
THE CROSS BORDER STRATEGY AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR STIMULATING TOURISM IN THE POLISH-BELARUSIAN- UKRAINIAN BORDERLAND

Andrzej MISZCZUK^{ABCDEF}

1. The Faculty of Earth Sciences and Spatial Management of Maria Curie-Skłodowska
University

Keywords:

- tourism
- cross-border strategy
- Polish-Ukrainian borderland

Abstract:

The aim of the article is to assess *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Oblasts for 2014-2020* (2014) as an instrument opening a qualitatively new stage of cooperation in the field of tourism on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland. *The strategy* is an effect of collaboration of a team of Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian experts. On 7 May 2014 an agreement for its implementation was signed in Lublin by the local government of Lublin voivodeship and the authorities of Brest oblast in Belarus, and Lviv and Volyn oblasts in Ukraine.

Due to the fact that despite the natural potential and cultural heritage tourism is characterised by relatively low level of development, *the Strategy* defines the directions of actions raising the utilisation efficiency of the tourism potential, the implementation of which will be possible thanks to projects co-financed by the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020.

INTRODUCTION

A borderland is an area which is part of the geographical space, and its determinant is the position along a state border on both its sides. Due to the multiplicity and complexity of shaping conditions and factors every area of this type is unique (J. Anderson, L. O'Dowd 1999, p. 593). Its delimitation and significance can often dramatically change over time and in space.

Specific attributes of a borderland are (Z. Chojnicki 1998, pp. 1-48, M. Koter 2003, pp. 13-22, A. Miszczuk 2012, pp. 37-50):

- the geographical (geopolitical) location and the resulting nature of the state border,
- differences in the level of development and the way of functioning of the economy in relation to neighbouring regions (economic distance),
- the institutional distance associated with the competence inadequacy of neighbouring administrative regions and sub-regional units,
- differences in the state of development on both sides of the border,
- low transport accessibility,
- multiculturalism and its material heritage.

The geopolitical conditions resulting from the position of the borderland and consequently defining the nature and functions of the state border are the most important for its functioning. O. J. Martinez (1999), often cited in the literature, proposed a model of the evolution of the border, comprising of the following stages:

- a stage of the alienation border,
- a stage of the coexistence border,

- a stage of the cooperation border,
- a stage of the interdependence border.

The stage of alienation is generally a consequence of violent political events, connected with the risk for the existence of the state, inviolability of its territory and borders. At this stage the state border has a disintegrating function (A. Moraczewska 2008, pp. 58-61). The transition from alienation to the stage of coexistence takes time. It is easier when one of the impulses to initiate cooperation between border areas is – according to R. J. Bennett (1997, pp. 323-336) the condition in which the functional space (economic, socio-cultural, etc.) surpasses state borders.

The stage of the coexistence border can be defined as a phase of information exchange. It happens at various levels and between different entities. In the framework of the stage of the cooperation border the intensity of cross-border contacts deepens. In both of these phases the border fulfils a fragmentary function, i.e. it opens out to certain impulses, and closes to others. In turn, the stage of the interdependence border means further strengthening of ties within the cross-border area, through connections in the sphere of technology, capital, flows of workers, undertaking joint ventures on partnership principles. The border then serves an integration function, takes on an unnoticed nature, which can be seen as a desirable target state. The process of moving from the separating (closed) border, through the filtering one, to the connecting (open) border is long, complex, multi-faceted and not necessarily unidirectional.

The areas which are important in the development of cross-border cooperation according to C Ricq (2006, pp. 108-122) are:

- the natural environment and spatial planning,
- transport and communication infrastructure,
- the economy and the labour market,
- health services, social services and housing,
- education, research and culture.

According to the mentioned author (C.Ricq 2006, p. 117) tourism (summer and winter) is part of the economy and the labour market, and cross-border activities in this framework should focus on:

- the use of common tourism resources, especially showing similarities, in particular based on common cultural heritage (including through developing and improving cross-border tourism products, cooperation of tourism entities and joint promotional campaigns, publication of cross-border guides, maps, calendars of cultural events, etc.),
- harmonizing the development and utilisation of the common tourism and recreation infrastructure,
- coordination of leisure activities policy (e.g. through common cultural investments, exchange of theatre and music bands, and coordination of the calendar of cultural events).

The Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian cross-border region, which consists of Lublin voivodship and Brest, Lviv and Volyn oblasts (Fig. 1) is a relatively new frontier, as it was divided by the state border only after the end of World War II. At the end of the First Polish Republic as a whole it belonged to the Polish state, during the partitions – mostly to the Russian partition and only Lviv voivodship to the Austrian one. When Poland regained independence in 1918 it led to its re-integration within a single state. In 1945 (with a small correction in 1951) a subsequent delimitation of the state border was made, separating moved to west Polish territory from the territory of the Soviet Union. For more than 40 years the Polish-Soviet frontier acquired a character of an alienation border with a disintegrating function. Gaining independence by Belarus and Ukraine in 1991 gave the current border a

nature of a coexistence border with manifestations of cooperation with a fragmentation function. Its permeation in the infrastructure dimension improved (new, systematically expanded border crossings), but in 2004 (Polish accession to the EU) and in 2007 (Polish accession to the Schengen zone) there appeared new visa restrictions in the case of Polish-Belarusian border – for the citizens of both countries, and in the Polish-Ukrainian case – only for the Ukrainians.



Fig. 1. The administrative division of the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland
 Source: A. Jakubowski, U. Bronisz, S. Dziaduch (2013)

Cross-border cooperation of Lublin voivodeship has more than 20-year tradition. Its various forms developed during this period, including institutional relations with Brest oblast in Belarus and Lviv and Volyn oblasts in Ukraine. One of them was the establishment on 9 September 1995 of the Cross-Border Association “Euroregion Bug”, and on 1 January 1999 – the Local Government Association “Euroregion Bug”, grouping local authorities involved in cross-border cooperation from the area of Lublin voivodeship. The legal framework for this type of activity was also created through the conclusion of agreements:

- with Brest oblast on cross border cooperation on 31 March 2000,
- with Volyn oblast on economic, trade, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation on 1 October 2002,
- with Lviv Oblast on economic, trade, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation on 16 June 2004.

In the years 2013-2014 a strategic document entitled *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Oblasts for 2014-2020* (2014) was prepared for the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland. It was a pioneering document – in the Polish conditions – taking into account past experiences, and in particular barriers.

Impulses for the preparation of this document were:

- the initiative of the Cross-Border Association “Euroregion Bug” which took in 2012 a form of an appropriate resolution to launch the preparation of the strategic document,
- the adoption in 2013 of a new Development Strategy for the Lubelskie Voivodeship 2014-2020 (with a 2030 perspective) (2013), in which the border area of strategic intervention was identified as requiring socio-economic activation,
- a pilot project of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, which was a manifestation of self-government diplomacy, implemented in 2013, entitled: *Building a partnership for the development of the Cross-Border Strategy for 2014-2020*, in which the author fulfilled the role of an expert – methodologist.

The aim of the article is to assess *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Oblasts for 2014-2020* (2014) as an instrument for opening a qualitatively new stage of cooperation in the field of tourism on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland. *The strategy* is an effect of collaboration of a team of Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian experts. On 7 May 2014 an agreement for its implementation was signed in Lublin by the local government of Lublin voivodeship and the authorities of Brest oblast in Belarus, and Lviv and Volyn oblasts in Ukraine.

1. Socio-economic characteristics of the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland

The long lasting division of the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland with the Polish-Soviet state border, having a disintegrating function, and then – the external border of the EU and the Schengen area with a fragmentation feature, found its synthetic expression in the level of its development, measured by the value of GDP per capita. And thus in Lublin voivodeship this figure for 2010 expressed in current prices amounted to 6,247.4 euro, Brest – 3,111.4 euro, Lviv – 1,550.4 euro, and Volyn – 1,319.3 euro¹. In relation to the national average Lublin voivodeship achieved GDP per capita at the level of 67.6%, taking the 15th, the last but one position in the country, Brest oblast – 71.0% and the 5th place for 7 administrative units, Lviv oblast – 69.3% and the 14th place in a total of 27 regions, and Volyn oblast – 59.0% and the 22nd place among 27 regions. It can be, therefore, concluded that the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian cross-border region is a periphery area in economic terms.

¹ Statistical data – unless indicated otherwise – come from works of A. Jakubowski, U. Bronisz, S. Dziaduch (2013).

The Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland with the area of 99.9 thousand km² is inhabited by 7,142.8 thousand people (2011), out of which Lviv oblast accounts for 2,540.9 thousand people (i.e. 35.6%), Lublin voivodeship – 2,171.9 thousand people (30.4%), Brest oblast – 1391.9 thousand people (19.5%) and Volyn oblast – 1038.6 thousand people (14.5%). A characteristic feature of the cross-border region is its diverse population density. And thus, Lviv oblast is most densely populated (116 persons per 1 km²). Lublin voivodeship (86) and Volyn oblast (52) have lower and Brest (42) oblast the lowest population density. In the years 2003-2011 a decrease in the population of the borderland was recorded amounting to 145.7 thousand people, i.e. 2.0%, and it concerned mainly Brest oblast (decrease by 58.8 thousand people, i.e. 4.1%) and Lviv (decrease by 57.4 thousand people, i.e. 2.2%) and to a lesser extent – Volyn oblast (decrease by 10.2 thousand people, i.e. 1.0%) and Lublin voivodeship (decrease by 19.3 thousand people, i.e. 0.9%). The relatively low population density influenced the development of a not too dense and quite weak urban settlement network. It consists primarily of Lviv - 786.6 thousand inhabitants (2011), Lublin – 348.6 thousand, Brest – 320.9 thousand, Lutsk – 210.0 thousand, Baranovichi – 169.9 thousand and Pinsk – 134.2 thousand and 9 cities with the population from 50 to 100 thousand residents (Drohobych, Chervonohrad, Kovel, Chełm, Zamość, Biała Podlaska, Novovolynsk, Stryi and Kobryn).

The infrastructure of higher education certainly creates development potential of the cross-border region. In the academic year 2011/2012 the number of students amounted to 296.0 thousand, out of which there were 131.2 thousand students in Lviv oblast, 96.2 thousand in Lublin voivodeship, 36.9 thousand in Brest oblast and 31.7 thousand in Volyn oblast. The most important academic centres in this area are: Lviv – 108.7 thousand students, Lublin – 80.8 thousand, Lutsk – 26.6 thousand, Brest – 21.1 thousand, Baranovichi – 9.9 thousand, Drohobych – 9.8 thousand, Biała Podlaska – 5.9 thousand and Pinsk – 5.8 thousand.

The transportation location is quite beneficial, as major European road routes cross the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland: E30 (Warsaw-Minsk-Moscow), E372 (Warsaw-Lublin-Lviv), E373 (Warsaw-Lublin-Kiev), as well as railway routes E20 (Warsaw-Minsk-Moscow), E30 (Warsaw-Lublin-Kiev) and the non-electrified Broad Gauge Metallurgy Line, running from Sławków in Upper Silesia to the Polish-Ukrainian railway border crossing Izov-Hrubieszów. Moreover, the following road and railway border crossings with Belarus operate here: Terespol-Małaszewicze/Brest, Kukuryki/Kazlovicy, Terespol/Brest, Sławatycze/Domachevo, and with Ukraine in Dorohusk/Yagodyn, Zosin/Ustyluh, Hrubieszów/Volodymyr-Volynsky, Hrebenne/Rava-Ruska and Dołhobyczów/Uhryniv. However, only in the last case – pedestrian traffic is allowed. A complement to the transport infrastructure are three modern, but used to a small extent – civil airports, i.e.: the International Airport of Daniel Halicki in Lviv, Lublin Airport in Świdnik and the International Airport in Brest.

2. Assumptions, objectives and expected effects of the Strategy

It was assumed that *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Oblasts for 2014-2020* should be based on the use of the endogenous development potential of the cross-border region to build its competitiveness and overcome the negative effect of the environment in the form of the border barrier impact. Therefore, it cannot take the form of a classical document created for planning of a compact and uniform administration system, but it should have a functional character and be primarily an attempt of a coherent specification of possible development activities for interested regional border units of the three states. Accordingly, the essential tasks of this document were:

- the development and reconciliation of strategic objectives, development priorities and a catalogue of projects leading to a wider opening to cross-border cooperation and achievement of mutual benefits,
- the stimulation of development processes on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland and making them more dynamic, as well as the improvement of the effectiveness of its promotion and the ability to attract external investments,
- the preparation of tasks and priorities for the new European Neighbourhood Policy and the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine in 2014-2020, as the main source of financing of the proposed development activities.

The process of the creation of the strategy was based on five principles, that is:

- the principle of partnership, meaning joint and equal involvement of Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian partners,
- the principle of consistency with other strategic documents developed on the regional, national and European level,
- the principle of flexibility, which consists in adapting to changing external conditions and the endogenous potential, which means the need to monitor the implementation of the document, and to update it when necessary,
- the principle of thematic concentration, meaning a choice of several areas which are the most important for the functioning of the cross-border region,
- the principle of the reliability of the data used in the process of creating the document, coming both from statistical and other sources.

