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# **TOOLKIT FOR CROSS-BORDER PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN THE POLISH-CZECH BORDERLAND IN THE CIESZYN SILESIA EUROREGION – EXERCISES**

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## Introduction

Though management of projects usually consists in applying knowledge, skills and some techniques in order to fulfil the requirements and expectations of their beneficiaries, in case of activities performed in borderlands the above mentioned competencies are not sufficient to plan and realize undertaking of such kind effectively. Apart from basic skills at project management it is essential to apply some rules of inter-cultural management which make possible people from different cultures to understand one another.

The publication as a toolkit for cross-border project management in the Polish-Czech borderland in the Euroregion Śląsk Cieszyński-Těšínské Slezsko has been written especially for people who professionally realize projects (managers, inter-cultural trainers, representatives of local and regional governments as well as NGOs and schools). It contains many useful basis of cross-border project management methodology in an inter-cultural context can be applied in many different fields of co-operation. The study directly refers to the theoretical tool created by Association of Development and Regional Co-operation „Olza” and Institut EuroSchola entitled the same way in which inter-cultural and project management issues have been presented cross-sectionally. It is recommended to use both the tools and the tool created by Euro-Institut Kehl/Strasbourg together on account of their complementarity.

The publication is a result of the project PAT-TEIN (Professionalizing actors of transfrontier cooperation) – Adaptation of selected tools within the Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network) implemented in 2012-2014, funded by Leonardo da Vinci Programme and realized by 8 partners-institutions representing European border regions<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Olszewski, B. Kasperek, A. Olszewska, H. Böhm, D. Madziová, *Toolkit for cross-border project management in the Polish-Czech borderland in the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion*, Cieszyn-Třinec 2014, p. 6.

## 1. Defining the cross-border project

### Exercise No. 1.1.

#### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE „Photos”



Aim of the exercise:

- introducing the participants to the subject of the training course
- acquainting the participants with the subject of cross-border co-operation/ a cross-border project



Target group:

- any, providing that a number of the participants will be the same as a number of photos – one photo falls to one person



Duration:

- it depends on a number of participants (about 15-20 min. for a 20-person group)



Materials/teaching aids:

- colourful photos depicting various pictures of everyday life



Description/Instructions:

- participants sit in a circle facing the centre where there are some photos on the floor. A trainer asks them to choose individually one photo which associates with cross-border co-operation/ a cross-border project. Then each of the participants is asked to explain in a few words why he/she has chosen the particular photo and how he/she has associated the photo with the discussed subject. At the end of the exercise the trainer sums it up.



Analysis– instructions:

- application – it is the best to perform the exercise on the first day of a training course as a introduction to the discussed subject combined with introductions of the participants themselves e.g. : *“My name is Katarzyna Kowalska; I work at the Development Agency; I have chosen the photo because according to me it associates with a diversity of cross-border co-operation/ cross-border projects”*;
- comments – the exercise can be used as a brainstorming technique before a particular training course module e.g. : *“Choose photos which you associate with a word culture, please”*.

## Exercise No. 1.2.

### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE

#### „Understanding terminology, interpretation of concepts and terms in a project”



#### Aim of the exercise:

- realizing some different traps which await us during defining a cross-border project
- uświadomienie sobie różnych pułapek, które czyhają podczas definiowania projektu transgranicznego



#### Target group:

- depending on a situation, optimally 12 people



#### Duration:

- about 40-50 min.



#### Materials/teaching aids:

- printed case study in two language versions
- flipchart, coloured felt-tips, sheets of paper



#### Description/Instructions:

- participants are divided into 3 groups by the trainer (mixed Polish-Czech groups are recommended). Then the groups are given sheets of paper, coloured felt-tips and printed description of a certain situation they have to read (see: enclosure No. 1 to exercise No. 1.2.). The trainer gives all groups assignments. The first group is to ponder over strong points of the described situation and put them down on a sheet of paper. Another group is to ponder over weak points of the described situation and put them down on a sheet of paper. And the third one is to think about what should be improved in the described situation and what way (recommendations for the future). In another stage of the exercise

the representatives of the three groups present all participants the results of their common group work and the trainer writes them down on a flipchart. After putting down all suggestions the trainer comments them pursuant to the materials he/she has (see: the enclosure No 2 to exercise No. 1.2., chapter No. 1 of the cross-border tool – the theoretical part, chapter No. 1 of the general tool). Then the trainer’s comments should be followed by a discussion moderated by the trainer. At the end of the exercise the trainer sums it up.



Analysis– instructions:

- reflection – the trainer asks participants about their good or bad experiences of defining projects (in the context of the situation presented in the case study) whether similar situations have happened during their project work with Polish/Czech partners or if they have noticed some differences between Polish and Czech attitudes to the stage – if the answer is “yes” the trainer asks about explanations, some examples, etc.;
- comments – the exercise can be used during a discussion on some issues related to planning a cross-border project.

**Enclosure No. 1 to exercise No. 1.2. Materials for participants – case study description „Understanding terminology, interpretation of concepts and terms in a project”**

*(the Czech-language version of the enclosure is available in the Czech-language version of the materials)*

<b>Subject</b>
Preparing conception of network co-operation in public institutions –terminology perception; differences in interpreting project meanings and terminologies
<b>Situation description</b>
Partners of the project (1 Polish and 1 Czech), which aim was preparation of network co-operation conception, organised a working meeting to agree upon upcoming tasks. It was agreed during the meeting that each partner will be responsible for activities on their side of border while keeping the partner informed about implementation and consulting any necessary issues. Both partners presented their initial proposal of the conception. They both agreed that it will be composed from analytical and strategic part without more details. Both partners should have worked on the conception separately while taking into account previous agreements and realising mutual phone and e-mail consultations. Despite this virtual and phone contact and some face-to-face meetings both partners failed to agree upon detailed work-plan. Partners also failed to exchange documents they have been individually working on. Finally the Poles prepared longer document of analytically-strategic nature including good-practice transfer proposal, whereas the

Czechs prepared only kind of telephone list of public institutions which operate in the border area and placed it on the project web-page. In this situation the Poles prepared similar list and placed it on the Polish mutation of project web-page, but the Czechs refused the analytically-strategic document prepared by Poles.

**Enclosure No. 2 to exercise No. 1.2. Materials for trainers – case study description „Understanding terminology, interpretation of concepts and terms in a project”**

<b>Subject</b>	
Preparing conception of network co-operation in public institutions – terminology perception; differences in interpreting project meanings and terminologies	
<b>Situation description</b>	
Partners of the project (1 Polish and 1 Czech), which aim was preparation of network co-operation conception, organised a working meeting to agree upon upcoming tasks. It was agreed during the meeting that each partner will be responsible for activities on their side of border while keeping the partner informed about implementation and consulting any necessary issues. Both partners presented their initial proposal of the conception. They both agreed that it will be composed from analytical and strategic part without more details. Both partners should have worked on the conception separately while taking into account previous agreements and realising mutual phone and e-mail consultations. Despite this virtual and phone contact and some face-to-face meetings both partners failed to agree upon detailed work-plan. Partners also failed to exchange documents they have been individually working on. Finally the Poles prepared longer document of analytically-strategic nature including good-practice transfer proposal, whereas the Czechs prepared only kind of telephone list of public institutions which operate in the border area and placed it on the project web-page. In this situation the Poles prepared similar list and placed it on the Polish mutation of project web-page, but the Czechs refused the analytically-strategic document prepared by Poles.	
<b>Strong points</b>	<b>Weak points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- general agreement supports creativity and freedom to conduct a task;</li> <li>- autonomy in implementation of any task could be/is an asset.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- absence of clearly formulated tasks divides the Czechs and Poles in project implementation phase ;</li> <li>- the terms ‘strategy’ and ‘conception’ weren’t explained and defined clearly enough;</li> <li>- guesses what should be done;</li> <li>- too big autonomy leads sometimes to the negative result, when both partners do different things;</li> <li>- both partners disregard each other in the implementation phase ;</li> <li>- it was the false assumption that both the Poles and</li> </ul>

