

ACTION PLAN FOR THE PODKARPACKIE REGION IN POLAND



Part I – General information

Project: Animation League for Increased Cooperation in Europe (Acronym: ALICE)

Partner organisation(s) concerned: Rzeszow Regional Development Agency

Country: Poland

NUTS2 region: Podkarpackie

Contact person: Beata Hulinka, Małgorzata Kilian

Email address: bhulinka@rarr.rzeszow.pl mkilian@rarr.rzeszow.pl

Phone number: 0048 17 867 62 14 / 0048 17 867 62 29



Part II – Policy context

Ultimately, the activities under the "ALICE" project within its 1st and 2nd phases of implementation were aimed at influencing the "Investments for economic growth and employment" program and were directed to the policy instrument which was the ERDF / ESF Regional Operational Program for the Podkarpackie Voivodeship 2014-2020 - Priority Axis I: "Competitive and innovative economy", Specific objective: "Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic use of new ideas and fostering the creation of new businesses i.e. through business incubators".

Unfortunately, this policy instrument, originally indicated for the Podkarpackie Voivodeship, has already been closed in terms of the possibility of obtaining funding for the implementation of activities within its framework. In addition, due to COVID-19, all savings under this policy instrument were allocated to tackling the effects of the pandemic, supporting both businesses (mainly for pandemic mitigation) and hospital-driven activities and programs, so these savings were not redeployed or earmarked for other possible development activities.

A new policy instrument that will apply from 2021 to 2027 is still under development. The program entitled "European Funds for Podkarpacie 2021-2027" will be a two-fund program, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund + (ESF +) covering the following priority axes:

- I. Competitive and digital economy (ERDF),
- II. Energy and Environment (ERDF),
- III. Mobility and Connectivity (ERDF),
- IV. Infrastructure closer to the people (ERDF),
- V. Territorially sustainable development (ERDF),
- VI. Human capital ready for change (ESF +).

As at the day of developing the Local Action Plan, it is not known exactly when the future policy instrument for the region will be launched, so it is difficult to assess whether during the implementation of the Local Action Plan PP6 (RRDA) will be able to submit a project under this policy instrument, that will enable to support the activities of the animation industry.

Considering the existing situation, the Local Action Plan developed by PP6 (RRDA) in cooperation with the main stakeholder of Association of Polish Animation Producers (SPPA) refers primarily to the policy instruments which are:

- Operational Program "Dissemination of Film Culture" for 2021 - Priority "Audiovisual market research", under which efforts were made to finance activities supporting research in the animation industry, which will contribute to its future development and innovation.
- Regional Innovation Strategy of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship for 2021-2030 - document at the stage of social consultations.

In addition, in cooperation with the main stakeholder of the project, a number of forms of support for the animation industry were included in the Local Action Plan, which, due to their specificity, will be implemented both at the local (Podkarpacie region) and national levels. This is due to the specificity and type of entities operating in the animation and gaming industry or at the meeting point of the film and animation industries, operating in the Podkarpackie region. During meetings with stakeholders organized by PP6, these entities indicated that they primarily needs are educational and training support, access to advanced animation software, the lack of knowledge, which very often becomes a serious barrier in undertaking more ambitious projects, and above all, supporting their development potential through networking and cooperation with more experienced partners (entities) operating in the industry. Such activities require supra-regional cooperation, joining forces of more and less experienced entities, with the support of universities and institutions fostering development of the industry, such as SPPA or film funds from various polish regions.

Due to the fact that animated productions implemented in Poland have an extensive financing mechanism that combines fundraising from various national public and private sources, while public funds are obtained partly from operational programs managed by the Polish Film Institute, and partly from Regional Films Funds (often from several regions), it is important that the activities supporting the development of the industry are implemented in a supra-regional dimension. The main identified deficits affecting the development of the industry are the challenges related to the mismatch between the educational and training offer and the needs of employers, which significantly affects the possibility of participating in large international co-productions (sometimes companies give up involvement in a given co-productions due to the lack of competent employees and partners) in cooperation with whom they could take part in large-scale projects.

System solutions related to the implementation of financing mechanisms additionally supporting the animation sector require strategic, long-term planning in Poland, therefore, in the opinion of stakeholders, they will not have a chance to be implemented within 12 months given for Local Action Plans, but rather within 3 years or more.

Therefore, the proposed Local Action Plan will take into account both actions at the regional and national level, due to the



importance of involving domestic stakeholders from other regions of Poland to key tasks possible to be taken within a 12-month time frame.

