

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN CULTURAL AND EVENT TOURISM IN THE COUNTIES OF NORTH-WEST REGION OF ROMANIA

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Abstract

The present study explores the opportunities and challenges of cross-border cooperation (CBC) in cultural and event tourism in the north-western counties of Romania. Cross-border cultural tourism involves visiting cultural heritage sites in border regions, promoting cultural diversity, and strengthening community ties and this research highlights the positive impact of this type of tourism on economic growth, cultural events' s visibility and infrastructure investments. The best practices from European projects and initiatives abundantly demonstrate the importance of collaboration and information exchange between communities for the sustainable development of CBC in cultural tourism. Our research in the studied has identified various and solid historical and contemporary cultural relations between Romania, Hungary, and Ukraine, underling mutual influences and artistic collaborations, common interests, but also key obstacles, including cultural and linguistic differences, varying stakeholders and objectives, underdeveloped infrastructure, and geopolitical tensions and crises that can disrupt tourism flows, creating instability and uncertainty. Additionally, different regulatory frameworks between countries complicate the coordination and implementation of cross-border projects. Our study proposes solutions to overcome these challenges, such as promoting cooperation and partnerships, developing infrastructure, managing tourism sustainably, and last but not least a consistent access to European funds. Cross-border cultural tourism has significant potential for the economic, social, and cultural development of border regions, contributing to improved quality of life and the promotion of cultural values. By addressing the identified challenges and leveraging the opportunities, regions can foster sustainable and inclusive tourism that enhances cultural exchange and overall regional development.

Keywords: Cross-border cooperation, cultural tourism, heritage, economic development, European projects

JEL Classification: Z32, F15, R58, O18

1. Introduction

Cross-border cultural tourism (CBCT) involves visiting cultural heritage sites in regions along the borders between two or more countries. Although similar to "regular" cultural tourism, it focuses on authentic cultural experiences and interactions with local communities in border areas. CBCT promotes cultural diversity, facilitating intercultural exchanges and strengthening community ties (Duda, 2024). It mitigates the adverse impact of borders, often perceived as obstacles or symbolic delimitations (Badulescu et al., 2014). In the current context, CBCT contributes to economic growth supporting the economic and cultural development of the involved regions, generating revenue for local communities, and stimulating investments in infrastructure and services, thereby improving the quality of life for residents (Hardi et al., 2021).

Collaboration between countries and regions is essential for creating integrated and attractive tourism offerings. Various studies show that cross-border partnerships increase the number of

tourists and diversify tourism experiences (Hardi et al., 2021). Cultural events and festivals promoted through CBC benefit from greater exposure and attract a diverse international audience, highlighting their importance in regional development and cultural promotion (Mair & Weber, 2019).

CBC in cultural and event tourism facilitates the conservation and promotion of shared cultural heritage, encouraging collaboration between neighbouring countries. In the European Union (EU), this type of cooperation is widespread and supported through initiatives that contribute to creating a common European space where cultural diversity is appreciated and valued. CBCT positively impacts international relations, promoting peace and understanding between nations. Cultural exchanges allow tourists and local communities to learn from each other, overcome prejudices, and build bridges of communication and collaboration (Council of Europe, 2021a; Council of Europe, 2021b).

The objective of this research is to analyse the opportunities and challenges of CBC in cultural and event tourism in the north western counties of Romania, specifically Bihor, Satu Mare, and Maramureş, in collaboration with partners from neighbouring countries, Hungary and Ukraine. The structure of this paper is as follows: after this introduction, we will review the main contribution on this topic and outline the historical and cultural context, and then we will explore the perspectives on cross-border tourism and its economic impact for local and regional communities. The subsequent chapter will discuss the challenges and solutions in the development of CBCT. Finally, we will conclude with several recommendations.

