

Report

Interreg post 2027 stakeholders' consultation meeting

Subject of consultation

Shape of the post 2027 Interreg programme on the Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Belarusian borderlands

Objectives of consultation

1. Identify and analyse the key spheres and problems in the region that need solutions and can be addressed by Interreg post 2027 programme;
2. Assess conditions and locate points for cooperation;
3. Collect opinions, propositions and define probable directions of Interreg post 2027 for the region.

Note: The required timing of the meeting is 2-3 hours

Administration

Region	Rivne Oblast, Ukraine
Conducted by (entity)	Lviv Branch Office of Joint Secretariat
Place/venue/address	Rivne Oblast State Administration, 1 Prosvity Sq, Rivne
Date	23 September 2024

Part 1.

Information about respondents

Number of participants	29 persons 20 entities represented
Categories of participants, structure and share of participation	<p>Note: Please register participants in the list that will be further attached to the report (List should obligatory contain name, surname, function, name of entity represented, type of entity, signature).</p> <p>The following groups of stakeholders shall be invited and represented in the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Regional, urban, local government authorities; 2.) Healthcare institutions; 3.) Education institutions (schools, universities, academies), training or research centres; 4.) Cultural institutions (such as museums, galleries etc.); 5.) Organizations responsible for nature/environment protection; 6.) Bodies in charge of disaster and emergency risk management; 7.) Economic/social partners, associations, SMEs; 8.) NGOs (indicating a sphere of activity); 9.) Other type (what exactly)

	<p>Please provide the division of the audience into each of the type. Example: Healthcare institutions – 30% (3 entities) NGO`s – 20% (2 entities) Education institutions – 50% (5 entities) Etc.</p> <p>Regional, urban, local government authorities – 7 (35%) Healthcare institutions – 2 (10%) Education institutions (schools, universities, academies), training or research centers - 3 (15%) Cultural institutions (such as museums, galleries etc.) – 2 (10%) Organizations responsible for nature/environment protection - 1 (5%) Bodies in charge of disaster and emergency risk management - 1 (5%) Economic/social partners, associations, SMEs – 2 (10%) NGOs (social psychology, children, inclusion) – 2 (10%)</p>
<p>The level of awareness of the audience about the Poland-(Belarus)-Ukraine / Interreg and EU/Donor funded projects</p>	<p>Please assess the audience according to the level of awareness/involvement of the organisation in the EU funded projects in the region and specify what is the quantity and % share of each group in the total quantity of participants (it is best to cover that in the registration):</p> <p>Low – heard of EU-funded projects without knowing details on the financing conditions, priorities, objectives etc.;</p> <p>Medium – aware of the EU-funded projects with basic knowledge on conditions, examples of projects in the region or indirectly involved in the implementation;</p> <p>High – directly involved in the Programme/projects implementation as a Monitoring Committee member or beneficiary of current or previous Poland-(Belarus)-Ukraine programme edition.</p> <p>Low – 7</p> <p>Medium – 18</p> <p>High - 4</p>

Part 2.

What is Interreg

The audience should be informed about the basic data on the Programme (PL-UA/PBU) - financing structure, area, cross-border cooperation frame, successful projects in the region. The information should be adapted to the participants' awareness on the issue – if it is medium-high – please communicate rather the analysis of the previous programmes (challenges, resolutions, lessons learnt etc.). Highly informed participants may assist in sharing the basic information for enriching the discussion.

As the majority of participants had a medium level of awareness about the Programme, some information about the Programme has been provided (programme periods, statistics of the supported projects, eligible beneficiaries, financing, current Programme priorities, and future activities in the Programme).

Experience of the region

Please indicate which PBU/PL-UA projects (or other CBC projects) implemented in the region proved most successful in the stakeholders' opinion, brought strongest results, had highest impact etc.

MATSYK project on culinary heritage

BEC project (Ternopil oblast) – the center for the children with disabilities

(Only one project was implemented in the region in 2014-2020)

Part 3.

Analysis of feedback and input on key questions

Note: After introductory input and familiarization with the audience please initiate further joint discussion and exchange of opinions of the stakeholders on each of below key questions.

<p>1. Is location next to a border an opportunity or a disadvantage?</p>	<p>As a summary of opinions of stakeholders please put the jointly outlined general answer whether the location next to a border is more opportunity or disadvantage and explain what key arguments state for the chosen answer.</p> <p>1. Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - additional financing allocated on infrastructure and roads; - opportunities for cooperation, being closer to neighbours, - experience exchange (Polish experience and best practices can be implemented) - good for business, esp. logistics, transport <p>2. Disadvantages</p> <p>A border with Belarus is a disadvantage as it is associated with danger, there is a threat of Russian attack from this side</p>
<p>2. Where is the biggest potential for territorial cooperation in your area?</p>	<p>Please work on the joint identification of the region's most actual fields to be addressed in frames of Interreg orientation.</p> <p>Please list maximum 5 from below and arrange the list from the most to less actual. If other arise please add to the list.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint cultural heritage; - Health services and healthy lifestyle promotion; - Protection of environment; - Responding to natural and human related threats and hazards

