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Common Perspective

Cross-border Academy of Development

THE 3RD EDITION OF CROSS-BORDER ACADEMY OF DEVELOPMENT IN MINSK (BELARUS)

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On 9 August 2018, the third edition of Cross-border Academy of Development was held in the hotel “Viktoria” (Minsk, Belarus). The event was organized within the framework of the 15th anniversary of ENI Cross Border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020. The meeting was attended by more than 150 participants, including representatives of science, business and local administration from Poland, Ukraine and Belarus. The purpose of the event was to discuss, share viewpoints and listen to the experts in the field of cultural, historical and natural heritage.

By tradition the Cross-border Academy was opened by Dr. Leszek Buller, director of the Centre for European Projects, who made a point of Academy during the opened 2nd call for proposals. The Head of the JTS Pawel Slowikowski presented the main achievements of the Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine during the three periods of the Programme existence: 2004-2006, 2007-2013, 2014-2020.

Both in the first and second editions, which were held in December 2016 in Janów Podlaski and in September 2017 in Lviv, the independent experts provided the important information for preparation of micro-projects under the ENI Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020. The Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian experts discussed popular trends and perspectives in regard to preservation of common cultural, historical and natural heritage of three neighbouring countries. Potential applicants could get valuable experts’ recommendations and therefore improve their project ideas for the second call of the project proposals.

The ENI Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020 has entered in its brightest stage. This year the following Programme is celebrating its 15th



anniversary. The Cross-border Cooperation Programme has become one of the most essential resources for promoting cooperation, social and economic development of cross-border regions and enabling to draw attention of neighbouring countries' capacities. About 400 projects have been financed for 15 years. Although experience of cooperation between these three countries takes much longer, this cooperation has got a practical form once the Programme was launched.

It should be reminded, that the 2nd call for proposals in the Programme was launched on 1st August 2018 and will last until 31st of October 2018. The 2nd call is dedicated to micro-projects, offering mainly non-investment activities promoting cooperation, such as building of new cross-border contacts and relations, exchange of experiences and social initiatives in connection with local culture and historical and natural heritage.

Moreover, the aim of heritage is not only to enhance cultural links, but also improve the image and attractiveness of regions – and this in turn is connected to the development of cross-border tourism.

In the second call of the Programme applicants can apply their application forms on two priorities within the framework of the Thematic Objective “HERITAGE”. The first priority is “Promotion of local culture and history”. The second priority is “Promotion and preservation of natural heritage”.

The Cross-border Academy gathered independent scientists and practitioners. They summarized the results of the previous call, exchanged the experience gained during previous Programme periods, analyzed the effectiveness of the current Programme priorities and expressed their views on the coming second call of project proposals.



THE PROGRAMME INDICATORS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE INDICATORS OF THE SECOND CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The network of presentations by independent experts was kicked off by Dr. Marcin Zarzecki (The Cardinal Wyszyński University in Warsaw). He presented analysis of the Programme indicators with a focus on the indicators of results and outcomes within the framework of the Thematic Objective “HERITAGE”.

According to his lecture there are several indicators which are supposed to be a prerequisite for succeeding in the second project call for proposals:

Priority 1.1 “Promotion of local culture and history”

Output indicators

- Number of improved historical and cultural and historical sites as a direct consequence of Programme support;
- Number of cross-border cultural events organized using ENI support.

Result indicators

- Increased number of visitors of the historical heritage and cultural sites.

Priority 1.2 “Promotion and preservation of natural heritage”

Output indicators

- Number of cross-border events organized using Programme support.

Result indicators

- Increased number of visitors of the natural heritage sites

In addition to above mentioned, if necessary, any other particular output indicators for the project can be used.

The expert stressed the specific role of innovations. As any sphere, historical and cultural heritage, is literally imbued with new technologies. And it also should be taken into account for new project preparations. According to Dr. Marcin Zarzecki, the so-called “technical schools” are being created now in each region of Poland for whoever wishes to refer to and learn how to write applications correctly. It is possible to find a partner and offer cooperation at these meetings. Firstly, such meetings may take place at the local level. Then, applicants can expect interregional consultations.



