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Institutional Support of Euroregions “Carpathian” and “Bug”: A Case Study for Ukrainian-Polish Cross-Border Cooperation

Abstract: This paper presents cooperation across boundaries as co-operative measures, being goal-oriented to the economic, social, scientific, technical, environmental, cultural, and other relations, initiating and deepening among territorial communities, local authorities both in Ukraine and in Poland. The methodological basis of the study consists of the following approaches to the study of Euroregions: geographical, political, administrative, functional. Definitions of the Euroregion as the main form of cross-border cooperation have been determined, and institutions promoting cross-border cooperation between Ukraine and Poland have been studied. The institutional support for cross-border cooperation within the framework of the “Carpathian” and “Bug” Euroregions has been examined. Features of the Ukrainian-Polish Euroregions – “Carpathian” and “Bug” have been characterized. Problematic issues concerning the Euroregion cross-border cooperation support have been identified. Moreover, recommendations on improving the institutional component of the Ukrainian-Polish CBC within the “Carpathian” and the “Bug” Euroregions are given herein.

Key words: institutional support, cross-border cooperation, “Carpathian,” “Bug,” Ukraine, Poland

Being an element of the state policy, today, cross-border cooperation (CBC) occupies an important place in socio-economic development priorities and European integration directions. An important aspect of regional development is establishing interregional and cross-border cooperation among border regions and territories. A progressive form of such cross-border cooperation is creating Euroregions, which envisages some cooperation between administrative and territorial units and is car-

ried out under bilateral or multilateral CBC agreements. Today, a unified system of cross-border space management has emerged in Ukraine – of Euroregions covering all the border regions along the perimeter of the state border. In the regional governance system, they must fully take over the coordination in the development of cross-border regions and ensure their competitiveness in the domestic and global territories.

Ukraine has some great potential for its development due to the favorable geopolitical position since 19 out of 25 regions are border-regions, and the Ukraine external border is the longest in Europe (1390 km of the land border with EU countries). The activities of the “Carpathian” and the “Bug” Euroregions are among the main forms of Ukrainian-Polish cooperation within CBC. Unfortunately, Ukraine lacks the experience of institutional support. Therefore, research on the development of general principles and generalization of the experience of implementing various aspects of institutional support of CBC becomes relevant.

We focus on the Ukrainian side in the study because the current political situation in our country has led to a decrease in bilateral relations between Poland and Ukraine, and the biggest loss has become our close ties with the eastern border regions. Most companies did not cope with the difficult situation due to economic and political problems in Ukraine. Micro, small institutions, and enterprises operating in the field of cross-border business are still in worse conditions (Kawałko, 2011). The important problem is that areas with the most intense international economic ties in both countries are located far from the border.

Review of sources and methods

The presented research is based on the information and conclusions we received during the study by the Department of International Communications and Political Analysis of Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University on cross-border cooperation of Ukraine, starting from 2013. For three years in a row (2013–2015), the Department has conducted a study on “Cross-Border Co-operation Information Support” by Order of the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sport of Ukraine. Research findings have resulted in the publication of three monographs edited by the author of the article Antonina Shuliak (Mytko). They outline findings on informational and institutional support for a SWOT analysis of cross-border cooperation between Ukraine and its nearest

neighboring countries in three aspects: theoretical, practical, and methodical.

The formation and development of CBC for a long time is the subject of special attention of scientists. In the late 1980s, I. Babets, P. Belenky, V. Garagonych, E. Matveev, N. Mikula, A. Mokiy, S. Tovkanets, G. Tovkanets, P. Belenky, and others began to study this topic in Ukraine.

The most important traditional and new groups of sources of targeted information for the study of institutional support are: archival sources and published documentary materials of Ukraine and neighboring countries; documentary sources on cross-border cooperation in the international dimension; documentary and information materials on cross-border cooperation; statistical materials on cross-border cooperation; concepts and strategies, programmes and projects for the development of cross-border cooperation; various kinds of memoirs. Analyzing these groups of data, we note that the concept of "cross-border cooperation" consists of the following elements: cross-border cooperation; Euroregion; its subjects and participants; agreements on cross-border cooperation; joint projects (programmes); projects (programmes) on cross-border cooperation; state support for the development of cross-border cooperation; state programmes for the development of cross-border cooperation.