	<p>Czechs understood each other without any explanations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- absence of mutual information exchange on actual problems;</li> <li>- absence of mutual documentation exchange.</li> </ul>
<b>Polish point of view (stereotypes)</b>	<b>Czech point of view (stereotypes)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czechs make their lives too easy without any ambitions;</li> <li>- Czechs don't show any engagement;</li> <li>- Czechs realize the project in their own way again, they don't inform about what and how they have been working on</li> <li>- Czechs don't respect initially concluded agreements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poles are (yet again) able to make things unnecessarily complicated both in terms of preparation and implementation, yet the effort is not worth the result;</li> <li>- Poles do the things their way ; don't inform Czechs what they have been working on concretely;</li> <li>- Poles don't respect initially concluded agreements.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective reasons for such behaviour</b>	
<b>Poles</b>	<b>Czechs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poles are used to that kind of working style;</li> <li>- Poles have too ambitious approach to the problem solution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czechs are used to that kind of working style;</li> <li>- Czechs don't talk about their expectation all the time, they stop a little bit prematurely.</li> </ul>
<b>Interpretation in the intercultural context</b>	
<p>Misunderstanding was caused by the absence of precise description of individual activities. In Czech organisational culture the pragmatism has been overwhelming – in the particular situation lacking detailed methodology the minimum was prepared by Czechs. Lacking concrete rules on implemented activities, insufficient stated expectations and unclear outcomes of joint work resulted into misunderstanding, which resulted into two different elaborations of one assignment.</p>	
<b>Recommendations (based on the weak points)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it is necessary to formulate the rules clearly, including precise definition of project content and main outcome;</li> <li>- it is necessary to make clear what is understood by both partners in concrete formulations and project expectations;</li> <li>- too much autonomy endangers the result of implementation of joint activities;</li> <li>- it is not recommended to expect that both partners know each other too well;</li> <li>- it is necessary to ensure mutual informing work of both partners and consult necessary questions;</li> <li>- it is necessary to hand over the elaborated documents to the partner permanently.</li> </ul>	

## 2. Establishing the cross-border partnership

### Exercise No. 2.1.

#### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE „Flea market”



##### Aim of the exercise:

- awareness of a feeling a member of the group and significance of a mutual co-operation in the cross-border context



##### Target group:

- 6 people at the minimum, 20 ones maximally; 8 is an optimal number of the people, when the number of participants is much bigger they should be divided into two separate groups which can compete with each other



##### Duration:

- about 15-20 min.



##### Materials/teaching aids:

- 2 identical items of different small things for each of participants (e.g. 2 paperclips, 2 coins, 2 ping-pong balls etc);
- chairs (one for each of participants)



##### Description/Instructions:

- participants sit down on the chairs formed a circle, the trainer gives each of participants 2 identical things. Then the trainer takes away the earlier handed out things and gives another ones – but this time 2 different things to each of participants. The participants

hold the things in their hands showing them the others. One man of the group has been given only one thing so one of his/her hands is empty. Then they have to exchange the things in such a way to get back the two identical things they were given at the beginning of the exercise (one man gets back one thing). Rules: 1) a thing can be handed over to the neighbour(a man sitting next to) who has only one thing in his/her hands, 2) the participants cannot change their seats.



#### Analysis– instructions:

- reflection – during performing the exercise each of participants gets back his/her thing but he/she also has to hand over it another person many times. The game proceeds this way. It is a kind of reference to a partner co-operation – if I expect something from the other side I have to take into account that I also should give something back, I also should contribute something towards the co-operation;
- it is worth to pose an unanswered question : what is more important to them to get back the things or to perform a task as a team?;
- When the exercise is over it should be comment on by the trainer to explain the participants what was its aim (e.g. showing the complexity of the partnership establishing process). It could be done pursuant to the materials from the chapter No. 2 of the cross-border tool – the theoretical part, chapter No. 2 of the general tool. Then the trainer’s explanations should be followed by a discussion moderated by the trainer. At the end of the exercise the trainer sums it up.

### 3. Planning a cross-border project

#### Exercise No. 3.1.

#### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE „Case study – dress code”



Aim of the exercise:

- realizing how a way of dressing can influence on perceiving a partner and establishing partner relationships in the cross-border co-operation context
- becoming aware of Polish-Czech stereotypes



Target group:

- depending on situation, optimally 16 people



Duration:

- about 40-50 min.



Materials/teaching aids:

- printed case study in two language versions
- flipchart, coloured felt-tips, sheets of paper



Description/Instructions:

- participants are divided into 4 groups by the trainer- 2 Polish groups and 2 Czech ones. Then the groups are given sheets of paper, coloured felt-tips and a description of a certain situation they have to read (see: enclosure No 1 to exercise No. 3.1.). The trainer gives all groups assignments. The first Polish group is to ponder over strong points of the described situation and put them down on a sheet of paper. Another group – the first Czech one is to ponder over weak points of the described situation and put them down on a sheet of

paper. Another Polish group is to think about how Poles perceive Czechs in the described situation and write down their reflections on a sheet of paper. Next another Czech group is to think about how Czechs perceive Poles in the described situation and write down their reflections on a sheet of paper as well. Then the representatives of the four groups present all participants the results of their common group work and the trainer writes them down on a flipchart. After putting all participants' reflections down the trainer comments them pursuant to the materials he/she has (see: the enclosure No. 2 to exercise No. 3.1., chapters No. 3 and 4 of the cross-border tool – the theoretical part, chapter No. 3 of the general tool). Then the trainer's comments should be followed by a discussion moderated by him/her. At the end of the exercise the trainer sums it up.



#### Analysis– instructions:

- reflection - the trainer asks participants about their good or bad experiences of planning projects (in the context of the situation presented in the case study) whether similar situations have happened during their project work with Polish/Czech partners – whether they have tried to interpret them, etc.;
- comments – the exercise can be used during a discussion on some issues related to a stage of establishing cross-border partnership and implementing a cross-border project.

#### **Enclosure No. 1 to exercise No. 3.1. Materials for participants – case study description „Dress code”**

*(the Czech-language version of the enclosure is available in the Czech-language version of the materials)*

<b>Subject</b>
Official meeting of the Polish-Czech project team members – a dress-code problem
<b>Situation description</b>
The partners of the project, which is dedicated to the co-operation of two municipalities (Polish and Czech ones), decided to organise an official project meeting (in a mountain hotel and in a summer time). The meeting was expected to be a high-level one, including mayors of both cities and project team. Both participating municipalities were well in advance informed about the nature and content of the meeting. The Polish participants arrived in very formal dresses, whereas the Czechs had sport-wear.