The Cross Border Cooperation Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Oblasts for 2014-2020 was prepared using the expert and participatory method, recommended by national and European institutions and widely used and verified in the creation of local, regional, national and European strategic documents. Its advantage is the combination of expert knowledge with the priorities and assessments formulated by executing entities and local and regional communities. The time horizon of *the Strategy* covers a 7-year programming period and is consistent with the financial perspective for the years 2014-2020. Although the spatial range of *the Strategy* includes four regional units, i.e.: Lublin voivodeship and oblasts of Brest, Lviv and Volyn, they were treated together as one cross-border area (a borderland). Three state borders exist in its framework, i.e. the Polish-Belarusian, Polish-Ukrainian and Belarusian-Ukrainian frontiers, but only two of them, i.e. Polish-Belarusian and Polish-Ukrainian, were considered, since they are sections of the external border of the EU. The concept of cross-border cooperation was also narrowed down to these two sections of the borders.

In the course of the discussion of the expert panel it was assumed that the general objective of *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Oblasts for 2014-2020*, is: *the increase of the socio-economic competitiveness of the cross border area at the European, national, regional and local level by effective use of endogenous potentials and mitigating the limitations of the functioning of the external EU border*. This objective was elaborated by formulating targets relating to four identified areas of strategic actions, which are:

- economic cooperation, understood as the creation of conditions for the development of entrepreneurship and investing by external capital,
- the natural environment, culture and tourism,
- transport and border infrastructure,
- science and higher education.

For each area the expected effects were defined (Table 1), the achievement of which would be possible through the realisation of the proposed courses of action.

Table 1. The objectives and effects of the *Cross Border Cooperation Strategy*

The area of strategic activities	The objective	The expected effect
Economic cooperation	<i>The creation of conditions for the development of entrepreneurship and investing by external capital</i>	<i>The improvement of the economic competitiveness of the cross-border region</i>
The natural environment, culture and tourism	<i>Strengthening of the natural and cultural potential and its use for tourism development</i>	<i>Increasing the tourist attractiveness of the cross-border region in the national and European dimension while maintaining its biodiversity and cultural heritage values</i>
Transport and border infrastructure	<i>Support for activities improving internal and external transport accessibility</i>	<i>The improvement of the consistency of the transport infrastructure of the cross-border region, involving a substantial and lasting reduction of the time of crossing the Polish-Belarusian and Polish-Ukrainian border</i>
Science and higher education	<i>Building a knowledge-based economy by supporting cooperation between universities and science and research institutions in the field of research and teaching</i>	<i>Improving the quality of education, internationalisation of the education offer and inter-university research teams</i>

Source: Own summary on the basis of: *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy ...* (2014)

3. *The assessment of the tourism potential and the extent of its utilisation on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland*

Natural environment assets, preserved in a fairly good condition and protected by the Polish side to a greater extent, constitute important endogenous potential of the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland, contributing to the development of tourism, (Fig. 2). They comprise, among others:

- 9 national parks: Poleski and Roztoczański (Lublin voivodeship), Belovezhskaya Forest (*Brest oblast*), Shatsky, “Tsuman Forest”, “Pripyat-Stokhid” (Volyn oblast), Yavorivskiy, “Northern Podolia”, “Skole Beskids” (Lviv oblast),
- 21 landscape parks, 401 nature reserves, 17 protected landscape areas and 1,878 monuments of nature.

The past of the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian cross-border region was conducive to the creation of multicultural values, among which the following should be mentioned: Old Towns of Lviv and Zamość, which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites, historic wooden Orthodox churches located in Lviv oblast, some of which are on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Old Town in Lublin, Kazimierz Dolny (Lublin) and Zhovkva (Lviv) and Pinsk and Kamieniec (Brest), numerous palaces and castles (including Kozłówka, Lutsk, Olesko, Pidhirtsi Zolochiv), the fortress of Brest and places of martyrdom – former Nazi concentration camps (Majdanek, Bełżec, Sobibór).