Activities of Euroregions and other CBC participants and parties are reduced to activities within *joint projects and programmes* as a set of measures to develop cross-border cooperation, which have received *state support* in recent years. As a set of decisions and actions of Ukraine public authorities' organizational, legal, and financial nature, they have been aimed at implementing projects (programmes) on cross-border cooperation (*Law of Ukraine, 2004*).

An analysis of the strategic documents of the Ukraine and Poland interstate policy and institutions responsible for their implementation showed that despite their considerable number, only a few are functioning and have some influence on the CBC policy. One of the most effective institutional mechanisms for bilateral cooperation between Ukraine and Poland today is the Intergovernmental Coordination Council for Interregional Cooperation (ICAMC). At present, the Ukrainian-Polish treaty base includes about 200 agreements, treaties, and other bilateral international documents, including the agreement on local border traffic, the law on the Pole Map, and many others. The main legal instrument of Ukrainian-Polish interregional cooperation is the Intergovernmental Agreement of Ukraine and the Republic of Poland on Interregional Cooperation, which

is in force but needs change. Lviv, Transcarpathia, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Volyn regions and Poland (Subcarpathian Voivodship) have no separate CBC strategies. Instead of them, there is a “Cross-border Cooperation Strategy for the Lublin Voivodship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Regions for 2014–2020,” which is mostly formal.

A set of philosophical, general scientific, and special methods of classification and systematization were used to implement the research. It contributed to the generalization of the legislative, normative documentation, and scientific literature on the research topic. Application of the structural and functional method enabled the study of a state support structure and functional features for developing Euroregions in the state. The system approach made it possible to carry out a general analysis of the state’s support for cross-border cooperation based on studying the relations and interactions of its institutions. In addition, methods of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, comparative analysis, the unity of theory and practice were used.

The methodological basis of the study consists of the following approaches to the study of Euroregions: *geographical* – the Euroregion is a territory with a specific geographical location; *political* – parts of this territory are under the jurisdiction of sovereign states that share a common border; *administrative* – the Euroregion is formed by the border regions of the states with a common border; *functional* – the Euroregion is a form of cross-border cooperation.

Concept of “euroregion” as an institute of cross-border cooperation

Cross-border cooperation is carried out within the competence of territorial communities or authorities determined by the internal legislation. In the scientific literature, this term describes the territories of intensive border cooperation in all spheres of life. These are the aggregate border territories of two or more neighboring states with high available or potential levels of border cooperation (Stechenko, 2006).

There are various forms of cross-border cooperation such as clusters, partnerships, industrial parks, techno-parks, projects, Euroregions, and European territorial cooperation groups among the mechanisms actively used in the world practice and relevant to current globalization trends and can be applied in Ukrainian realities (Mikula, 2003, pp. 9–12). First of all, cross-border cooperation institutions should include Chambers of Com-

merce and Industry, regional development agencies, business centers, and various industry associations. They are at the heart of the environment in which public initiatives are being developed to improve regulatory policy in cross-border cooperation and prepare relevant projects and grant applications under relevant programmes funded by the EU budget. In addition, these institutions should carry out effective information and consultative activities in the environment of local self-government bodies, non-profit organizations, and business structures regarding the organizational and financial opportunities that they face, participating in cross-border cooperation system (Shuliak, 2020, pp. 431–454).

To characterize the institutional support of Euroregions, initially, it is necessary to define the basic concepts of the categorical apparatus. The Law of Ukraine “On Cross-Border Cooperation” provides the following definition of the term: “The Euroregion is an organizational form of administrative and territorial units of European state cooperation, carried out in accordance with bilateral or multilateral agreements on cross-border cooperation” (*Law of Ukraine*, 2004).

Today, there are between 120 and 183 Euroregions in Europe, but some of them have just declared their creation. Moreover, there are more than 100 Euroregions in Western and Central Europe. Most Euroregions are located at the borders with Germany (31), France (15), Sweden (16), Finland (10), as well as Poland (18), Czech Republic (13), Bulgaria (14), Hungary (15) and Romania (13). In Western and Central Europe, there are more than 90 Euroregions. The chronological distribution widely confirms facts, having been theorized by other studies, dealing with the proliferation of Euroregions, especially during the 1990s and the first years of the 2000s. Important explanatory factors are derivable from the European enlargement process and the political, legal, and financial support provided by the European institutions and the Member States (Guimerà, Camonita, Berzi, Noferini, 2018).