#### **Enclosure No. 2 to exercise No. 3.1. Materials for a trainer – case study description „Dress code”**

<b>Subject</b>
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<b>Official meeting of the Polish-Czech project team members – a dress-code problem</b>	
<b>Situation description</b>	
<p>The partners of the project, which is dedicated to the co-operation of two municipalities (Polish and Czech ones), decided to organise an official project meeting (in a mountain hotel and in a summer time). The meeting was expected to be a high-level one, including mayors of both cities and project team. Both participating municipalities were well in advance informed about the nature and content of the meeting. The Polish participants arrived in very formal dresses, whereas the Czechs had sport-wear.</p>	
<b>Strong points</b>	<b>Weak points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- dressing variety is an asset as such;</li> <li>- dress can help to express man's personality;</li> <li>- dress can also send a message (the Czechs sent a message that they are happy because it is a summer-time).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- different dress-code causes a barrier in a first contact between Poles and Czechs (non-verbal communication);</li> <li>- dress makes a man (it can easily create a negative stereotype about the other person only because of his/her dress);</li> <li>- different styles of dressing and perception of the situation by the Poles and Czechs;</li> <li>- the 'first impression' concerning the partner in the situation can create a stereotype;</li> <li>- dress communicates seriousness of situation, which can be interpreted in a negative way.</li> </ul>
<b>Polish point of view (stereotypes)</b>	<b>Czech point of view (stereotypes)</b>
<p><u>negative:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czechs don't have high respect for Poles;</li> <li>- Czechs are bit 'too relaxed' and don't care much;</li> <li>- Czechs miss a good taste and style;</li> </ul> <p><u>positive:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czechs attitude towards life is healthy, normal (they wear clothes to feel comfortable);</li> <li>- they don't create a barrier.</li> </ul>	<p><u>negative:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poles are unnatural, artificial and pretending games;</li> <li>- Poles demonstrate that they are in a way 'better' partners;</li> </ul> <p><u>positive</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poles have their class and style.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective reasons for such behaviour</b>	
<b>Poles</b>	<b>Czechs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poles do adapt their dress to the actual situation and group composition;</li> <li>- dressing is for Poles an important element</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czechs feel well in casual dresses which don't restrict movement, aren't too tight;</li> <li>- dress is an expression of themselves; they are not</li> </ul>

<p>of their lives, mainly in professional life – savoir vivre, which also predestined their dress when meeting Czechs.</p>	<p>so formal when dressing for work.</p>
<p><b>Interpretation in the intercultural context</b></p>	
<p>In Polish culture – organizational culture as well – dress should be adjusted to circumstances, a time of the day and people who we meet and to the character of the meeting itself. On the one hand our attachment to the gentry, court ceremonials and our urge to pattern ourselves after the high society can justify it. On the other hand we adopt western styles of organizational culture including a dress-code.</p> <p>In Czech culture – organizational culture as well – pragmatism dominates , so the Czechs in the particular situation their dresses adjusted to summer temperature. They behaved naturally so they wore casual clothes.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations (based on the weak points)</b></p>	
<p>- dress-code recommendation should be indicated in an invitation.</p>	

## 4. The implementation of a cross-border project

### Exercise No. 4.1.

#### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE „Case study – specialist training course organization”



Aim of the exercise:

- giving some thought to technical part of organizing events relating to cross-border co-operation/ cross-border project implementation.



Target group:

- depending on situation, optimally 16 people



Duration:

- about 40-50 min.



Materials/teaching aids:

- printed case study in two language versions
- flipchart, coloured felt-tips, sheets of paper



Description/Instructions:

- participants are divided into 4 groups by the trainer- 2 Polish groups and 2 Czech ones. Then the groups are given sheets of paper, coloured felt-tips and a description of a certain situation they have to read (see: enclosure No 1 to exercise No. 4.1.). The trainer gives all groups assignments. The first Polish group is to ponder over strong points of the described situation and put them down on a sheet of paper. Another group – the first Czech one is to ponder over weak points of the described situation and put them down on a sheet of paper. Another Polish group is to think about how Poles perceive Czechs in the described

situation and write down their reflections on a sheet of paper. Next another Czech group is to think about how Czechs perceive Poles in the described situation and write down their reflections on a sheet of paper as well. Then the representatives of the four groups present all participants the results of their common group work and the trainer writes them down on a flipchart. After putting all participants' reflections down the trainer comments them pursuant to the materials he/she has (see: the enclosure No. 2 to exercise No. 4.1., chapter No. 4 of the cross-border tool – the theoretical part, chapter No. 4 of the general tool). Then the trainer's comments should be followed by a discussion moderated by him/her. At the end of the exercise the trainer sums it up.



Analysis– instructions:

- reflection - the trainer asks participants about their good or bad experiences of implementing projects, about language communication, a manner of taking seats at the table, forms of invitations (are they invited in the same way by both institutions sitting on the opposite sides of the table), etc.

**Enclosure No. 1 to exercise No. 4.1. Materials for participants – case study description „Specialist training course organization”**

*(the Czech-language version of the enclosure is available in the Czech-language version of the materials)*

<b>Subject</b>
Specialist training course in the Polish-Czech borderland – organizational problem especially concerning the language
<b>Situation description</b>
A Polish institution prepared and organized a specialist training course several hours long in the Polish-Czech borderland. The training course took place on the Czech side and it was addressed to some representatives of local governments (people holding managerial positions in departments of the municipal councils and taking up the above mentioned issues. The event was preceded by sending invitation letters along with the programme for the training course both in Polish and Czech. A few minutes before the training began the organizers had met the experts to set together its course. Eventually representatives of public institutions (local governments) who took part in the training course held different positions in local governments from mayors, heads of departments to specialists and inspectors. The participants (about 20 people) sat down opposite each other at a long table – Poles on one side and Czechs on the other. Both the moderators and the experts took places at a presidium table. On the tables there weren't any

table name plates showing apart from participants' names and surnames the names of institutions where they worked and positions they held. The training course was moderated in Polish by two people representing a Polish institution while two other people invited to provide the training course as experts came from both sides of the border (a Polish expert and a Czech one). The Polish expert gave a lecture in Polish including a PowerPoint presentation. And similarly the Czech one in his/her native language. Some arisen problems with understanding foreign-language presented texts or speeches were solved at once by the moderators of the training course. Moreover on the separate tables there were available materials (publications, brochures in Polish) on the subject of waste management as well as some snacks. After the lectures gave by the experts there was time for discussion. Those who took part in it were mostly the representatives of Polish institutions. At the end of the training course all its participants were given evaluation forms then they were invited for dinner. The results of the evaluation forms showed us that there were some organizational problems.

