

# Newsletter

## Nr. 3 / 2021



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## What's NEXT? INTERREG NEXT

**Stay up-to-date with the programming of the Interreg Next Romania - Ukraine 2021-2027.**

The Joint Programming Committee discussed the terms of the future Programme, including its architecture and **activities to be funded**, over the course of a set of meetings and written procedures. Even though **the final content and total budget are still under discussion**, you will find below the up-to-date information concerning the upcoming programming period.



## Interreg NEXT Romania-Ukraine programme is undergoing a new stage of preparation

The process of elaborating the Programme will continue in the next period, so that it's submission to the European Commission will be possible at the beginning of 2022.

**MORE  
INFORMATION  
ON THE  
PROCESS OF  
ELABORATING  
THE  
INTERREG NEXT  
ROMANIA-UKRAINE  
PROGRAMME  
2021-2027  
ON  
WWW.RO-UA.NET**

The Joint Programming Committee, made of delegations from both countries involved in the future Programme, met on 23rd of November 2021, to approve the type of activities to be funded in the period 2021-2027 under the new programme.

The Joint Programming Committee **reached a consensus on the most relevant areas and activities for cross-border cooperation**, identified following consultations on both sides of the border. The consultation process was led by the programme management structures in collaboration with TESIM, representatives of public authorities, institutions from domains like: education, health, environment, emergencies situations and also various professional groups.

The main goal of the Interreg NEXT Romania – Ukraine 2021-2027 Programme is to **contribute to the transition towards a climate - neutral and resilient society while ensuring a sustainable growth and the well-being of its citizens.**

**In the next period**, the Managing Authority will carry out the procedure for the **strategic environmental assessment**, a mandatory requirement according to the European regulations, in order to be able to submit the cooperation programme to the European Commission.

At the online session, the Committee approved also the continuity of Regional Office for Cross-Border Cooperation Suceava as the organization entrusted to host the Joint Secretariat of the programme.

The final budget of the **Interreg NEXT Romania – Ukraine 2021-2027 Programme** has not been approved yet, but will be at least of 50.7 mill EUR.

**Interreg**



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**NEXT** Romania – Ukraine

During the JPC meeting, **the member** state representatives **agreed on a first draft of** Interreg Programme (**Chapter 1**).



## 9 events, 2 countries, 1 celebration European Cooperation Day 2021

The regional brunches took place in each major city of the programme area: Suceava, Satu-Mare, Baia-Mare, Tulcea, Botosani – Romania and Chernivtsi, Uzhhorod, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ismail – Ukraine.



63 journalists and over 250 participants joined the friendly and informal cooperation brunches on the two weeks journey through Romania – Ukraine programme area.

This year was no different for Romania - Ukraine Programme, we came together to share, look back and celebrate. The campaign "Projects without Borders. Romania - Ukraine" marked the European Cooperation Day, during September 20 and October 15, 2021. The campaign included 9 regional events, organized in the Programme area, both in Romania and Ukraine, as well as the promotion of the

programme on radio stations and online.

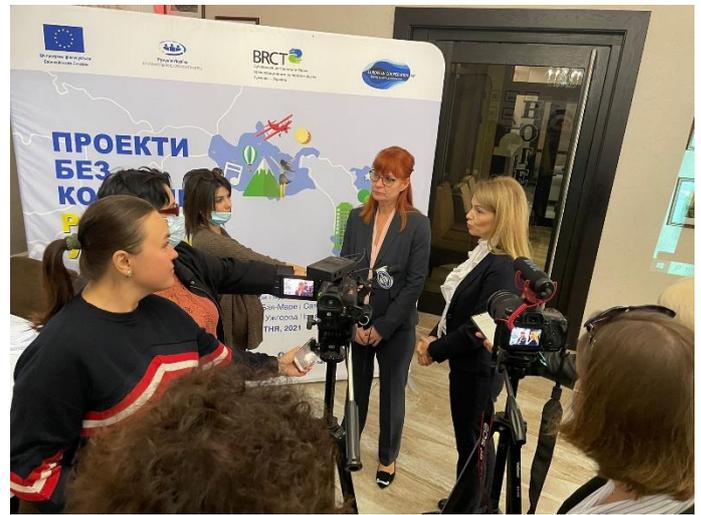
The 9 regional meetings brought together programme beneficiaries and local journalists to showcase the results of the funded projects, their positive impact on the life of the border citizens, but also to promote cross-border cooperation as a valuable tool, useful to address common problems.

The campaign "Projects without borders. Romania - Ukraine" gained the appreciation of the participants and received **great media support** generating **over 70 articles** in the local press in both countries. Our #ECDay2021 posts on Facebook contributed to the overall 10 million Interact goal for European Cooperation Day, with a reach of 300,000.

