**‘CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION FOR HEALTH TOURISM OF POLISH-UKRAINIAN BORDERLAND’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Umbrella project lead partner (LPU)</th>
<th>The Association for Development and Promotion of Podkarpackie Region ‘Pro Carpathia’/ PL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro-projects</td>
<td>12 PL-UA partnership projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total budget</td>
<td>€643,778.65</td>
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<td>Programme contribution</td>
<td>€579,400.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>12 months (from 01/01/2014)</td>
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<td>Project ref. number</td>
<td>IPBU.03.02.00-18-832/12</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tel. 0048 17 850 01 87 e-mail: <a href="mailto:agnieszka@procarpathia.pl">agnieszka@procarpathia.pl</a></td>
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The project implementation area (Podkarpackie Voivodship, Lviv, Zakarpattia and Ivano-Frankivsk Oblasts) is predestined for tourism development. Its diversity of natural resources including mineral water springs, as well as rich cultural heritage, is attracting growing attention from the visitors.

The barriers, which hinder the development of tourism in this area, include an insufficient number of tourist facilities, often of rather poor quality, limited tourist offers, the lack of an effective system of marketing management, and insufficient or irrelevant information about the available resources and attractions.

To date, several initiatives have been implemented to change this situation, however, they didn’t bring out the expected results, in many cases being incoherent, sometimes even contradictory of one another. One of the results of this situation is the poor usage of the available tourist facilities (the use of accommodation fluctuates from 10% to 50%). The overseas tourists make up only 10.6% among all the visitors coming to the area of Polish and Ukrainian border. Ukrainian tourists constitute the lesser percentage of this group. The situation is similar in the Ukrainian border area, where the necessity to cross the Polish and Ukrainian border is an additional obstacle.

In order to improve this situation and to support the development of the Polish-Ukrainian borderland, first of all, the potential of this region and potential of the Polish-Ukrainian cross-border partnership shall be used. Having this in mind, the activities planned within the umbrella project were focused around one of the greatest assets of the region – its health resorts. On the Polish side of the project area (Podkarpackie Voivodship) there are some of the oldest resorts such as Rymanów Zdrój and Polańczyk Zdrój, on the Ukrainian side in the Lviv
Oblast - Truskavets - one of the oldest health resorts in Europe, Skhidnytsya (Drohobych Rayon), Morshyn (Stryy Rayon), Niemyriv, Shklo (Javoriv Rayon), in Zakarpattia Oblast - Kvasy and in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast - Yaremche. The main objective of the project is development of the cross-border cooperation concerning health tourism on the area of Polish-Ukrainian border.

Due to the fact that a modern-day tourist or a health resort patient aside from accommodation, catering and treatment of medical, rehabilitative or preventive nature, looks also for natural and cultural tourist attractions, which would make the stay more interesting, a number of activities have been planned to create complex tools to promote the region, based on health resorts offers (Micro project no. 1), prepare complex information on health resort facilities, to make medical, rehabilitation treatments available, medical recommendations, but also on available natural attractions, cultural events which are held in the region (Micro projects no. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12), promotion and popularisation of health resort offers (Micro projects no. 2, 3, 5, 6), expand the existing tourist offer with additional attractions (Micro project no. 6, 7, 9, 11, 12), improve the standard of tourism services (Micro project no. 4, 8), develop healthy behaviour (Micro project no. 3, 11), involve representatives of different social groups: public authorities, health facility owners, social sector in the processes of promotional tools building (Micro project no. 1).

The project activities are targeted at representatives of the tourism industry, medical personnel of health resorts, NGOs and local governments associated with the development of health resort treatment policy, enthusiasts and those who have a love for the region.

Objectives of the project match the Programme by establishing the cross-border partnerships, which will enable cooperation between the tourism industry, NGOs and public institutions in support of health tourism. The activities planned allow the establishment of contacts between the border communities through popularisation of tourist offers and attractions. The cross-border partnership will promote examples of ‘best practices’ and allow for a promotional campaign of the whole region’s potential.
Locations and roles of the partners in the project

- **LPU - Umbrella project lead partner**
- **Micro-project lead partner**
- **Micro-project partner**
‘In order to achieve visible changes in the consciousness of local societies, actions and behaviour of the tourist industry, recognition of the region, it is necessary to create omnibus level of cooperation, join forces of the representatives of many social groups.’

AGNIESZKA PIENIAŻEK – VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF PODKARPACKIE REGION ‘PRO CARPATHIA’

What in particular did inspire you to choose the theme for the umbrella project?

We wish to undertake a number of actions to take advantage of the potential of the Polish-Ukrainian borderland area and the cross-border cooperation in order to support the development of the region because before such attempts were not concentrated and coordinated. In addition, the flow of information in the field of tourism was limited. All our actions will revolve around one of the biggest assets of the region - the health resorts.

What is the main idea of the project?

A modern tourist, a health resort visitor (apart from accommodation, board, as well as medical, rehabilitation and preventative treatments) looks for tourist, natural, cultural attractions that would allow him to spend free time during the stay at a spa or health resort. Therefore we focus not only on comprehensive information about the spas and health resorts, available medical and rehabilitation treatments, medical recommendations, but also on available natural, cultural attractions and events taking place in the region. In addition we turn to enrichment of the existing tourist offer with additional attractions. We also intend to improve the standard of the tourist services and create pro-health attitudes.

Is there a special added value for the future cooperation between the partners in addition to the current project?

All institutions taking part in the realisation of the project are certain that it is an excellent platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of health tourism. For many Ukrainian partners it is also the first
opportunity to use the European Union funding so there is no doubt that positive experience they will gain during the realisation of the micro-projects will result in future projects in cooperation with the Polish side. The attitude towards the future cooperation is best described by a statement of one of the leaders of the micro-projects - Mr. Taras Bilośyký, the President of the Lviv City Public Organisation 'Tourist club Manivci': ‘Our cooperation certainly will not be limited to this project. Meetings during the preparation and realisation of the project are a great opportunity for new ideas.’

What uniqueness can someone visiting the Polish-Ukrainian borderland area discover?

The Polish-Ukrainian border area has once been a magical land of mountain pastures, broad mountains and shepherds. The cultural heritage of the area was created mainly by the Boykos, Lemkos, Pogóźqanie and Dolinianie. The exotic culture of these people has, for centuries, been attracting many scientists, researchers as well as poets and artists. It is also the area that stands out as regards to nature, thanks to its wide diversity of natural conditions including numerous submontane and mountain areas, the amount of forest districts, bodies of water, flora and fauna, richness of common cultural heritage. Also, the cross-border area is rich in spas and health resorts including Iwonicz Zdrój - the oldest spa in the Podkarpacie Province and Truskavets - one of the oldest spas in Europe. A peculiarity of the region itself is the fact, that to some extent, it functions at the point of crossing of two civilizations (of East and West), thus creating a specific buffer zone which marks out a path for cooperation, mutual interaction and enrichment of nations, religions and cultures.

Focal points of the project: