

The Euro-Regional Point of View of Ukraine-Romania Transfrontier Co-operation

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Introduction

Transfrontier co-operation had an important place in the European state and social interaction system, and it still holds leading positions in these segments of international interactions. Europeans see transfrontier co-operation, first of all, as a phenomenon that has a real economic and political effect. According to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, transfrontier co-operation means, “any joint action aimed at strengthening and deepening good-neighborly relations between territorial communities or authorities under the jurisdiction of two or more Contracting Parties and the conclusion for this purpose of any necessary contracts or agreements.”¹ The “Eligibility Guidelines on Transfrontier Co-operation of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe” issued by the Council of Europe states that “the fundamental principle of transfrontier co-operation is to establish connections and contractual relations in the frontier zones between public and private parties of the political life and civil society in order to come with joint solutions to common problems.”²

¹ Європейська рамкова конвенція про транскордонне співробітництво між територіальними громадами або властями (ухвалена 21 травня 1980 р., м. Мадрид) [Yevropeys'ka ramkova konventsia pro transkordonne spivrobitnytstvo mizh terytorial'nyumu obshchynamy abo vlastyamy (ukhvalena 21 travnya 1980 r., m. Madryd)], Законодавство України [Zakonodavstvo Ukrainy], accessed 11.02.2019, <http://zakon.rada.gov.ua/cgi-bin/laws/main.cgi>.

² Методичні рекомендації щодо транскордонного співробітництва місцевих і регіональних влад в Європі [Metodychni rekomendatsiyi shchodo transkordonnoho spivrobitnytstva mistsevykh i rehional'nykh vlad v Yevropi], Верховна Рада України [Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy], accessed 11.02.2019, http://gska2.rada.gov.ua/pls/mpz/docs/757_1829_transfrontier.htm.

Italian researcher Giovanni Delli Zotti, having analyzed various forms of this activity, concluded, “Euroregions are the future of transfrontier co-operation.” Unlike transfrontier co-operation as a “soft” form of “institutionalization,” he called the Euroregions a rigid institutional form.³ In general, the Euroregion is a certain geographic area, which includes parts of the territories of two or more countries with a common border, which have agreed to coordinate their activities in various fields. Typically, the administrative structures of the countries with common borders serve as territorial structural elements of Euroregions. Euroregions are a relatively young form of transfrontier co-operation that has existed for more than half a century.⁴ The pioneers of transfrontier co-operation were the German-French, Norwegian-Swedish-Finnish and Holland-German frontier zones.

Trying to imitate the European experience, Ukraine, in the first years of its independence, when the need for transfrontier co-operation was spoken of only in scientific circles, turned to such a phenomenon as Euroregions. The process of the genesis of Euro-regional co-operation with Ukraine is directly related to the settlement of a number of controversial issues and the establishment of contractual relations with neighboring countries, including Romania. On June 2, 1997, an Agreement on Good-neighborly Relations and Co-operation between Ukraine and Romania was signed, which created some incentives for the development of transfrontier co-operation. The commitment and willingness of the parties to develop this aspect of bilateral relations are reflected in Art. 8 of the Basic Agreement, which states:

The Contracting Parties, in accordance with the provisions of the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities (995–106), will encourage and support direct contacts

³ С??? Максименко, Є??? Кіш, М??? Ленд’ел, І??? Студенніков та ін. (ред.) [S??? Maksymenko, YE??? Kish, M??? Lend’el, I??? Studennikov, et al. (ed.)], *Регіональна політика в країнах Європи: уроки для України* [Rehional’na polityka v krainakh Yevropy: uroky dlya Ukrainy] (Київ: Логос [Kyiv: Lohos], 2000), 29; Н??? Мікула та Я??? Калат [N??? Mikula and YA??? Kalat], “Єврорегіональне співробітництво в системі транскордонної співпраці” [Yevrorehional’ne spivrobitnytstvo v systemi transkordonnoyi spivpratsi], *Соціально-економічні проблеми сучасного періоду України* [Sotsial’no-ekonomichni problemy suchasnoho periodu Ukrainy], 2014, вип. [vur.] 4 (108): 28–38.