2. Theoretical backgrounds on cross-border cooperation in tourism and culture

Cross-border cooperation (CBC) in tourism and culture offers significant opportunities for promoting cultural diversity, enhancing mutual understanding, and fostering economic development (Timothy & Jarkko, 2013), thereby promoting peace and cooperation between neighboring countries. Prokkola (2007) emphasizes that CBC can lead to the development of new tourism products and services, enhancing the attractiveness of border regions and Perkmann (2003) highlights the role of CBC in regional development, as it can stimulate economic growth and create new employment opportunities. However, despite the benefits, cross-border cultural cooperation faces several challenges. Cultural and linguistic differences can create barriers in communication and understanding between tourists and local communities, affecting the tourism experience (Timothy, 2001). Different regulations and policies complicate the coordination and implementation of cross-border projects (Scott, 2015), (Badulescu et al., 2015) and geopolitical tensions further exacerbate these difficulties (Paasi, 1999), limiting the movement of people and tightening border controls. Additionally, the lack of adequate infrastructure in border regions can hinder accessibility and attractiveness (Prokkola, 2007). Successful CBCT projects often involve strong partnerships and effective communication between local communities, regional authorities, and other stakeholders. According to Perkmann (2003) collaboration is key to overcoming cultural and linguistic differences and coordinating regulations, while Bujdosó et al. (2015) emphasize the need for investments in infrastructure to improve accessibility. Sustainable tourism practices are crucial to minimize environmental impacts (Hall, 2000), and integrated tourist products that leverage common cultural heritage and offer authentic experiences can attract tourists and stimulate the local economy (Timothy, 2001).

Central and Eastern European countries share a common history of transitioning from centrally planned economies to market economies, experiencing in recent decades an increased openness in cross-border relations, supported by EU accession (Bachtler & McMaster, 2008; Hughes & Allen, 2005). This has allowed them to capitalize on their shared cultural heritage and historical ties to develop strong and innovative cross-border tourism initiatives (Hughes & Allen, 2005). However, these countries also face unique challenges, such as varying levels of economic development and political stability, which can impact the effectiveness of cross-border projects. In the specific case of Ukraine, the country's CBC has been positively influenced by its strategic course towards EU integration but negatively impacted by the consequences of the war with Russia. The European Neighbourhood Policy has provided Ukraine with various interaction

mechanisms, opening prospects for economic integration (Sotnikov & Kravchenko, 2013), including the development of border infrastructure, tourism, cultural exchange, and environmental protection. Local communities play a strategic role in these initiatives, particularly in regions like Transcarpathia, which have strong historical and cultural ties with neighbouring EU countries (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania) (Melehanych, 2020). However, Ukraine faces challenges such as geopolitical tensions and varying levels of infrastructure development, which can impact the effectiveness of cross-border projects (Ovcharenko, 2020).

3. Historical and Cultural Background of Romanian Border Regions

Cross-border regions in Europe have a rich and complex history, characterized by intense cultural and economic interactions between communities on either side of the borders. These areas have been convergence points for various ethnic and cultural groups, contributing to a diverse and vibrant cultural mosaic. Despite periods of peace and development, history also records conflicts and economic regression, especially when border areas were considered peripheral zones of national states or delimitations of power areas (Badulescu et al., 2014). In contemporary times, CBCT peacefully leverages shared history and heritage, promoting intercultural exchanges and strengthening ties between local communities, contributing to the economic and social development of the involved regions (McDermott & McDowell, 2021).

The cultural relations between Romania and Hungary, as well as between Romania and Ukraine, have a complex and often tumultuous history. In the case of Romania and Hungary, cultural relations have been marked by significant mutual influences, particularly in the historical region of Transylvania. This region has been a convergence point for various ethnic and cultural groups, including Romanians, Hungarians, and Germans, each contributing to a rich and diverse cultural heritage (Blomqvist et al., 2013; Stoica & Toca, 2010). Cultural exchanges have been facilitated by the movement of people and communities, demographic changes, mixed marriages, and joint activities, leading to artistic and intellectual collaborations. The shared cultural heritage between Romania and Hungary is evident in numerous aspects of cultural and social life. The cultural relations between Romania and Ukraine have been influenced by the geopolitical context and historical developments, mainly in the regions of Bukovina and Maramureş. Folklore traditions, music, and popular dances reflect the mutual influences between the two cultures. In border regions (including Satu Mare and Maramureş counties), there is a rich tradition of crafts and artisanship, reflecting mutual cultural influences. Local festivals and celebrations are occasions to celebrate the shared cultural heritage and strengthen ties between Romanian and Ukrainian communities (Gerasymchuk, 2017).

