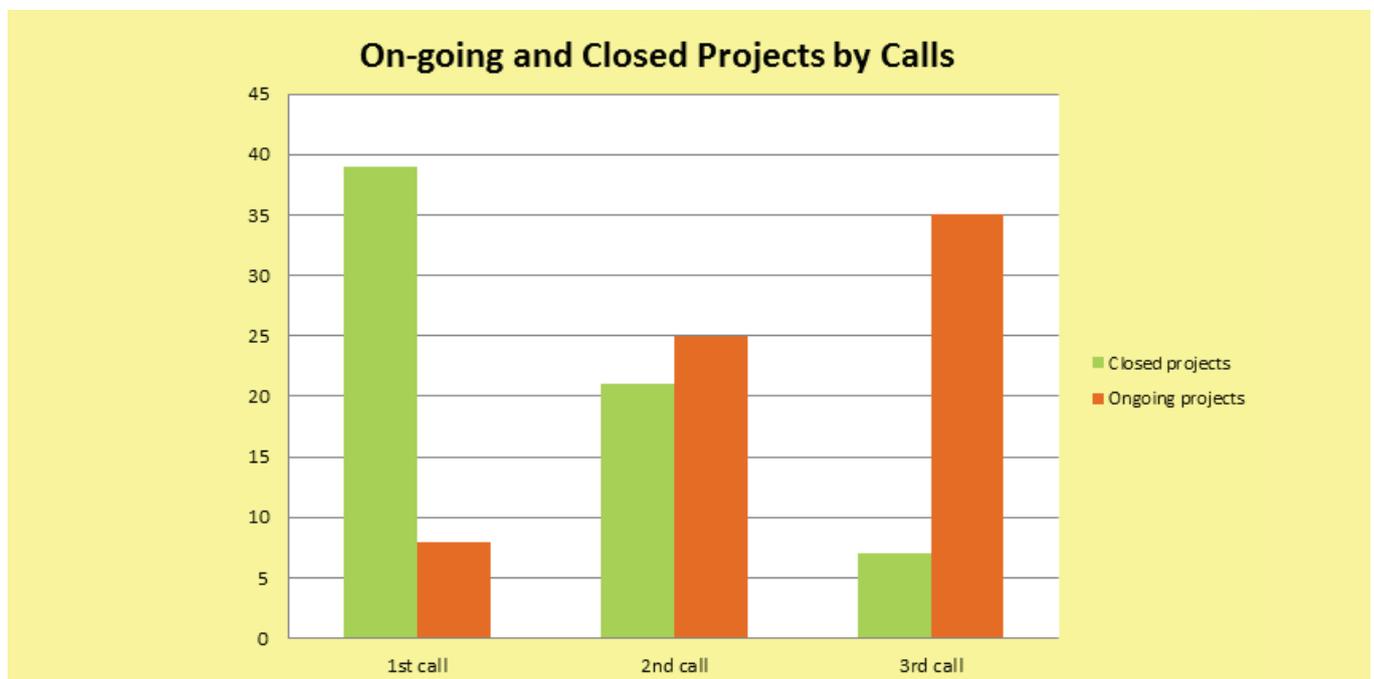




## State of play – Overview on the three Calls for Proposals

2015 had a particular and important role in both ENPI 2007-2013 and ENI 2014-2020 programmes. The peculiarity of the year's work stems from the fact, that implementation of the current Programme and preparation activities of the future Programme was simultaneously under process.

The management of the current Programme included project support activities dedicated to the coordination of the on-going projects contracted in the first, second and third Call for Proposals. Activities comprised in daily consultation and assistance, checking – clarifying and approving of modification requests either requesting amendment to the grant contract or a project modification, cooperation with national controllers and auditors regarding received interim and final reports, checking and proceeding with interim and balance payments depending on the implementation phase of the projects and also execution of monitoring visits.