⁴ К??? В??? Гороховська [K??? V??? Horokhovs’ka], “Транскордонне співробітництво в Україні: значення та пріоритетні напрями розвитку [Transkordonne spivrobitnytstvo v Ukraini: znachennya ta priorytetni napryamy rozvytku],” *Ефективна економіка* [Efektyvna ekonomika], 2017, nr 8, Ефективна економіка [Efektyvna ekonomika], accessed 11.02.2019, <http://www.economy.nayka.com.ua/?op=1&z=5736>.

and mutually beneficial co-operation between the administrative units of Ukraine and Romania, in particular in the frontier zones. They will also promote co-operation between the administrative and territorial units of both countries within the existing, as well as newly created Euroregions, such as “Upper Prut” and “Lower Danube,” to participation in which administrative and territorial units of other interested countries may be invited.⁵

The Agreement laid the legal groundwork for Euro-regional co-operation, and concrete, specific elements were set up by local communities and authorities, but with the support and assistance of central government authorities. On June 17, 2003, in Chernivtsi, after 19 rounds of talks, Ukraine and Romania signed a Treaty on the Ukrainian-Romanian Boundary Regime, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance on Border Issues, which supplemented the previous one.⁶

Carpathian Euroregion

The first Euroregion, which includes the administrative and territorial units of Ukraine and Romania, became the Carpathian Euroregion, which united the border administrative and territorial units of five countries: Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and Ukraine (Transcarpathian, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv and Chernivtsi Oblasts). The theoretical model of the functioning of the Carpathian Euroregion was developed with the assistance of experts from the East-West Research Institute. It should be noted that the decision on the creation of “Lower Danube” and “Upper Prut” Euroregions was made by the government and adopted by the presidents of Ukraine, Romania and Moldova, but as for the Carpathian Euroregion, the initiative came from local leaders.

On February 14, 1993, in the city of Debrecen (Hungary), the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine adopted a Declaration on the establishment of the Carpathian Euroregion Interregional Associa-

⁵ “Договір про відносини добросусідства і співробітництва між Україною та Румунією від 2 червня 1997 року [Dohovir pro vidnosyny dobrosusidstva i spivrobotnytstva mizh Ukrainoyu ta Rumuniyeyu vid 2 chervnya 1997 roku],” *Урядовий кур’єр* [Uryadovyy kur’yer] 1997, 5 червня [chervnya], 1997, 5.

⁶ “Договір між Україною та Румунією про режим українсько-румунського державного кордону, співробітництво та взаємну допомогу з прикордонних питань [Dohovir mizh Ukrainoyu ta Rumuniyeyu pro rezhym ukrayins’ko-rumuns’koho derzhavnoho kordonu, spivrobotnytstvo ta vzayemnu dopomohu z prykordonnykh pytan’],” Законодавство України [Zakonodavstvo Ukrainy], accessed 11.02.2019, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/642_022; В. Кравченко [V. Kravchenko], “И второй тайм мы уже отыграли... [I vtoroy taym my uzhe otigrali...],” *Зеркало недели* [Zerkalo nedeli] 2003, № [no.] 23 (448): 16.

tion, consisting of 19 frontier zones.⁷ Since 1997, the Carpathian Euroregion has included the frontier districts of Romania. The legal basis for the activity of the Carpathian Euroregion is the Agreement between the state authorities and local self-government “On the establishment of the Carpathian Euroregion Interregional Association” and the Charter of the Association.

The Carpathian Euroregion covers an area of 161.3 thousand sq. km and has a population of about 16 million people.⁸ This is the only region in Europe that includes the frontier zones of five post-communist countries with different economic levels, ethnicity, religious and cultural structures. That is why from the very beginning of its existence there was a problem in creating a system of common interests and co-operation in order to minimize and avoid potential hostilities and misunderstandings among local residents. The goal of the Association was, first of all, to improve the conditions for employment of citizens in neighboring countries, the development of frontier zones, border crossing checkpoints, infrastructure in general, joint efforts to protect the environment, natural and recreational resources, improve the relations between different communities and their welfare.