In addition to the on-site events and on-line posts, the visibility of the campaign was reinforced by broadcasting over 800 airings of the promotional **audio spot**, on local and national radio stations in each major city of the programme area.

**45 projects** presented, in an informal and friendly format, the results achieved so far, in order to emphasize the impact of Romania-Ukraine cross-border cooperation on border areas. During the brunches, the participants could also enjoy a promotional **video** highlighting the Joint Operational Programme Romania – Ukraine 2014-2020 into pictures and figures.

The purpose of this year's major event was to bring **the cooperation at the external borders** to mass media and general public's attention, and more importantly the fact that through the financial support of the European Union, improvements are being made in the life of the people and communities in the border area.



This was an excellent opportunity **to make the "voice" of our projects heard on local and regional media channels**, communicating about the path they have taken, the results achieved and about their perspective on the activity and experience gained in the context of cross-border cooperation within each of the priorities funded by the RO-UA Programme.



# VOCALIC project festival dedicated to the communities of Chilia

*Old Chilia (Romania) and New Chilia (Ukraine) are part of a project that aims to bring closer the two communities separated by the Danube, with the support of the European Union.*

The festival "Trans-Danubian RO-UA Harmonies 2021" was organized within "**Valorization of cultural identity and common history for tourism development in Lower Danube border area**" project, funded through the Joint Operational Programme Romania - Ukraine 20214 -2020.



The project focuses on **promoting and strengthening the identity of the common history** of Romanians and Ukrainians in the lower Danube border area.

The festival's goals was to revive the tourism in the area, but most importantly, to make a bridge over the Danube as **to reunite the inhabitants of the two communities** through traditional music, dance and authentic gastronomy.

For two days, the festival brought together folkloric groups from all over the Danube Delta and Ismail, as well as Ukrainian and Romanian officials. Over 60 guests from Ukraine participated including folkloric groups' members, project partners, and the mayor of New Chilia, across the Danube (Kilia).

After the officials' speeches, that highlighted the necessity of a simplified border crossing point between the two sister localities, the folkloric groups from Tulcea County, as well as from Odessa region, performed on the same stage.

***"Old Chilia must be on the map of important tourist sites in the country***

and for that we have to draw attention to it's the immense potential" said **Octavian Motoc** - *the president of the Danube Delta Sustainable Development Association and organizer of the festival.*

A special moment during the event was marked by the traditional costumes parade on the streets of Old Chilia. The members of the folkloric groups from both Romania and Ukraine, proudly presented their authentic costumes, left as a legacy, from generation to generation. People enjoyed the celebrations and felt they **shared common values on both banks of the Danube**. The festival also promoted authentic local gastronomy in an exhibition of traditional dishes, with tastings of fishery products and many others. Over a ton of fish was cooked on the occasion of the celebrations.

Throughout the Festival, the "Corsar" type boats were in a back and forth between Tulcea and Old Chilia, transporting several hundred people who wanted to enjoy the festivities and the traditional food, as the accommodation offer is quite limited.

**"It was no coincidence that we decided to organize the festival**

**"Trans-Danubian RO-UA Harmonies 2021" in Old Chilia.**

We could have organized it in Tulcea with less effort. However, we wanted, for at least for two days, to animate the village of Chilia Veche." said *Octavian Motoc*. Raising awareness in the Lower Danube region about historical heritage and its importance for tourism is one of Mr. Motoc`s goals.

During the festival, the Danube managed to connect the two Chilia`s, the Old and the New, instead of separating them. The guests were left with the nostalgia of a long lost fairy-tale place, and the villagers carried out the sweet taste of the traditional music and common cultural heritage.

But *the story will go on*, as the project aims to establish a Romanian-Ukrainian Cultural Center in Old Chilia and other one in Ismail. Whithin the project, traditional costumes and instruments were purchased for folkloric groups on the two banks of the Danube, and young people from Ukraine and Romania visited the neighboring country taking part in touristic site visits.

The other "Trans-Danubian RoUa Harmonies" festival, which was supposed to take place in Ismail, Ukraine this month, was canceled because of restrictions imposed in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, and it will be rescheduled for next spring.



***"We started from a dream, first it was a desideratum and today we are proud that it is achievable (...)"***

Igor Babaian - Youth Public Organization New European Generation  
(Ismail)



## Training the next generation of leaders with STEM hands-on methods

*The cross-border project „STEM Education in Vocational and Professional Schools” provides a step towards a more integrated and flexible labor market, as well as better access to jobs for vocational education and training graduates in both countries.*

One may ask himself what differentiates the STEM model from traditional education. **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics** stands for **STEM**. The model integrates these disciplines into a cohesive learning paradigm, based on real-world demands.