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation between research / science / academic centres - Promotion of entrepreneurship - Facilitations for SME cross-border operability - Easy employment in the neighbouring country - Tourism development - Networking research and enterprises to innovate - Joint sport events - Border security - Road infrastructure - Public transport crossing the border - Social integration - Strengthening local identity - New technologies / innovativeness development and promotion - Other – what exactly?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourism development 2. Protection of environment; 3. Health services and healthy lifestyle promotion 4. Joint cultural heritage; 5. Road infrastructure <p>Other – Education, inclusion/esp. accessibility of spaces</p>
<p>3. What currently works well in this cooperation and should be either preserved or reinforced?</p>	<p>Please discuss the aspect of cooperation and summarise maximum 5 positive points agreed in the audience.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Creation of joint natural park areas;</p> <p>Shared health services;</p> <p>Jointly coordinated security/emergency services - fire-fighters operations across the border, etc.</p>
<p>4. What currently does not work well in this cooperation and should be improved?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The opportunity to learn and build capacities of institutions that would have been impossible otherwise 2. The possibility of financing infrastructure 3. Strengthening cooperation between Ukrainian and Polish institutions, maintaining long-term cooperation, interpersonal informal contacts 4. Finding the points in common – something that unites us rather than divides us, which makes us stronger
	<p>Please discuss the aspect of cooperation and summarise a maximum 5 negative issues agreed in the audience.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Nature preservation practices in a shared river basin are not unified;</p> <p>Exchanges of practical experience between places facing the same issues are complicated.</p>

	1. Insufficient sustainability of projects 2. Information about the Programme is insufficient 3. Educational institutions (schools, universities, clubs) have not been supported sufficiently
5. What are major obstacles for a good cross-border cooperation in your area?	<p>On the issues summarized above please provide the major obstacles that interfere these issues to be duly solved.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Low and uneven economic development; Little knowledge of the programme and/or partner country language; Uneven competence and salary level of local authorities personnel, etc.</p>
	1. Danger related to the war -international partners are reluctant to visit the events 2. Complicated border crossings 3. It's difficult to find a Polish partner, not enough platforms for networking 4. Communication with partners can be challenging (Polish partners are not flexible enough and reluctant to use messengers (Viber, WhatsUp etc.) and alternative ways of communication). 5. Ukrainian institutions (esp. self-government) are not ready to apply (low awareness, low competencies)
6. Are there things you would like to do under Interreg but cannot? Why?	<p>Please collect probable measures/goals and reasons.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Involvement of SME as partners to strengthen financial and operational capability cannot be done to regulative limitations of programme rules;</p>
	1. Tourism projects or other priorities connected to heritage and culture 2. Investments in education
7. What is the most important novelty that you would like to see in the future Interreg?	<p>Please put the propositions that are new to the programme.</p>
	1. More training or other know-how on project design/preparation including infrastructural component 2. Cross-border projects without a cross-border partner 3. Having partners from outside the Programme area
8. Is there a need for some infrastructure projects?	<p>Please collect opinions/propositions of joint infrastructure projects may be established in the region in cooperation with adjacent region of the partner country.</p>
	<p>Yes. Culture, education, medicine and social sphere, tourist facilities, road infrastructure. Also, the transformation of buildings and public spaces to be more accessible for people with low mobility (e.g.</p>

	wounded soldiers and other victims of war, children and adults with disabilities).
9. What should be done to facilitate the work with your counterparts in another country (governance)?	Please list measures on governance that would be applicable for improvement of the cooperation between bordering countries/regions.
	1. More platforms for partner search, networking events such as forums etc. 2. Introduce the call for micro-projects before large ones 3. Provide more opportunities for offline meetings with partners

Part 4.

Conclusions, other topics of discussion

Please put here everything that was not covered above, but raised/expressed during the discussion.

The more experience a region has the more projects its institutions win. Newcomers, such as Rivne Oblast, need more effort in making their first steps. Therefore, the priority in terms of information and support should be given to them.

Overall assessment of the meeting by the organizer

Were the objectives of the consultation achieved?

Please refer to each objective and describe the level of engagement of the stakeholders into the discussion.

Being an adjacent region at the beginning of the Programme and having no physical border with Poland, Rivne Oblast has insignificant project experience. However, the participants expressed many ideas and demonstrated willingness to cooperate with Polish partners. They see many advantages in the proximity of the border and a potential for cross-border cooperation, especially in the areas of tourism development, protection of the environment; health services and healthy lifestyle promotion, joint cultural heritage and road infrastructure. Other directions mentioned included educational initiatives and inclusion, esp. Improving accessibility of spaces.

The participants mentioned the need to improve their knowledge and skills related to project design and implementation; insufficient capacities of institutions are seen as a serious obstacle to successful cross-border cooperation. Another challenge mentioned was the difficulty in finding a Polish partner, which can be explained by a lower number of historical/cultural links and generally less intensive cooperation in all fields, if compared, e.g. to Lviv Oblast.

Naturally, the suggestions for the future focused on the measures, which would facilitate partner search and networking and enable to get more project experience through implementing micro-projects before larger ones. The participants even suggested the option of single-partner projects.

Interesting quotes

Please collect interesting, important quotes from the participants on the matter of future post 2020 programme.

Please put Name of participant, Quote in "".

"We can see how Russia's informational campaigns work – recently, everything which seems to separate us from the Poles became noticeable... On the contrary, the Programme is doing a great job focusing on the things which unite us, helping to find something we have in common, like, for instance, cultural heritage, and something we can learn from each other. "-Olha Tsipan, NGO "Inclusive Center for Children's Development UNIKO"

Questionnaires

As a final point of the consultation – 10-15 minutes – please ask participants to fill the questionnaire for stakeholders on-line e.g. on their smartphones/laptops using the link (QR-code) to questionnaire for stakeholders (3 language versions available).
Participants that had already filled the survey before the meeting may share the experience and discuss whether consultation allow to improve replies given earlier.

QR code was distributed

Attachments:

1. Agenda.
2. List of Participants.