

International Conference

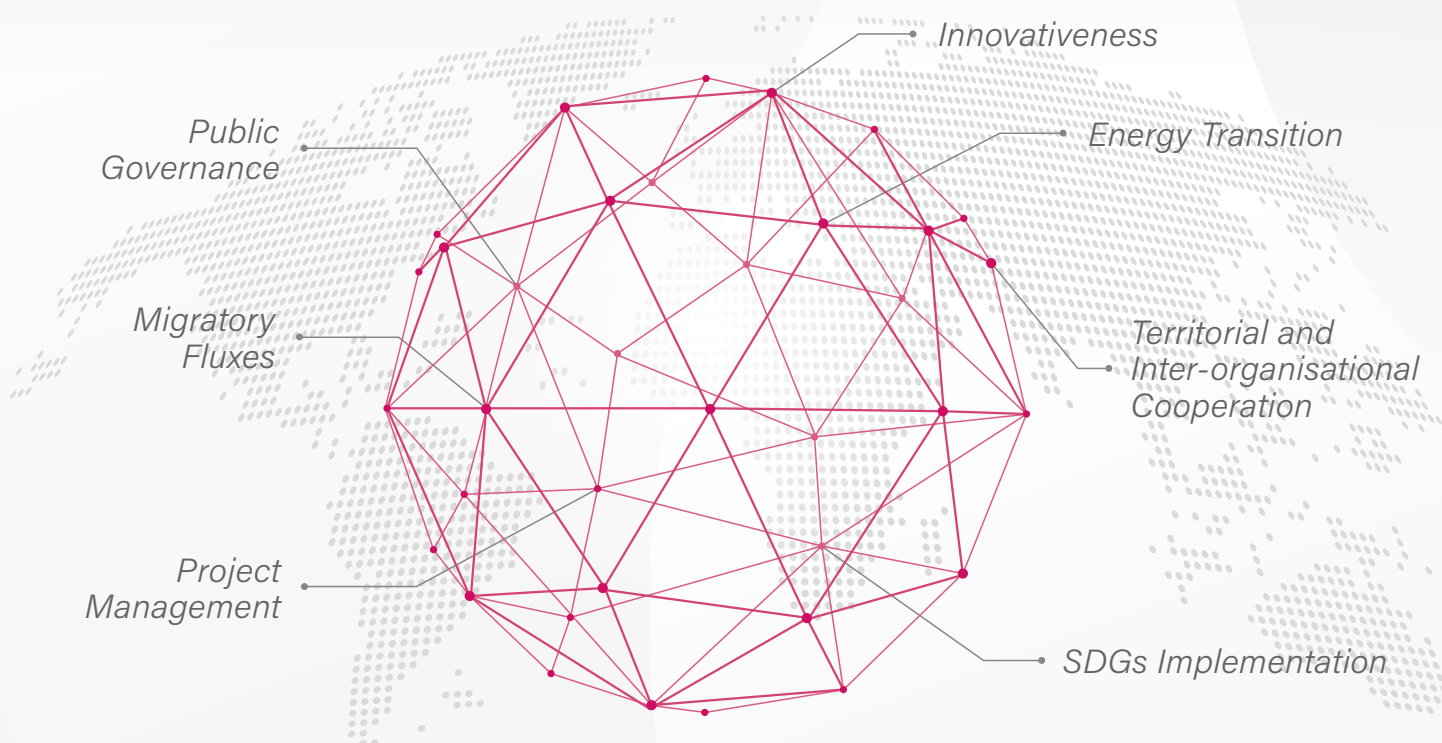
Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation 2026

27-29 October 2026

VENUE: WSB University,
Dąbrowa Górnicza, Poland

FORMULA: Hybrid

Book of Abstracts



Minister of Science and Higher Education
Republic of Poland

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The project is funded by the state budget, with funds awarded by the Minister of Science and Higher Education under the „Wektory Nauki” Programme.



Introduction

The International Conference on Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation is a recurring event for researchers and practitioners working on territorial and inter-organisational cooperation across local, regional, cross-border, and international dimensions, including academic and non-academic partners cooperating under the umbrella of the Q-Helix European University Alliance.

The event is organised through close collaboration with numerous Polish and international partners, who support the idea of inter-sectoral knowledge and experience exchange to develop various models of collaboration in local and regional development, as well as in international and global relations. In a rapidly changing world, no state, region, or enterprise can function in isolation; collaboration enables the achievement of goals that would be impossible to realise alone. In a rapidly changing world, no state, region, or enterprise can function in isolation; collaboration enables the achievement of goals that would be impossible to realise alone. Cooperation underpins stability, innovation, and sustainable growth.

In recognition of the importance of this scientific subject matter, this conference-like previous editions-is funded by public resources through the project “Multidimensional innovativeness of territorial and inter-organisational cooperation”, which aims to promote scientific research findings and is funded by the state under the Science Vectors programme of the Minister of Science and Higher Education.

The Conference is characterised by its interdisciplinary approach to addressing scientific problems from multi-perspectives and developing innovative solutions. Its aim is to foster networking and establish international, interdisciplinary scientific teams to address emerging scientific challenges collaboratively. Building on the results of six previous editions, this event has become an international platform for scientific cooperation, bringing together academic centres and practitioners who can benefit from research outcomes.



I believe that establishing ongoing scientific cooperation with the Research Institute on Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation, which I lead, would benefit all conference participants by creating opportunities joint research and projects as well as scientific publications.

Prof. Joanna Kurowska-Pysz, PhD

Director of Research Institute on Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation
WSB University, Dąbrowa Górnicza, Poland

Research Institute on Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation, WSB University

Research Institute on Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation has been operating at WSB University since 2018. The Institute implements an interdisciplinary programme of research on territorial and inter-organizational cooperation under the auspices of the Minister of Education and Science in Poland. This is an innovative formula for developing international research and applying its results in practice. The Institute develops a unique scientific school of cross-border cooperation research focused on cross-border project management.

Pillars of the Institute's Activities

1. Interdisciplinary research programmes implemented by scientists from various scientific fields who work together in international teams.
2. Development of a scientific network on a global scale.
3. Building relationships with outside academic community partners, including the European Commission, European regions, public institutions, regions and cities, NGOs and entrepreneurs.
4. Scientific articles published in English to enhance the dissemination of research results.
5. Counselling activity that allows the transfer of research results into business practice and their direct use in public institutions, local governments, non-governmental organisations and enterprises.
6. Participation in international projects to support research and consulting activities.

Key research topics:

- public governance
- territorial cooperation
- inter-organizational cooperation, clusters & networks
- cross-border and international project management
- knowledge & innovation management
- sustainable development
- green economy development
- public policies development & implementation



International Conference Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation'2026 – key information

Funding

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The project is led by the Research Institute on Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation, WSB University, Poland.

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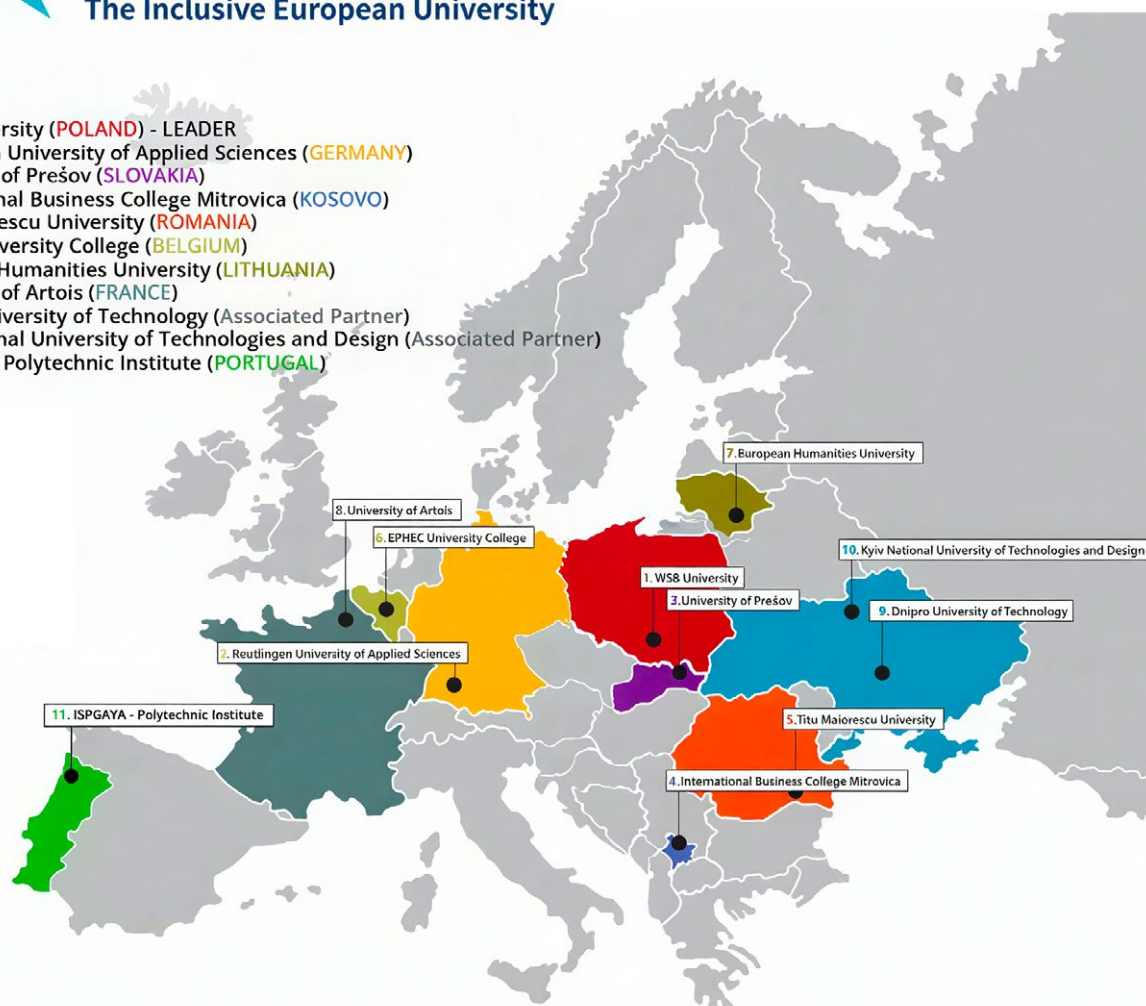


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Keynote Speakers





Hynek Böhm

Technical University of Liberec, Czechia

Hynek Böhm holds a Ph.D. in political geography. He has been professionally active in the field of cross-border co-operation (CBC) during most of his professional career in the public administration, NGOs and academia. He acted as a facilitator and a developer of cross-border initiatives. He was also a founding member of Transfrontier EuroInstitute Network (www.transfrontier.eu), which has been operating since 2010. After he defended his PhD thesis, which dealt with CBC and multi-level governance in border regions, he started researching and teaching border studies from the perspective of political geography at the Technical University of Liberec (CZ) and political sciences at the University of Opole (PL). He has been strongly involved in co-operation with the non-academic world, which makes his research more applied. He has co-founded EuroInstitute PL-CZ-SK, which should further deepen tri-lateral Polish-Czech-Slovak cross-border links by the means of training, applied research and consultancy. He has been acting as a chairman of the applied geography section of the Czech Geographical Society.