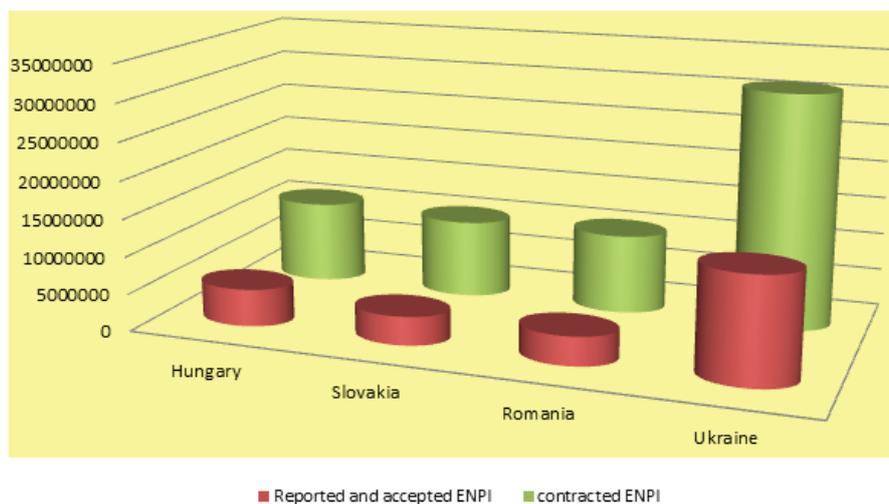
The above diagram provides a comprehensive picture on the state of play regarding on-going and closed projects in financial aspect. The figures are in harmony with the temporal placement of the different Call for Proposals. During the first Call for Proposals forty-seven projects have been awarded, out of which thirty-nine is financially closed for the time

being and only eight projects have not received the balance payment yet. The projects of the two compared categories are almost equal in terms of second Call for Proposal with the indicated green column of twenty-one projects and orange column of twenty – five projects. Third Call for Proposal with a tiny difference is the mirror-image of the first call, representing the largest share of on-going projects with thirty-five of them. The number of financially closed projects is seven.

In order to present the diagram's figures the Joint Technical Secretariat processed fifty-one requests for modifications requiring addendum to Grant Contract and one-hundred-seventy-nine project modifications. During the year fifteen interim and final reports have been submitted by the projects and approved by the Secretariat. In order to provide the highest possible support to projects, thirty-seven monitoring visits took place, ensuring opportunity for consultation regarding implementation issues, indicator achievement, sustainability or any other business.

In the list of positive facts of the year it is important to highlight, that the vast majority of the contracted projects are finalising their activities until 31 December 2015, which means that out of the one-hundred-thirty-five projects only five will be extended further then the year ends; due to specific problems incurred during the implementation phase. During the three Call for Proposals four hundred- thirty eight organizations received financial support of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI CBC Programme, which amount is 63 155 040,72 EUR in total. The following diagram provides information on the distribution of the Programme allocation in terms of contracted and reported amounts according to national breakdown.

### Community contribution (ENPI) Contracted and Reported by Participating Countries



As the pillars next to Hungary are showing, the total contracted amount in larger share is not reported yet in proportion of 54,88% . Partners in Slovak Republic succeeded to report their country level community contribution in 36,75% ratio. Romania received the third largest amount of grant among the countries. Participating organizations reported costs in a very similar ratio as Slovak partners did, 36,42% in precise definition. Partner organizations from Ukrainian Programme territory have received the greatest part of the total amount of grant available for projects. By reporting 45,03% of the received amounts Ukrainian organizations performed the second highest rate among countries.

In parallel with the current Programme activities, preparation of the Hungary – Slovakia- Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC 2014-2020 Programme was continuous, which included organization of events dedicated to the future Programme. Video conference with the representatives of the National Authorities, European Commission, Joint Managing Authority, Joint Technical Secretariat and external experts was organized on the 20 February 2015 and the 5th Joint Task Force Group meeting took place on 19-20 March 2015 in Miskolc, Hungary. On the 5-6 May 2015 the Joint Working Group Meeting with National Authorities in the frame of Hungary – Slovakia - Romania – Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020 took place in Visegrád, Hungary. The sequence of events continued with the 6th Joint Task Force meeting which was organized on 3-4 June 2015 in Stará Lesná, Slovakia. On the 30th June, 2015 the Joint Operational Programme, the Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Ex-ante report of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020 have been approved by the participating countries in line with Art. 5.1 of the Implementing Rules (897/2014 EC Regulation) and were submitted by the JMA to the European Commission - Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) for adoption. The revised version of the JOP has been completed by the 13 November 2015 sent to the European Commission DG NEAR and uploaded on the Programme's website.

As a different tool being used for ensuring appropriate information on the Programme, the website has been continuously updated with relevant information for the public. By 2015 the website reached 1 143 337 total views by using the opportunity to learn about the Programme itself, awarded projects, information on the ENI CBC 2014-2020 Programme, applying interactive map tool, reading about project news and also project events via the updated calendar.