The cultural relations, built and intangible heritage among the three countries, are not only historical and ethnographic. In recent years, cultural events have played an important role in consolidating cross-border cultural relations. Festivals such as the International Theatre Festival in Oradea and the Transylvania Film Festival in the North-West Region of Romania, or Campus Festival (Debrecen, Hajdu-Bihar) and Nyíregyháza Vidor Festival (Nyíregyháza, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg) in Hungary attract participants from neighboring countries, promoting cultural exchanges and artistic collaboration. Additionally, joint cultural initiatives, such as art exhibitions and cross-border concerts, contribute to strengthening cultural ties between these countries. Cross-border mobility, recently facilitated by Romania's accession to the Schengen area and the elimination of border controls with Hungary, can have a positive impact on cultural tourism, facilitating tourists' access to events and cultural attractions in border regions. On the other hand, culture is a living phenomenon, and cultural tourism is not only nourished by heritage buildings, fortresses, museums, and folk traditions. Young people play an essential role in the development of cultural and event tourism. Generation Z and millennials are attracted to authentic experiences and opportunities to discover new cultures and traditions. Social media and influencers have become important tools in promoting tourist destinations, offering an authentic and personalized perspective on travel (Enea, 2018). Young people are increasingly interested in sustainable tourism and ecotourism, seeking experiences that generate a low environmental impact and support local

communities. This trend is reflected in their preferences for eco-friendly accommodation and activities that promote the conservation of nature and cultural heritage (Bujdosó et al., 2015).

4. Perspectives on Cross-Border Tourism: European Experiences

4.1. Showcasing Best Practices from European Projects

Collaboration between local communities and regional authorities is essential for the success of CBCT. European and international experiences show that partnerships between communities can lead to sustainable development and increased tourist attractiveness of the involved regions (Council of Europe, 2021b). Studies and research explore cross-border cultural cooperation in European border regions, emphasizing reconciliation and intercultural understanding (Laganà & White, 2021) and strengthening relationships between neighbouring communities (Baltà Portolés, 2015). They highlight the role of festivals in promoting CBC and cultural exchanges (Kostopoulou et al., 2015) and the involvement of local authorities in developing cross-border tourism (Badulescu et al., 2014; Badulescu et al., 2016).

Numerous projects demonstrate the interest and vitality of these initiatives across Europe, combining the value of cultural objectives with adventure tourism and visiting natural attractions to attract tourists and develop the local economy. From the rich European experience in cross-border (cultural) tourism, several programs and projects stand out, demonstrating the importance of collaboration and information exchange between communities to overcome challenges and capitalize on the opportunities offered by CBCT:

- The "Network of Cross-Border Cultural Centers" project between Italy and Slovenia, which aims to create a network of cultural centers to promote culture and tourism in the cross-border region (Interreg Italia-Slovenija, 2024);
- The Interreg VI-A Romania-Hungary Program, which establishes "Culture and Tourism" as one of its six strategic areas, aiming to promote common cultural heritage and develop cultural tourism in the cross-border region (Interreg Romania-Hungary, 2024b);
- The "Danube Cultural Heritage" project, involving several Danube riparian countries, focusing on promoting cultural tourism and protecting cultural heritage along the river (Institutul Național de Cercetare - Dezvoltare în Turism, 2021);
- The "Wine Cultural Route" project between France and Germany, which promotes cultural and gastronomic tourism by creating thematic tourist routes in wine regions (Council of Europe, 2021a);
- The "European Festivals" project within the "Creative Europe" initiative between various European countries, supporting the organization of cultural festivals and events to attract tourists and promote cultural diversity (European Commission, 2022);
- The CROCUS Project, which promotes cultural and creative tourism in rural and isolated areas of Europe by creating cross-border laboratories for prototyping sustainable business models and developing macro-regional and cross-border policy scenarios (CROCUS, 2024);
- The TExTOUR initiative, which developed a seven-step methodology for local communities interested in developing their tourism industry by leveraging their heritage capital, jointly designing innovative sustainable cultural tourism strategies to give disadvantaged areas in Europe a chance and replicate these experiences in other parts of the world (TExTOUR, 2021; CORDIS - EU research results, 2024);
- The "Castle Road" Project, which involved collaboration between castles in Eastern Styria and Southern Burgenland (Austria) and those in Slovenia to develop and promote cross-border heritage tourism. The initiative created common tourist products and disseminated knowledge (EU Tourism Platform, 2024a), improved museum management, attracted international tourists, and facilitated the exchange of information and experiences.