The Ukrainian side actively supports the creation of similar forms of cross-border cooperation. According to the Ministry of Economic, the Euroregions territory makes up almost a third of the total area of Ukraine, with 31.5% of the population in our country. Euroregions include 9 (nine) regions such as Volyn, Transcarpathia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Odesa, Sumy, Chernivtsi, Chernihiv, and Kharkiv. From the border of foreign countries, they are administrative-territorial units of Poland, Belarus, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Moldova, Russia, and even Austria, Germany, France.

Since the early 1990s, four Euroregions have been established at the borders of Ukraine and the new EU Member States, involving six

regions of Ukraine. It is the “*Carpathian*” Euroregion (Ukraine – Poland – Slovakia – Hungary – Romania), established in 1993; and the “*Bug*” Euroregion (Ukraine – Poland – Belarus) – 1995; “*Lower Danube*” (Ukraine – Moldova – Romania) – 1998; “*Upper Prut*” (Ukraine – Moldova – Romania) – 2000. Four more Euroregions were created by three regions of Ukraine together with the CIS countries: “*Dnipro*” (Ukraine – Russia – Belarus) – 2003; “*Slobozhanshchina*” (Ukraine – Russia) – 2003; “*Yaroslavna*” (Ukraine – Russia). In 2007, the Luhansk Regional Administration and the Administration of the Rostov Region of Russia initiated the creation of a cross-border association on their territories, such as the “*Donbas*” Euroregion. In 2010, the leaders of the Lugansk and Rostov regions signed the relevant Agreement in Luhansk. In 2012, the “*Azov*” Euroregion creation issue was to include territorial units of Ukraine and the Russian Federation (Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk region, Crimea, Krasnodar, and Rostov regions), which was actively discussed.

The Assembly of European Regions coordinates the development of cooperation at the level of the Euroregions. The purpose of the activity is to increase the level in the sphere of economy, politics, culture, etc., that is, to pull the lagging regions to the required level (Bilokon, 2004, pp. 76–111). Admission to the Euroregion is voluntary. Expectations of economic benefits are most influenced by decision-making. Cooperation in the fields of science and culture is also important. Expectations for investments, the introduction of preferential taxes, etc., play a significant role. Mutual knowledge and understanding between representatives of certain territories and creating more favorable conditions of life is the most important element of European integration (Stechenko, 2006).

We believe that the *main tasks of the Euroregions* (Mytko, 2013, pp. 8–23) are the following:

- experience and information exchange;
- equalization and continuous improvement of living conditions;
- regional development support;
- development of economy, trade, and tourism;
- environment improvement and protection;
- cooperation in the prevention and management of natural disasters and catastrophes;
- cooperation in the field of humanitarian and social activities, in the field of education, sports, and health;
- cultural exchange and care for the cultural heritage.

Institutionalization of Ukraine and Poland relations within European regions

A special institutional level of the CBC between Ukraine and Poland was formed in the first half of the 1990s during the emergence of the “Carpathian” and “Bug” regions as important centers of the intensification and development of Ukrainian-Polish interregional and cross-border cooperation. The “Carpathian” Euroregion (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Transcarpathia, Chernivtsi regions as participants from the Ukrainian side, and Subcarpathian Voivodship from Polish) was created based on the Declaration on Cooperation of Communities Living in the Carpathian Region and the Statute of the Interregional Association “Carpathian” Euroregion, dated February 14, 1993, and signed in Debrecen (Hungary) by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Poland, and Hungary. Agreement on the Creation of a Cross-Border Association “Euroregion Bug” was signed on September 29, 1995, in Lutsk between the Volyn region and the former Chelm, Lublin, Tarnobrzeg, and Zamosc Voivodships of the Republic of Poland (now the Ukrainian side is represented by Volyn region, Zhovkiv and Sokal districts of Lviv region, Polish side – by Lublin Voivodship) (*Information support*, 2015).

The institutions promoting cross-border cooperation between Ukraine and Poland cover institutions at national, regional, and local levels. It includes international institutions, foreign diplomatic missions and consular posts, local self-government bodies, governing bodies of cross-border associations, Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI), associations of economic entities, regional development agencies (Table 1).