## Stepping over from ENPI into ENI - Smooth transfer to the next programming period 2014-2020

The preparation of the programming process of the Cross-border cooperation between Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine within the European Neighbourhood Instrument which will be implemented in the programming period of 2014-2020 entered into the final phase this year. The Joint Task Force (JTF), composed of representatives of central governmental organisations and 10 eligible border regions from the four participating countries, with the support of the JTS and external consultants, governed and controlled the elaboration of the main document of the next programming period, the Joint Operational Programme (JOP). The JTF members discussed and agreed on the programme area, programme

strategy and programme structures and took all necessary decisions for the drafting and submission of the JOP to the European Commission – Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) for approval until the end of June 2015.

The programming process included numerous consultations and actions to be taken, in order to involve every important stakeholder in the preparation of the Programme's key document. National



,regional and local authorities, regional development agencies, chambers of commerce, nature parks and protected areas management bodies, cultural institutions, educational institutions, tourism associations, scientific institutes/research centres/universities, local business associations, and civil society organisations were involved as stakeholders and provided valuable contribution during the whole programming process. After the programming work reached its final stage – meaning the document was elaborated and approved by the JTF - a public consultation was launched on the website of the actual programme. The result of the public consultation was incorporated into the final version of the JOP.

The Programme document for the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020 is expected to be approved by the Commission at the end of December 2015, ensuring adequate basis for launching of the next programming period.

The Joint Operational Programme of Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020 for the ENI Cross-Border Cooperation was adopted by the European Commission on 17 December 2015 with the corresponding Commission Implementing Decision.

To consult the final Joint Operational Programme and news regarding next programming period please visit the official website of the current Programme: <http://www.huskroua-cbc.net/>

## Border of Ukraine and the Slovak Republic – same boundaries but different crossing points!

Among success stories of the current programming period there is one very special Large Scale Project which could be mentioned as one of the greatest pride of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI CBC Programme. The particular features



of project HUSKROUA/LSP/001 – „**Modernization and Reconstruction of Border Crossing Points at the Slovak-Ukrainian border**” are originating firstly from the nature of the project which is infrastructural and concerns border crossing point renovation. Secondly from the fact, that the vast majority of activities fixed in Grant Contract have been successfully implemented despite of difficulties caused by procurement procedures ,changes in pricing standards and several other issues imaginable to incur when dealing with construction works on border territories of an EU member state and a non-member state.

Cooperating organizations of the successful implementation have been the Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic as Beneficiary, Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic; State Fiscal Service of Ukraine and Chop Customs Office of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine as Partners. The project has been granted via direct award and received 6 795 000 EUR fund as the 90% of the total budget of the action (7 550 000 EUR). As the project was planned to contain reconstruction and infrastructural components as core activities the objective set was to increase the efficiency and security

of the Slovak-Ukrainian Border at the border crossing points (BCPs), namely Vysne Nemecke – Uzghorod; Velke Slemence – Mali Selmenci and Matovce. The project's driving force was the need for increasing the operational capacity of border crossing points in harmony with decreasing the load of the heavy traffic, moreover to raise awareness among stakeholders about their rights and duties when crossing the Slovak-Ukrainian border.

### Velké Slemence

Almost 5% share (362 859, 08 EUR) of the total budget has been allocated for the first project component which was the reconstruction of the Velké Slemence crossing point. The border crossing point has been first opened in December 2005, ensuring smooth opportunity for cyclists and pedestrians for entering and exiting Slovakia/Ukraine.



The invested financial and professional efforts resulted in a much more convenient way of border crossing procedure. Previously border guards performed the crossing control in a container, while passengers stayed on the concrete ground in long queues regardless of weather conditions. Today it goes in a different way, by letting border guards to work in separated small building and using modern IT technology. The passengers also don't need to queue without roof over their heads, since they can easily step in control buildings while their passports are being checked. Passengers are allowed to cross either by bike or on foot, as the whole crossing area has been broadened and renovated. All related works were done between April 2014 and September 2014.

### Vyšné Nemecké

Vyšné Nemecké – Uzghorod is an international road and transport border crossing point. More than 23 % of the total budget (1 779 788, 80 EUR) has been dedicated for the second component of the large scale project.



During the fruitful five months of works a significant progress has been reached on both sides of the border. Starting from preparatory reconstruction works like widening of the border road from Ukraine (instead of two lanes to Ukraine and three lanes to Slovak Republic there are three lanes to Ukraine and four lanes towards the Slovak territory); construction of new rain water running channels, through improvement of camera systems and installation of a new reserve electricity generator, until the general reconstruction of the administrative building and

purchasing new equipments and vehicles of various types all planned and fixed activities in Grant contract have been implemented. Four months ago the reconstruction works has begun on the Ukrainian side as well which after finalising works in the near future will be also able to contribute to higher standard of dealing with passengers undergoing passport and customs control.