PRESERVATION OF NATURAL HERITAGE

Belarusian experts **Alexander Panko** (the Candidate of Historical Sciences in Brest State University named after A.S. Pushkin) together with **Nikolay Mikhalchuk** (The Polesie Agrarian Ecological Institute named after A.S. Pushkin) focused in their presentation on the questions how to preserve natural heritage and ecology in the region. These issues are still actual nowadays. It's supposed that natural resources of Belarus, Poland and Ukraine are well-researched but it's not totally true. So just a few years ago the first nature reserve in the history of Belarus "The left bank part of the Yaselda River" appeared in Brest Region. Moreover, the unique botanical nature monument was found in Malorita Region in 2009.

The experts pointed out that many Brest researchers moved into project management from the project "Three Polesyses – Joint Strategy for Protection and Environmental Use of the Natural Heritage of the Territory of the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian Boderlands" launched under the Neighborhood and Partnership Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2004-2006. The uniqueness of the project was that all three parties of the project (Poland, Belarus and Ukraine) were acting on an equal as financial partners.

One more project that influenced on creating cooperation is a collaborative cross-border project that was implemented within the Programme of 2007-2013 by two universities, Brest State University named after A.S. Pushkin and Pope John Paul II State School of Higher Education in Biala Podlaska. Classic tourism was the basis for the project. The main point was to create a bicycle route "Following the Nadbuzhanskie Region Mysteries", though the expert offered to consider the project wider as a form of ecological tourism.



The experts identified the possible ideas for the project in the field of natural heritage preservation:

- ▶ publication activities on the theme “Preservation of natural heritage”;
- ▶ organizing events devoted to round-number anniversaries (e.g. the 80th anniversary of creating the Bureau of Polesye land reclamation and the 85th anniversary of Louise Boyle’s expedition around Polesye);
- ▶ organizing demonstration botanical gardens (e.g. for cultivation of medicinal plants, herbs);
- ▶ economical consumption and conservation of energy resources;
- ▶ information support of ecological routes;
- ▶ organizing exhibitions (photo-, art-, etc.) on the theme of preservation of cultural heritage;
- ▶ creating new and unique tourist products.



CULTURE IS THAT WHAT UNITES US

Cultural and historical heritage united with local culture is an interesting perspective for the future projects. Six experts presented lectures on preserving cultural and historical heritage within the frames of the section.

According to **Dr. Yuriy Pachkovskyy** (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv), modern perception of cultural heritage is not only monuments of culture and history but also our environment with peculiar historical landscape sites. Nowadays cultural heritage is a powerful element of economic and strategic state's development. Dr. Pachkovskyy also noted that it's important to focus on both using advances in information and communication technologies and creating modern e-products for smartphones, tablets, laptops and PCs.

Yuriy Pachkovskyy guessed that the possible projects for the Programme could be creating electronic guide books, electronic tourist products, interactive guide books in different languages, and organizing start-ups in the sphere of cultural tourism.

What's more, the Ukrainian expert suggested to keep a record of sites of cultural heritage. Digital catalogues, virtual electronic management systems for sites of cultural heritage, and information analytical systems could be created. Normative and legal basis for revitalization of intangible cultural heritage should also be updated.

Dr. Pachkovskyy proposed further consideration of cultural and historical heritage in terms of marketing from the viewpoint of Ukraine. Every tenth European, to quote the expert, dreams of visiting a Ukrainian village. There are about 30 thousand monuments of culture in every country. There are about 11% out of a total number of these sites are located in Kiev, 10% of monuments are situated in Kharkiv Region. There are only 5% out of a total number of the sites (or 2045) are in Lviv Region. Besides, there are a number of problems concerning preservation of this heritage.



About 70% of sites are in need of renovation, 10% of these cultural sites are in an emergency condition. Ukraine hasn't got any unified system of protecting these cultural sites and monuments. The expert offered to develop and implement new technologies for introducing various cultural sites, conduct a physical inventory of cultural heritage, aim to retain their authenticity. Thus, the offered projects should be more efficient not only with regard to visiting sites but in terms of innovative aspects of this or that project.

The Polish expert **Anna Fidelus** (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw) proposed to implement a large number of networking projects that would enable to establish and develop Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian partnerships. Networking might be as further specification of the already existing collaboration among some establishments that had already existed but formally there were no financing instruments to support cooperation between them. Networking cooperation can be arranged in thematic directions such as economical, educational or cultural as well as in the field of security from both sides of the border.