The municipalities of Ivano-Frankivsk (Ukraine), Sighetu Marmăției and Seini (Romania) joined forces to increase the competitiveness of students

from 6 vocational and professional schools by introducing the approaches of STEM in the educational process.

Achieving of this objective was based on cross-border cooperation between young people, who participated in several workshops, camps, scientific and educational activities showing great involvement and responsibility. VocProfCAMP was one of these extracurricular activities.



Because of the pandemic restrictions, the interaction between the highschool students from the partner cities took place both on-line and on-site in the 3 camps organized in Ivano-Frankivsk, Sighet and Seini. Over 60 students took part in joint activities, learning and developing Arduino projects, travel using QR codes, demonstration with robots bypassing obstacles, simulating games, group work, practical activities in high school greenhouses and laboratories and study visits to interesting places like research institutes, farms or local museums. In the framework of the youth workshops, participants found out abilities in

terms of choosing a future professional path and familiarizing themselves with the basics of critical thinking, but also projects and start-ups that show how ecotourism can capitalize on local resources.

***It equips students with real skills, as opposed to theoretical knowledge only.***

One of the main tasks of modern schools is to create conditions for the development of emotional intelligence, creative thinking and reflection in students, essentials pursued also by the project.



**Modern equipment** was provided, with European funding, to three high schools in Romania, in order to further **continue the STEM approach** and ensure the use of the latest technologies.

The schools received equipment necessary for educational laboratories like: teaching kits for the mechatronic workshop, laptops, 3D printer, robotics equipment, interactive board, digital camera, kits for digital biology microscope and other multifunctional equipment.

“One advantage of STEM is that it gives students some control over their learning. When they are in control, the students care more. They will take on the task more easily and be more involved and willing to make things happen. STEM education allows them to experiment and explore.”



**Oxana Fertadi, teacher at the educational School “Taras Sevchenko”, Sighetu Marmatiei.**



As a result of the camps, the project team received a lot of positive feedback from the students and had the opportunity to see the interest and, most importantly, the initiative of teachers who use these modern approaches furthermore at their lessons.

**Mihaela Ona, teacher at the Technology High School “Marmatia.”, Sighetu Marmatiei**



“The fact that we have equipped two laboratories, one of robotics and one of electrotechnical to European standards, helps us achieve our objective, which is to attract more students to the STEM disciplines and, consequently, to make them consider career development in these disciplines. I look forward to future STEM projects.”



“Health on Wheels” caravan within a joint Romanian-Ukrainian effort.

“Stefan cel Mare” University, Suceava, Romania together with “Vasyl Stefanyk” National Precarpathic University of Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine

## Prevention is the best medicine

**Cross-border project that aims to educate health providers and the general population about the factors of risk associated with obesity and diabetes, through nutritional counselling and conducting on-site screening health campaigns.**

The main mission of the project „Personalized prevention tools in obesity and diabetes - a joint Romanian-Ukrainian programme of health education (PrePOD)”, can be defined by 2 key elements: AWARENESS and PREVENTION.

**Awareness** aims to enhance the communication activities addressed to individuals from the general population regarding the risk factors that cause overweight, obesity, pre - diabetes and type 2 diabetes, and their complications,

in order to flag out a warning about the importance of periodic assessment of health and screening.

**Prevention** is the main approach to obesity and type 2 diabetes. The project focused on providing educational materials on healthy lifestyle to all people evaluated in public screening campaigns, but also nutritional counselling to the individuals identified with moderate or increased risk for the occurrence of these diseases.

Thus, starting with May 2021, the 2 mobile clinics „Health on Wheels” were available for citizens during the public events. Within this initiative, adults, young people, and children were evaluated and received advice from prevention coaches.



The screening campaign was conducted in: Suceava, Ilișești, Moara and Șcheia - **Romania** and Burshtyn, Stectseva, Pijlo and Tysmenychany in Ivano-Frankivsk, **Ukraine**.



The public events aimed at assessing the health of the participants through a set of measurements that included:

01. - **analysis of vital data:** *blood pressure, pulse, temperature;*
02. - **analysis of anthropometric data:** *weight, height, abdominal circumference, skin folds, body mass index, percentage of body fat;*
03. - **evaluation of blood glucose and capillary lipid profile;**
04. - **other assessments to interpret the results** *such as type 2 diabetes risk factors, dietary intake or the level of physical activity.*

936 was the total number of participants in the screening activity, Romanians and Ukrainians. Following the evaluation, **each participant received a health report** with the values identified for the above-mentioned measurements and following the interpretations, as appropriate, the presentation of the risk *low/medium/high* for *overweight/obesity/diabetes*.