**Enclosure No. 2 to exercise No. 4.1. Materials for a trainer – case study description „Specialist training course organization”**

<b>Subject</b>
Specialist training course in the Polish-Czech borderland – organizational problem especially concerning the language
<b>Situation description</b>
A Polish institution prepared and organized a specialist training course several hours long in the Polish-Czech borderland. The training course took place on the Czech side and it was addressed to some representatives of local governments (people holding managerial positions in departments of the municipal councils and taking up the above mentioned issues. The event was preceded by sending invitation letters along with the programme for the training course both in Polish and Czech. A few minutes before the training began the organizers had met the experts to set together its course. Eventually representatives of public institutions (local governments) who took part in the training course held different positions in local governments from mayors, heads of departments to specialists and inspectors. The participants (about 20 people) sat down opposite each other at a long table – Poles on one side and Czechs on the other. Both the moderators and the experts took places at a presidium table. On the tables there weren't any table name plates showing apart from participants' names and surnames the names of institutions where they worked and positions they held. The training course was moderated in Polish by two people representing a Polish institution while two other people invited to provide the training course as experts came from both sides of the border (a Polish expert and a Czech one). The Polish expert gave a lecture in Polish including a PowerPoint presentation. And similarly the Czech one in his/her native language. Some arisen problems with understanding foreign-language presented texts or speeches were solved at once by the moderators of the training course. Moreover on the separate tables there were available materials (publications, brochures in Polish) on the subject of waste management as well as some

snacks. After the lectures gave by the experts there was time for discussion. Those who took part in it were mostly the representatives of Polish institutions. At the end of the training course all its participants were given evaluation forms then they were invited for dinner. The results of the evaluation forms showed us that there were some organizational problems.

<b>Strong points</b>	<b>Weak points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the training course addressed to both Poles and Czechs was organized on the Czech side by a Polish institution;</li> <li>- preparing and sending bilingual (Polish-Czech) invitation letters with a programme</li> <li>- meeting with the experts before the training course and showing some essential issues connected with it;</li> <li>- placing the participants of the training course at one table; opposite each other;</li> <li>- a small number of the participants in case of the specialist training course;</li> <li>- the experts using their native languages (Polish or Czech);</li> <li>- the programme including time for discussion;</li> <li>- the representatives of Polish institutions took an active part in the discussion;</li> <li>- providing meals for the participants of the training course;</li> <li>- the evaluation forms were carried out among the participants of the training course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the apparent lack of cooperation in organization and providing the training course between Polish and Czech institutions;</li> <li>- the lack of specifically indicated target group of the training course (people, their positions) in the invitation letters which caused that the participants had different competence and skills;</li> <li>- the organizers and the experts had met to discuss some essential issues a few minutes before the training course began;</li> <li>- there were no table name plates (showing apart from participants' names and surnames the names of institutions where they worked and positions they held);</li> <li>- moderation of the training course in Polish only;</li> <li>- poor comprehension of the specialist language of the neighbour;</li> <li>- the experts' presentations weren't translated into Polish and Czech respectively;</li> <li>- the lack of materials (publications, brochures) in Czech;</li> <li>- the lack of training printed facilities;</li> <li>- the participants didn't inform the organizers or experts about some language comprehension problems during the experts' lectures;</li> <li>- the moderators were also interpreters at the same time;</li> <li>- the lack of professional Polish-Czech interpreter;</li> <li>- none of the representatives of Czech institutions took an active part in the discussion.</li> </ul>
<b>Polish point of view (stereotypes)</b>	<b>Czech point of view (stereotypes)</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it was hard to talk to the Czech participants of the training course about waste management issues because they were ordinary workers and their views/opinions on the subject weren't binding;</li> <li>- the Czech participants were passive during the discussion, not very much active in working the subject out, they weren't interested in the training course;</li> <li>- it was hard to understand what the Czech expert presented because there was no translation;</li> <li>- in addition the Czech expert's presentation was completely different than the Polish expert's one - not so much interesting than the Polish presentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it was hard to talk to the Polish participants of the training course about waste management issues because most of them were mayors and heads of departments of municipal councils;</li> <li>- the Polish participants were condescending to us – during the discussion they talked a lot, often seized the initiative, they were the dominant side in the discussion;</li> <li>- the Polish participants didn't respect us – they didn't provide any materials in Czech, both the moderators and Polish expert talked only in their native language and in addition some of the training participants wanted us to talk in Polish, apart from that it was hard to understand what the Polish expert presented because there was no translation;</li> <li>- the Polish expert's presentation was completely different than the Czech expert's one – it was a pity that both presentations weren't coherent and didn't show similar issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective reasons for such behaviour</b>	
<b>Poles</b>	<b>Czechs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- some problems with communication between the Polish and Czech training participants and their open and direct manners arose due to the differences in positions held by the particular participants</li> <li>- most of the Polish participants held managerial positions whereas the Czech participants mostly were ordinary workers;</li> <li>- another reason for some problems with communication between Polish and Czech training participants was the fact that the training course was provided by Poles. So the Polish training participants felt comfortable, they were open and direct, more talkative and took an active part in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- some problems with communication between the Polish and Czech training participants and their open and direct manners arose due to the differences in positions held by the particular participants - the Czech participants mostly were ordinary workers whereas most of the Polish participants held managerial positions;</li> <li>- another reason for some problems with communication between Polish and Czech training participants was the fact that the training course was provided by Poles. So the Czech training participants felt less comfortable, they found themselves in an embarrassing situation – they avoided speaking during the discussion;</li> <li>- an important role in the process of behaviour</li> </ul>

<p>the discussion;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an important role in the process of behaviour /communication between the Polish and Czech training participants played the language. Both the Polish moderators and the participants assumed that the Czech participants knew Polish so they used Polish as the only form of communication – we could say that it was a kind of habit of speaking Polish. It caused that on the one hand the Czech participants “stiffened up” were less involved in the discussion, on the other hand they had problems with understanding the Polish expert’s presentation language (it was after all highly specialist language).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/communication between the Polish and Czech training participants played the language;</li> <li>- the Czech training participants didn’t signal the need for translation of the training lectures (despite a possibility of translation)because they didn’t want to disrupt the course of the meeting;</li> <li>- some of the Czechs’ negative feelings were also enhanced by the lack of the materials; (publications, brochures) in Czech – there were only those in Polish.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interpretation in the intercultural context</b></p>	
<p>It is a typical situation of a cultural misunderstanding caused not only by the language barrier but also by the fact that no one took into consideration the Czech ‘cultural code’. The meeting was organized according to the standards of Polish organizational culture instead of international and thus an intercultural character of a meeting. The Poles taking part in the meeting were people who professionally took decisions, planned economic enterprises, gave official orders and controlled their subordinates’ work. The Czechs taking part in the meeting were clerks. Their job descriptions included among the others subjects and tasks discussed during the meeting and connected with the future cooperation. The ensuing situation was a result of different styles of management. In the Czech Republic less hierarchization meant that the clerks were enough competent to take part in such meeting. In Polish organizational culture there are still existing old-fashioned patterns.</p> <p>Another issue was the language used during the meeting. The Czech guests were invited by the organizers who stereotypically assumed that they knew and understood Polish. Even if they spoke the local dialect or Polish – because of their Polish roots – their language level wasn’t advanced. They didn’t understand the training lectures because they didn’t understand specialist official Polish. The lack of materials in Czech caused that the guests could feel ignored because the Poles attributed a role of an expert in the training subject to themselves.</p> <p>Another issue was that the guests were treated impolitely. The meeting could be defined as a meeting in a narrow circle because 20 people took part in it. In accordance with the rules of etiquette the participants of the meeting should be welcomed and introduced. Introducing</p>	

the participants to one other as well as describing the positions they held could contribute to better interaction among them. Moreover both Polish and Czech experts' arrangements could be more coherent in order to reduce the differences between the Polish and Czech presentations. The details which were omitted by both the organizers and moderators brought about dissatisfaction and misunderstanding among the training participants. It arose due to different cultural codes which the organizers should be aware of.