Table 1

Institutions for Promoting Cross-Border Cooperation between Ukraine and Poland

Institutions		Institutions Functions
1	2	3
International Institutions	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, Assembly of European Regions, Association of European Border Regions. Joint structures and authorities responsible for the “Poland-Belarus-Ukraine” Cross-Border Programme.	Development of a strategy for the development of CBC among the regions of Europe; development of CBC principles and recommendations for their implementation; financial support for cross-border projects; promoting interregional integration.

1	2	3
European institutions	Association of European Frontier Regions (AEFR), Assembly of European Regions (AER), Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine, Interregional Association "Carpathian Euroregion."	Organization of commissions, committees' meetings, forums, conferences, European and national institutions; Initiation of working groups created to develop appropriate development tools.
Consular authorities	Consulates General of Ukraine in Krakow, Lublin; Consulates General of the Republic of Poland in Lviv, Lutsk.	Issuance of Visas, Certificate for Ukrainians, Cards of a Pole, Permit for small border traffic, etc.; Assistance for citizens (legal entities) in finding partners in neighboring countries; Issuance of Apostilles, legalization, translation of documents, and certification of signatures.
Local self-government bodies	Regional and local self-government bodies in the border areas of Ukraine, Poland. Permanent Conference of Heads of Regional State Administrations and Regional Councils of Ukraine and voivodships and marshals of the voivodships of Poland.	Development of interregional and cross-border cooperation, involvement, international technical assistance; Intensification of foreign economic relations and the entry into the foreign market of local enterprises, institutions, and organizations; Assistance in the activities of customs, state protection agencies.
Governing bodies of the cross-border associations	The Council, the Presidium of the Council, and the Secretariat of the Euroregion "Bug." Council, Presidium of the Council, and Secretariat of the "Carpathian" Euroregion.	Organization and coordination of activities, facilitating economic, scientific, environmental, cultural, and educational cooperation between members of the Euroregion; Development of specific CBC Projects between members in the area of mutual interests; Facilitation of the development of contacts among the population inhabiting territories, belonging to the Euroregion, in particular among specialists from different industries; Promotion of good neighbor relations between Euroregion members; Mediation and cooperation of Euroregion members with international organizations and institutions; Fulfillment of the beneficiary's functions in EU cross-border programmes.
Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI)	CCI of Ukraine, CCI of Poland. Regional CCIs. Polish-Ukrainian CCI.	Organization of cross-border fairs, exhibitions; Establishment of contacts between business structures of the border regions;

1	2	3
		<p>Promotion of foreign economic relations, export of domestic goods and services; Provision of practical assistance to entrepreneurs in conducting trade and financial operations in the domestic and foreign markets and developing new forms of cooperation.</p>
<p>Association of business entities</p>	<p>Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. Association of Ukrainian Banks.</p>	<p>Development of cross-border production cooperation; Facilitation of the technology transferring and knowledge sharing; Exchange of personnel, joint retraining, and professional development of personnel; Joint consultations, meetings, and conferences.</p>
<p>Regional development agencies</p>	<p>Border Agency for International Cooperation "Our House – Zhovkivshchyna," Lviv International Development Agency "Ukraine-Poland," Agency for Regional Development and European Integration in Lviv Region, Lviv Center for Municipal and Regional Development, etc.</p>	<p>Development of a set of measures aimed at creating a positive image of the region, enhancing its investment attractiveness; Promotion of the region internationally, attracting international donors and financial organizations to the region; Involvement of international and domestic financial institutions in regional development; Promotion of socio-cultural integration.</p>
<p>National and regional institutions</p>	<p>The Assembly of Ukrainian Border Regions and Euroregions, Advisory Council on Euroregion Development and CBC at the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Housing and Communal Services. "Euroregions" (Association of Local Self-Government Bodies "Carpathian" Euroregion, "Bug" Euroregion), Scientific information-statistical cross-border cluster "Ukraine – Poland Infostat." The Western Bug Basin Water Resources Management Authority of the State Agency of Water Resources of Ukraine. Leading non-governmental organizations of European direction.</p>	<p>Coordination and cooperation at the level of individual CBC institutions; Investment and establishment of the CBC participants' interaction with the structures of local authorities, harmonization of common goals in the CBC fields, and resources to achieve productive cooperation.</p>