From Identifying to Removing Cross-Border Barriers: Institutional Capacity and Territorial Cooperation in Czech Borderlands

Despite decades of European integration and substantial financial support through Interreg programmes, legal, administrative and institutional barriers continue to constrain cross-border co-operation (CBC) within the European Union. Their identification and removal have therefore become increasingly important for territorial cohesion and the effective functioning of European border regions.

This contribution examines the Czech experience of identifying and addressing cross-border obstacles along its borders with Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Austria. Drawing on research conducted in cooperation with the Association of Czech Euroregions, it explores how legal and administrative asymmetries, institutional fragmentation and differences in national regulatory frameworks affect cooperation in fields such as emergency services, transport and environmental protection.

The presentation pays particular attention to the institutional mechanisms through which barriers are identified, communicated and potentially resolved. It highlights a seemingly paradoxical finding: more developed cross-border governance structures may report more obstacles, not necessarily because cooperation is less effective, but because they possess greater institutional capacity to

detect and document them. This institutional detection paradox challenges conventional interpretations of the number of identified barriers as a direct indicator of cross-border integration.

The Czech case also illustrates the importance of connecting local and regional actors with national authorities and European instruments, including Interreg and b-solutions. The contribution argues that effective barrier removal requires more than financial support: it depends on sustained institutional cooperation, multilevel coordination and mechanisms capable of translating locally identified problems into legal, administrative and policy responses.





William Elliott

OBE, University of Łódź, Poland

William Elliott is a former British diplomat, who now works in business, finance and sustainability. He grew up in Sierra Leone, Texas and England. He studied English Literature at the University of York, and was then a lecturer in English at the Universities of Lodz and Tbilisi.

He joined the UK Foreign Office in 1993 and was posted to Warsaw, Kabul and Tallinn (Deputy Ambassador). In London he worked on Afghanistan at the time of 9/11 and its aftermath. He was UK Consul General in St Petersburg from 2006–2010.

Since then he has mainly worked in international business. He has been a consultant on global markets and project management for major firms. He spent seven years at the City of London Corporation, leading financial services programmes in emerging markets and at CoP26.

He is currently Chairman of Ukraine Strategic Partners, a consultancy firm supporting global business in Ukraine. He is also a Senior Visiting Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Lodz and International Director for Polish Smog Alert, a Krakow-based NGO.

Has Brexit created new borders?

Brexit created two camps, with borders between them. The 2016 referendum exposed divisions in UK society that had developed over the past decades but had been ignored. Attitudes to Europe were only the tip of this iceberg. New lines in the sand were revealed and emphasised. 10 years later, time and political shifts have now begun to heal wounds and break down these borders.

But have attitudes to Europe changed so much for Leavers and Remainers since 2016? What has been the real impact of new borders between the UK and Europe on 'hard' issues (immigration, business, jobs) and 'softer' ones (holidays, languages, education, culture?). Have new borders with Europe changed the attitudes of two significant groups – political/government leaders and Generation Z? And are those attitudes reflected by what Europeans feel about the UK?



Martin Klatt

the European Centre for Minority Issues
in Flensburg, Germany;
University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

Martin Klatt is the Head of Research Cluster at the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg (since 2022). Since 2005 he has been working also as the Associate Professor at the Center of Border Region Studies at the University of Southern Denmark in Sønderborg. His previous scientific positions were: research fellow at the Schleswig-Holstein Institute for Peace Research (1996), the Research Department of the Danish Library for South Schleswig (1997–2000), assistant professor at the Danish Institute for Border Region Studies (2001–2005). His research activities concentrate on national minorities in border regions, regional cross-border cooperation, cross-border regions in history and today, and cross-border regional governance. Martin is also coordinator of the Borders Shaping Perceptions of European Societies (B-SHAPES) Horizon Europe research project.

Minorities, borders, territorial and organizational cooperation: Linkages, barriers, and challenges

Minorities, understood as communities with cultural and linguistic, sometimes also religious traits as well as a self-perception of difference from the majority society; and national borders within the EU as principally open borders (Common Market, Freedom of Movement) are two factors often forgotten when studying territorial and especially organizational cooperation. My lecture will address this, based on the results of the Borders Shaping Perceptions of European Societies Horizon Europe research project (B-SHAPES). Our findings suggest that:

1. Minority voices, especially from younger borderlanders, remain unheard in many political discourses on borders and border regions.
2. Minorities, and here also young minority members, have acquired certain qualifications, knowledge and skills because of their border-crossing lives, which can contribute to regional development, as well as improvements in organizational and territorial cooperation.
3. This border-crossing lives increase awareness of how borders still shape perceptions of societies and narratives of “us” and “them” – which often lead to perceptions of otherness that stand in the way for successful cooperation (not only) in borderlands. My lecture will illustrate models to better include minorities in borderlands into planning, innovation and development; both institutionally and organizationally; reflecting on theoretical models as Unfamiliarity (Spierings and van der Velde 2013), integration of cross-border regions (Brunet-Jailly 2005), borderland people/transnational borderlanders (Martinez 1994) as well as borders as resources and places of innovation (Sohn 2014; Cappellano et al. 2022).



Martin Lačný

University of Prešov, Slovakia

Martin Lačný graduated from the Faculty of Business Management at the University of Economics in Bratislava and obtained a doctoral degree in Cultural Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Bratislava. He is currently based at the Institute of Political Science, University of Prešov, Slovakia in the position of associate professor. His research and scholarly activities are focused on border studies, development economics, international economics and business ethics. He was the principal investigator of several VEGA projects, including the project VEGA 1/0177/19, focused on research of Slovak-Ukrainian cross-border cooperation under the conditions of the gradual AA/DCFTA implementation and visa-free regime between the EU and Ukraine. He has participated in 19 other national (APVV, VEGA, KEGA) and international (ERDF, Norway Grants, IVF) research projects. Since 2016, he has been a member of the Association for Borderlands Studies.

Research Into the Human Aspects of Resilience: Life Satisfaction Index for Border Regions

Borderlands resilience has been outlined in contemporary European border studies as an ability of a community to self-organize and mobilize skills and resources to create opportunities when faced with adversity, and to act in solidarity when the community is disturbed and even disrupted. Within this context perceived social and political stability, economic conditions, cohesion of societies and social capital were recognized as enabling resources playing key roles in building and maintaining social resilience, cooperation, social and economic relationships.

Based on an analysis of data from November/December 2024 in western Ukraine and eastern Slovakia, our research seeks to look at how satisfied residents living in the border regions of both countries were with significant areas of their lives. Earlier research from the conflict in Ukraine in 2015 revealed that life satisfaction among residents in the part of the country not directly affected by the conflict had hardly deteriorated, if at all. In a recent study comparing life satisfaction among residents of Ukraine and Slovakia, individual characteristics, self-efficacy, and positive affect were interpreted in accordance with the homeostatically protected mood (HPMood) hypothesis, which maintains a moderately positive assessment of life satisfaction despite adverse circumstances. Life satisfaction was assessed in a sample of residents from Slovakia (N = 245) and Ukraine (N = 267) using an index whose measurement model represents a hybrid reflective-formative construct that aggregates four significant areas of life. The effect of commonly surveyed demographic characteristics, gender, age, and education was controlled while the influence of two personal characteristics was tested: general self-efficacy as a direct factor and positive affect—how people felt during the day when the research was conducted—was tested as a moderator of life satisfaction. The results indicate a higher level of life satisfaction among Ukrainian residents, with the moderator effect being insignificant.



Mariya Mendzhul

Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

Maria Mendzhul is a Doctor of Law, Professor of the Department of Civil Law and Procedure of Uzhhorod National University. Her scientific interests include civil and family law, human rights, digitalization of law, cross-border cooperation and gender equality. Maria Mendzhul is a member of the Scientific Advisory Council under the Supreme Court and the Chairman of the Board of the NGO “Carpathian Human Rights Agency “Vested”, where she is engaged in the implementation of human rights and social projects. She is the author and co-author of monographs and numerous scientific publications.

Resilience of Local and Regional Authorities in the Context of European Integration (together with Juliia Fetko, Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine)

The European integration of Ukraine highlights the need to strengthen the capacity of local and regional authorities, as well as territorial communities, to respond effectively to contemporary socio-economic, security and institutional challenges. In this context, community resilience should be understood not only as the ability to withstand crises, but also as the capacity for strategic development, mobilisation of internal resources, attraction of external funding and development of effective partnerships.

The report examines the relationship between regional policy and the institutional capacity of territorial communities in the process of Ukraine’s European integration. Particular attention is paid to cross-border and territorial cooperation as instruments for strengthening community resilience, developing inter-municipal partnerships, attracting resources from EU programmes and implementing joint projects. The report also addresses the importance of proper project planning, participation of communities in European Union programmes and the development of partnerships with communities in EU Member States.

The report concludes that regional policy, institutional development and cross-border cooperation should be viewed as mutually reinforcing components of Ukraine’s European integration. Together, they create the prerequisites for building resilient, adaptive and sustainable territorial communities capable of effective participation in the European policy space.



Ekaterina Mikhailova

the Arctic University of Norway, Norway

Ekaterina Mikhailova is a Political Geographer working at the crossroads of Border Studies, Eastern European Studies and Governance. Ekaterina works as Associate Professor of Border Studies at the Centre for Geopolitics, Peace and Security, the Arctic University of Norway. She is a regional editor of the Journal of Borderlands Studies and Head of the project “Border(land) Museums as sites of remembering and forgetting: between lieux de mémoire et lieux de l’oubli” (2026–2028) funded by the French-Nordic trilateral program CUNP/FMSH. Ekaterina’s research interests include borders and borderlands, territorial identities, contested memories, indigenous communities, city diplomacy, toponymic geopolitics and more-than-human bordering.

Norwegian-Russian Borderland in Uncertain Times: Ruptures, Reconfigurations, Responses

In the past four decades, the Norwegian-Russian borderland in the European Arctic has undergone significant transformations driven by major global geopolitical shifts. During this period, it transitioned from Cold War stand-off to good-neighbourly relations in 1991, and back to palpable tensions, increased unpredictability and suspended contacts in 2022 following Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine. The Barents cooperation, which had been a hallmark of the region for the previous 30 years, has been halted, and the two sides of the borderland have become increasingly disconnected, living in diverging realities.

This presentation provides an overview of the ongoing changes unfolding at the Norwegian side of the borderland, focusing on three types of local reactions to the new major geopolitical shift. The first type of reaction is conceptualised as ruptures – discontinuities and losses triggered by the near-complete termination of cross-border institutional and grassroots exchanges. The second type, reconfigurations, refers to adaptations of previous business and administration routines, as well as personal livelihoods, to a new situation. Finally, the third type, responses, encompasses new measures and initiatives introduced to create a new horizon of territorial development and strengthen local resilience. The presentation argues that all three types of (re)actions should be understood as coexisting processes that shape one another, generating both synergies and conflicts in their implementation.



İsmail Şiriner

Batman University, Turkey

İsmail Şiriner is Professor of Economic Policy at the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Batman University, Türkiye. He holds a PhD in Economic Policy from Marmara University and was a visiting scholar in Development Studies at the University of Westminster, London. His research covers macroeconomic and development policy, labour markets and long-term unemployment, and the economics of migration and regional development, with particular attention to Türkiye's south-eastern border regions. He is the author or editor of several books in political economy and development, and co-founder of the ICOPEC International Conference of Political Economy and the CUDES congress series. He currently coordinates the preparation of a COST Action proposal on border-region economies, bringing together researchers from twelve institutions across seven countries.

Learning Across Borderlands: Displacement, Labour Markets and Regional Development Reflections from the Polish-Ukrainian and Turkish-Syrian Borderlands

Border regions are economically distinctive, yet the economics of these regions remains thinly developed. Research on cross-border cooperation has largely been built on borders where interaction is facilitated, and where the central questions are commuting, trade and market integration. Much less is known about border regions where movement is constrained rather than enabled, and where two demographic processes occur at the same time: the arrival of displaced populations, and the continuing departure of local working-age residents.

This keynote approaches that configuration through two cases. The first is the TRC1 region of south-eastern Türkiye, on the Syrian border, which has received large numbers of displaced people since 2011 while continuing to lose younger residents to other parts of the country. The second is the Polish-Ukrainian borderland after 2022, examined in recent work by Łażniewska, Kurowska-Pysz, Górecki, Prytula and Plac, who present their findings as possible examples of good practice for other European regions.

The two cases are not alike. The borders differ, as do the institutions, the legal status of those who arrive, and the time that has passed since arrival began. Placing them next to each other nevertheless raises the same questions. What happens to a local labour market that absorbs new workers while losing others? What do local governments, employment services, employers and civil society organisations actually do? And what can border regions at Europe's eastern and southern edges learn from one another?

The talk does not offer conclusions. It sets out a comparative research agenda and identifies what current data cannot yet measure.



Moderators





Yuliia Fetko

Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

PhD in Law, Director of the Research Institute of Fundamental and Applied Studies of European Territorial Cooperation, Associate Professor at the Department of International Law, Uzhhorod National University. Research interests include EU law, the legal regulation of European integration processes, European territorial cooperation, and the legal aspects of the adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to the EU acquis.



Margherita Vacca

University of Florence, Italy

Architect, Adjunct Professor, PhD, Project manager. She obtained a PhD within the PhD program Sustainability and Innovation for the design of the built environment and the product system at the Department of Architecture of the University of Florence. Previously, she graduated in Architecture (five-year MA degree) at the University of Florence. Since 2017 she has been collaborating within the Design Laboratory for Sustainability (DIDA UNIFI), dealing with the creation and development of national and international projects on issues such as the empowerment of rural communities, the safeguarding of craft knowledge, social innovation. Her topics of interest are eco-social design and sustainability, systemic design, interculturality, design with communities and territories. She took part in the coordination and management of international and national research projects. She's currently teaching Eco-Social Design at the BA Degree in Design of the University of Florence. She's an active member of the Social Design Network and Design + Posthumanism Network.

The abstracts of the conference presentations



Regina Andriukaitiene, Lithuanian Sports University, Lithuania

Socially responsible implementation of Human Resource management as a factor in the organization's sustainability

Socially responsible human resource management is becoming an increasingly important management practice in modern sports organizations. CSR principles in sports organizations are especially important due to their close connection with society. Employees of sports organizations face significant physical and psychological strain (Arnold et al., 2021), therefore, it is important that CSR becomes the fundamental basis for decision-making (Aguinis & Glavas, 2019) and the necessity to achieve long-term sustainability (Walters & Tacon, 2018). Research aim-to define the factors determining socially responsible human resource management that enable the sustainable development of organizations. Human resource management in sports organizations is increasingly being examined within the broader context of sustainability, social responsibility, and employee well-being. The term socially responsible human resource management is not always used directly in sports sector research. The latest scientific research emphasizes employee engagement, appropriate working conditions, non-discrimination, improving employee well-being, work-life balance, organizational trust, employee training, and integrating social responsibility into the activities of sports organizations (Hill et al., 2026; Huang et al., 2026; Saiyed et al., 2025; Dehghanpouri et al., 2025 et al.). Research reveals that integrating social responsibility into HRM processes and organizational strategy can contribute to the sustainability of a sports organization and improve performance outcomes. Socially responsible human resource management in sports organizations should be regarded as a comprehensive management system that combines the principles of employee well-being, organizational fairness, social responsibility, and long-term sustainability.

Jennifer Bettis, Western Washington University, United States of America

Cross-Border Vulnerabilities in Cascadia: Business Impacts of the Canada-US Trade Dispute

Cascadia, the border region spanning Washington State and British Columbia, is often cited as a model of cross-border integration, built on decades of institutional trust and a “culture of collaboration.” Yet the current Canada-US trade dispute, marked by tariffs, annexation rhetoric, and a Canadian boycott of U.S. goods and travel, is testing the durability of these cooperative frameworks. It shows that even well-established border regions remain structurally vulnerable to shifts in federal policy and bilateral relations.

This paper draws on two sequential surveys conducted by the Border Policy Research Institute examining how Whatcom County, Washington businesses are perceiving these disruptions. A 2025 survey (n=58) identified tariffs and declining Canadian travel as compounding threats, especially for small and medium-sized firms. A second survey in 2026 (n=62) focuses specifically on impacts from the continued drop in Canadian visitors, finding that most respondents report damage to their business, with tourism, retail, and food and beverage sectors most concerned about survival, and newer businesses more vulnerable than established ones. Most expect the disruption to be long-term, prompting layoffs and reductions. The paper argues that local economic resilience cannot be assumed from historical integration alone and discuss implications for cross-border governance.



Artur Boháč, Technical University of Liberec, Czechia

The Small Project Fund Turów: A Unique Financial Instrument for a Dispute-Affected Borderland

The Turów lignite mine dispute represented one of the most serious challenges to Czech–Polish cross-border relations in recent decades. While the conflict attracted considerable political, legal, and media attention, less attention has been paid to the subsequent reconstruction of everyday cross-border cooperation at the local level. This contribution examines the role of the Small Project Fund in the Czech–Polish borderland affected by the Turów dispute. It asks whether small-scale cross-border projects can contribute to restoring mutual trust, strengthening interpersonal contacts, and increasing the resilience of cross-border cooperation after an intense misunderstanding. The article focuses on the specific procedural and geographical setting of the financial tool itself as well as on projects implemented within it. The contribution argues that although small projects cannot address the structural causes of the Turów dispute, they may function as an important bottom-up mechanism for maintaining and rebuilding cross-border relationships when cooperation at higher political levels becomes contested or temporarily disrupted.

Joseph Brown, WSB University, Poland

Framing Change Management in Public-Sector SAP S/4HANA Transitions: A Conceptual Model

Germany's public administration faces a mandatory shift away from SAP ECC, making S/4HANA migration a major digital transformation challenge. Yet existing change-management research remains dominated by private-sector cases, leaving the conditions for successful public-sector ERP transitions under-theorised. This talk presents a conceptual model for studying how intra-organisational factors (leadership, culture, resource capacity) and extra-organisational factors (regulation, politics, vendor ecosystems) jointly shape the effectiveness and efficiency of SAP ECC-to-S/4HANA transitions in German public-sector organisations. Rather than presenting empirical findings, the session outlines the framework's theoretical foundations, proposed research questions, and planned qualitative case-study design – inviting discussion on its applicability and refinement.



Erol Ciçek, Batman University, Turkey

Reflections of Global Trade Tensions on Food Markets and Price Stability

In recent years, increasing trade tensions in the global economy have had significant effects on countries' foreign trade structures and economic balances. In particular, the trade tensions between the United States and China have affected not only bilateral trade but also global supply chains and commodity markets due to the implementation of tariffs and reciprocal trade restrictions. Changes in trade policies can increase import costs and place upward pressure on the prices of food products, particularly essential food items. Rising costs in food products may be reflected in consumer prices, thereby influencing overall inflation and food inflation. This study examines the implications of global trade tensions for food markets and their consequences for price stability. It evaluates the potential effects of trade wars on food imports, import costs, and prices, highlighting the importance of changes in international trade policies for food markets. The study aims to contribute to a better understanding of how trade tensions can influence food markets and price dynamics in the global economy.

Magdalena Drózd, WSB University, Poland

Selected forms of knowledge transfer at a research institute

The presentation will discuss selected forms of knowledge transfer used within a research institute as a knowledge-based organisation.

A research institute is a specific type of organisation whose functioning is based on knowledge and its effective management. A particularly important process is knowledge transfer, during which the results of research and various types of substantive information are disseminated both within and outside the organisation.

In this context, three forms of knowledge transfer can be distinguished, namely: knowledge sharing, which involves the exchange of knowledge between staff and collaborators; the transfer of knowledge to industrial and scientific partners in the form of specific technical and technological solutions; and the dissemination of knowledge, enabling access to it for all interested parties.

During the presentation, a practical approach to the issue of knowledge transfer within a research institute will be outlined.



Tamerlan Gurbanov, WSB University, Poland

The Impact of Transformational and Transactional Leadership on SERVQUAL-Based Service Quality Across the Customer Journey in Automotive SMEs: Evidence from Azerbaijan

This study examines the influence of transformational and transactional leadership styles on SERVQUAL-based service quality across the customer journey in automotive small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Azerbaijan. Despite extensive research on leadership and service quality independently, empirical evidence linking these constructs across the full customer journey – encompassing marketing, sales, and aftersales stages – remains scarce, particularly in emerging market SME contexts. Drawing on data collected from employees and customers of automotive SMEs operating in Baku, Azerbaijan, this study employs a quantitative survey-based approach and Structural Equation Modeling to empirically investigate these relationships. The findings are expected to demonstrate that both leadership styles positively influence SERVQUAL dimensions, with transformational leadership exhibiting stronger effects on customer-oriented dimensions such as responsiveness and empathy, while transactional leadership demonstrates relatively stronger influence on operational dimensions including reliability and assurance. The study contributes to the leadership and service quality literature by providing context-specific empirical evidence from an underrepresented emerging market and offers practical implications for SME managers seeking to enhance service quality through targeted leadership development.

Anna Maksymenko, Dolishnyi Institute of Regional Research of NAS of Ukraine, Ukraine

Partnership Networks as a Measure of Effectiveness in Cross-Border Cooperation: The Case of Ukraine and Slovakia

Although Ukraine-Slovakia cross-border cooperation continues to expand, few studies assess the effectiveness of joint projects through the lens of the partnership networks they generate. This study defines effectiveness as the capacity to build and maintain social ties between institutions on both sides of the border within projects, and to ensure the long-term use of project outcomes after implementation. Drawing on the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014–2020 and the first call of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Interreg NEXT Programme (2021–2027), we focus on the cross-border network of institutions from Slovakia and Ukraine specifically, and analyze partnerships by institution type separately for the two programming periods. We further combine network analysis with in-depth interviews with project leaders from both countries to examine how partnerships in CBC projects are established, and what project sustainability means for its executors.



