



## DECC - Supporting the development of the economy, of culture and creativity in the cross-border region Hungary-Romania-Ukraine

### Abstract

The task of this project was to analyze the structures and (economic) potentials of the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) in the border region between Romania, Hungary and Ukraine, more precisely in the three regions Maramures county (Romania), Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county (Hungary) and Transcarpathia oblast (Ukraine). The entire area under investigation covers an area of 26,326 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 2.450 Million inhabitants in 2013.

In order to get a comprehensive overview of the current economic situation in the Cultural and Creative Industries in the area under investigation it was necessary to use a wide range of methods, tools, data collection processes and sources: literature research, regional statistical analysis, economic workshops, 15 branch hearings with regional stakeholders from the branch groups “Arts”, “Media”, “Cultural Heritage / Architecture”, “Advertising / IT” and “Tourism”, analysis of “case studies”, organization of 2 training modules and one workshop for regional CCI-stakeholders in every one of the three regions, qualitative interviews with regional stakeholders and visual inspection by the provider’s project team.

The findings were put together the findings in a SWOT analyses, differentiating it into three topics:

- Overall CCI-development

The overall economic climate in the area under investigation is recovering. There is already a high level of cross-border co-operation in the CCI. However, regional “brands” are missing, public and private funds are low, there are lacks in the quality of staff training. Threats are the loss of traditional (handicraft) abilities, spontaneous innovations without comprehensive regional development concept problems with the quality of consulting / advisory services. On the other side there are many opportunities. There is a rich common cultural history. Local/regional population and stakeholders are highly motivated. Social media are a very promising vehicle to get people interested in arts events. The stronger stance of electronic/social media can provide a broader set of local information and increase the competitive pressure on the public and private newspaper market. International orientation and quality awareness are good preconditions for future development.

- Infrastructure

The main road network in the area under investigation is in good condition. The communication infrastructure in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Maramures is very good. However, the train connections between the regions, and within Maramures and Transcarpathia, are very bad. The secondary/tertiary road network is in bad shape. Generally infrastructural problems hinder cross-border co-operation and tourism. Investment in infrastructure requires a lot of financial resources. On the other side there are opportunities.





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The EU high-speed railway network is extending towards the area under investigation, investment in infrastructure is intensely funded by the EU.

- **Tourism**

Cultural heritage and history can act as touristic driving force. In general the quantity of tourism facilities is sufficient; however there is a lack in quality. There are few brands and quality certificates in tourism, there is no comprehensive regional touristic bottom-up development concept. The area under investigation has extensive (nearly) unspoilt small-structured areas which are attractive to tourists; however there is the danger of loss of (bio-) diversity by missing management (e.g. wildlife management).

In the course of the project there emerged 93 project ideas, mostly from regional stakeholders.

The two most important project recommendations by the provider are:

- **Branding** through **networking**
- Using **tourism** as lead topic for stimulating cross-sectorial and cross-border regional development in all CCI-sectors

**“Branding”** requires improvement in infrastructure, training of staff, and development of complex touristic products and so on. In short, almost all project ideas can be subsumed under “Branding”.

**“Networking”** is essential for regional development. This cannot be achieved by focusing on a single CCI-sector. It requires an approach that is including as many CCI-sectors as possible, instead.

**Tourism** is a cross-sectorial topic which offers possibilities for all different CCI-sectors, in one region as well in a cross-border area like the area under investigation.

Regional development requires networks. These networks not only have the purpose of bringing relevant stakeholders together, they also provide an organized form for civic participation, which is an essential part of regional development. For this purpose existing networks should be used as much as possible. In some cases the creation of new networks will be necessary.

What is necessary in all three regions and on cross-border level (covering the area under investigation) is networks for projects and regional development concepts. Most project ideas collected in the course of this project would be complex projects that require a degree of project management and networking that is currently rarely available.

The most effective way would be to

- initiate a Bottom-Up process aiming at the development of an RDS in every region, including all interested stakeholders (state and communal agencies, enterprises, NGOs, private persons etc.),
- establishing a board, a steering committee and a professional regional management,
- define common objectives, project ideas and “who shall what do”, establish a steering committee as well as a professional project management, and to
- include in this process already existing regional development organizations like the Local Action Groups (LAGs)



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Beneficiary  
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Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Chamber  
of Commerce and Industry



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**Presented by:**

MKW GmbH, Munich, Germany

**Authors:**

Dr. Franz Hitzelsberger

Dr. Gernot Nerb

Veronika Ratzenböck

Ute Vieting

Jana Petrowa

**Applicant (contracting body):**

Maramures Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Baia Mare, Romania (=CCIMM)



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