1	2	3
Institutions of interstate policy of Ukraine and Poland	<p>Intergovernmental Agreement between Ukraine and the Republic of Poland on Interregional Cooperation.</p> <p>Ukrainian-Polish Intergovernmental Coordination Council for Interregional Cooperation Issues, Ukrainian-Polish Interregional Forum/Conference of Heads of Regional State administrations, regional councils of Ukraine and voivodships and marshals of voivodships of the Republic of Poland.</p> <p>Permanent Ukrainian-Polish Conference on European Integration</p>	<p>Local governments (region, district, city), within their competence, conclude agreements with the Polish local authorities (voivodship, county, city) on cooperation in the field of construction, transport, communal services, industry, nature conservation, and other issues of mutual interest;</p> <p>Regular participation of the regional council representatives, state administrations, and other institutions in the meetings of the Council, Emergency and Rescue, and Protection Commission, and relevant commissions.</p> <p>Development of border checkpoints and border infrastructure;</p> <p>CBC issues as to border areas.</p> <p>The Council meets once a year and commissions every six months on a wide range of CBC issues; the participation in economic forums of Ukraine and Poland, individual meetings, forums/ conferences, etc.</p>
Consultive advisory bodies	<p>Tourism Development Coordination Council; Coordinating Council for the Development of the Sanatorium and Spa Sphere; Civic Council, Permanent Parliamentary Commission on European Integration, Cross-border Cooperation and Relations with Ukrainians Abroad.</p>	<p>Establishment of a Programme Council on projects and programmes. Co-financing of international technical assistance from the regional budget;</p> <p>Financing assistance of the international communication activities/ CBC within relevant regional programmes; organizational, analytical, and informational support of the regional council activity in the field of the region promotion;</p> <p>Facilitation of establishing cooperation with local government bodies of other regions of Ukraine and foreign countries;</p> <p>Consideration and coordination of individual current issues regarding international cooperation/CBC at working meetings and joint meetings with the relevant commissions of Poland.</p>

Source: Own elaboration based on: *Analysis of cross-border cooperation policy in Lviv region*, Analytical report (2015), Lviv, 122 p.; M. Slusarciuc (2016), *Coordinates and Representations of Architecture for a Regional Cross-Border Development Strategy*, CES Working Papers, http://www.ceswp.uaic.ro/articles/CESWP2016_VIII1_SLU.pdf,

12.02.2021; M. Slusarciuc (2018), *The Role of Institutions in Cross-Border Regions Theoretical Reference Points*, Transylvanian Review, http://www.centruldestudiitransilvane.ro/Document_Files/Review%202015%20-%20202035/00000775/cwcpy_MarcelaSlusarciuc.pdf, 12.02.2021; *Institutional aspects of cross-border cooperation*, https://www.aebr.eu/files/publications/inst_asp_99.en.pdf, 12.02.2021; *Institutional cooperation with Ukraine starts!*, <https://www.eagrants.sk/en/news/institutional-cooperation-with-ukraine-starts>, 12.02.2021; K.-L. Lepik (2011), *Cross-Border Cooperation Institutional Organisation: Cross-Border Cooperation's Role in Regional Development Paperback*, LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 136 p.

Features of cooperation activities carried out by the “Carpathian” and “Bug” euroregions

The Ukrainian-Polish virtual exchange by innovative projects and proposals was initiated in 2010 (Mytko, 2008, pp. 129–136). The official opening of the Cross-border Investment Agency launched its activity within the framework of the Project “*Cross-border System of Investor Acquiring Poland-Ukraine*” was in 2013. The Volyn Regional Entrepreneurship Support Fund, jointly with the European Union-funded Innovation and Development Promotion Center from Bialystok (Poland), has been implemented the present Project within the framework of the cross-border cooperation Programme “Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013.” The Agency’s activities have been aimed at cooperation with the local authorities in the Volyn region to draft and promote the investment proposals.

