

Ivanna Havryliuk, Candidate of Economic Sciences (PhD)

Lviv National Environmental University

Lviv, Ukraine

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-417-7-37>

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AS A TOOL TO SUPPORT THE EU

The participation of Ukraine's regions in cross-border cooperation contributes to Ukraine's European integration processes and is an effective tool for achieving sustainable development goals. Neighbourhood programmes play an important role in the development of cross-border cooperation. This was one of the ways to attract EU funding.

International cooperation across borders, as part of state policy, plays a crucial role in the political and socio-economic development of countries. The process of integration into Europe contributes to increased cooperation across borders, while cross-border cooperation, in turn, fosters the development of regions by creating political, institutional, socio-economic, and cultural influences. The development of such cooperation opens up new opportunities for providing quality services to residents of border areas, business development, enhancing the competitiveness of regions, creating new economic unions, forming and developing cross-border markets for goods, as well as achieving an integral effect by removing barriers to the movement of goods, services, capital, information, and technologies.

Given that cross-border cooperation is one of the means of implementing Ukraine's European integration guidelines, it is necessary to improve the conceptual framework and mechanisms for strengthening cross-border cooperation. The activation of cross-border cooperation is proposed to be understood as "a set of means and measures aimed at deepening and widening cross-border relations through the use of various forms of cross-border cooperation, namely European groupings, cross-border cooperation associations, cross-border partnerships, cross-border industrial zones, cross-border industrial parks, cross-border projects, cross-border trade, cross-border markets" [1].

It should be added that before the Russian invasion on 24 February, more than 200 EU-funded cross-border cooperation projects were operating in Ukraine. They covered many sectors. Since the beginning of the war, the European Commission's Support Group for Ukraine, together

with the EU Delegation to Ukraine and EU projects operating in the country, have responded to the Russian aggression. They quickly refocused their activities in the face of a humanitarian crisis and massive population displacement. EU funds of up to €200 million, originally earmarked for projects, have been redirected to thousands of activities to help Ukraine during the war. These include the provision of basic necessities, shelter, medicines and medical equipment, and support for Ukrainian refugees, civil society and the media, entrepreneurs, civil servants and many vulnerable groups [4].

Since 2014, cross-border cooperation has received new impetus for development in several areas, including the development of sustainable infrastructure policies, the revision of sectoral and regional strategies, and the development of a multifunctional transport network as part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). The issue of financing to maintain the condition, capacity and problems of existing infrastructure has become a topical issue and an initiative to involve the private sector in transport projects has been launched.

As the EU's borders have expanded, new guidelines have emerged for the creation of transport and infrastructure hubs and the development of international transport corridors. Europe is currently developing a new multimodal trans-European transport system involving all modes of transport and is implementing a new major plan for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). This plan aims to connect the transport networks of all the new EU member states by 2020 in order to create a more efficient European single market. According to the EU document "Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network" [2], adopted in 2004, investment in such projects focuses on the development of a limited number of trans-European transport axes, which aim to connect the existing members of the European Community with each other and with new countries. To date, the following multimodal axes have been established in the European transport area: central, south-west, south-east, north and waterways between major European ports [3].

Regions with extensive experience of participating in EU programmes prioritise cross-border cooperation in their regional development strategies. Representatives of these regions have experience in managing European cross-border cooperation programmes. The uneven involvement of regional representatives in the preparatory stages of European programmes means that the development priorities of some regions are fully taken into account, while others are only partially taken into account.

Currently, for various reasons, Ukrainian regions have a limited understanding of how to secure funding for EU cross-border programmes. Cross-border cooperation is crucial for regional development and compliance with European standards. Ukraine is actively implementing the State Programme for the Development of Cross-border Cooperation for 2021–2027. This strategic document defines the direction of cross-border cooperation and outlines specific solutions, action plans or sources of funding.

The objectives of the programme are:

- Improve border infrastructure in the hilly regions of Central Europe.
- Increase employment opportunities in the regions of Ukraine.
- Increase exports and imports of goods and services.
- Improve the environment and attract investment for cross-border businesses.

Good neighbourly relations and cooperation with partners are currently a priority for Ukraine, which makes this step significant.

The process of deepening European integration is a factor in attracting investment, expanding regional markets and building cross-border links. Cross-border cooperation today takes different forms. Among them, the most promising are those that ensure greater independence of regional and local authorities in making decisions on the nature of European integration and in seizing opportunities to strengthen cross-border cooperation. Therefore, it is advisable to continue exploring new opportunities for cross-border cooperation in order to decentralise and adapt the mechanisms of cross-border cooperation to the situation in the border regions of Ukraine.

References:

1. Pavlikha N.V., Korneliuk O.A. (2019) Aktyvizatsiia transkordonnoho spivrobitnytstva misykykh poselen : monohrafiia [Activation of cross-border cooperation of urban settlements: monograph]. Skhidnoievropeiskyi natsionalnyi universytet imeni Lesi Ukrainky. Lutsk: Vezha-Druk, 212 p. Available at: <https://evnuir.vnu.edu.ua /handle/ 123456789/18484>
2. Decision No 884/2004/Ec Of The European Parliament And Of The Council of 29 April 2004. Amending Decision No 1692/96/EC on Community guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network. Available at: <http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:167:0001:0038:EN :PDF>
3. Networks For Peace And Development. Available at: http://www.central2013.eu/fileadmin/ user_upload/Downloads/Document_Centre/OP_Resources/Networks_for_Peace_and_Development.pdf
4. EU NEIGHBOURS east. Available at: <https://euneighbourseast.eu/uk/news/latest-news/yak-proekty-yes-dopomagayut-ukrayini/>