The main centres of the tourist traffic reception in Lublin voivodeship are the city of Lublin, Kazimierz Dolny – Naęczów – Puławy and Zamość, in Brest oblast – Belovezhskaya Forest and the cities of Brest and Pinsk, in Lviv oblast – the city of Lviv and the towns surrounding it (i.e. Golden Horseshoe), i.e.: Olesko, Pidhirtsi, Svirzh, Zolochiv and Zhovkva, in Volyn oblast – Shatsky Lake District, and the cities of Lutsk and Volodymyr-Volynsky.

Table 2 contains the basic data characterizing the tourist traffic and accommodation facilities on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland in 2010-2014. The table shows that in 2014 the area was visited by 1,730.7 thousand tourists, i.e. by 9.1% more compared to 2010, the biggest number – Lublin voivodeship 763.5 thousand (44.1% of all visiting the borderland) and Lviv oblast – 620.0 thousand (35.8%). The other two oblasts accounted for, respectively, Brest – 271.1 thousand (15.7%) and Volyn – 76.1 thousand (4.5%). In turn, most foreign tourists came to the region of Lublin and Brest, and the drastic fall in this category of

tourists in Lviv oblast resulted from the climate of uncertainty caused by the events on the Maidan in Kiev and aggression of Russia in Crimea and Donbas. The decreasing number of nights compared with the increase in the number of tourists means – in the case of Brest and Lviv oblasts – shortening of the length of stay by tourists. A similar phenomenon can be observed in Lublin voivodeship, achieved, however, with the low growth dynamics of the number of nights and a much larger number of tourists.

As far as the accommodation facilities are concerned we can see quite dynamic growth, not accompanied by an equally large increase in the number of beds (in the case of Volyn oblast – even a decrease), which means a change in the size structure, the number of smaller facilities rises, some of which can also replace larger facilities especially of lower standard. To evaluate the use of the tourism potential and thus the state of tourism development in the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian cross-border region – using the data in Table 2 – the following indicators were used (A. R. Szromek 2012, p. 295-309):

- the Baretje and Defert tourist function (the number of beds per 100 inhabitants),
- the Schneider intensity of tourist traffic (the number of people using accommodation per year per 100 inhabitants),
- the Charvat intensity of tourist traffic (the number of overnight stays per year per 100 inhabitants),
- the density of accommodation (the ratio of the number of beds to the area in km²),
- the Defert density of traffic (the ratio of the number of accommodation users to the area in km²),
- the development of accommodation (the ratio of the number of accommodation users to the number of beds),
- the utilisation of accommodation capacity (the ratio of the number of overnight stays to the number of beds).

Table 2. Tourist traffic and accommodation on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland in 2010-2014

Year	Accommodation facilities	Beds	Total number of tourists in thousands	Foreign tourists in thousands	Overnight stays in thousands
Brest oblast					
2010	59	4123	263.8	83.3	703.2
2014	71	4223	271.1	124.2	553.5
2014 (2010=100.0)	120.3	102.4	102.8	149.1	78.7
Lublin voivodeship					
2010	322	20307	665.5	89.9	1612.1
2014	363	20807	763.5	113.2	1636.5
2014 (2010=100.0)	112.7	102.5	114.7	125.9	101.5
Lviv oblast					
2010	268	30386	585.5	117.6	4370.2
2014	340	32746	620.0	56.0	3889.8
2014 (2010=100.0)	126.9	107.8	105.9	48.6	89.1
Volyn oblast					
2010	31	2431	71.9	8.5	157.1
2014	64	2049	76.1	5.7	171.5
2014 (2010=100.0)	206.5	84.3	105.8	67.1	109.2

Source: own study based on: The tourism potential ... (2016)

Values of these indicators are presented in Table 3, which shows that in the Polish, Belarusian as well as Ukrainian part of the borderland tourism functions are not significantly

developed. It is evidenced by the value of the Baretje and Defert indicator, at a level well below 4, which is interpreted as an almost complete lack of tourist activity. This is confirmed by the low value of the indicators of the accommodation density and Defert traffic density which in the case of well developed tourist areas amount respectively to at least 1000 and 50.