Adnan ul Haque, Yorkville University, Canada

Sustainable Knowledge and Innovation Management in Project-Based Work: A Systematic Review of Knowledge Transfer, Innovation Diffusion, and Portfolio Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability

Project-based organizations face persistent challenges in retaining knowledge post-project and translating innovation into sustained sustainability outcomes. This study conducts a systematic review of 47 peer-reviewed articles (2015–2025) examining sustainable knowledge and innovation management in project-based work. Following PRISMA guidelines, three research questions are addressed: how knowledge transfer occurs across project boundaries, how innovation diffuses within inter-organizational configurations, and how project portfolios can be governed for long-term sustainability. Findings identify three critical mechanisms. First, structured knowledge management practices including post-project reviews, boundary-spanning roles, and digital platforms significantly reduce knowledge loss and enhance cross-project learning. Second, innovation diffusion in inter-organizational projects depends on self-organizing working groups and iterative participation that bridge formal and informal organizing structures. Third, sustainability integration into project portfolio management requires Triple Bottom Line principles embedded in selection criteria, with Project Materiality Assessments enabling data-driven alignment with economic, social, and environmental objectives. The study contributes a conceptual framework linking knowledge codification, innovation diffusion mechanisms, and portfolio-level sustainability governance. Practical implications for project managers and policymakers engaged in territorial and inter-organizational cooperation are discussed. Limitations include reliance on published literature and the need for longitudinal empirical validation of the proposed framework.

Mohammad Akram Khan, Adeeba Anees, Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), India

Cross-Border University Networks as Drivers of Territorial Cohesion: The UNIADRION Model

The current paper is aimed at analyzing the significance of cross-border university networks for promoting territorial cohesion. The chosen example of such a network is UNIADRION, which unites 53 universities from ten countries of the Adriatic-Ionian region. In the paper, it will be shown how UNIADRION promotes cross-border academic collaboration and contributes to territorial integration via knowledge sharing. Specifically, it will be analyzed how university networks are used as infrastructures of territorial cooperation that allow launching joint projects, developing mobility programs, as well as creating joint curricula. Also, some problems related to the maintenance of such networks will be identified, and possible solutions to those will be proposed.



Yaroslava Kalat, Dolishniy Institute of Regional Research of NAS of Ukraine

European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation as an Instrument of Ukraine's Post-War Recovery and European Integration

European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs) are an institutional form of cross-border cooperation and an EU instrument designed to strengthen territorial cooperation, support the development of border regions, and promote European integration. For Ukraine, EGTCs may play a particularly important role in the post-war recovery period.

The presentation examines the current participation of Ukrainian regions in EGTCs and assesses their potential to strengthen Ukraine's post-war recovery and European integration. Particular attention is paid to the geographical distribution of existing EGTCs and those currently being established with Ukrainian partners. The presentation also addresses the relationship between EGTCs and the established network of Euroregions.

A specific focus is placed on Ukrainian-Polish cross-border cooperation. Despite a long history of institutional interaction, an extensive network of Euroregions, and intensive project cooperation, no EGTC involving Ukrainian and Polish authorities has yet been established. This raises questions about the causes of such gaps and the need to establish new forms of cross-border cooperation or transform existing cooperation mechanisms into more sustainable ones.

Grzegorz Kinelski, WSB University, Poland

Cross-border smart city resilience

Cross-border smart city resilience represents an advanced urban paradigm where neighboring international municipalities co-create a shared ecosystem to absorb and recover from global shocks. Built upon the cornerstone of the 4T model, this approach shifts the resilience focus from isolated technological nodes into a highly cooperative, transnational network of social and digital infrastructure.

The successful operationalization of this framework relies entirely on the synergy of the 4Ts: Technology provides the foundational layer, utilizing cross-border data platforms, shared IoT sensors, and integrated digital twins to monitor systemic environmental and cybersecurity risks in real time. However, technology is rendered obsolete without Talent—the collective human and administrative capital capable of designing open-source innovations across borders. This operational intelligence is structurally sustained by Tolerance and Trust. Tolerance fosters open, diverse, and inclusive socio-economic spaces that attract multi-disciplinary innovators. Simultaneously, Trust functions as the critical mechanism for seamless cross-border governance, enabling mutual data-sharing, collective risk mitigation, and joint crisis response without geopolitical friction.

Ultimately, embedding the 4T components within cross-border frameworks transforms smart cities into adaptable, resilient organisms. This integration replaces rigid, vendor-locked urban silos with flexible, decentralized networks capable of safeguarding neighboring populations against cascading regional emergencies.



Piotr Krowicki, WSB University, Poland

Residents as Co-Creators of Regional Brand: The Role of Engagement in Territorial Branding

Contemporary territorial branding increasingly recognises residents as active stakeholders who contribute to the meaning, identity and reputation of a region. This paper explores the role of residents' engagement in the co-creation of regional brands and examines how their involvement extends beyond the traditional role of recipients of territorial marketing activities. Particular attention is given to residents' identification with their region, their engagement in local initiatives and their role as advocates and communicators of the regional brand. The paper discusses selected theoretical perspectives and examples of resident participation in territorial branding, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges associated with a participatory approach. It argues that involving residents can strengthen the authenticity, legitimacy and social embeddedness of regional brands. The paper contributes to the discussion on contemporary territorial branding by emphasising the transition from institution-led brand management towards more participatory and co-creative approaches.

Anna Kluczyńska, European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation
"Polish-Lithuanian cross-border functional area"

The Polish-Lithuanian Cross-Border Functional Area: the role of the EGTC in strengthening territorial cooperation

The Polish-Lithuanian Cross-Border Functional Area is a territory where effective cooperation between local and regional authorities is essential for addressing common development challenges. The EGTC provides an institutional framework to strengthen cooperation between Polish and Lithuanian local governments and support joint initiatives that will demonstrate its role in developing long-term territorial cooperation within the Polish-Lithuanian border area. Particular attention will be given to the role of the EGTC in building institutional capacity, facilitating cooperation between local authorities and local communities, and identifying common development needs and barriers to cross-border cooperation. The presentation will also introduce current activities aimed at developing a common strategy for the Polish-Lithuanian functional area, including the use of the CLLD approach. The example shows how an EGTC can contribute not only to implementing individual cross-border projects, but also to building a more integrated functional area, strengthening local partnerships, and laying the groundwork for long-term cooperation.



Anna Kowalska, WSB University, Poland

Girls4Economy – Shaping the Network Competencies of Young Girls from Minor Towns and Restructured Areas as Future Business Leaders Operating in a 4.0 Economy

In a world where education, work, and relationships are increasingly moving into digital environments, being able to use technology effectively is no longer enough. Young people also need the ability to communicate, collaborate, build relationships, think critically, and work effectively in virtual teams and communities. These competencies are particularly important for young girls from minor towns and restructured areas, supporting their preparation for the realities of a 4.0 economy. The Girls4Economy project responds to these challenges by developing social-digital and network competencies and providing teachers with practical tools for working with young people. The presentation will focus on the Teachers' Toolkit – a set of materials, lesson scenarios, and practical solutions designed to integrate the development of these competencies into everyday educational practice. Using examples from the project, the presentation will demonstrate how project-based learning and appropriately selected digital tools can support communication, collaboration, work organisation, and the creation of shared outcomes. In this way, the presentation connects the objectives of the Girls4Economy project with their practical application in the work of teachers and students.

Solomon Kunle Omogbemi, WSB University, Poland

Security-Driven Displacement and the Political Economy of Migration: A Comparative Analysis of Nigeria and Ukraine as Sending Territories – Implications for Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation

Migration research has long treated conflict-induced displacement and economically motivated emigration as separate analytical tracks, yet the lived experience of sending populations rarely respects that division. This paper places two very different, currently unfolding cases side by side: Nigeria, a country from which people leave for a tangled mix of insecurity, joblessness, and diminished economic opportunity, and Ukraine, a country whose population has been displaced by direct territorial invasion since February 2022. The objective is to establish, through a mixed-methods comparative design combining documentary analysis with secondary quantitative indicators drawn from the National Bureau of Statistics (Nigeria), the World Bank, the International Organisation for Migration, and UNHCR, how far the economic architecture of each crisis converges or diverges, and what this means for territorial and inter-organisational cooperation frameworks. The paper argues that although the two crises differ sharply in cause, the economic mechanics of displacement, loss of productive capacity, erosion of remittance and labour markets, and the fiscal burden of protection show recurring patterns that regional and cross-border cooperation bodies can act on. The paper closes with a set of policy pathways relevant to territorial governance actors operating across the ECOWAS and EU spaces, and to the wider community of cross-border cooperation researchers convened at this conference.



Joanna Kurowska-Pysz, WSB University, Poland

Climate changes in borderlands and policies for their mitigation

The study aims to explore regional place-based approaches to climate change in borderlands, which face unique challenges and opportunities to develop innovative strategies and more resilient responses to mitigate threats posed by climate change.

The study reveals the policy directionality in border regions across multiple levels of government. Specifically, one explores how the different policy objectives – climate mitigation vs. adaptation – align across Polish borders and their counterparts in Germany, Czechia, Slovakia, and Lithuania.

The work uses mixed methods, combining qualitative data on policy documents and investment figures issued at regional, national, and cross-border policy levels. The findings demonstrate the spatial sensitivity in approaches to climate change across borderlands. Different levels of policy alignment are reported against the institutional set-ups of borderlands. The analysis shows a clear consensus on the role of cross-border cooperation in addressing climate change-related threats, including floods and forest fires. These threats are recognised unanimously across the borderland sample, although the remediation measures vary. The analysis demonstrates that a similar institutional set-up, across the two sides of the border, “per se” does not necessarily guarantee a coherent approach toward climate changes.

Myroslava Lendel, Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

From Institutional Density to Functional Integration: Inter-Organizational Cooperation in Ukraine's Western Borderlands

Ukraine's western borderlands have developed an increasingly dense landscape of institutions engaged in cross-border cooperation. Regional and local authorities, development agencies, universities, civil society organisations, Euroregions, EGTCs and sectoral institutions operate alongside Interreg partnerships and bilateral territorial arrangements. Yet institutional density does not necessarily translate into functional cross-border integration. This paper examines the gap between the proliferation of cooperation structures and their capacity to generate sustained coordination, cross-border services and territorial effects, using Zakarpattia Oblast as an empirical case.

