

Project EACH

Let’s get to know each other – Ukrainians in Suwałki, Poles in Ternopil

The Polish partner of the project, the Maria Konopnicka Public Library in Suwałki, organised an event entitled “Let’s meet our neighbours Ukrainians – Ternopil”, during which it was possible to support a collection called “Suwałki to help Ukraine”. In addition to the joint project, since February the library has been teaching the Polish language to Ukrainian children staying in Suwałki.

Project SECINCARP and CEP team

Joint protection of people and environment through the creation of Ukrainian-Polish system of disasters prevention and response in the Carpathian Euroregion

Thanks to the generosity of the staff of the Center of European Projects and the funds raised from the Programme, it was possible to purchase and transfer transport with aid to the Administration of State Emergency Service of Ukraine in Lviv Region, a beneficiary of the SECINCARP project. Military footwear, clothing, sleeping bags, medical supplies and foodstuffs amounting to over PLN 100 000 were donated.

Project SOSRescue

SOS-Rescue – the training center for organizing and operating cross-border rescue actions

Mountain rescuers have prepared the Training Centre – created as part of the project in the Bieszczady Mountains – for the needs of Ukrainian refugees, especially families of Ukrainian rescuers. The centre has set up a humanitarian hub, which has received about 80 tons of various donations since the beginning of the war, such as: hygiene supplies, long-term food, medical supplies, sleeping bags, sleeping mats, etc.



Project PLUARoztocze

B(L)ike Roztocze together in spite of borders

The newly established Geotourist Centre in Lipsko-Polesie (PL) has become a shelter for people fleeing the war in Ukraine. This facility was modernized within the PLUARoztocze project in the order to educate and accommodate tourists. It temporarily serves the needs of refugees. They are being provided with meals, free medical assistance, access to a psychologist, interpreter and the Internet.

Project DcbCforAutism

Development of cross-border cooperation in helping people with autism on the Polish-Belarusian borderlands

The DcbCforAutism project supports people with autism, but since the first days of the war, the Polish partner has opened its doors to Ukrainians fleeing the war. The centre created by the project has become a shelter for women and children.

Project BugCuisine

Culinary traditions of Bug river region

Polish partner Association “Local Action Group – Bug Valley Melting Pot” as well as the Drohiczyn commune has been assisting their Ukrainian partners, located in Dobrotvir with humanitarian aid. They have announced several collections among their community and have sent food, medicines, power generators for the needs of refugees, accommodated in Dobrotvir. Even during the war period, project team on Ukrainian side organized culinary workshops, which were attended by refugees from other parts of Ukraine. With the support of the Programme, the project team organised a holiday camp in Podlasie for 15 children from Ukraine.

Project MichaelAndYouth

Starting centers of work with the youth in Miejsce Piastowe and Skole – cultural and historical heritage of Rzeszów-Lviv region as the foundation of educational values of Fr. Bronisław Markiewicz

During the summer holidays the project partners organised a cycling camp in over the sea and a language camp in Miejsce Piastowe for children from Poland and Ukraine.

Cycling camp for children from Poland and Ukraine within the MichaelAndYouth project

FUTURE challenges

The year 2022 has also set challenges for the future. Despite the extremely difficult and demanding situation in the Programme area, after 3 years of preparation, the Interreg NEXT Poland-Ukraine 2021-2027 Programme was officially submitted for approval to the European Commission and received it on 30th November. Its implementation will be our common challenge for the coming years and hope for a better future for the entire Programme area.

The 2021-2027 Programme was initially prepared in a trilateral formula, as a continuation of the existing cross-border cooperation between Poland, Belarus and Ukraine. The first meeting of the Programming Committee responsible for its preparation took place back in October 2019. Already at that time, the members of the Committee, i.e. representatives of the national and regional authorities of three countries, as well as the social partners, had tentatively decided on the priorities of the new Programme. Regrettably, preparations were disrupted by the course of the presidential elections in Belarus in 2020, then by the actions of the Belarusian authorities on the border with Poland, and finally by their support for the Russian aggression against Ukraine. These events resulted in the European Commission’s decision, made in March 2022, to exclude Belarus from cooperation under the Interreg initiative.

The war and the pandemic did not stop work on the Programme. Within four months, Poland and Ukraine agreed and approved the content of the Programme in a bilateral, Polish-Ukrainian formula. After further public consultations, implementation of their results and approval of the document by both countries, we submitted the Programme to the European Commission within the deadline set. Next, when we received the Commission’s comments on the document, there have been many meetings during which we consulted and refined the final shape of the Programme. Following this, in October 2022 the Interreg NEXT Programme Poland-Ukraine 2021-2027 document has been officially submitted for the final approval of the European Commission, and was approved on 30th November 2022. You can read more about the details of this process on the pages of INSIDE THE PROGRAMME, and here we present the highlights of the 2021-2027 edition.

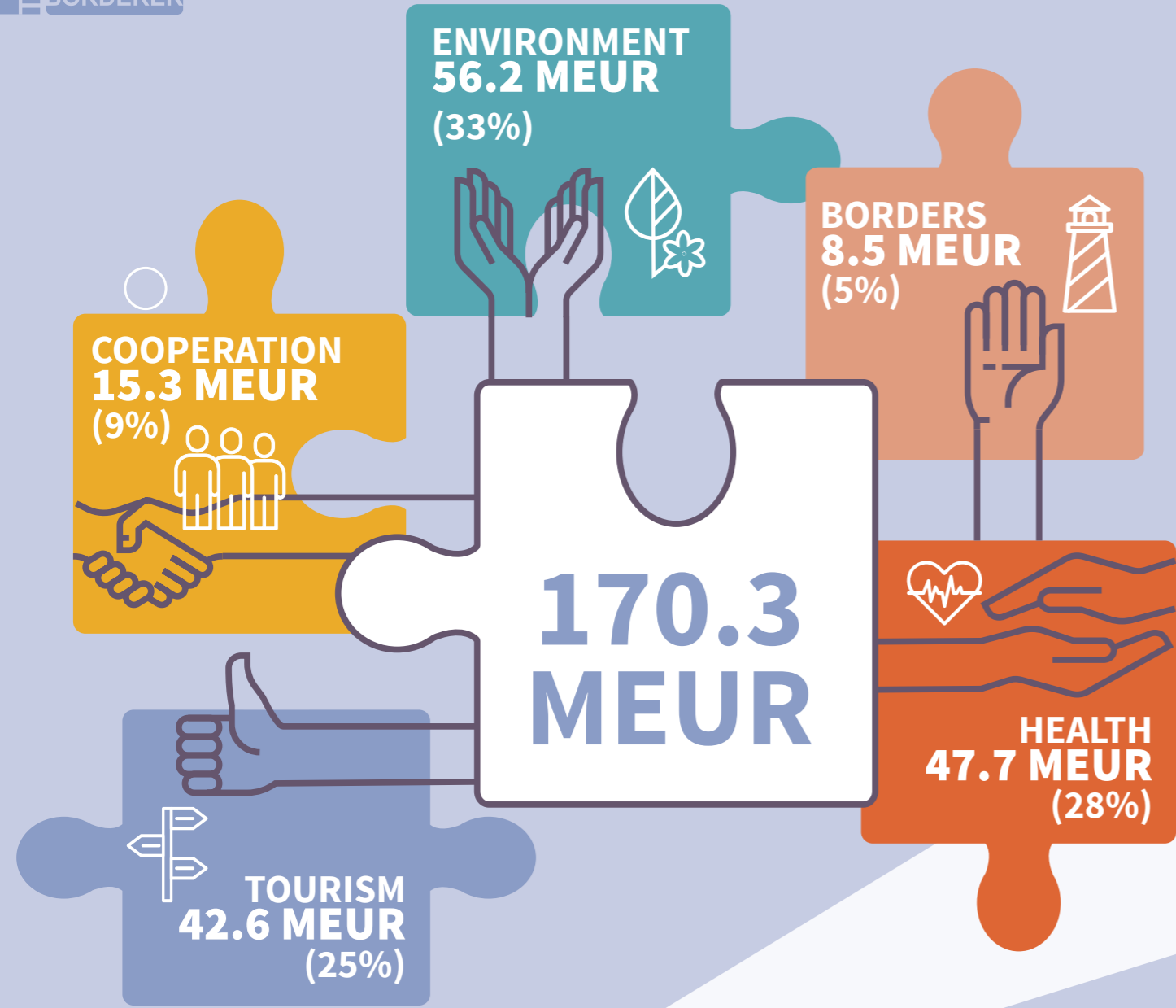


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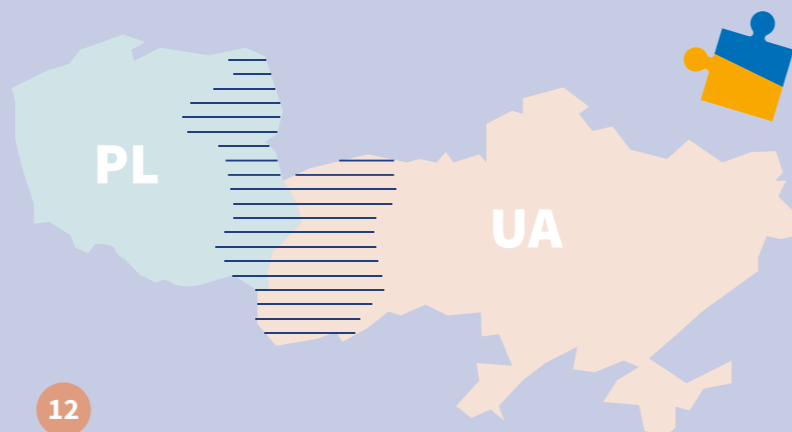
Co-funded by the European Union

