

Report from the peer review

At the beginning of **May 2022 (5. – 6.)**, the Czech EPICAH partner (Regional Development Agency of the Pilsen Region) was glad to host our Romanian colleagues. Peer review at the Czech-Bavarian border region was focused on networking, coordinating, and cultural activities of the “Centre Bavaria-Bohemia” that proved the high level of its competencies also during the COVID time. The first day started with the Czech-Bavarian conference (translated also into English) focused on the interpretation of the local heritage which was used as a presentation of one of the methods of effective networking and capitalization of good practices. As “an icing on the cake”, a guided tour at a new exhibition called “Attention, Border” in Domažlice was organized. In the afternoon the international group visited the biggest hill in the area to get visual input and information about an initiative “Green Belt”. Finally, the museum of the Czech Forest was visited to present ways how the cross-border tourist and educational activities are coordinated. The second day took place in the residence of the “Centre Bavaria-Bohemia” in the German city Schönsee where we discussed together more deeply formal, methodical, and even financial issues and challenges that were faced by the Centre during the COVID time but also knowledge, that we have learned thanks to it.

5.5. 2022







6.5.2022



Template of good practices

1. General information	
Name of your organisation. Contact person e-mail of this template	Regional Development Agency of the Pilsen Region Lenka Křížková krizkova@rra-pk.cz
Geographical region and scope of the practice (cross border, regional, national)	Cross-border
Title of the practice	Centre Bavaria Bohemia
Timescale of the implementation	This NGO organization has been founded in 2006, in the role of the cross-border center it has operated since 2016.

<p>Detailed information on the practice. <i>Please provide information (200-300 words).</i></p> <p>-What is the problem addressed and the context related to COVID in your region? -How the practice was implemented. Any cross-border actions? -Who were the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice? - Resources (human, financial etc)</p>	<p>The crisis caused by the Covid 19 pandemic has clearly shown that the cross-border dimension is, for most regional actors, primarily a superstructure or even just a practical way how to achieve their local goals. Problems related to Covid 19 (<i>limited face-to-face contacts, reductions of professional capacities, closure of borders, impediment of travel and movement across regions, disruption of some materials and services, ...</i>) have forced most of the regional development organizations to focus on their main priorities. At that moment, the development of cross-border cooperation (<i>understanding between neighboring countries and their inhabitants, as well as the building of a common identity and joint care for shared cultural heritage</i>) unfortunately stayed to be a priority only for those bodies, which were established on the cross-border bases (such are for example Euregions).</p> <p>However, also the NGO called "Centre Bavaria Bohemia (CeBB)" operates in the Czech-Bavarian border territory. It clearly succeeded in the role of cross-border coordinator in the covid and post covid period.</p> <p>CeBB is based in an old brewery (reconstructed besides others thanks to cross-border funds) in a small city called Schönsee, located in Bavaria just 10 km from the border. It is a cultural and information bilingual center, which operates to bring benefits to all the CZ-BY cross-border regions (Upper Franconia, Upper Palatinate, and Lower Bavaria x Pilsen, Karlovy Vary, and South Bohemian regions). It is run by an NGO association based in Bavaria, but its members are not only Bavarian but also Czech public bodies (municipalities, local and regional authorities).</p> <p>A long-term established network of partners and target groups, as well as the ability of CeBB to function in a virtual space, proved to be crucial in the covid period. The original "house" for organizing cultural events with a cross-border dimension and the tourist information center has quickly become a coordination and innovation platform that is able to address key topics, discuss and coordinate active people and initiative on a virtual basis. The cross-border</p>
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	<p>cooperation in the covid period would be significantly weakened without such CeBB's efforts.</p>
<p>Results achieved (150-200 words)</p> <p>-Why is this practice considered as good in (post) COVID context and how it supported the border territories recovery? Please provide some evidence (if possible).</p> <p>- How your organisation was involved in the process.</p> <p>- What are the further developments / further steps needed .</p>	<p>The following activities, not only from the last two years, deserve to be considered as good practice in (post) COVID context and supporting the border territory:</p> <p>a) “Culture without border” – The aim of this project is to present the diversity and richness of the cultural life of the six neighboring regions (Czech and Bavarian) thanks to cultural events and professional discussions in individual cities. The main event is the so-called “Week of the Neighbours”.</p> <p>However, at the time of the Covid, such events had to be canceled or limited. So CeBB quickly "transformed" into a virtual platform. It prepared an online variant where Czech participants could discuss online with German colleagues who participated directly at the venues. Cultural concerts or dance performances were broadcast on screens in open spaces on the other side of the border, virtual tours of individual places were organized. In this way, the common Czech-Bavarian culture and debate was maintained at a time when the borders were closed.</p> <p>b) “Green belt” – The topic of the green wooded belt that runs through Europe on the border between the former "communist east" and the "west" has been an important topic for the Czech-Bavarian border in recent years.</p> <p>CeBB has managed to establish this discussion in many professional groups, not only as a topic of “pure” nature protection but also as an issue of the cultural landscape and the history of people who have lived or are living there. Databases are being set up, specialized happenings are being organized, specialized environmental centers are being set up in the field, and schools and youth organizations are being invited to the area. All those actions are taking into account online variants as well.</p> <p>Such actions are important in post covid period when the border territories were weakened. Further, focusing on the green cross-border territory is in line with the principles of slow tourism, which is a priority for covid tourism.</p> <p>c) Cross-border Academy - This is a new emerging initiative that arose from the finding that the pandemic crisis had hit</p>