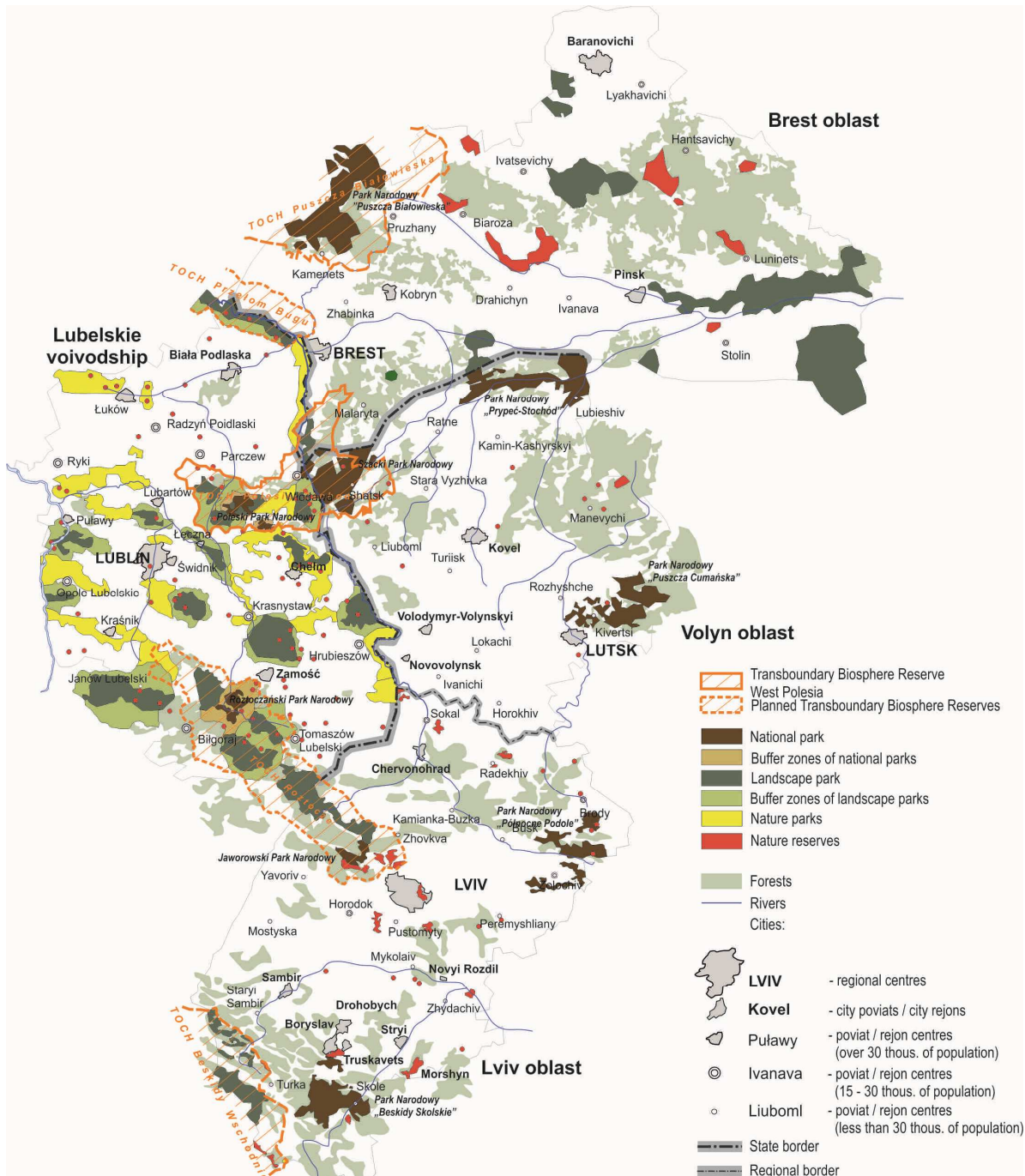


Fig. 2. The condition and protection of the environment of the cross-border region in 2011
Source: the same as in Fig. 1.

Despite the generally low level of development of tourism there are certain variations in the cross-border region. The highest Schneider indicator characterised Lublin voivodship, and the lowest – Volyn oblast. In terms of the Charvat indicator Lviv oblast is a definite leader, which means that tourists prefer longer stays there in comparison with the voivodship of Lublin. Lublin voivodship and Lviv oblast have the best results in terms of the density of

accommodation and the Defert tourist traffic. Brest oblast has relatively best developed accommodation and Brest and Lviv oblasts use it to the highest degree.