From these projects, several important lessons and best practices can be extracted:

- a. Collaboration and Partnerships: The success of cross-border projects depends on effective collaboration and communication between local communities, regional authorities, and other stakeholders to overcome challenges and achieve common goals.

b. Adaptation to Local Specifics: Tourism projects, business models, and cultural tourism activities must be adapted to the specific needs and characteristics of each region, benefiting local communities and ensuring long-term sustainability (CROCUS, 2024).

c. Promotion of Common Heritage: Joint cultural events, exhibitions, and festivals are effective ways to conserve, valorize, and promote common heritage and attract visitors, strengthening cultural ties between communities (EU Tourism Platform, 2024b).

d. Sustainability: The development of cultural tourism must be sustainable, considering the impact on the environment and local communities through ecological practices and long-term benefits for all involved parties (CORDIS - EU research results, 2024; TExTOUR, 2021).

4.2. Case Studies of Cross-Border Cultural Tourism in North-West Romania

In the counties of Bihor (BH), Maramureș (MM), and Satu Mare (SM) from the North-West Region of Romania (see Figure 1), collaboration between local communities and their counterparts in neighbouring countries (Hungary and Ukraine) has proven essential for the development of cultural tourism. Cross-border projects, such as those funded through the Interreg Program, have facilitated cooperation between communities and contributed to the development of tourism infrastructure and the promotion of shared cultural heritage (Rădulescu & Pop, 2017).



Figure No. 1. Counties from the North-West Region of Romania involved in CBC with Hungary and Ukraine

Source: own elaboration

For example, the collaboration between Bihor and Hajdú-Bihar counties has led to the organization of joint cultural events, such as festivals and exhibitions, which have attracted tourists from both countries and strengthened cultural ties between communities (Czuczor et al., 2023; Interreg Romania-Hungary, 2024a; Interreg Romania-Ungaria, 2024b; Biroul Regional pentru Cooperare Transfrontalieră Oradea (BRECO), 2025).

Local and regional authorities play a crucial role in promoting and developing CBCT. They are responsible for implementing policies and strategies that support CBC and ensuring a favorable framework for tourism development. For instance, the Bihor County Council has collaborated with authorities from Hajdú-Bihar County (Hungary) to develop joint tourism infrastructure projects and promote common cultural events (Consiliul Județean Bihor, 2023). These initiatives have been supported by European funds and have had a positive impact on the economic and social development of the region.

Another example is the collaboration between Maramureș County and Zakarpattia Oblast (Ukraine), which has led to the development of joint tourist routes and the promotion of shared

cultural heritage (Consiliul Județean Maramureș, 2021). Local and regional authorities have been actively involved in organizing cultural events and promoting the region as an attractive tourist destination. Annexes A11 and A12 present a series of these cross-border cooperation initiatives.

In the case of the North-West Region of Romania, these collaborations have had a positive impact on economic and social development, contributing to increased tourist attractiveness and strengthening cultural ties between communities.

4.3. Economic Benefits of Cross-Border Cultural Tourism in North-western Romania

Cross-border tourism, including its cultural component, has a significant impact on the economy of border regions, contributing to increased employment, revenue, and the development of local infrastructure. In the North-West Region of Romania, cross-border tourism with Hungary and, to a lesser extent, Ukraine, has generated a significant increase in the number of tourists and tourism revenues. Studies on cross-border tourism between Bihor County (Romania) and Hajdu-Bihar County (Hungary) show an annual increase of approximately 15% in the number of tourists between 2010 and 2016 (Rădulescu & Pop, 2017; Czuczor et al., 2023).