Based on institutional mapping, documentary analysis and evidence from cross-border initiatives, the study explores how heterogeneous organisations combine their competences, resources and networks under the simultaneous pressures of war and European integration. Particular attention is given to inter-organizational coordination between regional authorities, municipalities, intermediary organisations and sectoral actors in healthcare, education, civil protection, infrastructure and regional development. The analysis identifies a shift from predominantly project-based cooperation towards more functionally differentiated networks addressing shared territorial problems. However, fragmented competences, unequal municipal capacities, project dependence and weak coordination continue to limit integration. The paper argues that Ukraine's preparation for EU Cohesion Policy requires moving beyond institutional expansion towards durable inter-organizational coordination, shared territorial priorities and cross-border functional capacity.



Ho Long Ngoc, Le Thi Hong Oanh, The University of Danang, Vietnam

Building a Sustainable Quintuple Helix Partnership Ecosystem through Global Engagement: Lessons from the University of Danang, with the HEIsCITI Project as a Case Study

Universities have an important role to play in advancing innovation, nurturing talent, and contributing to a more sustainable future. Realising this potential requires more than academic excellence; it depends on the ability to build lasting partnerships that connect knowledge, institutions, and people across disciplines, sectors, and countries.

Drawing on the experience of the University of Danang (UD), this presentation explores how global engagement can foster a sustainable partnership ecosystem through the complementary perspectives of the Triple Helix and Quintuple Helix models. While the Triple Helix highlights the role of university–government–industry collaboration in driving innovation, the Quintuple Helix broadens this perspective by incorporating civil society and the natural environment, placing innovation within a wider context of sustainable development. Together, these perspectives provide a useful lens for examining how universities can connect international knowledge and institutional partnerships with local priorities and shared societal goals.

The presentation considers how international academic networks, institutional partnerships, Erasmus+ mobility and capacity-building initiatives, and multi-stakeholder collaboration can reinforce one another to strengthen institutional capacity, facilitate knowledge exchange, and create opportunities for sustained cooperation. Particular attention is given to the partnership between UD, Vietnam and WSB University, Poland, through the HEIsCITI project. This experience illustrates how project-based cooperation can support institutional learning, deepen inter-organisational relationships, and open pathways to collaboration beyond the lifetime of an individual project.

The presentation argues that sustainable partnership ecosystems depend not only on formal agreements or project funding, but also on shared priorities, mutual trust, committed people, institutional ownership, and continuous co-creation. The experience of UD and its collaboration with WSB University through HEIsCITI offers practical insights into how global engagement can help transform individual initiatives into enduring partnerships that connect universities, public authorities, businesses, and wider society in pursuit of innovation and sustainable development.

Keywords: Triple Helix; Quintuple Helix; global engagement; sustainable partnerships; Erasmus+; internationalisation of higher education.



Matthias Löffler, WSB University, Poland

Ergonomic implications of custom-made orthopedic insoles in an industrial environment: Effects on musculoskeletal health, pain, quality of life and CHM

Background: Musculoskeletal disorders are a leading cause of impaired work ability, sickness absence, and reduced quality of life, particularly in industrial occupations that require prolonged standing, walking, load handling, and the use of safety footwear. Custom-made orthopedic insoles are a non-invasive and comparatively low-cost intervention, yet evidence of their effectiveness under real-world industrial conditions remains limited. This study will evaluate their health-related, biomechanical, and economic impact when worn in safety footwear.

Methods: In this prospective, controlled, non-randomised quasi-experimental field study, approximately 30 industrial employees receiving custom-made orthopedic insoles will be compared with approximately 20 employees in a non-intervention control group over six months. Assessments at baseline and follow-up will include the Self-reported Foot and Ankle Score (SEFAS), the SF-36 Health Survey, dynamic pedobarography, gait-related parameters, standardised rearfoot documentation, adherence data, and company-provided records of sickness absence attributable to musculoskeletal disorders. Between-group differences and changes over time will be analysed.

Outcomes: The primary analysis will examine whether custom-made insoles improve foot and ankle function, pain, health-related quality of life, and biomechanical load distribution. Secondary analyses will assess changes in musculoskeletal-disorder-related sickness absence and, from the employer perspective, relate intervention costs to avoided absence costs to estimate return on investment.

Conclusions: By integrating patient-reported, biomechanical, occupational-health, and economic outcomes, this study will generate context-sensitive evidence on the effectiveness and organisational value of custom-made orthopedic insoles in industrial settings. The findings are intended to inform corporate health management and evidence-based decisions on scalable interventions for musculoskeletal health in industrial small and medium-sized enterprises.

Marek Olszewski, Association of Development and Regional Cooperation „Olza” Cieszyn, Poland

Cross-border public services as key factors in the development of the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion.

The aim of the presentation is to present selected examples of cross-border public services that currently exist or are planned for implementation in the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion. Their nature and specific characteristics align with the policy areas identified by the European Commission and outlined in the current Development Strategy for the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion.

Joanna Łabędzka, Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce, Poland

Logistics Process Design and Employee Creativity: Balancing Efficiency and Innovation

The study examines how logistics process design, optimization, and standardization influence employee creativity and the generation and implementation of improvement ideas. It addresses the tension between achieving process efficiency and maintaining employee autonomy and creative capacity. A qualitative case study of LW Bogdanka is conducted using publicly available corporate documents from 2019 to 2026, including annual and periodic reports, ESG and integrated reports, strategic documents, and materials concerning organizational processes, innovation, and operational improvements. The data are analyzed using systematic qualitative content analysis, focusing on process optimization and standardization, employee involvement, autonomy, creativity, innovation, and continuous improvement.

The study explores whether standardized logistics processes constrain employee creativity or can also create conditions that support problem identification, employee initiatives, and continuous improvement. Particular attention is given to the dual role of standardization: as a potential constraint on autonomy and experimentation and as a framework that can improve process transparency, stability, and opportunities for improvement.

The study contributes to research on logistics process design by highlighting the relationship between process efficiency and employee creativity. The findings may provide practical implications for designing logistics processes that combine operational efficiency with employee involvement, creativity, and continuous improvement.

Muhammad Aurangzeb Manzoor, Lithuanian Sports University, Lithuania

The Impact of Social Media Engagement on Sport Club Brand Loyalty

Social media has transformed the relationship between sports clubs and their supporters, shifting communication from one-way information dissemination toward interactive, relationship-driven engagement. While a growing body of research confirms a positive link between social media engagement and sports club brand loyalty, the literature remains divided on the mechanisms underlying this relationship, with competing explanations drawn from Relationship Marketing Theory, Customer Engagement Theory, and Social Identity Theory. This study investigates the impact of social media engagement on sports club brand loyalty, addressing four objectives: identifying the key dimensions and practices of social media engagement used by clubs; examining the relationship between fan engagement and brand loyalty; identifying the broader factors influencing brand loyalty; and evaluating the specific role of fan identity within this relationship. The study responds to a gap in current literature, where existing findings are largely drawn from professional football contexts using cross-sectional designs, limiting generalisability and leaving the psychological mechanisms connecting engagement to loyalty only partially understood. By synthesising theoretical and empirical perspectives, this research aims to contribute a more integrated understanding of how digital engagement builds sustainable fan loyalty, offering practical implications for sports club marketing and communication strategy.



Marcin Matuszny, WSB University, Poland

Building Knowledge Bases to Improve Decision-Making Effectiveness in Manufacturing Enterprise Management

The aim of this study is to present a conceptual framework for building knowledge bases designed to support decision-making processes in the management of manufacturing enterprises. In the context of the increasing complexity of production processes, growing pressure to improve operational efficiency, and the need to respond rapidly to changing market conditions, the effective acquisition, organization, and utilization of organizational knowledge are becoming increasingly important.

The development of knowledge bases enables the systematic organization of information, accumulated experience, and best practices, while facilitating their accessibility to individuals involved in decision-making processes. The study outlines the fundamental assumptions underlying the identification, acquisition, and structuring of knowledge, as well as its application as a basis for managerial decision-making.

Furthermore, the potential benefits associated with the implementation of knowledge bases are discussed. Particular emphasis is placed on reducing decision-making time, minimizing the risk of errors, and improving the consistency, repeatability, and overall efficiency of production processes.

Wojciech Młynarski, WSB University, Poland

EU-NATO Military Interoperability: Challenges and Opportunities

The changing European security environment has intensified debate on military interoperability between the European Union and NATO. Russia's war against Ukraine, the rise of hybrid threats, and the need for rapid multinational response have exposed the importance of closer coordination between the two organisations. Despite overlapping memberships and broadly shared strategic objectives, interoperability remains limited by institutional fragmentation, uneven capability development, divergent planning and procurement processes, and differences in operational standards.

The presentation explores the principal obstacles to effective EU–NATO military interoperability and assesses the extent to which recent EU defence initiatives can complement NATO rather than duplicate its role. It focuses on selected areas including military mobility, capability development, cyber defence, standardisation, and joint exercises. The argument advanced is that interoperability is not merely a technical matter, but also a political and strategic challenge. Stronger coherence between EU and NATO frameworks could improve operational readiness, resilience, and collective security across the Euro-Atlantic area.

Magdalena Pierzyna, WSB University, Poland

Conceptualization of the cross-border tourism services market on the example of the Polish-Czech borderland

The aim of this study is the conceptualization of the cross-border tourism services market and the determination of its structure on the example of the Polish-Czech borderland, which responds to the lack of a clear definition of this concept in the literature.

The research utilized method triangulation: a systematic literature review, bibliometric analysis, surveys among 390 tourists from the Śląsk Cieszyński – Těšínské Slezsko Euroregion, and 12 interviews with representatives of six Polish-Czech euroregions.

The results allowed for the formulation of an original definition of the market. They also revealed differences in behavior: Poles prefer local one-day offers, while Czechs are more willing to treat the borderland as a destination for short trips. On the supply side, a dispersion of activities based on single projects was demonstrated, whereas a mature product requires full integration of the offer.

The conclusions indicate that this market is a dynamic system of relations between demand, supply, and institutions. The mere existence of attractions or spatial proximity does not guarantee success; a process-oriented approach to design, an integrated offer, and cooperation management are essential.

Tomáš Pražák, Silesian University, School of Business Administration, Karvina, Czechia

Regional Development and Cross-Border Business Cooperation in Times of Uncertainty: Evidence from the Těšín Silesia Euroregion

Economic disruption profoundly affects businesses, labor markets, and employment structures. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 strongly disrupted cross-border cooperation in the Těšín Silesia Euroregion along the Czech-Polish border. This study examines the impacts crisis on the cross-border labor market and economic activities, using a mixed-method approach combining quantitative surveys, and expert interviews. Findings reveal the vulnerability of cross-border workers, supply chain disruptions, and challenges for SMEs. The results support the Euregio-Info platform, helping policymakers and stakeholders better manage future crises.