The governing and executive bodies of the Carpathian Euroregion are the Council of the Euroregion, the International Secretariat, the National Representative Offices, and six working groups. The Carpathian Euroregion is part of the Association of European Cross-Border Regions.

The role and place of the Carpathian Euroregion in the system of co-operation between Ukraine and its western neighbors and the European Union as a whole were significantly influenced by the accession of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to the EU in 2004 and 2007. The Euroregion became the contact area of the Eastern border of the EU: an area that could become a source of tension or stability. That is why, on the basis of the concept of Europe of Regions, which primarily focuses on safety and stability, the promotion of the region’s most vigorous activity and development is in the best interests of the member countries of the Carpathian Euroregion and the EU.

⁷ М??? Ленд’ел [M??? Lend’el], “Досвід Карпатського Євро регіону: повштовх до переосмислення моделі транскордонного співробітництва [Dosvid Karpat-s’koho Yevrorehionu: povshtovkh do pereosmyslennya modeli transkordonnoho spivrobitnytstva],” in С??? Максименко та І??? Студенніков (ред.) [S??? Maksymenko and I??? Studennikov (eds.)], *На шляху до Європи. Український досвід євро регіонів: Проект Київського центру Ін-ту Схід-Захід* [Na shlyakhu do Yevropy. Ukrayins’kyu dosvid yevrorehioniv: Proekt Kyivivs’koho tsentru In-tu Skhid-Zakhid] (Київ: Логос [Kyiv: Lohos], 2000), 52–53.

⁸ Н??? Мікула [N??? Mikula], *Євро регіони: досвід та перспективи* [Yevrorehiony: dosvid ta perspektyvy] (Львів: ІРД НАН України [L’viv: IRD NAN Ukrayiny], 2003), 116.

From the geopolitical point of view, the very status of the Carpathian Euroregion has changed: it received a Europe-wide recognition. Based on this situation, some local authorities of the Ukrainian frontier zones decided to stimulate transfrontier co-operation through the development of regional programs. First of all, this is in reference to the “Strategy for the Development of Transfrontier Co-operation in the Carpathian region ‘Carpathians 2003–2011’” (October 2003), initiated by the Transcarpathian Oblast State Administration and the Transcarpathian Oblast Council and supported by regional authorities of the frontier zones of Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania.⁹

Co-operation between Ukraine and the neighboring countries within the Carpathian Euroregion was also intensified and influenced by the creation of the Association of Local Self-Government “Carpathian Euroregion: Ukraine” in 2007. It became the first unifying self-governing initiative in Ukraine, which was built by local authorities. In November 2008, the National Delegation of Ukraine in the Carpathian Euroregion recognized the Association. The Association includes 66 local governments and their associations in Transcarpathian, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv and Chernivtsi Oblasts.¹⁰

The upsides of the Ukraine-Romania co-operation within the framework of the Carpathian Euroregion include the co-financing of mirror-like cross-border projects through PHARE programs in Romania and TACIS CBC in Ukraine, solving the issue of financing and construction of the Solotvyno–Sighetu Marmariei international border post at the Ukrainian-Romanian section of the state border of Ukraine, as well as conducting international fairs and exhibitions in the cities of the region; intensification of foreign economic contacts between territories; organizing conferences to discuss common problems of the five countries; support of transfrontier initiatives of higher educational establishments; the formation of the Association of Universities of the Carpathian Euroregion, the organization of summer schools; promoting the establishment of commercial relations between enterprises of the Carpathian Euroregion member-countries (the founding of the Association of Carpathian Chambers of Commerce and Industry); improving the activities of border crossing points, co-operation with various international agencies, etc.

⁹ О??? Чалий [О??? Chalyy], “Стан та перспективи співробітництва між Україною та Європейським союзом [Stan ta perspektyvu spivrobitnytstva mizh Ukrayinoyu ta Yevropeys'kym soюзom],” *Аналітичний щоквартальник. Інституційні реформи в ЄС* [Analitychnyy shchokvartal'nyk. Instytutsiyni reformy v YES], 2003, вип. [вур.] 4: 33.