NEXT Poland-Ukraine



TOTAL PROGRAMME AREA:
177 128 KM²

PROGRAMME AREA POPULATION:
14.5 MILLION PEOPLE



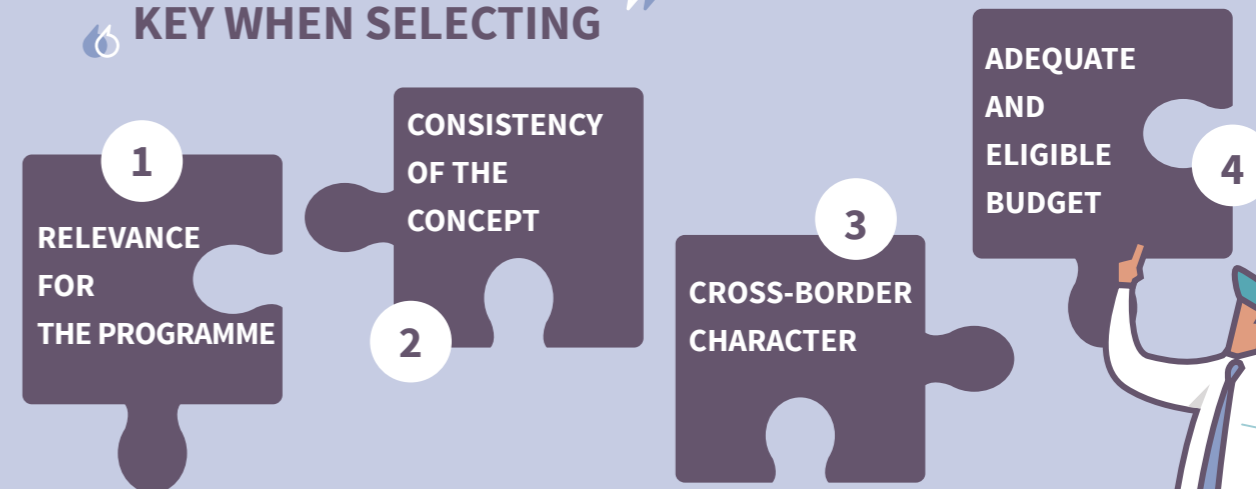
TYPES OF PROJECTS

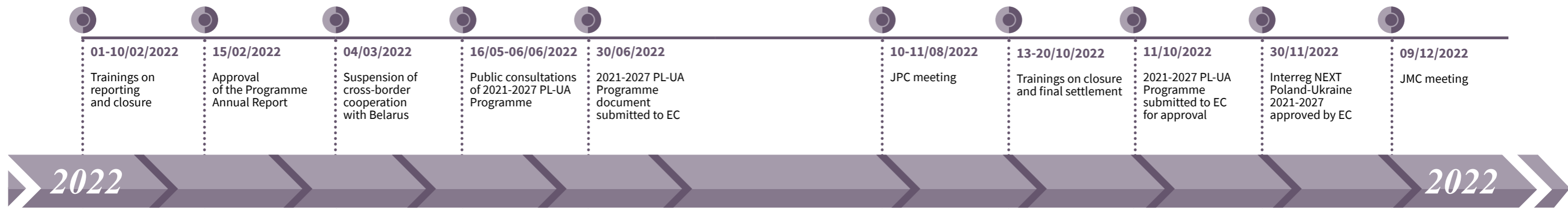


MAIN RULES

- EU CO-FUNDING - UP TO 90%
- ADVANCE PAYMENTS
- CROSS-BORDER PROJECTS
- LEAD BENEFICIARY PRINCIPLE
- PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
- GRANT CONTRACT WITH THE MANAGING AUTHORITY

KEY WHEN SELECTING





Programme insight

New Programme approved by EC!

The year 2022 will be strongly remembered by the Programme, its beneficiaries and stakeholders. The events on the Polish-Belarusian border and the subsequent Russian aggression against Ukraine inevitably affected the implementation of the Programme and its projects, as well as the preparation of the new, 2021-2027 edition. Despite this, both the Programme institutions and the project partners did everything possible to fulfil their tasks.

MODIFICATIONS TO THE 2014-2020 PROGRAMME

The Managing Authority (MA) and Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) have taken a number of measures to adapt the Programme rules to the changing external situation. In response to the involvement of the Belarusian authorities in the war against Ukraine, based on recommendations received from the EC, the MA – Polish Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy suspended all payments to Belarusian beneficiaries. The JMC decided to treat as ineligible all expenses incurred and paid by Belarusian beneficiaries from 24th February 2022.

Immediately, a meeting between EC and EU funded cross-border cooperation programmes involving Ukraine was held in Brussels to explore the possibility of continuing their implementation. As a result, it was

agreed that Polish and Ukrainian beneficiaries could continue their activities. At the same time, the JTS, MA and EC started to work on introducing comprehensive solutions that would enable proper implementation of projects on the Polish and Ukrainian sides. Following this, they elaborated a number of simplifications in project procedures and the principle of individual approach to the situation of each beneficiary. Significant changes were also introduced to allow for additional project activities for the benefit of the needy and those affected by the war in Ukraine, including: providing refugees with access to project products (e.g. buildings or equipment), adapting project events to the needs of refugees, and allocating project savings to supplies and/or services helpful to Ukrainian refugees. Savings from the Programme

itself were also directed to ongoing projects to expand activities to include humanitarian and other support to victims of the war in Ukraine, including refugees. The Programme allocated an additional 2.5 MEUR for this purpose, with a 100% funding level. Over time, an obligation was also introduced to exclude entities and individuals supporting aggression in Ukraine from contracts and procurements. In parallel, new procedures were developed for projects that previously had partners in Belarus – so that Polish and Ukrainian beneficiaries could complete them independently of Belarusian institutions. At the same time, the “Programme Manuals” as well as the “Guidelines on Expenditure Verification” were updated several times to the new situation.

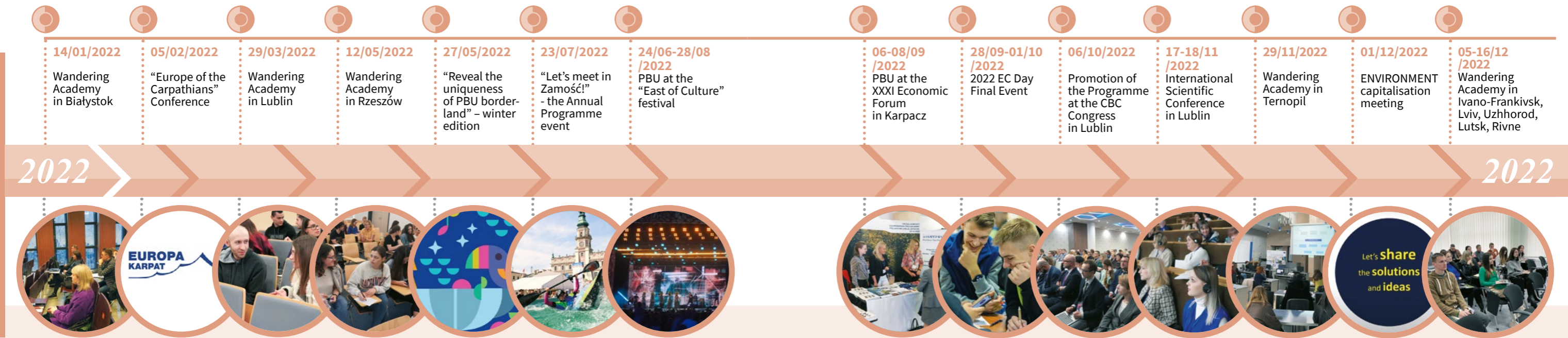
PROJECT RELATED ACTIVITIES

Supplementary contracts, numerous changes to the projects and prolongations in reporting created also a big challenge for the Joint Secretariat to allocate efforts timely and assist all individually. Many projects required addendums, and at the same time we were contracting additional funds to beneficiaries of medical projects for anti-Covid activities (as the Programme had previously added 3 MEUR to fight the pandemic). In 2022, the last grant contract was also signed and we

made about 40 on-the-spot visits to projects. In 2022 we have also organized another two series of workshops and trainings related to the closure of projects. Micro-projects’ partners from the three countries had the opportunity to take advantage of these online in early February. Practical online classes covered, i.a. issues of reporting and maintaining the sustainability of projects. On the other hand, for beneficiaries of Large Infrastructure Projects and regular projects, trainings were held in October in Lublin, Rzeszów and Białystok. They covered the issues of reporting, closure, accounting, sustainability and control of projects, as well as information and promotional duties.

WORK ON THE 2021-2027 PROGRAMME

At the same time, work was underway to modify and launch the 2021-2027 Programme. Turbulence caused by events in Belarus and Russian aggression against Ukraine forced crucial changes in its shape – trilateral Programme formula was changed into bilateral Polish-Ukrainian and new priority BORDERS was introduced. Thanks to the strong involvement of responsible institutions from Ukraine and Poland, the Programme made it to the final signature of the European Commission. More about this on pages 11-13.



Promotion in motion

In 2022, after almost two years of restrictions due to the pandemic, we could finally return to live, direct meetings in our promotional activities – which in cross-border projects is of great importance and gives them additional energy and value. Indeed, online meetings, although speeding up the work, cannot replace the close relationships and bonds that are only formed at face-to-face events with partners and future applicants from both sides of the border.