This growth has been supported by cross-border projects funded by the EU, such as the Interreg Program, which allocated funds for the development of tourism infrastructure and the promotion of shared cultural heritage (Bujdosó et al., 2015; Rădulescu & Pop, 2017). Interreg allocations for the Romania-Hungary relationship between 2021 and 2027 amount to nearly EUR 232 million (Interreg Romania-Hungary, 2024a), while for the Romania-Ukraine relationship, the allocations are around EUR 54 million (Ministerul Investițiilor și Proiectelor Europene, 2024). Although not all funds are directed towards the three counties analysed here, and the funding domains are broad, tourism will have a significant share in these projects. For example, in the Romania-Hungary cooperation, there are five major funding domains: competitiveness and intelligence, ecology and low carbon emissions, connectivity, social aspects, and cooperation governance. In the Romania-Ukraine cooperation, although the amounts are much smaller, one of the four main funding domains is titled "Tourism and Culture: Restoration of Tourist Sites." These funds support the modernization of tourism infrastructure, renovation of historical sites, development of tourist routes, and improvement of accommodation facilities. For instance, the restoration projects of Oradea Fortress and wooden churches in Maramureș have attracted many tourists and revitalized these areas. Investments in cross-border tourism have demonstrated their economic, cultural, and neighbourly benefits (Badulescu et al., 2016; Rădulescu & Pop, 2017).

In conclusion, CBCT has a significant positive economic impact on the border regions of north-western Romania, contributing to sustainable development and improving the quality of life for residents in these regions. The economic benefits of CBCT are multiple and extend beyond the direct revenues generated by tourists. These include job creation, stimulation of local entrepreneurship, and infrastructure development.

CBCT has led to the creation of numerous jobs in the tourism and hospitality sector. In Bihor, Satu Mare, and Maramureș counties, it is estimated that approximately 14,800 people are directly or indirectly employed in the tourism industry (Institutul Național de Statistică, 2024). These jobs include employees in travel agencies, tour guides, transportation, promoters, local craftsmen, and artisans. Strengthening CBCT can supplement the number of jobs and diversify qualifications and employment opportunities, encouraging local entrepreneurs to invest in tourism-related businesses, such as guesthouses, restaurants, souvenir shops, and travel agencies. These businesses generate revenue and contribute to the diversification of the local economy and the region's competitiveness.

Projects funded by European funds and revenues generated by tourism have been used to improve local infrastructure, through the renovation and conservation of historical sites, development of tourist routes, and improvement of accessibility in border regions. For example, the restoration projects of Oradea Fortress and wooden churches in Maramureș have attracted a significant number of tourists and contributed to the revitalization of these areas. These investments have proven their economic, cultural, and neighbourly utility (Badulescu et al., 2016; Rădulescu & Pop, 2017).

All these factors show that CBCT has a significant positive economic impact on the border regions of North-western Romania. By increasing revenues, creating jobs, and stimulating local entrepreneurship, this type of tourism contributes to sustainable development and improving the quality of life for residents in these regions.

5. Overcoming Challenges in Cross-Border Cultural Tourism in North-western Romania

5.1. Identifying Obstacles and Challenges

Despite strong enthusiasm for developing CBC and cultural tourism, the implementation of these projects can encounter numerous challenges and obstacles (Figure 2). These challenges have both general characteristics, common to most CBCs, and specific sub-regional or local aspects:

- **Cultural and Linguistic Differences:** These can create barriers in communication and understanding between tourists and local communities, affecting the tourism experience and cross-border cooperation (Skäremo, 2016; Badulescu & Badulescu, 2017). In northwestern Romania, national minorities from Ukraine and Hungary can mitigate this challenge, but difficulties remain at the level of official actions and comprehensive programs (Badulescu et al., 2014; Badulescu et al., 2016).