¹⁰ Єврорегіон «Карпати-Україна» [Yevrorehion «Karpaty-Ukrayina»], accessed 11.02.2019, <http://euroregionkarpaty.com.ua/about.html>.

To conclude, it can be stated that at the current stage of the development of the Carpathian Euroregion, a watermark moment has come after the expansion of the European Union and signing and entry into force of the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine. This means, first of all, that for the mainly political and declarative Euro-regional co-operation, it is necessary to accelerate the transition to the priorities of economic co-operation and the implementation of specific joint economic transboundary projects.

Lower Danube Euroregion

The second Euroregion, which included the territory of Ukraine and Romania, was the Lower Danube Euroregion. In the beginning of July 1997, in the city of Izmail (Odessa Oblast), the meeting between President Leonid Kuchma, President of the Republic of Moldova Petru Lucinschi and, Romanian President Emil Constantinescu took place, which ended with the signing of the Protocol on trilateral co-operation between the governments of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Romania.¹¹ This document, as well as the Treaty on Good-Neighborly Relations and Co-operation between Ukraine and Romania, created the basis for work aimed at the formation of the Lower Danube Euroregion.

On August 14, 1998, after the annual work of the parties on studying the national legislation of the three countries and defining the main directions of co-operation, in the Romanian city of Galati, an agreement was signed on the formation of the Euroregion, which included the Odessa Oblast of Ukraine, the regions of Vulkanesti, Cahul and Cantemir of the Republic of Moldova and the districts of Braila, Galati and Tulcea of Romania. The total area of the Euroregion is 53.3 thousand sq. km (more than half falls on the territory of the Odessa Oblast), with a population of about 4 million people.¹²

The organizational structure of the Euroregion was approved as follows:

1. The Council of the Euroregion is the supreme governing body;
2. Chairmen of the Euroregion;

¹¹ "Вплив транскордонного співробітництва на регіональний розвиток в Україні [Vplyv transkordnonnoho spivrobitnytstva na rehional'nyu rozvytok v Ukrayini]," in *Конгрес місцевих і регіональних влад України: Проблеми регіональної політики України, стан місцевого самоврядування та правова політика Конгресу: Збірник документів і матеріалів (грудень 2003 р.)* [Konhres mistsevykh i rehional'nykh vlad Ukrayiny: Problemy rehional'noyi polityky Ukrayiny, stan mistsevoho samovryaduvannya ta pravova polityka Konhresu: Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv (hruden' 2003 r.)] (Київ: Логос [Kyiv: Lohos], 2004), 107.

¹² Мікула [Mikula], *Єврорегіони* [Yevrorehiony], 144.

3. Vice-Chairmen of the Euroregion;
4. Committees on the following activities:
 - Regional Development, Programs and Interregional Co-operation Committee;
 - Economics and Financial Audit Committee;
 - Environment and Emergencies Committee;
 - Transport and Communications Committee;
 - Demography Committee;
 - Humanitarian Development and Interethnic Relations Committee;
 - Personal Security and Counter-Terrorism Committee.
5. The Administrative Body of the Lower Danube Euroregion is the Co-ordination center.

Three years after its foundation (in 2001), the Euroregion became a member of the Association of European Cross-Border Regions. The following year, the Euroregion was awarded a special prize of the Association, “Papenburg’s Sail” for “the development of social and cultural co-operation, despite the difficult situation in the frontier zones of Ukraine, Romania and the Republic of Moldova.” After the accession of Romania to the EU, the question arose about upgrading activities at the level of Euro-regional co-operation. On March 1-2, 2008, a meeting of the working group took place in Odessa, during which a new version of the Statute of the Euroregion was developed. Among the agreements in principle were the following.¹³

- ◆ The need to establish a Euroregion Secretariat, its placement in the territory of the presiding party; the representative of the presiding party shall be the Head of the Secretariat;
- ◆ The number of Committees shall be increased (from 7 to 9), each of the activities of which shall be regulated by a separate Provision;
- ◆ The governing body of the Committees shall change according to the rotation principle simultaneously with the change of the presiding party;
- ◆ An annual membership fee shall be introduced, which shall partially finance the activities of the Secretariat and the Committees.