FOR YOUTH ...

In January 2022, we inaugurated our "Wandering Academy" – a series of free classes for students about our Programme and practical exercises on preparing EU projects. They are organised by the Programme's branches in its eligible area in cooperation with universities. Thus, in 2022, we have already visited 9 regions in Poland and Ukraine, where, in cooperation with the universities from Białystok, Lublin, Rzeszów, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Uzhhorod, Lutsk and Rivne, we organised classes for approx. 250 students and university staff. For more on this subject, see page 18.

... AND YOUNGER

Younger – students aged 12-16 – were invited to take part in an Educational Campaign to mark the

European Year of Youth and European Cooperation Day celebrated in September. The first stage, a preliminary round, took place in the spring and was attended by teams from 22 schools in Poland and Ukraine. Sixteen teams qualified for the 4-day final, which was organised after the holidays in the Mazovian Voivodeship. The finalists took part in joint workshops, presentations, a meeting about the European Commission and visited Warsaw. On pages 22-23 you can see how much excitement was generated by the joint youth meeting!

LET'S MEET IN ZAMOŚĆ!

The summer's hot weather accompanied the Programme's most important promotional event - the Annual Event, which this time took place in Zamość (PL). In its Grand Market Square, our beneficiaries had the opportunity to present the effects of their projects to the public: handicrafts, regional dishes, publications, rescue and mountain equipment, and even... a canoe pool and a zip wire ride from the Town Hall tower. Throughout the afternoon and evening, artistic groups presented themselves on the stage in front of the town hall. Details can be found on pages 19-21.

IN THE WORLD OF SCIENCE AND CULTURE

It has already become a tradition that once a year we also target the scientific community with our activities. Experts from many fields are important partners for us in shaping the Programme and evaluating and promoting its results. This time we invited scientists to the hospitable premises of the Catholic University of Lublin, where they had the opportunity to discuss a whole range of issues related to the security of border areas, about which we write more on page 25.

Our Programme and the results of its projects were promoted at cultural events, as well. In 2022, the Programme was an official partner of the "European Stadium of Culture" in Podkarpackie, the "Other Sounds – Art&Music Festival" in Lubelskie and the "Other Dimension" in Podlaskie organised under a common name as the EAST OF CULTURE Festival. It is attended by performers from the Eastern Partnership countries and its audience reaches up to 300 000 people, thanks to which our promotional spot and information about the Programme reached a wide audience mainly in Central and Eastern Europe.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

We also accepted an invitation to Karpacz (PL) for the 31st Economic Forum. This prestigious event brings together economists, politicians, analysts and journalists from many countries around the world, so that information about the Programme could reach a very wide range of opinion-forming audiences. Representatives of the Center of European Projects

and the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy of the Republic of Poland – the Managing Authority of the Programme – took part in the Forum debates, which were largely devoted to the situation in Ukraine. An important international event was also the Cross-Border Cooperation Congress in Lublin, during which we organised as many as 3 Programme events: discussion panel, Grants' Fair and Partners' Forum – see page 26-27 for more information. The Programme was also promoted at the "Europe of the Carpathians" Conference, which brings together representatives of many European countries, including Poland and Ukraine.

... AND REGIONAL DIMENSION

We were also present at regional events with information on the Programme and its projects: Conference of Territorial Self-Governments with the participation of local government officials from Lubelskie and Podkarpackie, Forum of the Association of Rural Municipalities of the Podlaskie Voivodeship, a conference on territorial cooperation in Rzeszów and the Future Industry Platform in Lubelskie. We also talked about the present and future of the Programme at the events organised by the projects.

A busy year was topped off with a capitalization meeting on the environment, where participants from across the Programme area were able to learn about good practices and experiences of beneficiaries of such projects.

WANDERING ACADEMY

A key part of these lessons is a case study based on good practices from a selected PBU project. Students have the opportunity to learn about the main assumptions, indicators, activities and budget of the project, get familiar with the operation of the application generator and propose their own project as part of the exercises. The meeting's participants, in addition to a large portion of knowledge and practice, receive sets of promotional and informational materials of the Programme.

There are still new challenges ahead of us, new calls for proposals in the new financial perspective of the European Union. We strongly believe, that especially the young generation – basing on the rich experience of the current beneficiaries – will be able to face them with new energy and fresh look – wrote Andrzej Stodki, the Head of the Joint Technical Secretariat in the letter to rectors.

This new initiative of the Programme was met with a very positive response from the universities and the students themselves. The first classes of the PBU "Wandering Academy" took place in January 2022 at the University in Białystok and were attended, among others, by students of law, international relations, and philology. In March 2022 visited the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. This time we met with students of economics, logistics, management, economic analysis, finance and accounting as well as international law in the European Union. In May 2022, we held classes at the University of Rzeszów for medical students. These are some of the student

Wandering Academy in Rzeszów (PL)



About 250 students and university staff have so far taken part in the PBU "Wandering Academy". It is a cycle of free lectures on the Programme and practical exercises on preparing EU projects, organized by the Programme branch offices in its eligible area in cooperation with universities. In this way, we have already "wandered" 9 academic cities in Poland and Ukraine.

feedback we received after the classes:

- *I think it was the best workshop I have been to.*
- *I liked the practical part and my own project development the most.*
- *The content was communicated in an easy and accessible way.*
- *Professionally produced films and competent speech.*
- *Explanation of the whole PBU idea in a simple way.*
- *I am glad that the content was from the head, from the heart, and not from a piece of paper.*
- *The event convinced me that organizing projects is not as difficult as I thought.*

Despite wartime constraints, the end of the year also saw the launch of the "Wandering Academy" in Ukraine. The meetings were organized at the Western Ukrainian National University in Ternopil, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian University in Ivano-Frankivsk, National University Lviv Polytechnics, Uzhhorod National University, Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University in Lutsk, National University of Water Management and Nature Resources Use in Rivne.

2022 was the European Year of Youth proclaimed by the EU and the Travelling Academy fitted in perfectly. But it did not stop there. When asked what activities we could undertake for young people in the future, students most often asked for even more practical workshops on writing and implementing projects. And here we have good news – the "Wandering Academy" will continue its tour!

Wandering Academy in Ternopil (UA)



ANNUAL EVENT

*of the
Programme*

The most important promotional undertaking of the Programme throughout the year is certainly the Annual Event. In 2022 we met in Zamość, in the Lubelskie Voivodeship. In cooperation with the city, we have put almost the entire Great Square at the disposal of Polish and Ukrainian beneficiaries, so that in one place the inhabitants of the border region and tourists could learn more about the results and themes of cross-border cooperation in line with the event's motto – "Let's meet in Zamość!"





When the stage was filled with singing and dancing, the “project town” was already teeming with workshops and competitions, during which the youngest participants learned the secrets of the Białowieża Forest and the Bug River valley with flushed faces. Next to it, there was a huge swimming pool – an arena for demonstrations by canoeing masters and promotion of the project implemented by the Drohiczyn municipality. Anyone willing could go canoeing with a view of the Zamość Town Hall, whose 52-metre-high tower witnessed amazing events. Every now and then, as part of the mountain rescue demonstrations, someone was transported down from the tower on ropes attached to a GOPR (mountain rescuers) vehicle. Certainly everyone felt very safe, as a medical rescue vehicle with crew and a fire engine were stationed right next to it. The visitors had an opportunity to learn first aid, take part

in a mini bike rally, make a virtual journey through the Carpathians or wooden architecture sites in Poland and Ukraine. We haven’t forgotten about the gourmets either and we were waiting with regional delicacies prepared during the event. We have also prepared attractive prizes for some of the most persistent seekers of PBU project results.

The event was attended by nearly 1,000 people from Poland and Ukraine. It was co-created by representatives of projects from Drohiczyn (*BugUnitesUs*, *BugGuardians*), Sanok (*SOSRescue*; *OilCradle i SaltyHistory*), Tomaszów Lubelski (*RESCUE*), Zamość (*PLUARoztocze*), Korycin (*CraftNet*), Księżpol (*K&K:PolUA*), Lublin (*TouchingThePast*), Białystok (*CBCpaths*), Krosno (*Moviestories*), Białowieża and Hajnówka (*NatureTreasury*), Myszyniec (*PROFolk*), Zagórz

(*Touch_history*), Suwałki (*EACH*), Radzyń Podlaski (PL) and Ternopil (*EACH*), Lviv, Javoriv (*ROSETTES*), Kosiv (*ROSETTES*; *CarpathianBee*), Chervonohrad (*K&K:PolUA*), Lutsk (*PROFolk*), Boryslav (*OilCradle i SaltyHistory*) (UA). Playing and singing were young and old involved in projects from Myszyniec, Hajnówka, Księżpol (PL) and Chervonohrad and Lutsk (UA). The evening concert was graced by the bands: “Orkiestra Świętego Mikołaja” (“*The Saint Nicholas Orchestra*”) from Poland and “Yoryi Kloc” from Ukraine, which jointly implement the *MuZa* project.

– On behalf of the Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat, I would like to thank very much all Programme beneficiaries for organising the shows, workshops and performances, for filling the most important event for the Programme this year with attractive content. We have shown that despite difficult, dramatic times we can be together – summarized Andrzej Słodki, Head of the Joint Technical Secretariat.

*We have shown
that despite difficult, dramatic times
we can be together*





Meeting with representatives of the EC Representation at the Centre for European Projects, headquarters of the Programme's JTS

Youth Education Campaign

creative
innovative
active!