Fryderyk Marek Pryjma, WSB University

Who pays, who adopts? Pilot requirements in public startup acceleration across eleven Central and Eastern European EU states

Public agencies in Central and Eastern Europe fund accelerators meant to connect startups with firms, state-owned companies and municipalities acting as technology recipients. The study compares the design of 25 acceleration instruments in the eleven CEE EU member states using document analysis. Under a strict reading, only Polish instruments require a pilot with a technology recipient; Lithuania and Estonia join under a lenient reading. In most countries, cooperation with recipients is optional or absent. In instruments with available governing documents, none requires the recipient to co-finance the pilot or to commit to anything after it. Programme indicators count startups supported, not adoption. The one programme that reported post-pilot results recorded commercial use for 23 of 276 startups. Drawing on agency theory and absorptive capacity, the study argues that public acceleration separates the party that pays for cooperation from the party that could adopt its results. It discusses design options such as recipient co-financing, post-pilot procurement paths and adoption indicators.

Khrystyna Prytula, Yevgeniy Zakharchuk, Institute of Regional Research named after M.I. Dolishnyi of NAS of Ukraine, Ukraine

Comparative Assessment of Regional Innovation Systems in Ukraine and the EU: Methodological Adaptations and European Integration Priorities

Innovation development plays a crucial role in Ukraine's EU integration process, despite wartime challenges that keep R&D expenditures low at 0.33% of GDP. Classified as an emerging innovator achieving 32.5% of the EU average, Ukraine faces structural gaps in SME innovation activity, yet demonstrates strong performance in digitalization, broadband access, and knowledge-intensive services. This paper presents a comparative assessment of the regional innovation systems (RIS) in Ukraine and the European Union, utilizing an adapted methodology based on the European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) 2025. Drawing on statistical data from Ukrstat, Eurostat, and EUIPO, the research identifies critical structural gaps in financing models and highlights the existence of an "insular" digitalization model across Ukrainian regions. To bridge these disparities and strengthen regional innovation infrastructure, such as science parks and digital innovation hubs, the study outlines priority directions for state regional policy aimed at fostering innovation-driven economic development. Furthermore, the paper establishes clear vectors for the convergence of domestic ecosystems into the European Research Area (ERA), providing a robust methodological and informational foundation that actively supports Ukraine's European integration commitments and post-war economic recovery.

Tomasz Studzieniecki, Gdynia Maritime University, Poland

When Borders Close Again:

The Breakdown of Polish–Russian Cross-Border Cooperation

Cross-border cooperation is usually examined as a process of growing integration, institutionalisation, and mobility. Far less attention has been paid to its reverse dynamic: the erosion and eventual breakdown of such relations. This paper examines the disintegration of Polish–Russian cross-border cooperation, focusing on how a space of interaction and exchange has been transformed into one dominated by control, security, and separation. The analysis draws on academic literature, policy documents, institutional materials, and statistical data. It traces the development of cooperation since the early 1990s and identifies successive phases of integration, deterioration, and termination. Special attention is paid to changes in relations between state, regional, and local actors, euroregional structures, infrastructure, and mobility. The findings indicate that disintegration is a gradual and multidimensional process in which political and geopolitical factors progressively weaken institutional ties, reduce flows, and reinforce the separating function of the border. The Polish–Russian case demonstrates how previously established structures of territorial cooperation may rapidly lose their functional and institutional foundations under conditions of prolonged geopolitical tension.

Michał Szyszka, WSB University, Poland

Building Capacity through Inter-Organizational Cooperation: Lessons from the ACTIVE Erasmus+ Project

Inter-organizational cooperation is increasingly important for developing innovative educational practices, strengthening institutional capacity, and responding to complex social and educational challenges. This paper presents selected experiences and findings from the ACTIVE Erasmus+ project, focusing on cooperation between partner organisations from different European contexts.

The analysis explores how transnational collaboration supports knowledge exchange, co-creation of educational solutions, and the development of new organisational and professional capacities. Particular attention is given to the conditions that facilitate effective cooperation, including the exchange of expertise, shared responsibility, communication, and the adaptation of project outcomes to local contexts. The paper discusses the potential of Erasmus+ partnerships to move beyond short-term project implementation and contribute to sustainable inter-organizational networks. The ACTIVE project is used as a case study illustrating how transnational cooperation can support educational innovation and institutional development.

Anna Tatarczak, Kalina Grzesiuk, Monika Jakubiak,
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland

From Alliance Membership to Joint Education: Opportunities and Barriers to Inter-University Cooperation

European university alliances provide a framework for international cooperation in education, but developing joint teaching initiatives requires coordination across institutions with different procedures and priorities. This presentation examines opportunities and barriers to such cooperation from the perspective of representatives of universities participating in an international alliance. It draws on qualitative interviews conducted as part of the ATHENAWORKS project. The analysis focuses on experiences of cooperation in education, the challenges involved in developing shared initiatives, and the support needed by academic and administrative staff. The presentation considers how interview findings can inform practical tools for planning joint courses and degree programmes. It contributes to the discussion on how inter-organisational networks can translate institutional commitments into sustainable educational cooperation.

Lubomira Trojan, WSB University, Poland

From Observation to Cooperation: How Design Connects Regional Actors in Silesia

Design is increasingly moving beyond product development towards services, social innovation and territorial transformation. This shift creates opportunities for cooperation between designers, businesses, universities, public institutions, cultural organisations and citizens. However, the presence of these actors within one region does not automatically generate meaningful collaboration.

The presentation explores the role of the Regional Design Observatory in the Silesian Voivodeship, Poland, as a potential knowledge and collaboration broker. It brings together complementary perspectives on the regional design ecosystem and develops knowledge about its actors, needs, potential and barriers to cooperation. The Observatory is presented through a five-stage model: Observe, Understand, Connect, Co-create, Transform. The model describes how systematic observation and interpretation of regional data can support the development of relationships between previously dispersed actors, enable collaborative design processes and ultimately contribute to territorial change.

The presentation discusses design as a connective practice within the Quintuple Helix ecosystem. It argues that the value of a Design Observatory lies not only in producing knowledge about the sector, but in creating conditions for knowledge to circulate between different actors and to become a basis for cooperation, co-creation and regional transformation.

Pilatin Ubeydullah, Batman University, Turkey

Global Goals, Local Realities: The Perception of Minimum Wage and Decent Work (SDG 8) in the Batman Labor Market

While Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8) advocates for sustained economic growth and decent work, macro-level indicators often obscure the micro-realities of local labor markets. This qualitative study explores the socio-economic impact of the minimum wage within the context of SDG 8 in Batman, Turkey. Drawing on Bourdieusian concepts of habitus and multiple forms of capital, alongside semi-structured interviews with local minimum wage earners, the research investigates how low-wage labor reshapes the workforce's daily practices. Findings reveal a significant divergence between institutional definitions of decent work and actual lived experiences. The minimum wage is fundamentally insufficient for sustaining family life, depriving workers of the economic capital necessary to generate social and cultural capital. Consequently, employees face severe restrictions in social participation, an inability to invest in personal or familial development, and chronic future anxiety. This constraint transcends mere financial hardship; it triggers a profound habitus transformation where scarcity and precariousness become internalized, strictly limiting long-term social mobility and resilience. Ultimately, the study highlights the structural barriers to converting regional growth into sustainable well-being, proposing localized policy interventions to align territorial labor dynamics with global SDG 8 targets.

Antanas Ūsas, Edgaras Abromavičius, Paulius Danielius, Vilnius University, Lithuania

Perceived Digital Service Experience, Attitudes toward Football Esports, and Purchase Intentions among Football Consumers: Evidence from a Predominantly Lithuanian Sample

Football organisations increasingly invest in digital channels and esports, yet consumer-side returns remain weakly documented. This study examines how football consumers' evaluations of digital services and esports activities associate with perceived value, fan engagement, and purchase intentions. A cross-sectional survey of 300 football-interested consumers (74.0% resident in Lithuania) was analysed using PLS-SEM. We compared a fully mediated specification with a partially mediated model incorporating direct paths. The partially mediated model explained substantially more variance in purchase intention and was retained. Perceived digital service experience ($\beta = 0.243$) and attitudes toward football esports ($\beta = 0.248$) were directly associated with purchase intention, with perceived value ($\beta = 0.236$) acting as a robust mediator. Conversely, fan engagement lost significance once direct paths were freed ($\beta = 0.072$, $p = .181$). Additionally, digital service evaluations and esports attitudes were virtually independent ($r = 0.08$), indicating two distinct strategic levers rather than a single digital agenda. These findings suggest that perceived value is the central intervening mechanism converting digital and esports offerings into buying readiness, while fan engagement's mediating role is specification-dependent.

Margherita Vacca, University of Florence, Italy

Designing with. Design as an actor and activator of cooperative practices: approaches, methods, tools

To endure within this multifaceted complexity, we must first listen to and understand the landscape of ongoing contemporary transformations (climate change, migration, gender issues, etc.). We then asked ourselves: what contribution—and responsibility—might the designer have when engaging with these current tensions? What attitudes, methods, and tools must the designer (or any other practitioner) adopt to endure and to bring about concrete, positive change in society and the environment?

Based on my PhD studies, I identified a potential path forward in the realm of social cooperation and the third sector, analyzing the concept of „doing with”—or rather, „designing with”—as a collective, horizontal, and participatory practice. We propose this as a possible antidote for surviving and resisting the spread of individualistic practices and the lack of care for the contemporary „Other” and „Elsewhere”.

We therefore propose design as a cooperative practice, examining—through a threefold systemic, critical, and immersive approach—its design potential and its contribution to addressing real-world complexity and fostering resilience through eco-social design strategies and practices.

Given the experimental nature of the research, I will present a hybrid theoretical-critical framework. It is important to note that a significant portion of this theoretical stance stems from practical and speculative fieldwork; these experiences were analyzed and documented through a series of well-defined case studies—some linked to EU-funded research projects—and are presented here alongside their results and the lessons learned.

The primary field of design action here is eco-social design, characterized by increasingly integrated and sustainable research and design activities that yield concrete impacts on society and the environment—realms whose challenges can no longer be addressed in isolation. Through the complex design of products, services, processes, interactive systems, and communication strategies, the eco-social designer aims to play a part not merely in survival but, above all, in active resistance—taking a stand on the front lines and contributing to the improvement of everyday life, moving toward futures that are more collective sustainable, resilient, equitable, and just, at both local and trans-local levels.



Arkadiusz Wąsiński, University of Łódź, Poland

Building Resilient Information Communities: Inter-Organizational Cooperation in Addressing Disinformation

Disinformation has become an important challenge for contemporary information societies, affecting public communication, social relations and trust in institutions. This paper examines how individuals perceive and respond to fake news, drawing on qualitative research conducted among adult Poles within the national Infostrateg programme. Semi-structured interviews were analysed using a semi-inductive approach, with open coding and comparative analysis. The findings indicate that respondents perceive fake news as a permanent element of the contemporary infosphere, associated with distrust, social disintegration, manipulation of worldviews and commercial purposes. At the same time, respondents declare relatively high awareness of disinformation mechanisms and confidence in their ability to resist manipulation. The paper discusses these findings from the perspective of information resilience and considers the role of cooperation between educational institutions, public organisations, media actors and local communities in strengthening citizens' capacity to recognise and respond to disinformation. Particular attention is given to the potential of inter-organizational cooperation in developing sustainable information literacy and resilient local information environments.