	<p>border areas particularly hard and that existing cross-border links were not working effectively enough to address the situation in a variety of social areas together. The academy aims to organize cross-border targeted meetings (virtual or offline) and communication of experts on specific topics ("Labs) to seek solutions to common problems or to support the potential of the territory.</p> <p>d) Online cultural and tourist platform - Overview of cultural events and tourist attractions in the border regions on both sides of the border. Social media use, the widest range of tourist brochures in the place.</p> <p>e) Coordination cultural point - Overview of cultural actors from both sides of the border, cross-border internships, information on the possibility of funding. This role became very important in a time when people were not able to meet and share know-how in the "nature" way.</p>
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<p>Potential for learning or transfer (100-150 words)</p> <p>-Explain why you consider this practice potentially interesting for other regions to learn from (in post-pandemic context).</p> <p>- What factors can hamper the transfer.</p> <p>- Any information on transfers that already took place.</p>	<p><i>CeBB used to be the primary cultural institution. Anyway, the development proved, that actors established on the cross-border level with the aim to be focused primarily on cross-border issues are very needed in the territory. Otherwise, the cross-border dimension could be neglected in problematic times (for example during the pandemic periods).</i></p> <p><i>Another advantage of the CeBB's is the fact that it has been founded jointly by Czech and Bavarian public actors (even though it is located in Bavaria). But to be honest, most of its financial sources comes from cross-border programme, special CZ-DE funds, or Bavarian sources.</i></p> <p><i>Transferable is primary the tools of online presentation (touristic potential and cultural events). Its effective functioning is possible mostly thanks to the strong network of cultural organizations, that fill by themselves the online forms about their events. What is also very important is their trust in CeBB that their channels are useful for their purpose. Next, what is innovative for the CZ-BY territory, is organizing online culture, expert or social events, and a combination of on and offline methods.</i></p> <p><i>To sum up, the added value of CeBB is primarily the ability to connect people, initiatives, and public bodies, purposefully and in the long-term perspective. Furthermore, to address the border area as a territory with high potential and to combine thematic areas of interest.</i></p>
<p>Further information Name any further reading, studies with web links</p>	<p>Some links in EU official languages: General info: - Startseite - bbkult.net</p>

	<p>Ad a) - Woche der Nachbarn - bbkult.net</p> <p>Ad b) - https://www.europeangreenbelt.org/news/news/welcome-to-the-week-of-neighbours-to-celebrate-culture-history-and-future-of-the-bohemian-czech-and/ - Grünes Band - Zelený pás - YouTube</p> <p>Ad d) - Veranstaltungen Archiv - bbkult.net</p>
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