We also target our promotional and educational activities at young people. We believe that they will soon be the staff of future European projects. The most important event of the year aimed at this group is the educational campaign, which always culminates in September, on the occasion of the European Cooperation Day celebrated at that time.

The finalists of 2022 edition were selected from among the 22 schools that entered the competition in the spring and sent in their assigned works: comic strips, invention or innovation projects and song lyrics relating to the campaign theme. During the Final itself, the youngsters practised cooperation

and the language of their neighbours in thematic workshops: science-technology and arts, creating joint final presentations. The students also took part in a knowledge quiz about the European Union, the Programme and the PL-UA borderland.

Representations of 16 schools from Poland and Ukraine took part in the Finals of the Youth Education Campaign "CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE, ACTIVE!", organised on the occasion of European Cooperation Day 2022 and the European Year of Youth. This time the Final Event took place in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (PL) from 28th September to 1st October 2022.

One day of the event was filled with a visit to Warsaw. At the Centre for European Projects, headquarters

of the Programme's Joint Technical Secretariat, the finalists met with representatives of the European Commission Representation in Poland to learn about the history and main principles of the EU. They then visited the Old Town, including the University of Warsaw, a beneficiary of the PIMReC project. In the afternoon, they enriched their knowledge by visiting the Copernicus Science Centre and exploring the capital during a bus tour. The intensive day ended with a joint disco. All finalists received commemorative diplomas and very attractive prize sets.



*It was all
very inspiring
for our young people. You could
also see how these teenagers
quickly broke down barriers
and made contacts*

– agreed the teachers caring for the school teams,
and students added:

*We absolutely have to
take part in the next
campaign*

The educational campaign of our Programme addressed to young people already has a long tradition. The finals of the previous editions were held, among others, in Hrodna, Lviv and Rzeszów. They have attracted dozens of schools on both sides of the EU border and resulted in hundreds of international contacts and an unquantifiable and priceless number of positive emotions and memories. This year's edition was also part of the European Year of Youth declared by EU.



International Scientific Conference

Scientists, experts and professionals from various fields are important partners for us in shaping the Programme and promoting its results. More than a hundred of them took part in the International Scientific Conference of our Programme entitled “Security in Crisis Situations in the Border Regions of Poland and Ukraine”. The event took place from 17th to 18th November 2022 in Lublin in a hybrid format – at the premises of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and online.

Speakers comprehensively presented various aspects of security, not only those related to crisis situations, but to its social, economic or natural dimensions. Welcoming the participants to the meeting, the Director of the Center of European Projects in Warsaw, Dr Leszek Buller, emphasised that: *the organisation of the Conference is creating a platform for building future security in the region.* Head of the Joint Technical Secretariat of the Programme Andrzej Słodki presented the principles of the Programme in the new budget perspective, noting that: *all activities in the future period will focus on solving problems on the Polish-Ukrainian border, which is supposed to unite, not divide.* Rector of the University of Ivano-Frankivsk, Prof. Ihor Tsenda added: – *Security is not only a military issue, but also a political, economic, social or, last but not least, an environmental one.* Subsequent speakers confirmed this thesis in their speeches, and the whole thing was very aptly summarised from the point of view of the current situation and future prospects by Prof. David Lutz of the American Holy Cross College: – *Peace is not only the absence of war.*

Following the plenary session, participants went to sub-group meetings, where they discussed issues related to the effectiveness of crisis prevention, the

socio-economic effects of crises and emergencies, the coordination of services in crisis situations, the role of access to reliable information in the event of emergencies or the role of humanitarian aid. The entire event was summarised in a plenary session concluding the scientific part of the event.

Conference participants could also learn more about the history and present of Lublin, one of the most interesting cities in the Polish-Ukrainian border region. Many of our Programme's projects have been implemented there, including the *TwoTowers* project, which was on the itinerary of the visit.

The Conference was organised by the Center of European Projects and the CBC Programme Poland-(Belarus)-Ukraine 2014-2020 in cooperation with The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and the Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University in Ivano-Frankivsk. The event was held under the honorary patronage of the Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.

This is yet another scientific conference organised as part of our Programme. Previous conferences were held in Uzhhorod, Lutsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Rzeszów and Lviv.

Cross-border Cooperation Congress

We promote PBU and its projects not only within the Programme events, but also at external conferences, congresses and forums. Thank to this, as many as 3 Programme events were waiting for the participants of this year's Cross-border Cooperation Congress in Lublin. These were: panel discussion, Grants' Fair and Partners' Forum.

The guests of the panel discussion "Poland-Ukraine – time for even deeper cross-border relations" summarised the Programme's achievements in the past years. They unanimously emphasised that they could not only be measured by the kilometres of roads, trails and water pipelines built, the number of facilities, equipment purchased or events organised, but also by the great value of the interpersonal ties which were created as a result of the projects. These were further strengthened by the attitude of the Polish beneficiaries and Programme staff in the face of Russian aggression, who spontaneously rushed to help their partners in Ukraine.

the Zakarpattian Regional Military Administration and Dr Paweł Wais – Director of the Department of Regional Development at the Marshall Office of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship. The discussion was moderated by Andrzej Śłodki, Head of the Joint Technical Secretariat of the Programme.

The next event, the Grants' Fair, served the purpose of presenting the new edition of the Programme, i.e. Interreg NEXT Poland-Ukraine 2021-2027. Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions live. Both events were also broadcast on social media.

Panel discussion



Grants' Fair

Partners' Forum

– We had a deep need with the whole team to react somehow to this situation as a Programme, because after all we are a cooperation programme with Ukraine. We did our best – said Rafał Baliński, Director of the Department of Territorial Cooperation in the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, representing the Managing Authority of the Programme. – This experience has shown that we are not only partners, but also neighbours and friends – concluded Tetiana Tytarchuk from the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The panel was also attended by: Dr Leszek Buller – Director of the Center of European Projects, Oleksandr Bilak from

Our Programme block ended with the Partners' Forum, during which – in a dynamic, face-to-face B2B format – future applicants had the opportunity to meet and select potential partners and identify fields of cooperation. 100 representatives of organisations and institutions from Poland and Ukraine were qualified to participate in this part of the Congress.

In total, the entire Cross-border Cooperation Congress, whose main organiser was the City of Lublin, was attended by nearly half a thousand people. In addition, hundreds of viewers followed the online broadcast.

FACE TO FACE

On this page, we present the most interesting fragments from the discussions of expert panellists invited to events organized and/or participated by the Programme. They are often held in a narrow group of specialists, so thanks to "The CROSSBORDERER" they have the opportunity to reach a wider audience.

This time, some extracts from the panel discussion panel organized by the Programme as part of the CBC Congress in Lublin (5-7th October 2022). It was attended by:

- **Rafał Baliński**, Poland, Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy (**RB**)
- **Leszek Buller**, Poland, Center of European Projects (**LB**)
- **Tetiana Tytarchuk**, Ukraine, Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (**TT**)
- **Oleksandr Bilak**, Ukraine, Zakarpattian Regional Military Administration (**OB**)
- **Paweł Wais**, Poland, Marshal Office of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship (**PW**)
- **Iryna Hrymak**, Ukraine, Lviv Oblast Council (**IH**)
- **Andrzej Śłodki**, Poland, Joint Technical Secretariat of the PL-(BY)-UA Programme (**AS**)



LB: The European Union's strategy includes issues concerning the creation of a good climate of cooperation between the borderlands of Member States and neighbouring countries. We, through our Programme, have taken various measures to put this strategy into practice. It worked between Poland and Ukraine - after the outbreak of war our beneficiaries grabbed the phones and started communicating on what was needed...



TT: We have passed our most important exam - we proved to be not just partners but real neighbours and friends. And this is priceless for our countries.




RB: The programme will be a strong glue in the relations between our countries, not only regionally but also nationally. We have a common tool for cooperation. By getting involved in the Programme, the results, the achievements in the projects, it will feel like one family.



IH: Today we are already thinking not about the war, but about post-war time, when we will have to develop, unite into common projects, develop our economy and move towards European community, European family.



PW: Border areas are particularly important to us. In all development strategies, these areas are both a challenge and an opportunity that must be seized.



OB: For us, cross-border projects are not a tool for fixing problems, they are the mechanism which helps to understand how to prevent such problems.



PW: Border areas are particularly important to us. In all development strategies, these areas are both a challenge and an opportunity that must be seized.



AS: The future ahead of us is precisely the Poland-Ukraine Programme.

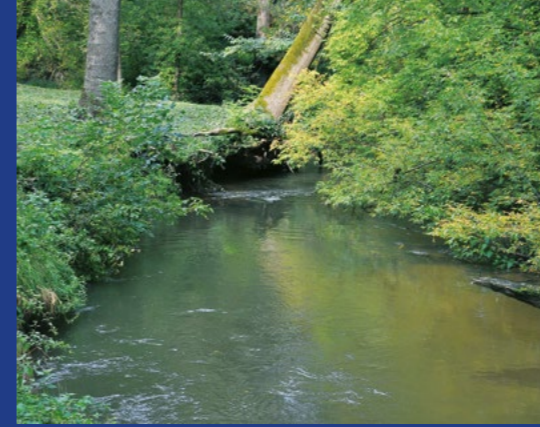
The 2014-2020 Programme is gradually coming to an end. Let's take a look at some of the results of the projects implemented in its framework. Welcome to a new chapter of "The CROSSBORDERER" magazine:

projects' review!