All participants received **personalized brochures** by age group on healthy eating and the importance of physical activity level for a healthy lifestyle. Depending on the risks identified, additional materials related to the prevention of obesity and type 2 diabetes were also provided.

**Screening campaigns** to assess health status are of high interest to the general population and also a

very interactive activity. Participants showed curiosity mainly for the analysis and interpretation of anthropometric data, blood pressure, blood glucose and capillary lipid profile.

The information presented in the personalized brochures was considered very useful for improving the diet, especially the **ideas of meals with the caloric presentation**.

By connecting participants directly to prevention coaches, as well as providing them with the relevant information, they will be thus empowered to take prevention into their own hands.

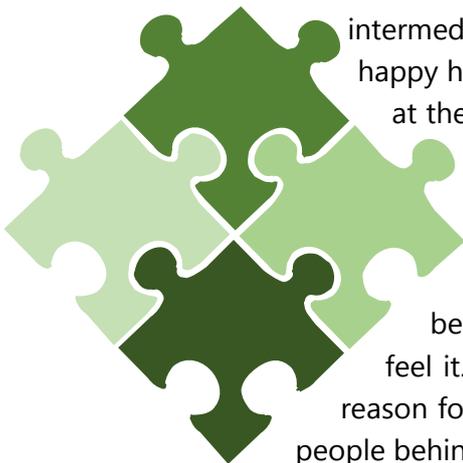
For more information about how to have a healthy lifestyle and a proper diet check the materials prepared by the experts in **#Prepod** project at [www.prepod.ro](http://www.prepod.ro) (RO) or [www.prepod.org.ua](http://www.prepod.org.ua) (UA).



## Testimonials: Holiday Season Cooperation

The end of the year in cross-border context is somewhat special and it **highlights the joint efforts carried out to successfully close the year** while preparing to celebrate winter festivities on both calendars, Romanian and Ukrainian.

For the workers in cross border cooperation projects, the holidays include final or intermediate reports, monitoring visits, together with sharing gingerbread and happy holidays online, among other documents and activities that projects entail at the end of the year, and most certainly **seeing the project's results is one of the best presents under the tree.**



The cross-border spirit of Christmas is surrounding us all since the beginning of December. Whether we recognize it or not, the project teams feel it. Although the holiday calendars are different in Romania and Ukraine, reason for which everything becomes more challenging in terms of planning, the people behind the projects do not let the joy of the holidays to be spoiled.



Alongside with deadlines negotiation for various documents or activities specific to the UNIV.E.R-U project, the project teams from "Stefan cel Mare" University in Suceava and Odessa National Polytechnic University, are already opening the carols rehearsal season.

### **What will come out? A Christmas carols jam-session!**

The perfect opportunity to release into the universe good thoughts for the future.

**Project 2SOFT/1.1/115 - Educational University Romanian-Ukrainian Cross-Border Cooperation - UNIV.E.R-U**

**Project 2SOFT/2.1/34 - Developing cross-border culture: Revitalised Theatres in Satu Mare and Uzhgorod**

May the year 2022 bring you:

- Hope and closeness to friends in the cross-border area
- Lots of reasons to celebrate and have wonderful holidays
- Abundance in the cultural events

as well as:

- Success progress reports
- Approved payment requests

Let's face the challenges of 2022 with a lot of confidence and responsibility.

**Think differently, think: Revitalized theaters!**

A unique Christmas tree, made by 12th grade students from Gura Homorului Inclusive Education School, sharing holiday wishes and thanks to all those involved in the cross-border project supporting inclusive education.



"If a child is encouraged, he learns to trust his own strength." (Maria Montessori)

**Project 2SOFT/1.1/35 - Special education in the cross-border area of Suceava - Chernivtsi: modern, inclusive and adequate e for the labor market.**



**Project 2SOFT/1.2/13 - Promote deadwood for resilient forests in the Romanian-Ukrainian cross border region (RESFOR)**

The end of the year is always a hustle and bustle, there is always one more day to complete a crucial task. **This is the time when one hand fills in the Progress Report and the other turns on the garland;** when on your mind, next to the list of gifts is the text of the Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Suceava and other objectives of the RESFOR project.

But here comes the holidays season, and the Lead Beneficiary with the partners of the project wish you all" **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**".

European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI) and co-financed by the participating countries in the Programme. The Programme is dedicated to the border areas between Romania and Ukraine and will contribute to the overall objective of the European Neighborhood Instrument: progress towards an area of prosperity and good neighborliness for the benefit of Member States and non-EU members through cross-border cooperation actions.

[www.ro-ua.net/en/](http://www.ro-ua.net/en/)



This Programme is funded by the European Union



The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their knowhow, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.