Katharina Weissenlehner, WSB University, Poland

Assessing SMEs' Readiness for Industry 5.0 Based on the IFTF Future Work Skills Model

Industry 5.0 is reshaping the competencies required for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to remain competitive in a digital, knowledge-based, and human-centred economy. This study assesses SMEs' readiness for Industry 5.0 using the Institute for the Future (ITFF) Future Work Skills model.

The analysis is based on a representative nationwide CAWI survey conducted among employees of Polish SMEs. The model was evaluated using reliability analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), with statistical validation performed on a cleaned sample.

The results confirm the high reliability of the IFTF-based scale and reveal a two-dimensional structure of future competencies comprising cognitive-adaptive and socio-digital skills. The findings indicate that the model may serve as a useful diagnostic framework for assessing SME workforce readiness for organisational and digital transformation in the context of Industry 5.0, while taking into account the specific characteristics of SMEs.

Joanna Wójcik-Chodorowska, WSB University, Poland

Appreciative Inquiry in Managing Inter-organisational Relationships within Territorial Cooperation

Territorial cooperation involves organisations representing different sectors and possessing diverse resources, competences, and perspectives. Its development therefore depends not only on formal cooperation mechanisms but also on the quality of inter-organisational relationships, the ability to exchange knowledge, and the effective combination of complementary resources held by participating organisations. The aim of this presentation is to discuss the potential of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a perspective supporting the management of inter-organisational relationships within territorial cooperation. The starting point is the assumption that focusing on existing resources, strengths, positive experiences, and good practices may complement the traditional problem-oriented approach to managing cooperation. The presentation discusses the potential contribution of AI to identifying partners' resources, fostering knowledge sharing, and collectively envisioning the future of cooperation. Particular attention is paid to human resources, as inter-organisational relationships are created and maintained by individuals representing the organisations involved in cooperation. The presentation proposes an approach in which employees' competences, experience, and knowledge can be understood as elements of broader resources available within territorial cooperation. Appreciative Inquiry is therefore presented as a potential management logic that may support the identification and mobilisation of resources embedded in networks of cooperating organisations and contribute to the development of their shared potential.

Dolska Olga, Educational and Scientific Institute of Social and Humanitarian Technologies National Technical University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute", Ukraine

Goncharenko Ievgen, Postgraduate Student, Department of Philosophy, Educational and Research Institute of Social and Humanitarian Technologies, National Technical University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute", Ukraine

Formation of hybrid reality on the basis of convergent technologies: innovation, knowledge, communication

The development of information and communication technologies and NBIC convergence creates fundamentally new environments in which physical and digital realities interact. Hybrid reality emerges through the integration of technological systems, communication networks, and human cognitive and sensory capabilities. Its formation can be examined through three interconnected directions.

The first involves the transformation of physical environments into *smart spaces* through RFID technologies, wireless sensors, and ubiquitous computing. These technologies provide physical objects with computational, perceptual, and communicative capabilities.

The second direction concerns the personalization of environments through identification and recognition technologies, including biometric systems, GPS, and geotargeting. Such technologies enable environments to recognize individuals and adapt to their needs.



The third direction involves the integration of virtual elements into physical reality through augmented reality (AR) and the Internet of Things (IoT). These technologies establish continuous interactions between physical objects, digital systems, and human activities.

Consequently, objects acquire new functions: they can store information, perceive environmental changes, recognize users, and communicate autonomously. This transformation expands human capabilities and establishes new forms of technological and social interaction.

However, the formation of hybrid reality cannot be reduced to technological innovation alone. It also requires reconsidering the relationship between human consciousness, corporeality, and sensory experience. Contemporary developments in phenomenology and non-classical epistemology emphasize the cognitive significance of the body and its role in knowledge acquisition.

This perspective challenges the dominance of the Cartesian principle *Cogito ergo sum* by introducing the complementary principle *Sentio ergo sum*. The integration of rational and sensory dimensions becomes essential for understanding human existence within technologically mediated environments.

Research in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) further demonstrates the importance of embodied cognition, emotional responsiveness, and sensory perception in designing interactive systems. Studies concerning auditory interfaces and sonification illustrate how bodily experience contributes to new forms of information processing and communication.

Thus, hybrid reality develops through the convergence of digital technologies, embodied cognition, and innovative communication practices. Its fundamental characteristics include the increasing integration of virtual and physical environments, the expansion of human perceptual capabilities, and the transformation of interactions between humans and technological systems.

The central philosophical challenge is to establish a balance between rational cognition and sensory experience. The synthesis of *Cogito ergo sum* and *Sentio ergo sum* provides a conceptual foundation for understanding the anthropological and epistemological transformations accompanying the emergence of hybrid reality.



Posters



Joanna Borkowska, Fundacja English Education, Poland

*Educational Migration as Territorial Mobility:
Regional Origin and Adaptation Among Domestic Student-Migrants in China*

Joseph Brown, WSB University, Poland

Beyond the System Switch: Managing change in Public-Sector ERP Transition

Jolanta Domańska, WSB University

Longevity Needs Strength: DomFit Promoting Active Ageing

Artur Fabiś, WSB University, Poland; Marcin Muszyński, Łódź University, Poland

Learning from European Lives

Agnieszka Ganiek, WSB University, Poland

*From institutions to communities: inter-organisational cooperation
in the management of the deinstitutionalisation of social services. A concept
for an implementation model based on the example of the CUS in Mikołów.*

Piotr Krowicki, WSB University, Poland

Customer Engagement in Creating the Shopping Centre Value

Matthias Löffler, WSB University, Poland

Ergonomic implications of custom-made orthopedic insoles in CHM

Marcin Matusznyi, WSB University, Poland

*Building Knowledge Bases to Improve Decision-Making Effectiveness
in Manufacturing Enterprise Management*

Dorota A. Miller, Suzanne Alabi, Holly Thompson,

Hestia Community Engagement Service – Haringey VCS, Great Britain

*Inter-organisational Cooperation in Community Engagement: An Approach
to Ageing Well through Health, Social Care and Community Resources*

Karolina Mucha-Kuś, WSB University, Poland

Green and Smart Cities – the case study of Metropolis GZM, Poland

Monika Nawojcka, WSB University, Poland

*Experiencing the Relationship between Religiosity and Sexuality:
Narratives of Generation X Individuals Raised in Deeply Religious Families*

Katarzyna Papież-Pawełczak, SPIN-US Sp. z o.o., University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland

*Model of the Ecosystem of Commercialisation of the Results of Research
and Development Work in Poland*

Lubomira Trojan, WSB University, Poland

*Application of Design Thinking in the Management of the Region's Intangible
Cultural Heritage*

Conference Programme



Territorial and inter-organisational cooperation '2026

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF Q-HELIX EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE

**27-29 October 2026****WSB University, Dabrowa Gornicza, Poland (a hybrid format)****Streaming:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLMYCEryziC3Q>

This conference is organised within the framework of the project “Multidimensional innovativeness of territorial and inter-organisational cooperation” (Project No. WNK/SN/0006/2025/01), implemented by WSB University under the umbrella of Q-Helix European University Alliance. The project is funded by the state budget and awarded by the Minister of Science and Higher Education under the Science Vectors programme.

Tuesday, October 27, 2026**12.30 – 13.00 Registration****13.00 – 14.00 Poster session**

Moderator: Joanna Kurowska-Pysz, WSB University

In front of Auditorium Maximum

Posters:

Joanna Borkowska, English Education Foundation

Educational Migration as Territorial Mobility: Regional Origin and Adaptation Among Domestic Student-Migrants in China

Joseph Brown, WSB University, Poland

Beyond the System Switch: Managing change in Public-Sector ERP Transition



Jolanta Domańska, WSB University, Poland

Longevity Needs Strength: DomFit Promoting Active Ageing

Artur Fabiś, WSB University, Poland, Marcin Muszyński, Łódź University, Poland

Learning from European Lives

Juliia Fetko, Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

Building Regional Resilience in Ukraine and the Visegrad Four through Territorial Cooperation.

Agnieszka Ganiek, WSB University, Poland

From institutions to communities: inter-organisational cooperation in the management of the deinstitutionalisation of social services. A concept for an implementation model based on the example of the CUS in Mikołów.

Jarosław Kacprzak, WSB University, Poland

From Client ESG Requirements to Strategic Performance Indicators: A Sustainability Balanced Scorecard Framework for IT Companies

Piotr Krowicki, WSB University, Poland

Customer Engagement in Creating the Shopping Centre Value

Matthias Löffler, WSB University, Poland

Ergonomic implications of custom-made orthopedic insoles in CHM

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Experiencing the Relationship between Religiosity and Sexuality: Narratives of Generation X Individuals Raised in Deeply Religious Families

Katarzyna Papież – Pawełczak, SPIN-US Sp. z o.o., University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland

Model of the Ecosystem of Commercialisation of the Results of Research and Development Work in Poland



Beata Tkacz, WSB University

Building social sustainability from the micro-level: Insights from two distinct cultural ecosystems

Lubomira Trojan, WSB University, Poland

Application of Design Thinking in the Management of the Region's Intangible Cultural Heritage

14.00 – 16.00 Scientific session for PhD students and students

Moderator: Barbara Piontek, WSB University

Room 227

14.00 – 14.15 Joseph Brown, WSB University, Poland

Framing Change Management in Public-Sector SAP S/4HANA Transitions: A Conceptual Model

14.15 – 14.30 Matthias Löffler, WSB University, Poland

Ergonomic implications of custom-made orthopedic insoles in an industrial environment: Effects on musculoskeletal health, pain, quality of life and CHM

14.30 – 14.45 Katharina Weissenlehner, WSB University, Poland

Assessing SMEs' Readiness for Industry 5.0 Based on the IFTF Future Work Skills Model

14.45 – 15.00 Magdalena Drózdź, WSB University, Poland

Selected forms of knowledge transfer at a research institute

15.00 – 15.15 Wojciech Młynarski, WSB University, Poland

EU–NATO Military Interoperability: Challenges and Opportunities

15.15 – 15.30 Magdalena Pierzyna, WSB University, Poland

Conceptualization of the cross-border tourism services market on the example of the Polish-Czech borderland

15.30 – 15.45 Marcin Matuszny, WSB University, Poland

Building Knowledge Bases to Improve Decision-Making Effectiveness in Manufacturing Enterprise Management

15.45 – 16.00 Scientific discussion

16.00 – 17.30 Meeting of the WSB Department of Management and networking within the Q-Helix International Research Group on Territorial & Inter-Organisational Cooperation

Moderator: Joanna Kurowska-Pysz, WSB University

Room 227

17.30 Dinner (AMIGO Club)



Wednesday, October 28, 2026**Auditorium D****8.30 – 9.00 Registration****9.00 – 9.15 Opening**

Katarzyna Szczepańska-Woszczyna, Vice-Rector for Science and Education of WSB University

Joanna Kurowska-Pysz, Director of the Research Institute on Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation, WSB University

9.15 – 10.30 Plenary session 1

Moderator: Martin Klatt, the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg, Germany; University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