Across the mountains on a horseback
(project *Horses&Nature*)

Gone are the days when a small Hutsul horse was the only way of transport available to the residents of Ukrainian Carpathians. Today, horseback riding across picturesque mountain landscapes can become an existing adventure. A new tourist route around Verkhovynskyi National Nature Park was created within *Horses&Nature* project with a thought of those who love horses and mountains. The route was tested for the first time during the promotional tour in September 2022.



Body and mind recharged with nature and sports
(project *BugUnitesUs*)

A long-awaited promotional tour along the Western Bug within *BugUnitesUs* project took place in Lviv oblast. The new route presented is called "a silver horseshoe of the Western Bug" (Verhobuzh-Busk-Kamianka-Buzka-Dobrotvir-Chervonohrad-Sokal-Litovezh). It combines driving with kayaking and other water sports as well as visits to interesting landmarks located nearby.



Baroque beauty restored
(project *CBCPilgrim*)

After the decades of neglect and disuse, a belfry tower in Pidkamin (UA) was open to visitors. Pidkamin, once known as "Częstochowa of the East" was an important pilgrimage destination in the past, attracting numerous visitors. Largely ruined during two world wars and the Soviet period, the monastery complex is being gradually restored. Restoration of the tower and the courtyard have been conducted as a part of *CBCPilgrim* project.

New education center opened
(project *ICTCompet*)

In September 2022, an innovative information and communication technology (ICT) and education center Multicentrum was opened in Ostrołęka (PL). The Centre is equipped with specialized information and communications technology devices. The facility will target children and students by organizing a variety of ICT workshops and trainings preparing young people to enter the dynamically changing labour market. Additionally trainings for the adults and seniors will be conducted, and the multigenerational ones as well. The building is adapted to the needs of the disabled people.



Historical events re-enacted
(project *Touch_history*)

Several thousand spectators were attracted by historical re-enactments organized as part of the *Touch_history* project in Zagórz (PL). In June 2022, history enthusiasts invited by the project leader re-enacted events from 250 years ago – the last battle of the Bar Confederation. In the scenery of the ruins of the Carmelite monastery, reconstruction groups from Poland and abroad presented themselves. Tourists and residents could observe camp life, genre scenes, demonstrations of weapon wielding, infantry and cavalry skirmishes, participate in thematic workshops, presentations of costumes and equipment, listen to a concert and taste regional dishes.

Revitalisation and modernisation
(project *TwinMonasteries*)

In June 2022, the ceremony of completing the revitalisation and modernisation works of the post-reformation monastery in Węgrów took place. Cooperation between the Roman Catholic Parishes of St. Peter of Alcantara and St. Anthony of Padua in Węgrów and the Archdiocese of Lviv under the project has resulted in the establishment of the Centre for the Dialogue of Cultures in Węgrów (PL) and the Centre for the Dialogue of Cultures and Family Orphanage in Rava-Ruska (UA).



Youth Centre in Ukraine created!
(project *MichaelAndYouth*)

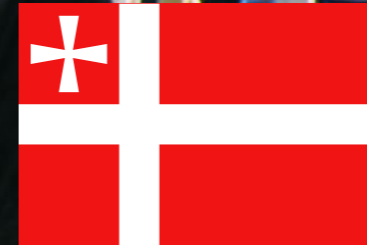
Our beneficiaries are real heroes! Despite most unfavourable conditions, the building of Youth Centre in Skole (Ukraine) has been completed as part of the *MichaelAndYouth* project. And, even despite power failure the final Conference and opening ceremony took place in November 2022 with over 100 people having attended the event. Previously, a similar centre was established on the Polish side – in Miejsce Piastowe.





*At the crossroads
of countries and
civilizations*

Volyn Oblast



Volyn oblast, which is now a part of what was the historical principality of Volyn, has played an important role in European history, standing at the crossroads of countries and civilizations, being the arena of important historical events. For many years, it has been a gateway for all those interested in trade and other activities in Ukraine and farther eastwards, while for many Ukrainians it was the extreme point on the way to western Europe. In the face of war it became Ukraine's stronghold in the North West and at the same time one of its major humanitarian centers.

Its history has been preserved in the numerous monuments of the past. Its beautiful nature with 125 lakes and 123 rivers, wide diversity of flora and fauna make it a great tourist destination. Its cultural life is diverse with a variety of theaters, galleries and museums, some of which have opened in recent years. Volyn oblast is also a venue of some large-scale festivals such as "Night at Lutsk Castle" art festival and other public events.





Lutsk (UA). Training of firefighters under the COORDINATION project

The economy of Volyn is formed by food processing, machine building, woodworking, paper production, production of rubber and plastic products, furniture, metallurgical, textile and clothing productions, mining and chemical industries. Volyn has a powerful agricultural sector, the priority products are grains and technical crops, potatoes and vegetables, sugar beets, meat and milk.

Thanks to its geographical location, Volyn oblast is an important logistical hub for cargo and passenger transportation from the countries of the European Union to Ukraine, Moldova and Romania, the countries of the Middle East and the North Caucasus. The international transport corridor “Baltic – Black Sea” (road and rail transport) and interstate transport corridor Uzhgorod – Lviv – Kovel – Domanovo cross the territory of the oblast.

The links with Poland have always been strong due to common heritage, family relations and business partnerships. They are being enhanced by the implementation of joint projects in the area of safety and security, heritage and entrepreneurship. Volyn oblast has been an active player of our Programme since 2004-2006 programme period. In the 2014-2020 edition, the institutions from Volyn are beneficiaries and partners in 27 Polish-Ukrainian projects.

Being an important transportation hub, Volyn is a strategically important area with 442.76 km of state border (with Poland and Belarus) and 12 border crossing points. As border security is

an important issue for the region, three projects within the Thematic Objective BORDERS have been implemented here. Within *IBSSNorth* project, specialized vehicles and other equipment have been purchased to ensure high-level monitoring of the state border and provide timely information about illegal attempts of border crossing. *BCPMonitoring* project aims at creating a modern and effective system of information exchange between the border agencies of Ukraine and Poland, using equipment such as unmanned aerial vehicles. *FriendlyBorders* is a project by two universities, consisting of trainings for border guards of the two countries.

The safety of people and the environment is also the objective of two other projects. *COORDINATION* is targeted at increasing the capacity of rescuers by establishing a new, fully equipped training facility for fire and rescue staff in Lutsk. Also, new equipment and vehicles (fire engines) have been purchased within the project. *PUFL* project engages local communities into providing fast and efficient response to emergencies. While volunteer rescue squads are quite common in Poland, they are only emerging in Ukraine. For Volyn the project was a chance to introduce this pilot initiative in several “raions” (districts): they have trained the rescuers, purchased equipment for them and conducted trainings on safety for schoolchildren.

Volyn has many treasures to be cherished and protected, including remarkable monuments of history and natural amenities. Lubart’s Castle, which once hosted a summit of European monarchs, is the

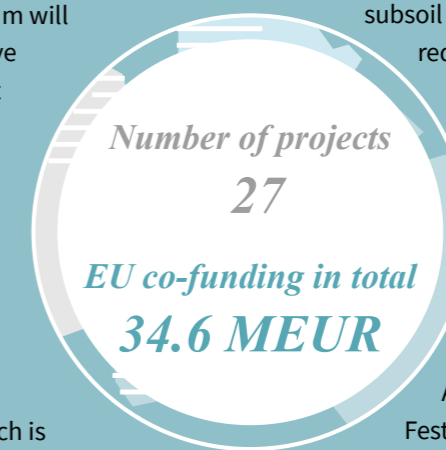
most recognizable landmark in Lutsk. Revitalization of two fragments, which make part of its fortification structure, i.e. Czartoryski Tower with a defensive wall and the Jesuits Monastery was a major part of *TwoTowers* project. The creation of the public spaces in the renovated premises such as the museum of Knighthood and Technology Museum will make this place even more attractive to visitors. Interestingly, the project will be followed by a micro project entitled *TowersMysteries*, which will contribute to the promotion of the landmark through new technologies, such as holograms, which will make it even more attractive and educational.

UrbanRivers is another project, which is meant to make the city of Lutsk more popular among visitors. The Styr river, which is an inseparable part of the cityscape, history, culture, and present-day life of the city, is at a focus in this project. The project activities include infrastructural improvements around the river and public events for the promotion of the natural heritage of the city.

The lake area is another well-known landmark of Volyn. It is a true pearl of nature with the lace of 33 lakes, located within Shatsk National Park and Western Polissia Biosphere Reserve. It’s famous for postcard panoramas of dense forests and glittering lakes, inhabited by rare species of animals, filled with the magic of ancient legends and songs.

To protect the most valuable asset of this area - the lakes, in particular, the waters of Svityaz lake, a large infrastructural project *SVITYAZ* was implemented. Thanks to the development of sewer networks in several villages around the lake, as well as new sewage treatment plants, the flow of polluted sewage to subsoil waters will decrease by 80%, which will reduce the pollution of Shatsk National Natural Park lakes and basins of the Western Bug and Prypiat. Another project, *UPLA*, will contribute to the promotion of this cross-border area, where lakes are the most precious natural attractions, while local history and well-preserved folklore create a unique cultural environment. Also, a new public event, Lake Mystery Festival, welcomed its visitors for the first time within the project. The new tourist brand of the lake region will make this area more competitive and recognizable, laying the foundations for further business and cultural initiatives.

Although natural amenities of Volyn are remarkable, the tourist season is usually limited only to the summer months. *4seasons* project challenged this state of things by encouraging local tourist operators to create tourist products for every season. As a result of the contest for best concepts followed by a “tourist mixer” training, 4 new tourist products have been created in Volyn oblast including kayaking on Luka-Peremut lakes, Prypiat-Stokhid boat tour, Honey museum in Bayiv and a hiking trip through Tsumanska Pushcha.





