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# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AT THE EU'S EXTERNAL BORDERS

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The Institute of Political Science of the Faculty of Arts, University of Prešov (IPOL) concluded its research project VEGA 1/0177/19 with an international conference entitled *Challenges and perspectives on cross-border cooperation in the context of the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement*. The IPOL, whose team participated in the abovementioned project implementation, is a workplace that has been successfully engaged in border studies for the last ten years. Under the expert guidance of prof. Alexander Duleba was its research team focused on research tasks within projects funded by national and international grant schemes, several members of the Institute of Political Science are members of the Association for Borderlands Studies. In addition to monographs and edited collections, the publications of the members of the institute include the first Slovak textbook on border studies and a whole series of textbooks intended for students of political science within the disciplines devoted to border studies and cross-border cooperation. The members of IPOL also published their scientific outcomes in renowned scientific journals, such as *East European Politics and Societies*, *Geopolitics*, or *Studies of Transition States and Societies*.

The aim of the online conference on 27 September 2021 was to discuss the findings of cur-

rent international research aimed at identifying opportunities and obstacles to cross-border cooperation at the EU-Ukraine border arising from the implementation of EU policies and relations with Ukraine, including the implications of the Association Agreement implementation, as well as government policies and relations between Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Ukraine. The capacities of regional and local cross-border cooperation actors and their ability to take advantage of existing and anticipated opportunities, as well as the impact of cross-border cooperation on the development of border regions and local communities, were also discussed.

The conference agenda has been divided into two panels. The first of them focused on the effects of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement on cross-border cooperation at the Schengen border and was hosted by prof. PhDr. Alexander Duleba, PhD. (IPOL) The panel was opened by prof. James Scott from the Karelian Institute of the University of Eastern Finland, a pioneer in border studies and a prominent figure of the European School of Border Studies. In addition, in the first panel have spoken several border scholars: associate prof. Hynek Böhm from the Department of Geography, Technical University of Liberec (Czech Republic), Dr. Alevtyyna Sanchenko and

Dr. Anastasiia Tokunova from the V. Mamutov Institute of Economic and Legal Research of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Kiev and professor Myroslava Lendel from the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Uzhhorod National University.

The second panel was devoted to the impact of cross-border cooperation on the development of border regions and local societies and was hosted by Ing. Martin Lačný, PhD. (IPOL). A special guest in this panel was the Secretary General of the Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives in Budapest (CESCI) – Gyula Ocskay. Other foreign guests also spoke in the second panel: Dr. Bianca Mitrică, the Head of Human Geography and Regional Development Department at the Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy in Bucharest, professor Jerzy Bański, the Head of Department of Rural Geography and Local Development at the Polish Academy of Sciences and associate professor Wojciech Gizicki from the Institute of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin.

The outcomes of the conference were published in a peer-reviewed scientific proceedings volume entitled *The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and Its Impacts on Cross-Border Cooperation*, and in the scientific journal *Annales Scientia Politica*, which has been published by the Institute of Political Science of the Faculty of Arts, University of Prešov for the tenth year in a row.