#### **Recommendations (based on the weak points)**

- the Polish institution should cooperate with the Czech one during organizing and providing the training course;
- the invitation letters to the training course should contain detailed information about the addressees (people, their positions, functions) so as potential participants of a training course would have similar competence and skills;
- choose people having similar competence;
- it is necessary to set up a meeting or meetings of organizers and experts to discuss some essential issues a few weeks before the training course;
- in case of a small group of participants (a specialist training course) name plates showing apart from participants' names and surnames, the names of institutions where they work and positions they hold should be placed;
- moderating in both languages – Polish and Czech during a training course;
- training experts' presentations should be translated into Polish and Czech;
- supplementary materials (publications, brochures) should be available in both language versions;
- participants should be given some course materials – in case of a specialist training course we recommend to work out a glossary of basic terms concerning a particular subject.
- a function of a moderator and an interpreter of a specialist training course shouldn't be fulfilled by one person;
- in case of a specialist training course a Polish-Czech interpreter (one or more) should be hired
- there are two suggestions about the presentation – a lecturer/an expert regardless what language he/she speaks should make his/her presentation bilingual. Another variant - a lecturer/an expert speaking Polish should make his/her presentation also in Czech and vice versa.

## Exercise No. 4.2.

### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE „Inter-cultural barometer”



#### Aim of the exercise:

- becoming aware of inter-cultural differences between Poles and Czechs in the cross-border co-operation/ cross-border projects context
- becoming aware of Polish-Czech stereotypes



#### Target group:

- Poles and Czechs, optimally the same number of participants representing both Polish and Czech nationalities, maximally 24 people, 12 on each of nationalities



#### Duration:

- about 40 min.



#### Materials/teaching aids:

- string/rope 3 m long, adhesive tape, 2 x 3 A5 sheets of paper with numbers 0%, 50% and 100%, sentences describing some selected traits of both cultures in a Polish-language version and Czech-language one



#### Description/Instructions:

- participants are divided into 2 groups by the trainer (a Polish group and a Czech one). Each of groups has a “barometer” (made by the trainer) – a stretched out rope with 3 sheets of paper on it. A sheet of paper with the number 0% is placed at the bottom of the rope, another sheet of paper with the number 50% – in the middle and the last one with the number 100% - at the top. Then the trainer reads sentences describing national traits of Czech culture and Polish one alternately (enclosure No 1 to exercise No. 4.2.). When

the trainer reads a sentence describing national traits of Czech culture then the Polish group moves as “an indicator in the barometer” up to the top-100% or stands still – 0% depending on to what extent they agree with the read sentence (agreement – 100%; disagreement – 0%). Then the Czech group do the same but the read sentences describing national traits of Polish culture;

- 2 trainers are recommended to take part in the exercise, one trainer reads one group a sentence describing national traits of the neighbour’s culture and they express their opinions at the same time the other translates it to the other group which does not take an active part in the exercise (does not move on the barometer).



Analysis– instructions:

- reflection – at the end of the exercise the trainer and participants sit in a circle and talk over it, the discussion aims at finding out whether the participants agree with the read sentences or do not and how often they encounter the selected traits describing a particular culture in practice. Then the trainer comments the information gathered during the discussion pursuant to the materials he/she has (see: chapter No. 4 of the cross-border tool – the theoretical part, chapter No. 4 of the general tool);
- it is recommended to use visualization (e.g. PowerPoint presentation) of traits describing a particular culture;
- comments – the exercise can be used during a discussion on some issues related to planning a cross-border project.

#### **Enclosure No. 1 to exercise No. 4.2.**

*(the Czech-language version of the enclosure is available in the Czech-language version of the materials)*

#### **Barometer**

- **one of the basic standards of Czech culture is improvisation (CZ);**
- avoiding all unknown is a distinctive trait of Polish culture (PL);
- **in Czechs formality causes distrust and raises doubts (CZ);**
- norms and plans are standards for Poles (PL);

- 
- **Czechs do not come into conflicts and if it possible they try to avoid such situations (CZ);**
  - during discussions Poles often defend their positions strongly, they do not change their opinions easily (PL);
  - **making an attempt to become a perfectionist is interpreted as an unnecessary slowdown in action by Czechs (CZ);**
  - Poles strive after perfection (PL);
  - **the ability to learn fast new things is characteristic of Czechs (CZ);**
  - Poles analyse a problem precisely and scrupulously in order to avoid it in future (PL);
  - **Czechs seek the simplest, convenient solutions (CZ);**
  - Poles search for optimal solutions, often complicated (PL);
  - **Czechs instead of saying frankly „no” say „yes, but...” (CZ).**

### Exercise No. 4.3.

#### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE „60 seconds”



Aim of the exercise:

- pondering over individual time perception in the cross-border co-operation/cross-border projects context
- awareness of some differences in time perception



Target group:

- any



Duration:

- about 20 min.



Materials/teaching aids:

- a watch for a trainer
- chairs ( one chair for each of participants)
- if in the room where the exercise takes place there is a clock, it should be covered in case the clock ticks loudly it should be removed



Description/Instructions:

- participants are asked to take their watches off and put them away. Then the trainer asks them to sit down on the chairs quietly with their eyes closed. Then they are asked to stand up and once again close their eyes. On the trainer's command "start" each of participants numbers off to 60 seconds, when he/she ends he/she sits down and opens his/her eyes. When everybody sits the trainer comments the exercise pursuant to the materials he/she has (see: chapter No. 4 of the cross-border tool – the theoretical part, chapter No. 4 of

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the general tool). Then the trainer's comments should be followed by a discussion moderated by the trainer. At the end of the exercise the trainer sums it up. It should be emphasized that the exercises is performed correctly only when the participants remain quiet.



Analysis– instructions:

- reflection – that kind of exercise raises important issues related to time and opens a discussion on individual time perception. The discussion can be oriented towards differences in time perception between Polish and Czech cultures and some advantages and disadvantages resulting from the situation in the cross-border co-operation/cross-border projects context;
- comments – the exercise can be used as an introduction to another training course module or as a light, pleasant form of an introduction to another day of training course.

## 5. Evaluation of a cross-border project

### Exercise No. 5.1.

#### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE „Evaluation of a Polish-Czech project team”



Aim of the exercise:

- cross-border co-operation assessment in the project team context



Target group:

- depending on situation



Duration:

- about 20 min.



Materials/teaching aids:

- printed a project team evaluation form
- ballpoints



Description/Instructions:

- the trainer gives each of participants a project team evaluation form where some characteristic traits of a project team cooperation have been mentioned (see: enclosure No. 1 to exercise No. 5.1.). Each of the participants is told to analyse individually a cross-border project implemented recently or currently which he/she has taken part in, paying special attention to relationships among members of the project team. Then he/she should fill in the form describing the intensity of the traits mentioned in the form pursuant to his/her experiences acquired during the project implementation. If anybody of the participants does not have any experience of Polish-Czech project implementation

he/she can fill in the form describing other situation (concerning Polish-Czech relations) in the Polish-Czech context in the borderland. Then each of the participants (or some of them – it depends on a group, its character, number, etc.) presents the most intensive trait of his/her project team according to him/her as well as the least intensive one and then he/she describes particular situations during the project implementation when the selected traits have revealed or have not revealed at all. It is recommended to ponder over the situations appraised very low by the participants and to discuss on some solutions to similar situations in the future. After listening to all participants' suggestions the trainer comments them pursuant to the materials he/she has (see: chapter No. 5 of the cross-border tool – the theoretical part, chapter No. 5 of the general tool). Then the trainer's comments should be followed by a discussion moderated by the trainer. At the end of the exercise the trainer sums it up.