Volyn has a fascinating history, but, unfortunately, many bits were forgotten and fell away into obscurity. Joint projects shine a light on the almost forgotten aspects of the past by creating innovative tourist products. One of the examples is *VirTour* project, which revives the history of the Sanguszko Princes family. The project team developed a tourist route connected to the history of this remarkable family, which is now available for individual tourists in the form of a mobile application.

OPALYN project reveals a forgotten history of the Opalin town, which was completely destroyed during the World War II. The project team wants to revive its glorious past and create a tourist attraction on its site.

GothicWay project is a trip to even more ancient and unknown times of the Early Middle Ages when Gothic tribes inhabited today's Poland and Ukraine. The amazing stories of these people will be presented in the museum in Volodymyr, where new attractive exhibitions, supported by new technologies, are being created.

Are traditional tours the only way to present the history of the place? The creators of *GamPol* project decided to introduce an alternative way to explore a new place – a game. Now one can go through the landmarks of Ustyluh town guided by the application and completing the tasks. At the end of the journey, a prize is awaiting. Both electronic and paper versions of the game have been made.

Being a truly cross-border region, Volyn is connected with remarkable figures of both Ukrainian and Polish

culture. For example, Ignacy Jozef Kraszewski, a famous Polish writer, lived a great part of his life and wrote some of his works in the village of Omelne. The activities of *KraszewskiPolesie* project aim to study and popularize the works of Kraszewski through public events and improve the places connected with his life.

When we talk about the historical heritage we cannot omit the museums, which are much more than the places to store artifacts. Thanks to *SPIDI* project, two cross-border museums (in Lutsk and Stalowa Wola) will be able to contribute to the promotion of the cultural and historical heritage of their regions, ensuring more active involvement of people in a cultural dialogue and stimulate their interest in local culture and history. Trainings and study visits for museum personnel will help to increase their capacities in providing better services for different categories of visitors and in promoting their museums effectively.

Intangible heritage is a valuable asset, which needs to be preserved and cherished. The *EthnicHeritage* project will increase the attractiveness of the cultural heritage of the Ukrainian-Polish borderland by carrying out research and promotion of folklore traditions, their reproduction and passing on to future generations to demonstrate the positive influence of folk melodies (“folk-melos”) on the human emotional state. Moreover, it will increase the children’s and youth’s interest in studying and reproducing folklore.

PROFolk is another project in this thematic area, planning to promote knowledge about the Kurpish and

Volyn crafts and folklore. Its core element and main attraction for the inhabitants and tourists will be two “Vanishing Professions” Festivals, during which visitors will be able to learn more about the Kurpish and Volyn cultures by trying their hand in traditional crafts, some of which have almost disappeared. Moreover, as part of a bilateral exchange, there will be organized dancing, singing, arts, crafts and folk music classes.

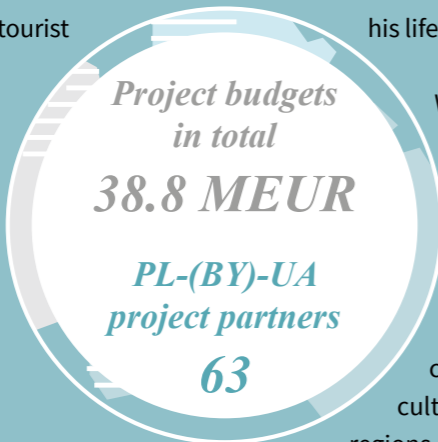
A village community of Rivne was a partner of *East_promotion project*, designed to develop the tourist potential of Bug River area and attract tourists through a series of coordinated promotional events under a common “Picturesque East” brand. Within this project, a joint bicycle rally was organized in Rivne village, combined with an outdoor event based on the celebration of St. John’s Night.

The town of Kovel was a venue for another regular project within the Thematic Objective HERITAGE – *CBCentres*. The major element of the project was building a Centre for Dialogue of Cultures. The Centre has a form of amphitheater, equipped with concert scenes, auditoriums, new technical and cubature facilities as well as the sound, lighting and monitoring systems. In the newly established facility artistic and scientific events will be conducted to promote the culture of the cross-border area.

The history and landmarks of Kovel will be promoted by a micro project *CommonIdentity*. In particular, a billboard with a city map, which shows major important tourist attractions, will be installed in the city center. Project partners will also organize cross-border events, create new tourist products, run promotional campaigns and produce publications.

Transport accessibility in the oblast was improved within three projects under the Thematic Objective ACCESSIBILITY. *FasterSafer* included modernization of two sections of 16.0 km in Ukraine (Sobishchytsi – Kolodii – Vovchytsk – Komarove – Roznychi, from Kostiukhnivka village to the M-07 road). Within *ImTraPBU* project 4.22 km of new roads were built in Zabrody Commune. *SafeTraffic* project, implemented in Lutsk, was targeted at improvement of road infrastructure and traffic management in the city.

All these projects contribute to the improvement of the region and its tourist and investment potential. As cross-border links grow stronger, new ideas for future joint projects are generated.



*'On the trails of
history, nature and
multinational culture*

LUBELSKIE

Voivodeship



Lubelskie Voivodeship, a region located in eastern Poland on the border with Ukraine and Belarus, surprises with the multicultural richness of its past, its rich nature, and the openness and hospitality of its people.

Lublin – a city with a rich past, culture and academic tradition – has played an important role in the history of this part of Europe. It was here, on 1 July 1569, that the so-called Union of Lublin was signed – an agreement between the states of the Crown of the Polish Kingdom and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which initiated the existence of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This common grouping was further enlarged by the conclusion of the so-called Hadiach Union in 1658, with the participation of the Cossack Hetman Ivan Vyhovsky. It provided for the union of three equal legal entities (states), equivalent to today's Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine. In this way, we were together the prototypes for the unification and peaceful coexistence of the peoples of the continent long before the European Union came into being.





Great Square in Zamość. Photo: R. Lesiuk



Zamoyski Palace in Kozłówka. Photo: archive of the Marshal Office of the Lubelskie Voivodeship

Today, Lublin is the capital of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, situated at the intersection of the historical routes linking east and west Europe and the north-south route, now known as Via Carpathia, which in the future will link the Baltic Sea with the Aegean and Black Seas. Lublin Airport in Świdnik plays an important role in the transport network. To the east, the Lublin Voivodeship borders on Belarus and the Ukraine.

The economy of Lubelskie Voivodeship is of an agricultural and industrial nature. Thanks to favourable soil and climatic conditions and the terrain, the region is a leader in many agricultural and fruit-growing crops. This favours the development of the food industry: dairies, breweries, oil mills, etc. The area also has coal deposits in the vicinity of Bogdanka, limestone in the Roztocze area and chalk in the Chełm area. The leading industries are engineering and electrical engineering, chemicals, installation and furniture.

Every visitor to Lubelskie can expect a good reception and an interesting stay. It is an expedition into the extraordinary world of nature and history, combined with active leisure and a taste of culinary delights. Lubelskie's natural beauty and natural wealth attract more and more tourists from large urban and industrial agglomerations. The Powiśle, Roztocze,

Solska Forest, Janów Forest, Polesie or the green and wild Bug River Valley act as a magnet for those seeking peace and quiet. Unique monuments, national and landscape parks, lakes, and a well-developed network of biking, hiking and canoeing trails - it is impossible to get bored in the Lubelskie Voivodeship.

The region protects and promotes its natural wealth. There are 2 national parks: Poleski and Roztoczański and 17 landscape parks. Recognising the outstanding natural values of the Lublin region, UNESCO placed the following on the World List of Biosphere Reserves: Polesie West and Roztocze Transboundary Biosphere Reserve. The latter runs from Kraśnik in the Lublin region all the way to Lviv in the Ukraine. The Roztocze region impresses with the beauty of its landscape, with its characteristic mosaic of arable fields and rolling, wooded hills, criss-crossed by deep gorges, river and stream valleys with numerous rocky thresholds, called "szumy" or "szyoty" on the rivers Szum, Sopot, Jeleń and, above all, on the Tanew.

UNESCO has also recognised the historical value of Zamość, founded in the 16th century by Chancellor Jan Zamoyski, by inscribing the Old Town on the World Heritage List. In another part of the region you will find the Chełm Chalk Underground, a historic

chalk mine, a unique site in Poland and Europe. Over hundreds of years, huge pits were created under the old town buildings of Chełm, with entrances leading to them from bourgeois cellars.

You can taste Lubelskie in many different ways, including literally – just try the flavours of Lublin's cuisine. Traditional Lublin cuisine is derived from the menus of the region's former inhabitants, where simple dishes of poor peasants intermingled with elaborate dishes from court tables. The influence of the culinary habits of our closest neighbours – the Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Belarusians – is also significant. Local cuisine was also heavily influenced by Jews, who had lived in Lublin's villages and towns since the Middle Ages.

The projects implemented under our Programme help to protect, develop and promote these assets. The *Two Towers* project has helped to save the heritage of medieval architecture through the revitalisation of Lublin's Gothic Tower and its surroundings. "The Festival of Legends", which was one of the project's activities, fitted perfectly into the historic fabric of the city by showing its diversity. The historic buildings of the city are on the new route created as part of the *TowersMysteries* project. At the same time, joint activities with Lutsk in both projects strengthened the more than 20-year partnership between the two cities.