The Cross-border Project “*Cross-border System of Investor Acquiring Poland-Ukraine*” is characterized by a very strong cross-border impact. The present Project strengthened the cooperation of the self-government bodies in the region, included in the Project toward creating joint investment proposals. The measures taken during the implementation of the Project are mainly aimed at creating a cross-border investment agency, drafting an investment proposal of the region included in the project, conducting Polish-Ukrainian trainings for employees of self-government bodies, organizing joint study tours, providing professional consultations for employees of self-governing bodies, and investors, and creating a common web portal. The project’s cross-border impact lies in the joint creation of a procedure and transfer of best practices and models related to servicing investors at the lowest level of self-government within the cross-border regions of Poland and Ukraine. It is noted that the main Project driver is some measures aimed at promoting the cross-border region of Podlaskie Voivodship and the Volyn region as attractive areas for foreign investors.

The most important effect of the cross-border project is developing the investment attractiveness of the Polish and Ukrainian border regions. Project results will greatly affect both its target group involving employees working for the self-government bodies and the final Project beneficiaries – investors and regional communities involved in the Project.

The cross-border effect for the target group is noticeable because of the creation of the best joint practices for investors and their services preceded by trainings, consultations, and joint study visits. The mutual exchange of experience and practice between the working bodies of self-government bodies in two countries, and a joint investment proposal, is made in the region. The starting point of the whole activities and kinds of cooperation, carried out by the self-governing bodies, is the Cross-border Investment Agency (CBIA), which is involved in training, consulting services, and study visits for the Project target groups. The CBIA is also a cross-border body with one office located in Ukraine, where experts from both countries will work, and their activities will be relevant to the entire project area. The Project outcome is to initiate a joint investment proposal of the cross-border region, its development. Employees of the self-government bodies will better serve potential investors.

The cross-border impact also affects the final Project beneficiaries – residents of the region, who participate in the Project. The results obtained at the event stage, like the investment proposal of the cross-border region, the region's promotion, the improvement of investor services, the creation of an online platform related to the investment spheres, cause great capital inflows into the region, including the foreign capital. On the other hand, it contributes to creating new jobs, some increase in employment rates, and improvement of the labor market on both sides of the region. Its impact on the revival of the development of Polish and Ukrainian cross-border regions, the improvement of living conditions in the communities involved in the Project, and the region's economic growth is significant too. The beneficial economic and social impact on the border of Poland and Ukraine is undoubtedly an important benefit of this Project.

Ukrainian-Polish cross-border regions are involved in the activities of two Euroregions – the “Carpathian” and “Bug,” which are implementing important projects. These projects are developing cooperation in the field of quality control of the boundary waters of the Western Bug River Basin and improving the system of public participation in the prevention and elimination of environmental disasters in the “Bug”

Euroregion. "Three Polissia" (*Three Polesie*, 2020) – a joint strategy of the protection and ecological use of natural resources of Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian border-zone, the construction of the second bridge over the river Western Bug in the area of International Automobile Border-crossing checkpoints "Yahodyn – Dorohusk." The Project "Living Tisa" (*What is the*, 2020), the project "Association of Museums and Art Galleries of the Carpathian Euroregion," "Green Carpathians"; "Polish-Ukrainian Agency for Communal Development" provide for a permanent mechanism initiated to support Polish-Ukrainian cooperation in the communal sphere and to develop local democracy by establishing a system of information exchanges, developing contacts between enterprises, etc. (Sidoran, 2010, pp. 87–93).

There are several industrial parks and zones in the region, such as Cherliany Industrial Park in Lviv Region, Solomonovo Industrial Park in the Transcarpathia region, and the Coast-Carpathians Industrial Park with elements of Logistics. In addition, there are a large number of techno-parks and business incubators in the region. The Lviv Polytechnic National University Techno-park and Yavoriv Techno-park operate in the Lviv region, the Volyn Regional Business Incubator in the Volyn region, the Business Incubator "Youth Capital" and the Uzhgorod Business Incubator in Transcarpathia region (Nemchenko, Nemchenko, 2011). There is Lublin Business Incubator, Lublin Polytechnic Business Incubator, Academic Business Incubator at Maria Kure Skadowska University at the Higher School of Business and Administration in Lublin Voivodship, and there are five (5) business incubators in Podkarpackie Voivodship. There is also the aviation cluster of Letnich Valley (*Carpathian region*, 2013).