- **Different Regulations and Policies:** Each country has its own regulations and policies, complicating the coordination and implementation of cross-border projects. Differences in visa regulations and border controls can discourage tourists (Tambovceva et al., 2020). In the case of Romania-Hungary cooperation, legislative alignments have allowed increased cooperation, culminating in the abolition of controls with Romania's accession to the Schengen area in 2025. In the relationship with Ukraine, difficulties have worsened due to the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict, limiting the movement of people and tightening border controls.

- **Underdeveloped Infrastructure:** The lack of adequate infrastructure, such as roads, public transport, and tourist facilities, can limit the accessibility and attractiveness of border regions (Rădulescu & Pop, 2017).

- **Insufficient Funding:** CBCT requires significant investments, and access to funding can be a challenge. European funds, such as those offered through the Interreg Program, are essential but not always sufficient (CORDIS, 2024).

- **Negative Environmental Impact:** The increase in tourist flows can have negative effects on the environment, such as pollution and the deterioration of cultural and natural sites. Sustainable tourism management is essential to minimize these impacts (Rădulescu & Pop, 2017; Badulescu et al., 2016).

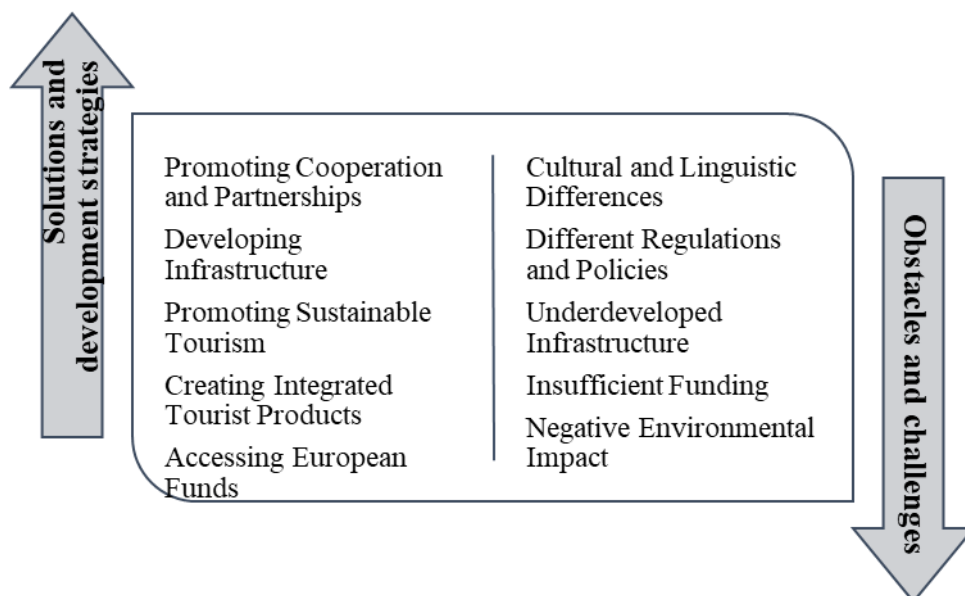


Figure No. 2. Obstacles and solutions for an effective CBC in cultural tourism

Source: own elaboration

5.2. Strategic Solutions for Cross-Border Tourism: Lessons from Romania-Hungary-Ukraine Cooperation

To overcome obstacles and capitalize on the opportunities offered by CBCT, the experiences and cooperation initiatives between Romania, Hungary, and Ukraine provide valuable solutions (Figure 2). Here are some of these solutions, based on references and examples from CBC, particularly those derived from CBC between Romania and Hungary:

- **Promoting Cooperation and Partnerships:** Collaboration between local communities, regional authorities, and other stakeholders is essential for the success of cross-border projects. Badulescu et al. (2016) addressed the cooperation experience between Bihor and Hajdú-Bihar counties, highlighting that strong partnerships and effective communication can help overcome cultural and linguistic differences and coordinate regulations and policies. Pardo et al. (2024) emphasize that contextual solutions can be replicated in other cross-border regions.