### Matovce

The border crossing point of Matovce is suitable for controlling and x-ray scanning train transport from the direction of Ukraine. Reconstruction works were also necessary at the third infrastructure component of the project in order to improve the access for proceeding control procedures for the customs staff. Even though the share of total budget was less than 2% (13 192, 07 EUR) for the works, a high degree of development took place between the period of 29 November 2013 – 17 December 2013.

## European Cooperation Day celebrates its fourth edition

The Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI CBC Programme joined again this year the European Cooperation Day, the yearly Europe-wide campaign organised on 21 September and the surrounding weeks to celebrate the benefits and achievements of cross-border and territorial cooperation in the EU and its neighbouring countries.

Around Europe, more than 120 events were organised by European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) and ENPI programmes, which besides the project implementation is an outstanding opportunity to express their commitment to creativity and imagination. A wide range of authentic events gathered the citizens of different European cities: contests, drawing competitions, gastronomic activities, biking tours, artistic performances, local folklore, city games, school tournaments and many more.

Nine European Cooperation Day events were organised by our beneficiaries in 6 counties of the Programme area. Among others, the Uzhhorod University held an innovative event with laser artists 'Reaching stars' in the new planetarium recently installed; the Ivano-Frankivsk University held open doors day on clean air management and air quality monitoring in the Ukrainian Carpathians; the Satu Mare County Museum held an event on protection and promotion of cultural heritage and a series of exhibitions in Ukraine; the Tisza River Basin Water Resources Directorate held an event for local students on water management



and flood protection and the Maramures County Council held a scientific tourism promotion event with demonstration of new planetarium equipment procured from Programme funds.

In 2014 within the third edition of European Cooperation Day, more than 20 local events were organised by project partners in cooperation with local authorities from all four participating countries. The range of events organised was from fairs for local population, contests and conferences to open air events or games, meetings, TV programmes with the aim to communicate the results of cross-border cooperation projects.

Similarly to the previous years, 'Sharing borders, growing closer' was the motto for the celebration of this spirit of cross-border cooperation throughout Europe. For more information click on the official website of the event series:

<http://www.ecday.eu/>

## Preserving Rákóczi Ferenc's II cultural heritage along the Ukrainian, Slovak and Hungarian border

Among projects financed in the frame of Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI CBC Programme we can find several ones, which are focusing on preserving cultural heritage parallel with concentrating on regional values and characteristics. Project HUSKROUA/1001/049 "The Places of Rakoczi's glory" – the Cross-Border Touristic Route" is definitely worth to mention is this category.

The project has been realised in the cooperation of Mukachevo Historical Museum, Union of Social and cultural development "Panoniya" and Small Business and Innovation Development Association "Uzhgorod–XXIst Century" from Ukrainian side, together with Záhony Representation of Eastern Hungarian European Initiations Foundation from Hungary and East Slovak Museum in Košice Slovakia. When the project was under preparation phase, the partnership members' aim was to create values which are built around the past of the Rákóczi family, while using the geographical proximity and common historical past of three countries' common border.



### Rákóczi's motto has become proverbial:

*"Cum Deo pro patria et libertate!" (With God, for the homeland and for freedom!)*

The project team considered as key importance, that if the region inherited cultural values it's their task to maintain it in good condition, making it possible for future generations to visit these places and buildings, while learning about the history of the soil beneath their feet. In particular, there are castles well-preserved representing the most outstanding historic and cultural monuments of the target region and places of tourist pilgrimage with great development prospects both on regional and European level, which might be a subject of development work in the future.

The partnership set several goals to be realized, and to create a joint touristic product-thematic route "The places of Rákóczi's Glory" was one of them. The thematic



route goes through Zakarpatska oblast, the eastern part of Slovakia – Kosice, Borsi – where Rákóczi was born, and on the East and North-East Hungarian part, namely Sárospatak. Since these territories are closely interrelated and connected by common historical past it forms the basis of the fruitful cooperation. Among the project goals improving the quality of tourist services have been also implemented, by developing the infrastructure of the historical monuments, in order to be able to deal with the continuously growing tourist flow. The final results of the action are reflecting the success of the project, meanwhile raising awareness on the importance of sustainability. The Palanok

castle in Mukachevo has been renovated by improving the castle yard and creating craftsmen' village in the same style as it was in the era of Rákóczi – as one of animation elements of the touristic route in Palanok castle. Renovation of premises and expanding the space of Rákóczi exposition as well as developing a media product to be demonstrated to visitors in form of video film and photo presentation is also available for tourists. In Slovakia outstanding results as in Ukraine have been realized too, by renovation of the Rákóczi exposition in Kosice (East Slovak Museum) – renovation of show rooms (which have not been renovated since 1986). Brand new media tools as touch screen installation and information programming, updating descriptions and signs of the exhibits are also opened for the visitors. On the Hungarian side there was no infrastructural development, but the close cooperation and every day work of Sárospatak project team was also a crucial part in implementing the project with great success.