Problem issues to be solved at once

The essence of cross-border cooperation in particular embodied in Euroregions as the most successful form (according to, for example, Martyniuk, Troian, 2005) is the transformation of border regions into "poles of growth," the network of which can form a kind of framework for some sustainable development of the country, formed in its peripheral territories. However, we cannot ignore the opinion of Euroregion experts, who conducted scientific intelligence on the mistakes and failures in the activities of these entities. For example, the director of the Institute for

Cross-Border Cooperation (Uzhgorod) (Telle, 2017), diplomat S. Ustych believes that work within the Carpathian Euroregion is in decline, it is in a severe social, economic, and even political crisis, the Council, as a governing body, is not functioning. One of the reasons is the lack of macroeconomic state support. Over the past 20 years, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Carpathian region have never met. The Ukrainian-Slovak, Ukrainian-Hungarian, and other intergovernmental commissions have not practically work (Why the mechanism).

The main factors hampering the development of cross-border cooperation in Ukraine are listed herein below:

- the underestimation of cross-border cooperation as a tool of territorial/regional development by central authorities and improvement of the quality of people life in the border regions of Ukraine;
- “the limited strategic vision of tasks and prospects for cross-border cooperation developed both by the government and local authorities of Ukraine, as well as by the “lack of joint planning skills for the development of border areas”;
- the low level of financial support for joint cross-border projects, both from the government and local authorities (except for the border infrastructure arrangement);
- the weakness of the regional development institutional base in the border regions should play the role of one of the cross-border cooperation drivers;
- the lack of awareness among local authorities and tasks for developing cross-border cooperation require coordinative functions, not rigid administration. Consequently, too few entrepreneurs and non-governmental organizations are involved in implementing cross-border cooperation projects (*Analysis of...*, 2015).

Among the factors hampering the deployment of cooperation along borders, experts also highlight:

- “excessive ambition and, at the same time, ambiguity in the mission of the Euroregions and their functioning at the borders of Ukraine and countries of Central Europe declaring their desire to solve common problems in all the spheres of public life”;
- low levels of socio-economic development on the territories, participating in cross-border cooperation compared to national average data;
- differences between the levels of the government decentralization in the countries of Central Europe and Ukraine;

- specifics of the Ukrainian legal system, the rules of which often conflict with the EU rules in management and business.

The creation and implementation of joint development strategies have become a critical factor for activating cross-border regions. The practice of using an identical approach for strategic management of regions, regardless of their location relative to national borders, is quite common. Priorities for their development are formulated unilaterally, without coordination with the priorities of cross-border partners. Therefore, it is necessary to create strategies that share common goals, priorities, guidelines, and specific actions that will use cross-border potential to enhance the competitiveness of neighboring border regions. The following strategies of the Polish state are an example of such documents (Korop, Miszczuk, 2017, pp. 5–20): National Strategy for Regional Development 2010–2020, Development Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodship, The strategy for the Subcarpathian Voivodship development for 2007–2020, Strategy for Socio-Economic Development of Eastern Poland until 2020. It states that since 2004 as the EU border has been passing along the eastern border of Poland, relations with its eastern neighbors, including Ukraine, are influencing Poland's international image in the European Union and Europe as a whole. In addition, the Strategy states that if Ukraine were to become a candidate country for the EU membership in the nearest future, the funds allocated by the European Union to develop cooperation with its neighbors would increase, which would facilitate further development of relations between Ukraine and Poland. Therefore, Poland will stimulate the process of mutual rapprochement between the European Union and Ukraine. Promoting regional development along the border with Ukraine is one of the priority areas of the Strategy.

The state has got a resource to finance the programme (UAH 10 million, when UAH 300 million is required) for co-financing international technical assistance projects in the fourth year of implementing the State Programme for the Development of Cross-Border Cooperation (2016–2020). However, only those projects were financed that were fixed in the appendix to the programme from the list of the ideas provided in 2015–2016. The funds arrived in the regions at the end of the 2019 budget year, which significantly complicated their use by lower-level managers, but more than 95% of the total sum was used. It is worth mentioning that the 2016–2020 Programme proved to be an ineffective tool to deepen cooperation between border areas, in particular, due to the lack of an efficient mechanism for co-financing cross-border cooperation projects and limit-

ing the scope of the programme to the list of projects that have lost their relevance (Lytvyn, 2020).

