

SHERPA  
Rural Science-Society-Policy  
Interfaces

PRACTICE ABSTRACT

# Sustaining Science-Society-Policy interfaces in Bieszczady



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In the territory of the SHERPA MAP Bieszczady (Poland), there are examples of platforms that bring together stakeholders from science, local government and the local community. However - it is worth noting - these are specialised groups, not necessarily known to the general public. It is worth popularising on a larger scale these types of platforms, as their operation can bring benefits.

One example is the Scientific Council of the Bieszczady National Park. The Scientific Councils of the national parks in Poland operate under a regulation of the Minister of the Environment. Their role is to advise and support the park authorities. They have five-year terms of office. In the case of this type of interface, sustenance is provided systemically - through legislation.

Another example of such an interface is the Podkarpackie Federation of Civic Organizations "PARASOL", which aims to provide comprehensive assistance to Podkarpackie organizations that request it. With the beginning of the outbreak of war in Ukraine, the Federation established the PARASOL Group, which consisted of scientists, social activists, officials, journalists, and worked together to help refugees. Maintaining this interface will depend on external funding, as PARASOL was funded by the National Freedom Institute - Centre for Civil Society Development within the framework of the Government Program NEW FIO Civic Initiatives Fund for 2018-2030.

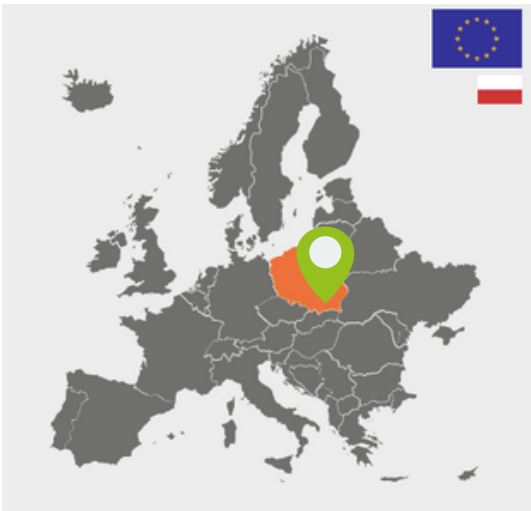
Third example are the cooperation established in the framework of specific projects. One such example is the cooperation of the Municipality of Olszanica (where the deputy mayor is a Doctor of Political Science), with the Local Action Group, residents and entrepreneurs. With joint efforts was established a social economy enterprise which was set up as a part of a revitalisation programme entitled "Bieszczad-ski - a revitalisation flywheel for the development of the Olszanica Gmina". The value of the project was PLN 18,751,024.46, including EU funding of PLN 9,946,447.99 from the European Regional Development Fund.

## MAP Bieszczady

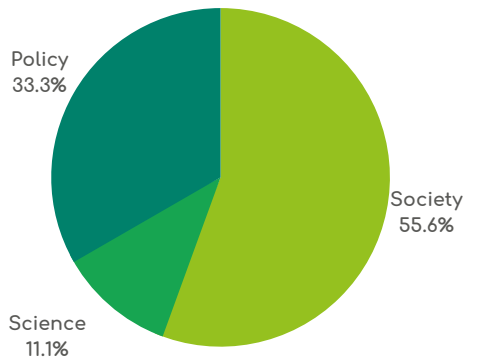
**Location**  
Leski and Bieszczadzki powiats,  
Podkarpackie voivodeship,  
Poland

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[SHERPA Regional Multi-Actor Platform | Bieszczady - SHERPA \(rural-interfaces.eu\)](https://rural-interfaces.eu)



### MAP membership:



From a “gmina” (i.e. municipality) that offered no prospects for young people, it has become a tourist destination with potential for investment. The opening of a social economy enterprise in the form of the Wańkowa Ski Resort has been a positive stimulus, providing dozens of jobs, but also developing the entrepreneurial spirit of local residents and giving young people a reason to stay in their hometowns. The example of Olszanica shows that once established, cooperation between different players results in further cooperative projects.

These diverse examples illustrate how science-society-policy interface can build on the experiences in SHERPA and continue to support rural development.



## ABOUT THE MAP

The SHERPA MAP Bieszczady is located in the Podkarpackie Voivodship, in southeastern Poland and includes part of the Eastern Carpathians (The Bieszczady Mountains) and the Bieszczady National Park. This MAP was established in 2022 and it operates on a local level, on an area that covers 2 districts (Leski, Bieszczadzki). It is a borderland of the European Union (Polish-Ukrainian border) that explains why this region is ethnically diverse. The Bieszczady is also the most sparsely populated area in Poland, for many years neglected and far from large urban centres.

One of the key problems of this region is the highest unemployment rate in Poland (Leski Powiat - 16.7%, Bieszczadzki Powiat - 14.9% compared to Poland - 6.2% at the end of 2020), the quality of life, negative migration balance, isolation, poverty, low population density.



## OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this MAP are the following:

- Organise a multi-actor dialogue between society, policy and science actors from MAP area.
- Publish a MAP Position Paper that presents the discussion points and outputs of the Bieszczady MAP about “Social dimension of rural areas”, including examples of good practices from the MAP area.
- Publish a MAP Position Note about empowering rural areas in multi-level governance processes.
- Develop recommendations for policymakers on rural development and Common Agricultural Policy.



## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

- Two large MAP meetings. During these meetings, the MAP brainstormed and also collected numerous results on social dimension of the Bieszczady mountains and governance in rural areas, which we then verified in individual interviews.
- Desk research (e.g. gminas' websites, local forums, powiat status reports, local NGO needs survey).
- 7 smaller meetings (diads and triads) from May 2022 till March 2023.
- 10 individual or -interviews from May 2022 till March 2023.
- Participatory observation (participation in local events during 5 visits to the Bieszczady Mountains: March, May, July and September 2022 and March 2023).
- Published a MAP Position Paper about "Social dimension of rural areas".
- An additional achievement of our platform was networking, which allowed people from different groups to meet in one place and inspire further action, and enabled the exchange of experiences.



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