- **Developing Infrastructure:** Investments in infrastructure are crucial to improve the accessibility and attractiveness of border regions. Bujdosó et al. (2015) analyzed infrastructure development in the border region between Hungary and Romania, highlighting that road modernization and the development of tourist facilities can be financed through European funds and other sources of funding. This is the case with the cooperation between Maramureş County (Romania) and Zakarpatia Oblast (Ukraine), where the development of joint tourist routes has promoted the region as a tourist destination (Consiliul Judeţean Maramureş, 2021).

- **Promoting Sustainable Tourism:** Sustainable tourism management is essential to minimize the negative impact on the environment. Conservation measures and the promotion of sustainable tourism in cross-border projects between Bihor County (Romania) and Hajdu-Bihar County (Hungary) or Satu Mare County (Romania) and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County (Hungary) have emphasized the importance of ecological practices, such as the use of public transport and renewable energy (Czuczor et al., 2023; BRECO, 2025), solutions that can be applied in other cross-border regions.

- **Creating Integrated Tourist Products:** Developing integrated tourist products that leverage common cultural heritage and offer authentic experiences can attract tourists and stimulate the local economy. Successful experiences from Romania-Hungary cooperation underline the importance of creating integrated tourist products, such as thematic tourist routes and joint cultural events. These initiatives can be applied and replicated in cooperation with Ukraine and other cross-border regions (Council of Europe, 2021b; Interreg Romania-Hungary, 2024a).

- **Accessing European Funds:** European funds, such as those offered through the Interreg Program, are essential for financing CBCT projects (Interreg Romania-Ungaria, 2024b). Local and regional authorities must collaborate to access these funds and implement successful projects. Cross-border projects between Romania, Hungary, and Ukraine that have benefited from European funding are good examples that should be multiplied and developed, demonstrating the importance of CBC in overcoming obstacles and capitalizing on opportunities in cultural tourism.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

CBCT presents a valuable opportunity for the economic, social, and cultural development of border regions. The North-Western Region of Romania has demonstrated the benefits of collaboration with Hungary and Ukraine, even amidst major geopolitical crises or regulatory differences. Successful projects and community relationships have contributed to the conservation of cultural heritage, facilitated the restoration of historical sites, and revitalized cultural events, thereby strengthening intercultural ties and stimulating local economic development. The success of these projects has been made possible through close collaboration between communities, regional authorities, and other stakeholders. Joint efforts and a vision of mutual interest have allowed for overcoming legislative differences and the diversity of specific objectives for each party.

The main achievements include a positive economic impact, increased awareness of the value of cultural heritage, conservation measures, CBC, and economic and environmental sustainability. CBCT has generated significant revenues, created jobs, and stimulated local

entrepreneurship, while investments in infrastructure and the promotion of shared cultural heritage have increased tourism attractiveness.

CBC must be sustainable, considering the impact on the environment and local communities. Successful projects have promoted ecological practices, ensured long-term benefits, and these experiences should become standard practices for all involved parties.

To further capitalize on the potential of CBCT and ensure the sustainable development of border regions, the following measures are recommended:

- Extended Collaboration: Continue and expand collaboration between local communities, regional authorities, and other stakeholders.

- Accessing European Funds: European funds, such as those from the Interreg Program, are crucial for financing CBCT projects. Local and regional authorities must be prepared not only to access these funds but also to collaborate effectively to secure them.

- Investments in Infrastructure: Modernizing access routes and developing tourist facilities are necessary to improve the accessibility and attractiveness of border regions.

- Sustainable Management: Minimize the negative environmental impact through education, promoting ecological practices, and conserving cultural and natural sites.

- Development of Integrated Tourist Products: Create tourist products that leverage shared cultural heritage and offer authentic experiences to stimulate the local economy and increase the attractiveness of the regions.

- Investments in Education and Professional Training: Ensure quality services and support the sustainable development of CBCT through education and professional training.

In conclusion, CBCT has significant potential for the economic, social, and cultural development of regions and communities in border areas. The achievements of the counties in the North-West Region of Romania, together with their partners and counterparts in Hungary and Ukraine, are fitting examples in this regard. By implementing these recommendations and leveraging the opportunities offered by CBC, border regions can benefit from sustainable and inclusive tourism, contributing to the improvement of the quality of life for residents, promoting good neighbourliness, and upholding the cultural values of the area.

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