According to Anna Fidelus, special attention should be paid to improving the capacities of cross-border regions from the point of innovative development and strengthening of closer cooperation between universities, institutions of scientific researches and business organizations.

In the context of draft projects Mrs. Fidelus referred to the issue of developing public relations. Communication within the project is supposed to be the main point in its implementation, especially if participants are from different countries. In that regard, a new project can become not only an opportunity to strengthen increasingly interdependent and mutually supportive public relationship but also have efficiency in communicating within the project itself.



The Belarusian expert **Stsiapan Stureika** focused in his presentation on a spiritual meaning of heritage. That's why, according to his opinion, quantitative indicators such as the number of visits of cultural and historical sites when evaluating of implementing this or that project is not always informative. The most important issue is to estimate whether the project has really changed life of those who live on the particular territory. There are several aspects according to Mr. Stureika:

1. The concrete involvement of a great variety of cultural heritage into socio-cultural nature (e.g. synthesis of cultures);
2. Social inclusion. It is essential to take into consideration the interests of people with disabilities and from socially marginalized groups, to conduct work on cultural integration.
3. It's important to take up issues about the heritage together with the sustainable development processes, adding new ideas and experiences.
4. The best project is the project that is needed at present and continues after the end of financing.
5. The most important result of each project is to formulate a response to the question what cultural heritage really is.



One more Ukrainian expert **Volodymyr Shwets** (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv) considers that very little attention has been given to such sites of cultural and historical as castle and palace landmarks. Regeneration of their infrastructure requires considerable resources and cannot be financed in micro-projects. However, if we apply a modular step-by-step approach, this aim will become more real. Projects can be as distinct modules for creating museum collections on different thematic areas. The artifacts of cultural and historical heritage of Poles, Belarusians and Ukrainians can be among these thematic areas concerning e.g. education activities, cooperation development, money matters, bank and insurance business on cross-border territories. Such collections have genuine grounds for becoming tourist sites for both sides of the border. Museum collections created within the micro-projects could be the basis for interior filling of renovated castles and palaces. Societies and unions of cultural heritage joined together can become the focal and organizing point of such initiatives. The aim of building such unions is to consolidate and activate public efforts towards preservation of cultural value of Poland, Belarus and Ukraine. The expert also stressed that mutual cultural heritage is essential not to hide but demonstrate. For this purpose, it's necessary to establish electronic cataloguing of archives.

The project can be considered to be successful only if it has received feedback from people. This evaluation gives an opportunity to find out mistakes and achievements. It's important to understand assessment criteria both external and internal. Hence, the project's efficiency can be evaluated from the growing number of the cultural product's consumers.



The Polish expert **Mieczyslaw Ozorowski** brought to the attention of qualitative indicators in project implementing. The project is considered to be unsuccessful if its duration is only a funding period. The project cannot make people interested won't have any future, even if it seems catching.

It would be designed to maintain a certain level of connection between preservation of natural heritage and current issue of our modern world. Here we should highlight the following core points:

1. The number of heritage;
2. The number of initiatives;
3. The number of collaborative researches;
4. Cooperation of governmental and non-governmental organizations;
5. Partnerships within the state.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

To sum up, at the conference the experts shared their experience and opinions on what it is necessary to pay attention for creating new projects.

1. Reducing world energy consumption and producing by approximately 20 per cent is the necessary standard;
2. Stabilization of forestry fund. Rain forests are being cut at the speed of "one football pitch per one second";
3. Waste recycling up to 90 per cent;
4. Changing in men's attitudes towards ecology;
5. Ecological and environmental safety.

MAIN RESULTS

It's essential to strengthen culture links and cooperation between universities, institutions of scientific researches, business and local organizations. The projects should be aimed at increasing knowledge and the potential of local communities in the field of culture. During the Academy it was pointed out that it's necessary to protect and promote historical and cultural heritage of cross-border regions, demonstrate perspectives for financing in the field of cultural heritage, implement innovative projects concerning preservation and popularization of cultural heritage, elaborating tourist values of cultural heritage of cross-border regions in detail.

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