The voivodeship capital also implemented the *TouchingThePast* project, which will make historical

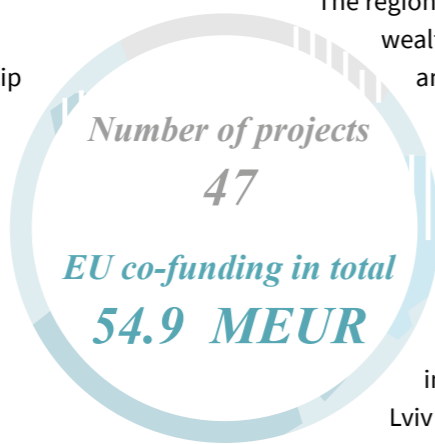
memorabilia more accessible also to people with disabilities, especially the blind and visually impaired. It expanded the existing range of museum exhibitions by creating tactile mock-ups of historical objects and works of art. In addition, museum staff, art galleries and city guides have been trained in handling visually impaired visitors.

The *2cultures* project has been involved in promoting the common cultural heritage of the borderland. Centres for the development of Polish-Ukrainian culture in Lublin and Uzhhorod have created a comprehensive offer including folklore, art, literature, painting, theatre and crafts. The centres have also set up information points where guidebooks on both cities will be available. Publications and the "Strategy of joint promotion and preservation of cultural and historical heritage" have also been produced.

Architectural gems can be found throughout the Lublin region. Thanks to the *ROCCO* project, a manor house in Ciechanki (Puchaczów commune), built in the 19th century and later renovated by one of Poland's most famous architects, Bohdan Lachert, was renovated. The potential of this building, which became the headquarters of the Centre for Creative Work, is a starting point for activating tourism in the

Lubelskie

Taste life!





„Szumny” (water cascades) on the Tanew river. Photo: R. Lesiuk

entire area. It is planned to host, among other things, history meetings, exhibitions, open-air art workshops, design workshops, outdoor events and study visits.

The importance of smaller tourist destinations has also been strengthened through projects: *CommonIdentity*, *TogetherNow* and *OPALYN*. Communicating the history and heritage of the region is one of the important tasks of museums. This was reinforced by the implementation of projects: *Museums PL/BY*, *GothicWay* and *KraszewskiPolesie*, while through the *VIRTOUR* project it is possible to take a virtual tour of the route of the Sanguszko ducal family.

The rich folk culture of the region is promoted through projects: *K&K:PolUA* implemented by Książpol Municipality and *East_promotion*, *Muza* and *MATSYK*, promoting culinary heritage. The preservation and promotion of Marian Hemar’s musical heritage is the outcome of the *HemarHeritage* project.

Nevertheless, valuable natural heritage was also of concern to the project partners. Through the implementation of the *PLUARoztocze* project, elements of the cycling infrastructure were created by connecting new geotourist information centres located along the route with a single line. The main investment was the modernisation of the 327-kilometre cross-border cycle route, where wooden shelters, lookout towers, information boards and cyclist service points were created. The project partners also organised cross-border events and

educational workshops, and publications on natural heritage were prepared. Cycling infrastructure in the northern part of the voivodeship was strengthened through the *VeloFort* project, and in the southern part additionally through *East_promotion*.

The promotion of natural heritage was also the aim of the projects: *Bio-reserve* (Roztocze Biosphere Reserve), *GamPol* and *UPLA* (Polesie). Knowledge of veterinary history is disseminated by the *VetHeritage* project. Water purity is to be an additional magnet for tourists through the *KSICHER* and *Muchawiec* projects.

Getting to know new tourist destinations is facilitated by good quality road infrastructure. Projects implemented within the framework of the ACCESSIBILITY thematic objective help to improve it. One of them is RDW812, under which the eastern part of the Lubelskie voivodeship gained 5 km of modernised voivodeship road No. 812 on the Korolówka-Włodawa route. A number of road sections were built and modernised in the voivodeship under the projects: *ECORoads* (Zamojski Powiat), *ImTraPBU* (Parczewski Powiat), *SafeTraffic* (Chetm), *Accessibility* (Sławatycze area) and *Ourbetterstreet* (Biała Podlaska). The investments have improved safety, travel conditions and times, and access to border areas.

SAFETY is an important element of travel and another thematic objective of the Programme. In villages and small towns, of which there are many in the Lublin region, volunteer fire brigades are an integral part of

the rescue system and are often the first on the scene. This is why the *PUFL* project supporting these rescue units in upgrading equipment and training, especially in the area of safety and road user protection, is so important. Through the project, as many as 32 units have acquired knowledge and equipment: medical rescue bags, waistcoats, pneumatic jacks, arm spreaders, hydraulic scissors and other tools. Training, conferences, joint field exercises and study visits were organised for almost 500 rescuers from Poland and Ukraine, as well as a “Safe Pedestrian” campaign for schools.

The *SAFETY* project, which aims to increase the level of safety of the population and the environment through the creation of a common system for monitoring and rapid response to emergency situations in cross-border areas, is also having similar effects.

In the field of healthcare, the *Rescue* project improved cooperation between medical services and the availability of healthcare by purchasing ambulances and specialised medical equipment for hospitals in Tomaszów Lubelski and Hrubieszów, among others (including first aid equipment, defibrillators, an electrocardiograph – ECG, an ultrasound machine – USG, and equipment for rescue simulations). The activities were complemented by specialised training for around 250 medical staff. At the hospital in Biała Podlaska, thanks to the implementation of the *EpidSafe* project, the capacity to prevent infectious diseases was strengthened. Problems associated with the spread of diseases among humans and animals will help to reduce the measures also taken in the *SVITYAZ* project.

Horses (Polish ponies) in Zwierzyniec. Photo: Anna Bociąg-Pastuszak

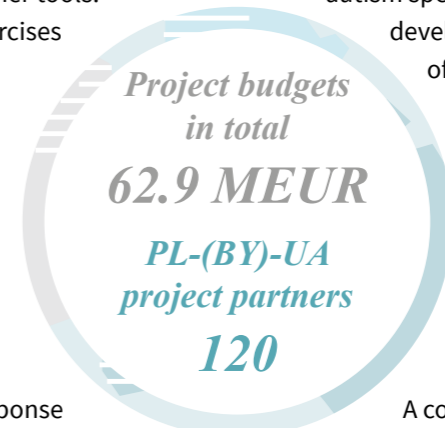


One of the primary goals of the Programme is to improve the quality of life of all area residents, especially the most vulnerable, those affected by various disabilities. In Biała Podlaska, the *DcbCforAutism* project has created infrastructure and developed a health and education system for children, young people and adults with

autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and similar developmental disorders. The needs of people with disabilities and their families were also met by the *BEC* project in Zamość, where a new Guided Learning Centre was established, creating an integrated rehabilitation system and social infrastructure for patients and their families.

A common border should unite, not divide – this is what projects under the BORDERS thematic objective help to achieve. Serving at the border is not easy, which is why the *FriendlyBorders* project partners from the universities of Lublin (KUL) and Lutsk provided training for border guards, organised international postgraduate courses in security and crisis management by making teaching materials available on the project website. A device to determine the level of stress resistance of employees was also purchased, conferences were organised and publications on threats and challenges were produced. This will improve the quality of border traffic, which will be further enhanced by the contacts made. Measures to improve the infrastructure and functioning of existing border crossings in the Lubelskie Voivodeship were also undertaken as part of projects: *OpenBorders Zosin*, *Borderprotect*, *IBSSNorth*, *IBSSCenter*, *BCPmonitoring* and *Weightcomplex*.

Czahary education and nature trail. Photo: A. Basoń



When the war broke out in Ukraine, the lives of millions of Ukrainians changed dramatically. Poland was the first country to lend a helping hand. At the same time, we are witnessing great examples of solidarity and cooperation between these two neighbouring countries. It's true that hard times bring out the best in people. Thanks to the strong ties established during the implementation of joint projects, Ukrainian and Polish institutions are now able to provide assistance to those who need it most. The infrastructure and equipment obtained through the projects are now being used in ways that could not have been foreseen before, but the purpose remains unchanged – serving the people's needs. We want to share with you the stories of Ukrainian-Polish friendship and cooperation during the war. This time we would like to share several stories instead of one...

A silent plea for help

Project story

The first story is about Umka, a white retriever who, together with its owners, was hiding from shelling in a basement in Kharkiv and whose owners had to send him to a safe place in Zakarpattia region. The dog ended up in the shelter and was so frightened that he did not leave the quarantine for a month and a half, refused to go for a walk, until he made friends with another dog. He stayed there for 98 days, which was the longest period of stay in the shelter.



cause, helping abandoned animals in the animal control centre.

This is a story about Spanish volunteers who collected 46 dogs in Ukraine, some of them in a difficult health condition. On their way home they received a warm welcome from their Ukrainian colleagues in a small cross-border town – Vynogradiv. They stayed there for three days, had some rest, the dogs got necessary medical assistance and their documents for border crossing were arranged.

The second story is about the old lady, who had to flee from Kyiv with her Yorkshire terrier, called Yorik. The woman was housed in a home for the elderly, where no pets were allowed, so the dog had to be placed in a shelter. Every day she came to see her friend and to take care of him – she walked him, brushed his teeth, talked to him.

This is also the story of a German lady who has been rescuing homeless dogs from Hungary and Serbia for many years, and during the war she also started helping the dogs from Ukraine. She brought almost 3 tons of dry dog food to the animal control centre in Vynogradiv and took out 25 dogs for adoption in the countries of Northern and Western Europe.