Analysis– instructions:

- reflection – the trainer asks the participants if they evaluate their projects, if they confirm, he asks how they do that, when – in which stage of the project implementation and what the scope of their evaluation is as well as how the results are used, etc;
- another issue which can be take up during the exercise is a discussion on an aim of a project evaluation, its duration and its influence on the improvement of a quality of a cross-border co-operation/ cross-border projects.

**Enclosure No. 1 to exercise No. 5.1. Materials for participants – „Evaluation of a Polish-Czech project team”**

PROJECT TEAM EVALUATION FORM			
Trait	Completely	Partially	At all
Relations among members of the project team are clearly determined by their roles in the project			
Members of the team help one another understand one another during a discussion			
Members of the team understand the differences in approaching to the project			
Members of the team do a survey of their work and informed others about its results in order to develop a project			
Members of the team learn from one another			
The team carries out the tasks on time			

Each member of the team wants to show that he/she contributes to the success of the project			
Members of the team are capable of sacrificing themselves regardless of what is needed to achieve success.			
We help one another in order to compensate for individual shortcomings			
A leader of the team prefers the project interest to his/her own good			
A leader of the team is fair and impartial to all people involved in the project			
A leader of the team creates suitable conditions for achieving common aims and learning from one another			

## 6. The transversal skills of a cross-border project manager

### Exercise No. 6.1.

#### METHODOLOGICAL SHEET FOR THE EXERCISE „Ideal manager of cross-border projects”



Aim of the exercise:

- pondering over competencies which a manager of cross-border projects should have
- analysis of own personality paying special attention to the competencies of a manager of cross-border projects



Target group:

- depending on situation



Duration:

- about 20 min.



Materials/teaching aids:

- flipchart, coloured felt-tips, sheets of paper



Description/Instructions:

- the trainer draws a silhouette of a manager of cross-border projects. Then he/she asks the participants (using a brainstorming technique) to provide the competencies, skills, capabilities which, according to them, describe an ideal manager of cross-border projects (15 traits minimum). The trainer writes the provided character traits down on the flipchart. Then each of the participants comes up to the flipchart and circles 3 selected traits which, in his/her opinion, describe an ideal manager of cross-border projects in the most accurate way. Next each of the participants is given a sheet of paper and puts down on it 5 character

traits (out of those written on the flipchart) which he/she has and 1 trait which he/she does not have or he/she should work on. Then during a discussion moderated by the trainer each of the participants (or some of them – it depends on a group, its character, number, etc.) chooses one trait and give an example of a cross-border co-operation or a cross-border project implementation when he/she has made a good use of it and how. At the end of the exercise the trainer sums it up commenting all activities pursuant to the materials he/she has (see: chapter No. 6 of the cross-border tool – the theoretical part, chapter No. 6 of the general tool).



#### Analysis– instructions:

- the exercise is orientated towards awareness of a wide range of competencies (especially the soft ones) which can be an attribute of a project manager. The exercise can be performed as a brainstorming technique before the training course module dedicated to the transversal competencies of a manager of cross-border projects or at the end as a résumé of the subject.

## 7. Case studies

The under mentioned case studies can be used as exercises the same way as in examples No. 1.2, 3.1 and 4.1. They also can be sources of inspiration for trainers during preparations for other exercise modules.

### Case study no 1 – „Promotion of Zaolzie on the Polish side of the Cieszyn Silesia – the problem of the history perceiving illustrated with an example of the published map”

<b>Subject</b>
Promotion of Zaolzie <sup>2</sup> on the Polish side of the Cieszyn Silesia – the problem of the history perceiving illustrated with an example of the published map
<b>Situation description</b>
The Polish organization <sup>3</sup> together with the Polish civic association <sup>4</sup> which has its seat in the Cieszyn Silesia – on its Czech side, worked out a project intended to promotion of Zaolzie on the Polish part of the Cieszyn Silesia. The project was partially funded by the Micro-Project Fund of the Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme between the Czech Republic and Poland in the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion. The project aimed at creating a common ground for relations between Poles living on both sides of the border as well as some instruments propagating knowledge of life, achievements and current problems of the Polish community in Zaolzie. Furthermore in the context of experiences of other European regions inhabited by national minorities the project was to contribute to change the way of perceiving the minority by the majority group which should perceive the Polish minority as a treasure of the region instead of as threat. The project realization included among the others organization of a series of public meetings (talk-shows) with participation of the inhabitants of Polish part of the Cieszyn Silesia and the outstanding representatives of the Polish community in Zaolzie. The culmination of the series was to be an exhibition presenting the current view of the Polish minority in Zaolzie, their achievements, organizational potential and the outstanding personalities. Moreover a large format folding publication made both the series of public meetings and the exhibition more attractive. On its front page there was a map of Zaolzie and on the back one there was some

<sup>2</sup> Zaolzie – the Polish name has been used since the 1920s for a part of the Cieszyn Silesia situated to the west of the River Olza which nowadays belongs to the Czech Republic

<sup>3</sup> The library aims at among the others working out some modern methods of regional and bibliological research, inspiring, organizing and carrying out research work concerning literature of the Cieszyn Silesia as well as popularizing knowledge of the history and culture of the region

<sup>4</sup> The association coordinating activity of organizations for Czech citizens of Polish ethnicity and it represents the Polish community in relations with the national majority, the state and local authorities and media. Its activity includes a full spectrum of social, cultural and business lives of the Poles inhabiting in the Czech Republic

information of its achievements and forms of its activity. All work during the project realization was going according to plan however a problem has arisen two months since the map was published. Some of the Czech local politicians construed the publication as an instrument which didn't influence beneficially on Polish-Czech relations instead of as a one of the project tools. According to them the map – set in history and drawing in accordance with the originators' principles – was published in such a way that it could be construed as a form of the revisionist idea – a change of the Polish-Czech border (on the map names of towns, villages situated to the west of the River Olza were in Polish, the cover of the map was in Polish national colours and there was the retouched Czech flag, moreover there were marked historical state borders which aren't officially accepted by the Czech side). So they construed the action as an offensive one. Furthermore they didn't talk about the situation directly with the organizations responsible for preparing and publishing the map but they involved in it some Czech local media which asked Polish media to comment on the ensuing situation. It was the beginning of the problems. The subject of the map gained impetus and gradually exceeded the local level. There were some articles describing the situation in the extend context (quoting other situations which influenced on Polish-Czech relations in the past)emphasizing deterioration in Polish-Czech relations in the Cieszyn Silesia. What is worse the whole situation influenced on mutual relations between managing authorities of the Micro-Project Fund of the Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme between the Czech Republic and Poland in the Cieszyn Silesia which co-financed the project thus the map.

The conflict concerning the publication had a life of its own both in the media and public institutions. Until now it hasn't been solved yet.