The elaboration of the State Programme for the Development of Cross-Border Cooperation (2021–2027) is in progress, but the coronavirus pandemic has made significant adjustments to the functioning of CBC structures. The Joint Monitoring Committee of the Programme has approved an additional € 3 million to fund cross-border health cooperation projects to support the fight against the Covid-19 outbreak. In total, 12 projects (7 PL-BY, 4 PL-UA, 1 PL-BY-UA), including hospitals and social service centers, can purchase additional equipment or introduce new health services to better respond to the situation. At the same time, the implementation of the planned project activities has not stopped. Their discussion and implementation have been transferred to the online space.

However, Ukraine remains Poland's main strategic partner among non-EU countries. We agree with O. Charucka's (Charucka, 2016, pp. 34–59) opinion that the current state of cooperation in the field of the Polish-Ukrainian border cannot be characterized as effective cooperation. Its development is hampered by economic, legal, and other social factors. Despite the destabilization in Ukraine, Polish companies are still not leaving the Ukrainian market and expecting better times because the potential is huge, ranging from heavy industry through chemicals to agriculture. World Bank data show that while Ukraine is not the best place to do business, it is developing and growing. The promotion of further cooperation depends on the progress of Ukraine's European integration process and the reform of the local government.

Conclusions

Therefore, cross-border cooperation is a joint action aimed at establishing and deepening economic, social, scientific, technical, environmental, cultural, and other relations between territorial communities, local executive bodies of Ukraine and territorial communities, and relevant authorities of other states within their competence and defined by national legislation. Cross-border cooperation will help attract foreign investments, give some impetus to production development, and provide a mechanism for implementing the transport corridor idea.

The organizational and legal support for the technology parks, manufacturing and industrial zones requires significant improvement, especially

regarding their functioning within cross-border regions. First of all, it is necessary to simplify the regulatory procedures, to outline mechanisms of the local self-government bodies, influencing the creation of the infrastructure developing industrial parks, to define ways of their interaction with local self-government bodies in neighboring states, to identify priorities of public-private partnerships during the project implementation. In particular, simplified procedures, controlling borders and customs can be proposed in cross-border industrial parks and zones, which will be created with the participation of the border areas of the EU Member States and Ukraine.

During the period of the Ukrainian independence within the cross-border regions, formed on the border with Poland and the EU, there was a constant formation and development of individual structural elements of Euroregions. Primarily, it concerns the development of the institutional environment elements, the improvement of the infrastructure and quality of the human capital, and the formation of the cross-border business foundations. Simultaneously, many problems related to the full functioning of the cross-border Euroregions at the western border of Ukraine are still unresolved. Initially, it concerns the development of cross-border markets, the establishment of modern methods of conducting cross-border business, the impact of local communities on cross-border activities, the establishment of information support for such activities, etc. In addition, the level of new cross-border cooperation forms using in Ukraine, particularly cross-border clusters, partnerships, and cross-border industrial areas, is outright insufficient.

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Wsparcie instytucjonalne transgranicznej współpracy ukraińsko-polskiej w ramach euroregionów „Karpacki” i „Bug”

Streszczenie

Artykuł przedstawia współpracę ponadgraniczną jako działania kooperatywne, ukierunkowane na cele gospodarcze, społeczne, naukowe, techniczne, środowiskowe, kulturowe i inne, inicjujące i pogłębiające się między społecznościami terytorialnymi, władzami lokalnymi zarówno na Ukrainie, jak i w Polsce. Podstawę metodyczną opracowania stanowią następujące podejścia do badania euroregionów: geograficzne, polityczne, administracyjne, funkcjonalne. Określono definicję euroregionu jako głównej formy współpracy transgranicznej oraz zbadano instytucje promujące taką współpracę między Ukrainą a Polską. Zbadano instytucjonalne wsparcie współpracy transgranicznej w ramach euroregionów „Karpacki” i „Bug.” Scharakteryzowano cechy ukraińsko-polskich euroregionów – „Karpacki” i „Bug.” Zidentyfikowano problematyczne kwestie dotyczące wsparcia współpracy transgranicznej w euroregionie. Ponadto podano zalecenia dotyczące usprawnienia komponentu instytucjonalnego ukraińsko-polskiej współpracy transgranicznej w ramach euroregionów „Karpacki” i „Bug.”

Słowa kluczowe: wsparcie instytucjonalne, współpraca transgraniczna, „Karpacki”, „Bug”, Ukraina, Polska