There is also a story about Richie, an old German shepherd, and Shera, the malamute, whose owners couldn't find a place to live during the first days of war. Nobody wanted to rent their property to someone with such huge dogs. The family had to sleep in their car until Richie and Shera were placed in the shelter, where they spent almost two months.

In fact, there are much more such stories, and all of them make a part of one big story - the story of the joint Polish-Ukrainian project *CBC4animals*, which was created and implemented by the people for whom caring for animals is not just a job, but a life mission. In Rzeszów, Poland the project involved the extension of an already existing animal shelter with 25 years of experience behind, while in Vynogradiv everything started almost from the scratch. A small shelter transformed into a modern animal control

There is a story about three women who lost their home due to the war but, finding themselves in a new place, a town in Western Ukraine, found the strength to master new skills and are now serving a noble

centre. It was a totally new concept for this town, and even the fact that the money would be spent on the welfare of dogs, not people, caused some public disapproval. But very soon, thanks to the devoted work of the project team, the animal centre appeared in Vynogradiv, which has no equals in terms of technological advancement not only in Ukraine, but also in many Eastern European countries. The centre's employees have been performing vaccinations, sterilizations, examinations, providing medical assistance, shelter, organizing adoption and holding educational activities.

– We can say that we managed to change the situation with homeless animals in our town. As part of the project, we performed 100 free sterilizations, and after the opening of the Centre we do 200 sterilizations each year, which led to the reduction in the number of stray dogs. But the most important thing is that the people themselves have changed, their way of thinking, their treatment of animals – says Arthur Sherehi, project coordinator.

On a regular basis the Vynogradiv Centre serves 350 animals per year but only in the last 6 months more than 300 animals have been treated. These were the dogs of internal refugees who stay there temporarily until their owners find a long-term housing as temporary accommodation for refugees usually doesn't allow pets. Sometimes local people went abroad and couldn't take their dogs with them. Instead of the planned 50 dogs, about 120-230 animals live in the Centre at one time. There is much work to be done and the demand for food and medicines has also increased.

– When the war started, we decided that we will contribute the best if we do what we can do the best. We carried out vaccinations, did chipping and everything necessary for the transportation of animals abroad, treated them, gave them a temporary shelter, helped with the transportation of animals. We even invited parents and children to play with the puppies so they could take their mind off the war. Our working hours have extended, we had to hire new employees – says Arthur.

Fortunately, in this difficult situation the Vynogradiv Centre was not alone. The cooperation between both project partners did not end with the completion of

the initiative. Animal Protection Organization from Rzeszów, helped with dog food and medicines. They also provided 250 chips for free, which were necessary for Ukrainian dogs to travel abroad. Moreover, 10 dogs have been taken to their Kundelek shelter in Rzeszów for further adoption. – *Now, in the face of war, we cooperate even more. Most of the dogs happily found new homes. Information that the Vynogradiv shelter needs help, we also pass on to organizations from other European countries that ask us how they can help – adds Katarzyna Pokrzywa from the Rzeszów Society for Animal Protection, coordinator of the Polish part of the project.*

Gradually, the aid began to arrive from organizations and philanthropists from various countries around the world. To a large extent, this happened thanks to refugees from other cities in Ukraine who received help here.

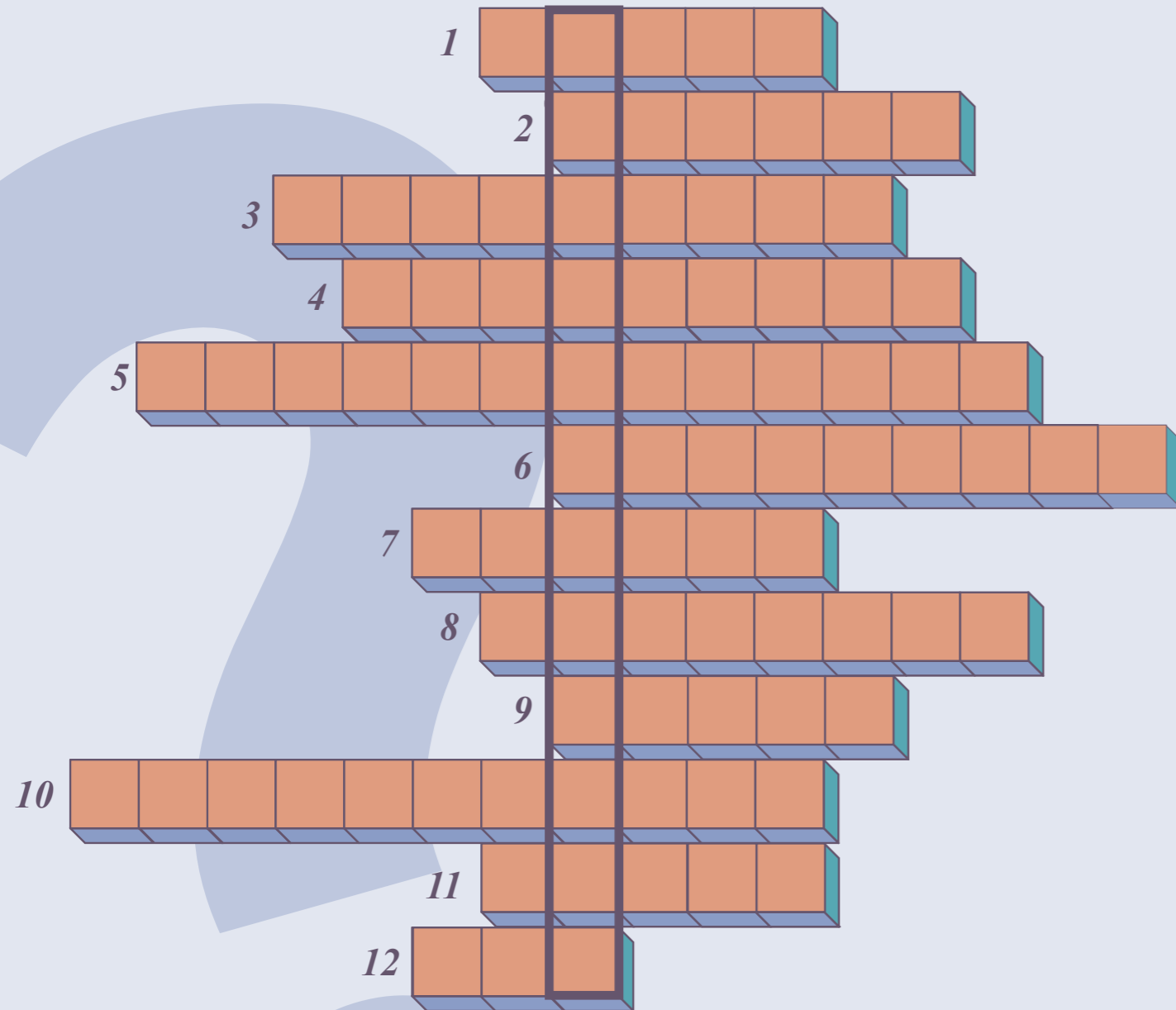
The war became a tragedy for millions of Ukrainians, ruined their lives and their pets were a part of it. For a dog, the owner is the whole world. But what if the owners died during the shelling? Or squeezed into the evacuation train at the last minute rescuing their children? Left their dog in a carrier at the train station because they didn't know if it would be allowed in their new home in Europe? The dog is looking at this mad world with the eyes full of terror, runs away from the sounds of gunshots, waits for months for its owners near an abandoned house. But in dark times you can clearly see bright people. People who, in spite of everything, care about the weak, about those who cannot ask for help with words. And it is incredible to see that a good deed causes more good deeds and the chain of good deeds never ends.

War refugee dogs at the animal centre in Vynogradiv (UA)



Finally, as always, we invite you for a moment of intellectual entertainment. This time it will be a crossword referring to the Programme and its projects. After guessing the individual words, you will get the main word, which is the solution to the whole crossword and, at the same time, the result of the CBCentres project. To make it easier, the words are listed in a modified order at the bottom of the page.

W CROSS R D



Have fun!

1. What can be tested at the tourist centre in Drohiczyn (PL), created as part of the *BugUnitesUs* project, to visit the Bug waterway?
2. A traditional meat dish from Rivne in Ukraine. Its name is also an acronym for one of PBU projects.
3. What new things have firefighters, mountain rescuers, border services and health services in Ukraine and Poland gained for their daily work as a result of the Programme's projects?
4. Which border locality in Poland is reached by the section of the regional road renovated and modernized as part of the *LIP885* project? A new Polish-Ukrainian border crossing is being created at this location.
5. Under which thematic objective of the 2014-2020 Programme were the roads renovated?
6. On the bench whose name you can rest in Sokółka, Poland? His surname is also an acronym for the project.
7. What historical surname is associated with the Creative Work Centre established within the *ROCCO* project in the village of Ciechanki in the Puchaczów Commune (PL)?
8. Under which thematic objective of the 2014-2020 Programme were historical buildings renovated?
9. Nyzhnya - is a locality in Zakarpattia Oblast (UA), where a pulmonology (treatment of lung diseases) hospital is being built as part of the *RRTB* project.
10. What is crucial in the work of partners so that they would be able to implement the project together?
11. In which village in Ukraine was a facility built to promote the traditions of the Carpathian Mountains to tourists and locals?
12. The „smallest beneficiary” of the Programme is... (insect species promoted and protected by a PBU project implemented in the Carpathians).



Correct answers in reverse order:

NOIHER AP SHA TYZENHAUZ COOPERATION
EQUIPMENT BEE ACCESSIBILITY LAHERT
UR YCH KAYAK MALHOWICE