At the same time, the signing of the Agreement on the establishment of the Lower Danube Euroregion Transfrontier Co-operation Association was signed in Odessa on June 15, 2008,¹⁴ which was important for the further functioning of the Euroregion.

¹³ Єврорегіон «Нижній Дунай» [Yevrorehion «Nyzhniy Dunay»], accessed 11.02.2019, <http://www.osvita.odessa.gov.ua/zovnshnoekonomchna-dyalnst1/vroregon-nizhnj-dunaj/>.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

The main achievements in the framework of transfrontier co-operation in this region are the following: development and implementation of such important projects as Ecotourism Center of the Danube Delta, Integrated Systems for Environmental Monitoring, Biological Diversification of Natural Resources of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (Romania-Ukraine), Improving Transfrontier Co-operation in the area of Integrated Water Resources Management in the Lower Danube Euroregion, Ordering the list of relics existing in Tulcea District and in the Odessa Oblast, a number of projects in the health care direction, cross-border reserve project in the Danube Delta under the auspices of the Council of Europe, ferry connection, etc.¹⁵

At the same time, a number of problems have become more acute, for example, the situation with the restoration in the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta of maritime traffic on the deep-water channel “Danube–Black Sea” can serve as an example. The channel has been working since the 1950s and was quite effective. However, since the 1980s, there was no funding and the channel was deserted. Considering that the Danube is a very powerful river that carries a lot of solid runoff, annual maintenance operations are required to keep the channel working. Due to the lack of such operations for many years, the passage of sea vessels through the channel became impossible. In order to revive the region of the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta, it was necessary to renew it, which was also a question of promoting the activities of several ports: Izmail, Kiliya, Reni, Ust-Danube. In a number of articles on the pages of the central and local press, the Romanian side even accused Ukraine of violating the territorial waters of Romania and moving the borderline towards the Romanian coast. Ukrainian experts have argued as follows:

[...] The reconstruction of the old channel, which became unusable for navigation in 1997, will not affect the ecological system of the Danube Delta. Clearing and deepening of the channel will enable Ukrainian vessels that currently use the Sulina channel and pay Romania a fee of about \$ 2 million per year for using it, reducing the time and costs of delivering goods to Ukrainian ports. After the reconstruction, the Bystroye channel could take 2/3 of the ships that now use the Sulina Romanian channel due to reduced tariffs and a shorter distance to the Black Sea and Ukrainian ports.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ С?? Григоришин [S?? Hryhoryshyn], “Деякі аспекти загострення українсько-румунських відносин на сучасному етапі [Deiyaki aspekty zahostrennya ukrayins'ko-rumuns'kykh vidnosyn na suchasnomu etapi],” in В?? Андрійко та ін. (ред.) [V?? Andriyko ta in. (eds.)], *Україна-Румунія-Молдова: історичні, політичні та культурні аспекти взаємин у кон-*

This being said, there is no doubt that the Lower Danube Euroregion has every opportunity to become an important transport hub for integrated parts of Europe and the Black Sea region, including Transcaucasia, Central Asia, the Near East and the Middle East. Within the Euroregion, three free economic zones have already been established: Galati (Romania), Giurgiulesti (Moldova) and Reni (Ukraine). The European Union has approved the routes of international transport corridors through the territory of the Odessa Oblast, fixing its extremely favorable geopolitical and geo-economic situation.

In fact, it may be said with regard to the Danube Delta, "It is a focus of multi-level regional competition." At the highest, global level, it competes with the entire Lower Danube Euroregion on the world transport (Danube Waterway is an International Transport Corridor No. 7, Helsinki — Alexandroupolis, TRACECA International Transport Corridor, Euro-Asian Oil Transportation Corridor are an International Transport Corridors No. 9,) and tourist (Danube Biosphere Reserve) services markets. At the national level, the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta competes with the Romanian and Moldovan parts of the Lower Danube Euroregion in transit transport services markets (the Danube-Black Sea competes with the Romanian Sulinsky and Georgievsky channels) and ecotourism (the city of Vylkove and the Danube Lakes).¹⁷

In general, despite a number of positive results, the Odessa Oblast is far from using the existing possibilities of transfrontier co-operation under the programs of the Lower Danube Euroregion in full. There is a need to develop a concept for the Oblast's participation in the Euroregion's activity at a new stage in Ukraine's implementation of the European integration vector, based on scientifically and practically substantiated conclusions on priority areas of co-operation, taking into account the potential in the Odessa Oblast for implementation of projects in specific spheres, as well as containing recommendations on the practical use of existing schemes for the attraction of funding.