Strong points	Weak points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the way of presenting the issues of Zaolzie (including among the others the map) enhance interest in the region;</li> <li>- the map as well as the whole project is aimed at the issues of Zaolzie and it is an element of popularization of the subject (all those what is Zaolzie today), the subject which still lives on;</li> <li>- the map is a kind of a spur to discussion, introduces the subject.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Czech audience was unfamiliar with the context and the aim of drawing the map and it caused the conflict;</li> <li>-unfamiliarity with the history and its appraisal from the angle of the map causes tensions;</li> <li>- inability to talk about the history which is tough and painful for Poles and Czechs inhabiting in the borderland (in the Cieszyn Silesia);</li> <li>- many organizations and social groups on both sides of the border were involved into the conflict;</li> <li>- there isn't one perfect solution of the problem.</li> </ul>
Polish point of view (stereotypes)	Czech point of view (stereotypes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czech nation is a small and cowardly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poles make an attempt on the Czech territory</li> </ul>

<p>nation which shouldn't express the opinion about Zaolzie;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czechs butt in the matter unnecessarily.</li> </ul>	<p>propagating revisionist ideas and trends;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poles strengthen Polish-Czech animosities, resentments which have their sources in the history, unnecessarily reopen old wounds.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective reasons for such behaviour</b></p>	
<p><b>Poles</b></p>	<p><b>Czechs</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a part of the Polish people living in the Cieszyn Silesia (particularly the young generation) isn't interested in the history and issues of the region;</li> <li>- a result of the project (the map) is interpreted in many different ways (mainly positively – as a promotion of Polish identity in the Czech part of the Cieszyn Silesia);</li> <li>- Polish public institutions at national level aren't interested in the above mentioned subject.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a part of the Czech people living in the Cieszyn Silesia (particularly the young generation) isn't interested in the history and issues of the region;</li> <li>- a result of the project (the map) is interpreted in many different ways (mainly negatively – as an attempt on the Czech territory, an effort of “smuggling” revisionist ideas into the publication).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interpretation in the intercultural context</b></p>	
<p>The authors of the map didn't display cultural sensitivity. Knowing the history of Polish minority (autochthonous) living in the Cieszyn Silesia in the Czech Republic which is still a touchy subject, they should use bilingual names of the towns and villages on the map in accordance with the legal norms which are applied in cities, towns, villages where Polish national minority makes more than 10% of inhabitants (legal basis: Ustawa nr 128/2000 Dz. U. o gminach z późniejszymi zmianami, Ustawa z dnia 10 lipca 2001 r. o prawach członków mniejszości narodowych i o zmianie niektórych ustaw).</p> <p>Consultations and decisions should be taken during the arrangements to avoid the ensuing situation. The knowledge of the history leaves a lot to be desired and the emotions cause that Czechs are more sensitive about belonging the Czech part of the Cieszyn Silesia to the Czech Republic.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations (based on the weak points)</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it is important to influence on Poles and Czechs inhabiting the borderland to change their way of perceiving their common history of the Cieszyn Silesia;</li> <li>- particular emphasis should be placed on the necessity of the regional education (learning the issues of the region starting from children);</li> <li>- the problematic issues which could cause conflict should be consulted with much more number of institutions (anticipation ability).</li> </ul>	

## Case study no 2 – „Cooperation between Polish and Czech schools – a problem of a will and motivation”

<b>Subject</b>	
Cooperation between Polish and Czech schools – a problem of a will and motivation	
<b>Situation description</b>	
<p>Czech organizations specializing in lifelong learning and Polish ones representing higher education as well as regional government drew up a project which was partially funded by the Cross-border Cooperation Operational Programme between the Czech Republic and Poland. The project aimed at improving knowledge and ability to cross-border cooperate among the teachers and secondary schools’ students in the Polish-Czech borderland (on the area where the following six Euroregions function: Nysa-Nisa, Glacensis, Pradziad-Praděd, Silesia, Śląsk Cieszyński-Těšínské Slezsko oraz Beskidy-Beskydy). The project was mainly oriented towards overcoming the Polish-Czech stereotypes as well as towards establish both formal and informal cooperation between the Polish-Czech secondary schools’ students and their teaching staff. Its realization was supposed to found on different kinds of workshops in intercultural learning, developing communication and language skills and drawing up mutual Polish-Czech projects. The workshops were supposed to be addressed to the above mentioned groups.</p> <p>The problem arose at the very beginning of the project implementation. While the Polish partners of the project involved a dozen or so educational institutions, the Czech ones just a handful of schools (less interest in participation in the project was noticeable on the Czech side of the entire border, it was assumed that 15 representatives of Czech borderland schools should have taken part in each workshop, the number of enrolling representatives of Czech schools for a workshop fluctuated from 2 to 6). The ensuing situation forced the project partners to extend the circle of the project recipients to include primary schools and other educational institutions).</p>	
<b>Strong points</b>	<b>Weak points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the ensuing situation will be a spur to take action to find out the reasons of the problem;</li> <li>- a change of the approach and the strategy to draw up and implement such kinds initiatives has been aware during the project realization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the analysis of the target groups’ demands for such kinds activities wasn’t carried out in the project planning phase;</li> <li>- the assumed indicators concerning the target groups were unreasonable;</li> <li>- the subject of the project was quite narrow thus the small number of the interested Czechs in it (for most of them the participation in the project realization was pointless);</li> <li>- inefficient PR of the project and its activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Polish point of view (stereotypes)</b>	<b>Czech point of view (stereotypes)</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czechs are lazy and comfort-seeking;</li> <li>- Czechs don't want to become involved in such kinds of initiatives/ they aren't prone to implement such undertakings;</li> <li>- Czechs are too attached to their daily routines and don't intend to change their attitude and to dedicated their time and energy to other, new initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a Polish teacher prefers participation in a project (a training course/ meeting) to working(teaching);</li> <li>- Poles are eager for all activities but they aren't very effective (they participate in meetings mostly "for pleasure");</li> <li>- if Czechs participate in a project (a training course/ meeting) they aspire to achieve the goal, develop their knowledge, skills etc., while Poles assume that if they achieve the aim that's good but failure isn't a problem for them;</li> <li>- Czechs are involved in cooperation with other countries of Western Europe and don't have enough time to cooperate with Poles.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective reasons for such behaviour</b>	
<b>Poles</b>	<b>Czechs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Poles are interested in Czechs (the culture, the news etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Czechs aren't interested in Poles (the culture, the news etc.);</li> <li>- according to Czechs Poles aren't prestigious and interesting partners in mutual activities(much better partners are Germans or Frenchmen then Poles);</li> <li>- Poland isn't trendy in the Czech Republic;</li> <li>- Poland isn't respected in the Czech Republic – the history in the underlying cause of the problem (officially the relations are appropriate but in less formal ones the history matters greatly) – however the further from the border, the better Czechs perceive Poles;</li> <li>- Czechs don't realize the need for cooperation with Poles, according to them Poland is so close that they can communicate, cooperate with Poles at any time.</li> </ul>
<b>Interpretation in the intercultural context</b>	
<p>The attempts at interpretation are influenced by the historical conditions. The Cieszyn Silesia forming both Euroregion Śląsk Cieszyński-Těšínské Slezsko and Beskidy-Beskydy Euroregion is inhabited by Polish autochthonous population – on the both sides of the border. The presence of Polish national minority on the Czech side of the border still gives rise to same difficulties.</p>	