Table 3. Indicators of the development of the tourist function on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland

Specification	Indicators of:						
	the Baretje and Defert tourist function	intensity of tourist traffic		density		the development of accommodation	the utilisation of accommodation capacity
		Schneider's	Charvat's	accommodation	the Deferta traffic		
Brest oblast	0.3	19.5	39.9	0.1	8.3	64.2	131.1
Lublin voivodeship	1.0	35.5	76.2	0.8	30.4	36.7	78.7
Lviv oblast	1.3	24.4	153.3	1.5	28.4	18.9	118.8
Volyn oblast	0.2	7.3	16.4	0.1	3.8	37.1	83.7

Source: the same as in Table 2.

In turn, the team of experts preparing *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy* made a qualitative assessment of the tourism potential and its utilisation, identifying strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats within a conducted strategic SWOT analysis. Table 4 contains its results. It shows that a strong point of the tourist potential of the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland are significant natural values and a relatively small degree of their degradation and the cultural potential based on common heritage of multiculturalism, with the cross-border location of both natural and cultural values. The lack of a language barrier may raise some doubts, particularly in relation to the younger generation. It is certainly not as clear as on the Polish-German borderland, but the knowledge of East Slavic languages based on the Cyrillic alphabet disappears in Polish society.

In the case of weaknesses the following were noticed: too little developed and too diversified tourist infrastructure, a lack of significant cross-border tourism products, difficult access to potential products resulting, among others, from the lack of tourist border crossings. What is also disturbing is the unsatisfactory condition of historic monuments, especially in the Ukrainian and Belarusian part. The limited availability of tourist information, both in the form of maps, guides as well as information points is relatively easiest to overcome.

Opportunities for the development of tourism on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland were discerned in the uniqueness – on a European scale – of tourist attractions, the development of cross-border tourism products, among others, with the use of modern forms of environmental protection which include geoparks, and by expanding the area of small (visa-free) border traffic. Threats contain: competition from other attractive tourist areas, the movement of cross-border environmental pollution, the domination of extra-tourist (mainly commercial) motives of arrivals, the maintenance of visas and the disappearance of regional and local culture.

Table 4. The SWOT analysis for areas of *the natural environment, culture, tourism*

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant natural values and a small degree of their degradation, • integrating cross-border location of the most valuable physiographic units (Polesie, Roztocze, the Bug River basin), • cultural potential based on the legacy of multiculturalism, • cross-border location of cultural objects, • lack of significant language barriers, • friendly attitude to tourists (hospitality). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • natural hazards (floods, landslides, soil erosion), • poorly developed network of environmental monitoring, • lack of the cross-border coordination of crisis management forces in the conditions of natural and anthropogenic hazards, • relatively underdeveloped and too little diversified tourism infrastructure, • lack of significant cross-border tourism products, • difficult access to potential tourism products, • lack of tourist border crossings, • poor availability of tourist information (a small number of tourist publications, including electronic ones, a small number of tourist information points and their inappropriate distribution), • unsatisfactory state of monuments and urban complexes.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unique from the European point of view natural and cultural values, • development of the environmental monitoring system, • coordination of crisis management forces in the conditions of natural and anthropogenic hazards, • strengthening of cross-border social ties and local and regional culture through cooperation of schools, • development of cross-border (regional, local) tourism products adequate for various forms of tourism, • creation of modern forms of environmental protection (geoparks), • extension of the spatial range of the agreement on small border traffic with Belarus and Ukraine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accumulation of natural and anthropogenic environmental hazards, • movement of cross-border environmental pollution, • competition from other tourist areas, • domination of extra-tourist motives of arrivals, • maintenance of visas, • disappearance of regional and local culture.

Source: the same as in Table 1.

4. *The strategic directions of tourism development on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland and the assessment of their feasibility*

The directions of tourism development on the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland were formulated on the basis of the SWOT analysis, taking into account the objective and the expected effect. These are:

- stimulation of activities conducive to the creation and coordination of the functioning of cross-border protected areas,
- stimulation of cross-border activities for the purity of water of the river Bug basin,
- development of cross-border tourism products,
- cross-border action to protect the world cultural heritage,
- support for and coordination of cross-border cultural events,
- establishment of cross-border networks of cooperation of institutions and organisations dealing with the environment, culture and tourism.

The following directions proposed in the strategic area of *transport and border infrastructure* are complementary to the above actions:

- increasing the permeability of the Polish-Belarusian and Polish-Ukrainian border by opening new border crossings, including pedestrian and tourist crossings,
- improving the road accessibility of border crossings,
- increasing the number of cross-border transportation links,
- extension of the zone of small border traffic,
- revitalisation of cross-border rail infrastructure,
- supporting airports in the opening of new routes, including cross-border ones.