тексті сучасних європейських процесів: Збірник наукових праць [Ukrayina-Rumuniya-Moldova: istorychni, politychni ta kul'turni aspekty vzayemyn u konteksti suchasnykh yevropeys'kykh protsesiv: Zbirnyk naukovykh prats'] (Чернівці: Видавничий дім «Букрек» [Chernivtsi: Vydavnychyy dim «Bukrek»), 2006), 282.

¹⁷ О??? Топчієв [О??? Topchiyev], "Одещина у складі євро регіону 'Нижній Дунай': пріоритети загальнодержавної та регіональної політики у прикордонному співробітництві [Odeshchyna u skladi yevrorehionu 'Nyzhniy Dunay': priorytety zahal'noderzhavnoyi ta rehional'noyi polityky u prykordonnomu spivrobitnytstvi]," *Актуальні проблеми державного управління* [Aktual'ni problemy derzhavnoho upravlinnya], 2000, вип. [vyp.] 3: 97.

Upper Prut Euroregion

After a difficult negotiation process that lasted almost three years, on September 22, 2000, the Upper Prut Euroregion was formed, the members of which were Chernivtsi Oblast of Ukraine, Beltsy and Edinet districts of the Republic of Moldova, as well as Botosani and Suceava counties in Romania. Starting from October 15, 2003, the Upper Prut Euroregion includes Chernivtsi and Ivano-Frankivsk Oblasts on the part of Ukraine, Botosani and Suceava districts on the part of Romania, and Faleshty, Edinet, Glodeni, Ocnita, Riscani and Briceni districts on the part of the Republic of Moldova.¹⁸ Since the Chernivtsi Oblast, Botosani and Suceava districts are simultaneously members of the Carpathian Euroregion, many problems are common to these Euroregions. The territory of Upper Prut Euroregion is 28.9 thousand sq. km, and the population is about 3 million inhabitants.¹⁹

According to the statutory documents, the purpose of creating the Upper Prut Euroregion is to expand existing subregional ties and facilitate the further development of transfrontier co-operation between the administrative and territorial units of founding countries, individual cities, other settlements, local governments, public administration, separate institutions, enterprises, non-governmental organizations, national minorities and individuals in the spheres of economy, education, science, culture and sports, as well as the development of new mechanisms of interstate co-operation, sustainable and safe (self-recovering) development of the region's integration into modern European process. The Charter of the Upper Prut Euroregion permits partnership of the Euroregion, in addition to membership, as a new category. "An administrative-territorial unit of a country of the European Union or another country having a partnership agreement or protocols on co-operation or twinning with similar administrative units of Upper Prut Euroregion" can become a partner.²⁰ Part-

¹⁸ Сергій Гакман [Serhiy Hakman], "Транскордонне співробітництво в західних областях України в контексті розвитку євро регіонів [Transkordonne spivrobitnytstvo v zakhidnykh oblastiakh Ukrainy v konteksti rozvytku yevrorehioniv]," *Актуальні проблеми внутрішньої політики* [Aktual'ni problemy vnutrishn'oyi polityky] 2004, № [no.] 3: 194.

¹⁹ Мікула [Mikula], *Євро регіони* [Yevrorehiony], 150.