Although it could be a bridge between Czech and Polish nations instead of being ‘painful testimony to history’. In the other Euroregions on both sides of the Polish-Czech border especially after II world war relocations of the population took place. A small number of autochthons wasn’t able to maintain the cultural and historical continuity. Therefore in the Euroregions Nisa-Nysa, Glacensis, Praděd-Pradziad ethnic relations are based on current experiences of their inhabitants. People who selected teachers to take part in the project realization—the headmasters – preferred like other decision-makers, not to talk about the Polish national minority, not to get back to the history as well as not to teach about it. Thus their reluctance to select teachers whose should have taken part in training courses together with Polish teachers. But the issues shouldn’t be concealed. For common good, for mutual contacts and cooperation it is important to act together and it means to know each other including the common history. An international cooperation is very important for the headmasters but western countries are much more attractive than Poland for Czechs. It was completely different situation in Poland where teachers are obliged to develop their professional skills all the time and participation in such training courses, workshops gives promotion prospects.

Another explanation could be that the teachers were tired of participating in many various training courses. The results of the research carried out among secondary school teachers show that they consider themselves ‘experts’ and they don’t need to improve their professional skills in contrast with primary school teachers.

#### **Recommendations (based on the weak points)**

- a market analysis should be carried out in the project planning phase to find out what the market demands are for and to avoid some problems during the project realization;
- chosen indicators should be achievable (sometimes it’s better to understate indicators and focus on the quality);
- the project PR activities should be more developed and performed well in advanced;
- some funds should be considered as an incentive to involve the target group of the project in its implementation
- the way how Czechs perceive Poles and vice versa should be changed i.e. through mutual communication strategy.

### Case study no 3 – „Cooperation in emergency management – the issue of reaction on a threat”

<b>Subject</b>	
Cooperation in emergency management – the issue of reaction on a threat	
<b>Situation description</b>	
<p>During a gale which passed Cieszyn and Český Těšín a high voltage power line was brought down and fell down into the border River Olza separating the two towns. The appropriate service was notified about the accident and fire brigades came soon after on the spot (both Polish fire brigades and Czech ones). After the preliminary assessment of the situation both Polish and Czech firemen had doubts about which fire brigades (Polish or Czech ones) should have taken the action. Finally one of the Polish firemen went into the water and tried to take the cable out of it. Unfortunately during the action he got an electric shock and was taken to hospital (the insurance covered the treatment costs). The detailed analysis of the case carried by the Polish and Czech firemen (when the action was finished) showed that the action should have been taken by Czech fire brigades. In the case ignorance of the procedures was the problem.</p>	
<b>Strong points</b>	<b>Weak points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the firemen took action in the ensuing situation;</li> <li>- cooperation between Polish and Czech uniformed services including firemen is real – both sides are convinced that the cooperation in emergency management is useful, valuable and they just do it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the firemen didn't know the procedures regulating cross-border actions concerning emergency management;</li> <li>- the procedures regulating cross-border actions in the field of emergency management are established at the national and regional levels thus they are better adapted for international cooperation than cross-border one which has more local character.</li> </ul>
<b>Polish point of view (stereotypes)</b>	<b>Czech point of view (stereotypes)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Czechs don't take any initiatives, they are cautious, they aren't reliable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Poles behave irresponsibly, they play 'the heroes'</li> </ul>
<b>Objective reasons for such behaviour</b>	
<b>Poles</b>	<b>Czechs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in Poland, likewise in the Czech Republic, legal procedures concerning emergency management are established at the national and regional levels;</li> <li>- in Poland provincial governors are responsible for coordination of civil defence and emergency management services' work (including firemen).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in the Czech Republic, likewise in Poland, legal procedures concerning emergency management are established at the national and regional levels;</li> <li>- in the Czech Republic commanders of actions working in provincial offices are responsible for both coordination and making decisions</li> </ul>

<p>But the provincial governors aren't superiors of the above mentioned services and don't bear responsibility for decisions concerning reactions to various occurrences, threats. The responsibility falls on commanders, heads of firefighting and rescue units etc. As an example when during an action a fireman sustain an injury through fault of his the responsibility for it falls on his commander, not for a provincial governor. Due to it the commanders, heads try to avoid situations when they have to give official orders to take action abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the problem arisen during the action is also kind of a mental problem which is inside people's (firemen's) heads – 'I don't do it because I'm afraid of it, I don't have enough experience so I don't take action';</li> <li>- in the above described situation the fire brigades didn't react because the cooperation between Polish and Czech fire brigades was very formal (they didn't know each other closely enough to go for a beer or just to talk or even 'quarrel', be more informal) what made the cooperation difficult. Informal contacts would improve it and contribute to enhance the trust and openness between them as well as bringing taking decisions forward.</li> </ul>	<p>concerning civil defence and emergency management services' work (including firemen). But the regulations connected with the subject are too general and therefore difficult to apply in practice especially in emergency situations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the problem arisen during the action is also kind of a mental problem which is inside people's (firemen's) heads – 'I don't do it because I'm afraid of it, I don't have enough experience so I don't take action';</li> <li>- in the above described situation the fire brigades didn't react because the cooperation between Polish and Czech fire brigades was very formal (they didn't know each other closely enough to go for a beer or just to talk or even 'quarrel', be more informal) what made the cooperation difficult. Informal contacts would improve it and contribute to enhance the trust and openness between them as well as bringing taking decisions forward.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interpretation in the intercultural context</b></p>	
<p>In the case the attempts at interpretation are influenced by the historical conditions as well. Czechs as a more prudent nation avoiding precarious situations didn't act immediately and didn't eliminate the threat. Poles behaved in a completely different way, like in the past and nowadays, they acted first then they thought. But in the case there was a real threat and if the action hadn't been undertaken or had been postponed the people's lives would have been in danger. The firemen from the both sides of the River Olza could make a common decision on further actions.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations (based on the weak points)</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- we should strive to modify the procedures regulating actions concerning emergency</li> </ul>	

management and other fields;

- some practical training courses in various fields should be organized for different target groups (including firemen) to broaden their knowledge about the subjects;
- the representatives of institutions responsible for cross-border activities (including the uniformed services) should cooperate more often and closely. The contacts should be both formal (conferences, training courses, meetings) and informal (integration activities, interactive and intercultural training courses just spending time together).

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## Conclusion

The character of the project management in borderlands is special. Apart from a fundamental dimension related to a technical part of planning and implementing some undertakings it also concerns sensitivity of social relations caused by complexity and specific features of a cross-border region. Inter-cultural competencies of project managers play the key role in the process of project management in borderlands. They enable the managers to work efficiently – means not only in accordance with the defined goals, activities, indicators and policies but also getting out synergy from cultural differences, co-operation, lifelong learning and submitting value added. The authors of the publication meant it as practical supportive form of a tool for a cross-border project managing staff as well as the members of project teams in the Euroregion Śląsk Cieszyński-Těšínské Slezsko<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> M. Olszewski, B. Kasperek, A. Olszewska, H. Böhm, D. Madziová, *Toolkit for cross-border project management in the Polish-Czech borderland in the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion*, Cieszyn-Třinec 2014, p. 175.