In reference to these directions the team of experts – in cooperation and after consultation with regional and local authorities of Brest oblast, Lublin voivodeship and oblasts of Lviv and Volyn – proposed a preliminary list of recommended projects. It includes, among others,:

- institutional strengthening of the cross-border biosphere reserve “Western Polesie”
- strengthening of the development of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation for the preservation of cultural heritage protection,
- creation of an interactive map of tourist trails (pedestrian, bicycle, car, water, equestrian),
- development and implementation of the twin project “Zamość-Zhovkva - Renaissance cities of new challenges and opportunities”,
- construction of sewage and waste treatment facilities in rural areas within Shatsky National Nature Park,
- construction of a bridge on the border river Bug at the border crossing Terespol-Brest,
- construction of a second bridge on the river Bug at the international road border crossing “Ustyluh-Zosin”,
- construction of new international road border crossings “Kryłów-Krehiv”, “Gródek-Ambukiv”, “Zbereże-Adamchuky” on the Polish-Ukrainian border,
- construction and modernisation of access roads to the new international border crossing points “Kryłów- Krehiv”, “Gródek- Ambukiv”, “Zbereże-Adamchuky”.
- restoration of a direct rail link between Chełm (Lublin voivodeship) and Kovel (Volyn oblast),
- creation of a high-speed rail link Lviv-Lublin-Zamość-Warszawa.

It is assumed that the system of the implementation of *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy* should be based on the model of multi-level governance, which means that stakeholders of four sectors will be engaged in it, i.e.: the public sector (central government, local governments), the private one (enterprises), the social one (NGOs) and the research and development sector (universities, research institutions). The institutional and coordination facilities of the strategy implementation system should be created by the Programme Board and the Management Team consisting of representatives of regional authorities of the four administrative units, forming the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland (Brest oblast, Lviv oblast, Volyn oblast and Lublin voivodeship).

Indicators monitoring the implementation of the objectives and directions of *the Strategy of cross-border cooperation* were adopted, which in the case of tourism are: the number of tourists and beds provided to them, and in the case of improving transport accessibility: waiting time to cross the border at individual crossings, the average travel time between Lublin and Brest, Lublin and Lutsk, Lublin and Lviv, the number of regular bus, train and air cross-border links, and the average travel time to Brest, Lutsk, Lviv and Lublin from selected European cities.

The question of sources of funding is of key importance for the success of *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy*. So far there have been two unsuccessful attempts to develop strategic documents for the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland². The source of their failure was, among others, the fact that they were created at the initiative of the Polish side, in the absence of real (not just formal) involvement of the Belarusian and Ukrainian sides, they formulated pretty vague courses of action, did not containing elements of the system of implementation (implementation bodies, a monitoring system, funding sources). As the presented considerations show, in the case of *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy* the situation has been different from the beginning.

The primary source of funding for the projects under *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy* is to be the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020. Its launch was delayed for more than two years and the first call for proposals began only in October 2016 and will last until December 2016. However, the size and structure of the planned funds is promising both for all the activities within the framework of *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy* and its component connected with tourism. The budget of the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020 amounts to over 183 million euro and is intended for the following thematic objectives³:

1. promotion of local culture and preservation of historical heritage,
2. improvement of accessibility to the regions, development of sustainable and climate-proof transport and communication networks and systems,
3. common challenges in the field of safety and security,
4. promotion of border management and border security, mobility and migration management.

Beneficiaries from all the regional units forming the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland can obtain co-funding for one project in the amount of 100 thousand to 2.5 million euro. More than 80 million euro is planned for the first call, including 14.84 million euro for the first objective, 28.32 million euro for the second, 14.53 million euro for the third and 23.79 million euro for the fourth.

CONCLUSION

Summing up all the considerations it can be concluded that *the Cross Border Cooperation Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, Lviv, Volyn and Brest Oblasts for 2014-2020* is the first strategic document jointly developed, consulted and adopted by Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian representatives for the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderland. One of the important areas of strategic actions contained therein is tourism, which despite the natural potential and cultural heritage is characterised by a relatively low level of development. Therefore, *the Strategy* defines the directions of actions raising the utilisation efficiency of the tourism potential, the implementation of which will be possible thanks to projects co-financed by the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020.

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² Cf. J. Polski (1997) oraz Wspólna polsko-ukraińska strategia... (2005).

³ www.pbu2020.eu (accessed 21.10.2016).

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