²⁰ Сергій Гакман [Serhiy Hakman], "Євро регіон «Верхній Прут» у контексті транскордонного співробітництва України, Республіки Молдова та Румунії [Yevrorehion «Verkhniy Prut» u konteksti transkordonnoho spivrobitnytstva Ukrainy, Respubliky Moldova ta Rumuniyi, Visnyk derzhkomnatsmihratsiyi Ukrainy]," *Вісник держкомнаціміграції України. Щоквартальний інформаційний журнал* [Visnyk derzhkomnatsmihratsiyi Ukrainy. Shchokvartal'nyy informatsiynyy zhurnal] 2002, № [no.] 2: 128–129.

ners of the Euroregion receive the right to participate in the governing and working bodies, with the right of an advisory vote only though. In this case, the partner of one of the members of the Euroregion can become a partner of all its members, which contributes to the expansion of regional co-operation opportunities. In December 2000, the Council of the Euroregion sent offers on an official partnership to the Austrian Land of Carinthia, the Bavarian district of Schwabia (Germany) and the French department of Mayenne. In January 2001, the Carinthian Land Authority adopted an official decision to establish a partnership with the Upper Prut Euroregion.²¹

The structures of Upper Prut, Lower Danube and the Carpathian Euroregions are very similar and differ, mainly, by the number of Committees and their branch directions. However, there are some fundamental differences. Thus, the structure of the Upper Prut Euroregion differs by the presence in its composition of the ecological Euroregion, which is a peculiar know-how in the theory and practice of the Euro-regional Movement. The idea of the Eco-Euroregion was born in 1994; it was proposed by Ecoresours, the Chernivtsi State Scientific and Technical Center for inter-sector and regional issues of ecological safety and resource conservation. July 3-4, 1997, the Ukrainian-Romanian-Moldovan summit in Izmail approved the proposal of the Ukrainian side to create a joint Eco-Euroregion:

The main objective of the creation of the Eco-Euroregion is to define the state and local authorities, as well as the entrepreneurs of the three countries, their mutual interest in the implementation of modern governance mechanisms for technogenic and ecological safety at all stages of the life cycle of production and consumption in order to improve the competitiveness of products, successful privatization, investment and reconstruction while ensuring sustainable social and economic development of the region as a whole.²²

In the future, for the development of transfrontier co-operation within the Upper Prut Euroregion, it is very important that the Eco-Euroregion project

²¹ О??? Хавич [О??? Khavych], "Західна Україна — провінція чи єврорегіон? [Zakhidna Ukrayina — provintsiya chy yevrorehion?]," *Українська правда* [Ukrayins'ka pravda] 2002, 20 червня [chernvnya].

²² З??? Бройде [Z??? Brojde], "Розробка основних елементів концепції та першочергових заходів зі створення Екоєврорегіону з координаційним центром у м. Чернівці: Звіт про НДР (остаточний). Державний НТЦ «Екоресурс». [Rozrobka osnovnykh elementiv konseptsiyi ta pershocherhovuykh zakhodiv zi stvorenniya Ekoyevrorehionu z koordynatsiynym tsentrom u m. Chernivtsi: Zvit pro NDR (ostatochnyy). Derzhavnyy NTTS «Ekoressurs»." № держреєстрації [No. derzhreyestratsiyi] 0197 V018569, Чернівці [Chernivtsi] 1997, 22.

fits well into the European and world priorities of the 21st century, when the share of sustainable development of technogenic and ecological safety is steadily increasing. The role of the noted factors in the crisis processes of world social and economic development is equally important, even in a pessimistic scenario.²³ Therefore, the idea of the creation of the Eco-Euroregion foresees the establishment of the principles of sustainable development and technogenic and environmental safety to the level of the new system of regional co-operation between Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Romania, proclaimed by the presidents of these countries, subject to the active support of such a project by the EU and other influential international structures. The intensification of co-operation between Ukraine and the EU on the basis of the Association Agreement signed in 2014 should become a good background for the successful implementation of the relevant plans.