The Programme wishes for similar role model projects in the forthcoming Programming period as well, since it is a perfect reflection and an exemplary way to incorporate history and culture into Cross-border cooperation.

## **Water management bodies of Ukraine, Hungary and Romania cooperate to sustainably manage the complex water resources in the cross-border region**

The water doesn't recognise borders and the flood-prone region in the interfluves of Tisza and Tur rivers between Ukraine, Hungary and Romania experiences a number of complex problems, related to unsustainable management of water, soil and biodiversity. The water management bodies of Ukraine, Hungary and Romania elaborated and are implementing a Programme-funded €1.2M project aimed to improve the joint management of water resources, support biodiversity conservation and sustainable agricultural practices in the area, and conduct small-scale practical actions in cooperation with local communities.

During 3 years of project implementation the Tisza River Basin Water Resources Directorate from Ukraine, the Upper Tisza Regional Water Directorate from Hungary and Somes-Tisa River Basin Water Administration from Romania in partnership



with local authorities, research institutions and non-governmental organisations worked on development of the joint water resources monitoring system in order to promote the effective management of water resources and flood protection.

In Ukraine, the activities focused on feasibility study for Batar Amelioration System reconstruction, reconstruction of a dike on Tisza River and extension of the automatic hydrological network, establishment of a Consulting Centre to help farmers and local communities. In Hungary,

the Palád-Csécsei main channel was reconstructed to ensure the safe protection from floods and inland inundation of this area. In Romania, the monitoring network for water quality and quantity was improved to protect downstream communities on the territory of Ukraine and Hungary.

The project partners also carried out the environment assessment of water resources and prepared the Common Programme of Measures for their renewal and conservation; carried out studies on rural economy issues for promotion of agricultural production; collected valuable data concerning the biodiversity in the interfluvies of the Tisza-Tur rivers and proposed establishment/enlargement of natural reserves; and finally organised small-scale demo practical activities with participation of local communities and specialised water management organisations to involve concerned villages in implementation of their Joint Programme of Measures.

The cross-border effect of this project was especially valuable because the management of Batar Amelioration System (which was planned as one system and is divided between 3 countries) and effective flood mitigation measures are possible and successful only with joint actions. Also biodiversity conservation requires joint efforts to create ecological corridors for the species without border limitations. The project also contributed to knowledge transfer from EU to non-EU member states, especially in the field of ecological status assessment.



## **Maramures and Transcarpathiacross-border region benefit from new Programme-funded astronomical tourism infrastructure development**

The tourism sector of the cross-border region between Maramures county of Romania and Transcarpathia region of Ukraine has been diversified by a new scientific tourism product due to a Programme-funded project which has finished the implementation at the beginning of December.

The “pl@NETour”project is a cross-border cooperation between Baia Mare Astronomical Complex and the Laboratory of Space Research of Uzhgorod University with the support of Maramures County Council and IARDI. The project with a

total budget of €529,724 aimed at diversifying the tourism services in cross-border region by creating a new scientific tourism product and improving astronomical infrastructure; creating a partnership network to facilitate transfer of best practices in scientific tourism field; stimulating tourist and public interest for astronomy; and developing non-formal education activities.

The Baia Mare Astronomical Complex was equipped with a last generation small-dome optical-mechanical planetarium projector, realistically simulating the sky with up to 7,000 stars of the northern and southern hemispheres and planets positioned with topocentric accuracy. The Space Research Laboratory of Uzhgorod University was equipped with a smaller digital planetarium projector with a portable planetarium dome. Astronomical observation spots have been elaborated in a form of a map; moreover these spots were set up for observation without causing any light pollution in Maramures and Transcarpathia cross-border region.



The new scientific tourism product “pl@NETour” consists of astronomical presentations at Baia Mare and Uzhhorod planetariums and outdoor observations at 10 astronomical observation spots in cross-border region was presented to general public, travel agencies and first groups of tourists from local universities and schools. For promotion of the new scientific tourism product, the project partners produced a series of publications as sky reading book and map of astronomical observational spots with GPS coordinates, multilingual brochures presenting “pl@NETour” product and mobile apps for smart phones and tablet computers.

For more information click on the project website: <http://planetour.net/> and <http://planetour.ro/>