9.15 – 9.35 Keynote speech

Mariya Mendzhul & Juliia Fetko, Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

Resilience of Local and Regional Authorities in the Context of European Integration

9.35 – 9.55 Keynote speech

Martin Lačný, University of Prešov, Slovakia

Research Into the Human Aspects of Resilience: Life Satisfaction Index for Border Regions

9.55 – 10.15 Keynote speech

Hynek Böhm, Technical University of Liberec, Czechia

From Identifying to Removing Cross-Border Barriers: Institutional Capacity and Territorial Cooperation in Czech Borderlands

10.15 – 10.30 Discussion

10.30 – 10.45 Coffee break**10.45 – 12.00 Expert debate – Building Regional Resilience in Ukraine and the Visegrad Four through Territorial Cooperation**

Moderator: Juliia Fetko, Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

Participants:

Mariya Mendzhul, Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

Martin Lačný, University of Prešov, Slovakia

Hynek Böhm, Technical University of Liberec, Czechia

Joanna Kurowska-Pysz, WSB University, Poland



12.00 – 13.00 Thematic session 1 (onsite)

Moderator: Hynek Böhm, Technical University of Liberec, Czechia

12.00 – 12.15 Ngoc Ho Long & Thi Hong Oanh Le, The University of Danang, Vietnam
Beyond the Project: Building Sustainable International Partnerships through the Quintuple Helix – UD–WSB Experience through HEIsCITI

12.15 – 12.30 Joanna Wójcik-Chodorowska, WSB University, Poland
Appreciative Inquiry in Managing Inter-organisational Relationships within Territorial Cooperation

12.30 – 12.45 Lubomira Trojan, WSB University, Poland
From Observation to Cooperation: How Design Connects Regional Actors in Silesia

12.45 – 13.00 Anna Kowalska, WSB University, Poland
Girls4Economy – Shaping the Network Competencies of Young Girls from Minor Towns and Restructured Areas as Future Business Leaders Operating in a 4.0 Economy

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break**14.00 – 15.15 Expert debate – Beyond Design: Activating Cooperation Across Sectors and Territories**

Moderator: Margherita Vacca, University of Florence, Italy

Participants:

Lubomira Trojan, WSB University, Poland

Barbara Szafir, Marshal Office of the Silesian Voivodeship, Poland

Katarzyna Sokołowska, Sokka Design Studio, Poland

Oskar Adamus, Katowice City of Gardens – Krystyna Bochenek Cultural Institution, Katowice, Poland

15.15 – 15.30 Coffee break**15.30 – 17.30 Thematic session 2 (online)**

Zoom link –

<https://zoom.us/j/94002152341?pwd=CAM9geHF74JcF5TvaaIH54XKi1Nvbr.1>

Moderator: Jacek Bendkowski, WSB University

15.30 – 15.45 Muhammad Aurangzeb Manzoor, Lithuanian Sports University, Lithuania
The Impact of Social Media Engagement on Sport Club Brand Loyalty

15.45 – 16.00 Pilatin Ubeydullah, Batman University, Turkey
 Global Goals, Local Realities: The Perception of Minimum Wage and Decent Work (SDG 8) in the Batman Labor Market.



- 16.00 – 16.15 Antanas Ūsas, Edgaras Abromavičius, Paulius Danielius, Vilnius University, Lithuania
Perceived Digital Service Experience, Attitudes toward Football Esports, and Purchase Intentions among Football Consumers: Evidence from a Predominantly Lithuanian Sample
- 16.15 – 16.30 Anna Tatarczak, Kalina Grzesiuk, Monika Jakubiak, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland
From Alliance Membership to Joint Education: Opportunities and Barriers to Inter-University Cooperation
- 16.30 – 16.45 Joanna Łabędzka, Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce, Poland
Logistics Process Design and Employee Creativity: Balancing Efficiency and Innovation
- 16.45 – 17.00 Dolska Olga, Goncharenko Ievgen, Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute Ukraine
Formation of hybrid reality on the basis of convergent technologies: innovation, knowledge, communication
- 17.00 – 17.15 Tomasz Studzieniecki, Gdynia Maritime University, Poland
When Borders Close Again: The Breakdown of Polish–Russian Cross-Border Cooperation
- 17.15 – 17.30 Grzegorz Kinelski, WSB University, Poland
Cross-border smart city resilience

17:30 Dinner (AMIGO Club)

Thursday, October 29, 2026

Auditorium D

9.00 – 10.45 Plenary session 2

Moderator: Iga Lehman, WSB University

9.00 – 9.20 Keynote speech
William Elliott, OBE, University of Łódź, Poland
Has Brexit created new borders?

9.20 – 9.40 Keynote speech
İsmail Şiriner, Batman University, Turkey
Learning Across Borderlands: Displacement, Labour Markets and Regional Development. Reflections from the Polish-Ukrainian and Turkish-Syrian Borderlands



- 9.40 – 10.00 Keynote speech
Ekaterina Mikhailova, the Arctic University of Norway, Norway
Norwegian-Russian Borderland in Uncertain Times: Ruptures, Reconfigurations, Responses
- 10.00 – 10.20 Keynote speech
Martin Klatt, the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg, Germany; University of Southern Denmark, Denmark
Minorities, borders, territorial and organizational cooperation: Linkages, barriers, and challenges
- 10.20 – 10.45 Discussion**
- 10.45 – 12.00 Expert debate – Minorities in border regions – an underused resource or underestimated factor of organizational and territorial cooperation?**
Moderator: Martin Klatt, the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg; University of Southern Denmark, Denmark
Participants:
Ekaterina Mikhailova, the Arctic University of Norway, Norway
Wojciech Opióła, Opole University, Poland
Anna Kluczyńska, EGTC Polish-Lithuanian Cross-Border Functional Area, Poland – Lithuania
Khrystyna Łazowska, Opole University, Poland – Ukraine
- 12.00 – 13.00 Thematic session 3 (onsite)**
Moderator: Ekaterina Mikhailova, the Arctic University of Norway, Norway
- 12.00 – 12.15 Regina Andriukaitiene, Lithuanian Sports University, Lithuania onsite
Socially responsible implementation of human resource management as a factor in the organization's sustainability
- 12.15 – 12.30 Anna Kluczyńska, European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation “Polish-Lithuanian cross-border functional area” in Puńsk, Poland
The Polish-Lithuanian Cross-Border Functional Area: the role of the EGTC in strengthening territorial cooperation
- 12.30 – 12.45 Joanna Kurowska-Pysz, WSB University, Poland
Climate changes in borderlands and policies for their mitigation
- 12.45 – 13.00 Fryderyk Marek Pryjma, WSB University
Who pays, who adopts? Pilot requirements in public startup acceleration across eleven Central and Eastern European EU states



13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break**14.00 – 15.30 Thematic session 4 (online)***Zoom link –*<https://zoom.us/j/91211208024?pwd=bb3k8ql5ra7U36VldP4b3eD0Cw1WiA.1>

Moderator: Adnan ul Haque, Yorkville University, Canada

14.00 – 14.15 Mohammad Akram Khan, Adeeba Anees, Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), India

Cross-Border University Networks as Drivers of Territorial Cohesion: The UNIADRION Model

14.15 – 14.30 Yaroslava Kalat, Dolishniy Institute of Regional Research of NAS of Ukraine, Ukraine

European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation as an Instrument of Ukraine's Post-War Recovery and European Integration

14.30 – 14.45 Tamerlan Gurbanov, WSB University, Poland

The Impact of Transformational and Transactional Leadership on SERVQUAL-Based Service Quality Across the Customer Journey in Automotive SMEs: Evidence from Azerbaijan

14.45 – 15.00 Anna Maksymenko, Dolishniy Institute of Regional Research of NAS of Ukraine, Ukraine

Partnership Networks as a Measure of Effectiveness in Cross-Border Cooperation: The Case of Ukraine and Slovakia

15.00 – 15.15 Khrystyna Prytula, Yevgeniy Zakharchuk, Institute of Regional Research named after M.I. Dolishniy of NAS of Ukraine, Ukraine

Comparative Assessment of Regional Innovation Systems in Ukraine and the EU: Methodological Adaptations and European Integration Priorities

15.15 – 15.30 Myroslava Lendel, Uzhhorod National University, Ukraine

From Institutional Density to Functional Integration: Inter-Organizational Cooperation in Ukraine's Western Borderlands

15.30 – 15.45 Coffee break**15.45 – 18.30 Thematic session 5 (online)***Zoom link –*<https://zoom.us/j/97172679041?pwd=QqsaBadfe0u5PQf2HvWk7x53u3EiJK.1>

Moderator: Joanna Wójcik-Chodorowska, WSB University

15.45 – 16.00 Marek Olszewski, Association of Development and Regional Cooperation „Olza” Cieszyn, Poland



- Cross-border public services as key factors in the development of the Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion*
- 16.00 – 16.15 Tomáš Pražák, Silesian University, School of Business Administration, Karvina, Czechia
- Regional Development and Cross-Border Business Cooperation in Times of Uncertainty: Evidence from the Těšín Silesia Euroregion*
- 16.15 – 16.30 Piotr Krowicki, WSB University, Poland
- Residents as Co-Creators of Regional Brand: The Role of Engagement in Territorial Branding*
- 16.30 – 16.45 Solomon Kunle Omogbemi, WSB University, Poland
- Security-Driven Displacement and the Political Economy of Migration: A Comparative Analysis of Nigeria and Ukraine as Sending Territories – Implications for Territorial and Inter-Organizational Cooperation*
- 16.45 – 17.00 Adnan ul Haque, Yorkville University, Canada
- Sustainable Knowledge and Innovation Management in Project-Based Work: A Systematic Review of Knowledge Transfer, Innovation Diffusion, and Portfolio Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability*
- 17.00 – 17.15 Jennifer Bettis, Western Washington University, USA
- Cross-Border Vulnerabilities in Cascadia: Business Impacts of the Canada-US Trade Dispute*
- 17.15 – 17.30 Akinlawon Atinuke Oluwagbemisola, Tinu Akinlawon Ministries, Nigeria
- Addiction Recovery as a Pathway to Socioeconomic Empowerment among Women with Substance Use Disorders in Urban Nigeria: A Qualitative Study from Ibadan*
- 17.30 – 17.45 Erol Çiçek, Batman University, Turkey
- Reflections of Global Trade Tensions on Food Markets and Price Stability*
- 17.45 – 18.00 Michał Szyszka, WSB University, Poland
- Building Capacity through Inter-Organizational Cooperation: Lessons from the ACTIVE Erasmus+ Project*
- 18.00 – 18.15 Arkadiusz Wąsiński, University of Łódź, Poland
- Building Resilient Information Communities: Inter-Organizational Cooperation in Addressing Disinformation*
- 18.15 – 18.30 Artur Boháč, Technical University of Liberec, Czechia
- The Small Project Fund Turów: A Unique Financial Instrument for a Dispute-Affected Borderland*

18.30 Closing remarks, farewell



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