Conclusion

Despite certain achievements, the Euroregions with the participation of Ukraine and Romania had not materialized the hopes placed on them just yet. First of all, regional factors of co-operation on the Ukrainian-Romanian border should be taken into account as fully as possible in the strategic planning of Ukraine's foreign and domestic policy.²⁴ A system of measures aimed at maximizing the cross-border economic co-operation intensification that really deserves comprehensive state support must be developed and implemented. Back in 2004, S. Hakman, Chief of the Migration Department of the Nationalities and Migration Office of the Chernivtsi Oblast State Administration made a very good point in his article "Cross-border co-operation in the western regions of Ukraine in the context of the development of Euroregions": "Solving most of the problems that are common to all Euroregions in the west of Ukraine goes beyond the capabilities of the members of the Euroregion."²⁵ One of the main

²³ "Єврорегіон «Верхній Прут» у контексті транскордонного співробітництва [Euroregion «Verkhniy Prut» u kontekst-sti transkordonnoho spivrobitnytstva]," accessed 11.02.2019, <http://ewi.org.ua/evrorehion-verhnij-prut-u-kontektsti-transkordonnoho-spivrobitnytstva/>.

²⁴ *Електронний бюлетень Спільного технічного секретаріату Спільної Операційної Програми Румунія – Україна – Республіка Молдова 2007–2013* [Elektronnyy byuleten' Spil'noho tekhnichnoho sekretariatu Spil'noyi Operatsiynoyi Prohramy Rumuniya – Ukrayina – Respublika Moldova 2007–2013], № [no.] 1/2016.

²⁵ Сергій Гакман [Serhiy Hakman], "Транскордонне співробітництво," 195; Сергій Гакман [Serhiy Hakman], "Міжрегіональне співробітництво як фактор європейської інтеграції

tasks of the state regional policy, which N??? Mikula highlighted, should be the cross-border convergence of the regions: the gradual convergence of the parameters of contiguous transfrontier zones of neighboring countries while preserving their identity, which takes place in the process of borrowing, reproduction or formation of common methods and tools of competitiveness increasing (convergence of competitiveness mechanisms), which helps to reduce disproportions (asymmetry) of social and economic development in the transfrontier area.²⁶ It is also worthwhile to establish active co-operation between the governing bodies of the management structures and the experts of science, as well as with civil organizations interested in participating in solving significant issues on both sides of the state border.

We shall also note that the unification of Europe makes matters of integration and co-operation more relevant for the countries just starting participation in the work of pan-European structures.²⁷ At a stage when Ukraine, after the conclusion and the entry into force of the Association Agreement with the EU, is looking for a worthy place in the system of pan-European political, economic and humanitarian values, such a transfrontier co-operation, which aims to promote closer relations between neighbors, renewal of lost positions in the markets of neighboring countries that are members of the EU, taking external economic relations to a new level, plays an important role. Each of the existing Euroregions, within which the Ukrainian-Romanian co-operation takes place, has its own peculiarities of functioning and development. At the same time, all of them are meant to both promote the internal development of our country and its faster full-fledged entry into the pan-European community.

України [Mizhrehional'ne spivrobotnytstvo yak faktor yevropeys'koyi intehratsiyi Ukrayiny], in M??? V??? Ярмистий [M??? V??? Yarmystyy], С??? М??? Гакман [S??? M??? Hakman], Я??? С??? Мельничук (ред.) [YA??? S??? Mel'nuchuk (eds.)], Регіональні аспекти державного управління. Інформаційно-аналітичне видання [Rehional'ni aspekty derzhavnoho upravlinnya. Informatsiyno-analitychne vydannya], (Чернівці: Видавничий дім «Букрек» [Chernivtsi: Vydavnychyy dim «Bukrek»], 2013), 7–25.

²⁶ Н??? Мікула [N??? Mikula], *Єврорегіони: проблеми та перспективи діяльності, 17 жовтня 2013* (Львів: ІРД НАН України [L'viv: IRD NAN Ukrayiny], 2013), accessed online 11.2.2019, <http://lv.niss.gov.ua/public/File/1/Mikula.pdf>.

²⁷ Н??? Ротар [N??? Rotar], “Тенденції розвитку транскордонної співпраці України та Румунії в контексті євроінтеграційних процесів [Tendentsiyi rozvytku transkordonnoyi spivpratsi Ukrayiny ta Rumuniyi v konteksti yevrointehratsiynykh protsesiv],” accessed 11.2.2019, <http://www.dc-summit.info/proekty/ukraina-rumunija-moldova/1330-tendencii-rozvytku-transkordonnoi-spivpraci-ukraini-ta-rumunii-1.html>.

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