Moreover, the dissemination of "ALICE" good practices not only at the local level, but also nationwide in Poland will increase the effectiveness of their implementation, because it should be noted that the largest and most dynamically operating animation studios are located in other regions of Poland. Therefore, including in the Action Plan key national stakeholders from other regions, and joining forces with them in the implementation of planned activities will contribute to greater effectiveness of operation. Including the profession of "Animator" in the Classification of Professions and Specializations, as well as developing recommendations for universities regarding teaching standards in artistic and IT faculties / specializations, educating future specialists in the animation industry are very important steps that have a chance to affect education of future industry specialists at national universities, and therefore will impact the quality of work and development potential of animation companies / studios operating and developing in individual regions, including the Podkarpackie Voivodeship.

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1: Support for adapting the educational program of schools and universities to the needs of the animation industry for specialists

The action was inspired by the information and knowledge gained during the implementation of the first phase of the "ALICE" project, thanks to the exchange of experiences between partners and their regional stakeholders, as well as involvement in consulting solutions and work of the Working Group No. 1 operating in the area of "Financing" and Working Group No. 2 operating in the area of "Entrepreneurship and training", including in particular:

- ALICE's mapping methodology as a result of the work of ALICE Working Group No. 1 - which helps to identify the skills and professional profiles the animation market most needs;
- webinar with Jérôme Bétrancourt on July 10, 2020 on, i.e. methods of recruiting specialists and methods of conducting trainings and their financing sources;
- webinar with Serge Umé on July 2, 2021 on, i.e. ways to recruit professionals in the animation industry;
- meeting of the Working Group No. 2 held on October 30, 2021 - introduction to the research of 3 stakeholder groups, including companies operating in the animation industry;
- conclusions and recommendations contained in the report on the ALICE Working Group No. 2 titled "Animator & Animation Manager Professional Profiles & Training Courses";
- results of surveys conducted among animation studios in Poland, including in the Podkarpackie region as part of Working Group No. 2, including, in particular, the demand for specialists in the animation industry in Poland, the lack of adjustment of the educational offer to the needs of companies for employees;
- information collected from project stakeholders during stakeholders meetings on February 8, 2021, March 17, 2021 and during the dissemination meeting on June 29, 2021.

The action will include the following 3 activities:

- **Activity 1 - Submitting an application for adding a new profession "Animator" to the Classification of Occupations and Specialties**

The application will be prepared by the main stakeholder of the project, the Association of Polish Animation Producers in cooperation with a representative of the industry (animation studio) and submitted for consideration to the Ministry of Development, Labour and Technology in Poland.

Classification of professions and specializations is a systematic set of professions and specialties occurring on the labour market. It is a "nature inventory" of occupations identified on the labor market. The classification is based on the International Standard for Classification of Occupations ISCO-08. Classification of professions and specialties does not regulate the standardization of education, training and granting qualifications by entities offering these services (e.g. courses or training), however, in the opinion of the animation industry, entering the profession "Animator" into this classification is an important step in activities related to adjusting the standards education at the professional level, and successively higher education level to the needs of employers operating in this sector for employees. It should be noted that one of the objectives of developing and updating the classification is precisely "to conduct a knowledge-based policy in the field of vocational education, consisting in correlation between the needs of the labour market and vocational education of young people and adults". The entity substantively



competent to apply for the introduction of the new profession "Animator" to the classification is the Association of Polish Animation Producers (SPPA), currently associating 46 members - 44 producers of animated films representing 24 animation studios and 2 members supporting (the Łódź Film Commission and New Horizons of Film Education). The application will be submitted to the Ministry of Development, Labour and Technology based on the applicable document templates (application and statements) available at <https://psz.praca.gov.pl/-/15252-klociagacja-zawodow-i-specjalnosci>. The submitted application will be subject to verification, after which, in the event of a positive recommendation, the new profession has a chance to be entered into the classification of professions and specialties. Updating the classification, in order to adapt to changes taking place on the labour market (Polish and European), by introducing new professions / specialties to it, takes place every 2-3 years by amending the regulation on the classification of professions and specialties for the needs of the labour market and the scope of their application. Considering the duration of this procedure, the decision whether or not to include the "Animator" profession in the classification may be taken after the end of the 2nd phase of the ALICE project, after Local Action Plan implementation.

- **Activity 2 - Testing the transfer of experiences and needs of employers representing the animation industry to higher education, on the example of cooperation between the WSIZ university from Podkarpackie Voivodeship, SPPA and associated animation studios from Poland.**

The cooperation concerns newly created specializations within the "Computer graphics and multimedia production" field of study existing since 2016 and includes:

- signing a cooperation agreement between these two entities, under which SPPA will take over a strategic partnership on the "Computer graphics and multimedia production" field of study;
- involvement by SPPA of the animation studios associated within its framework to consult the subject cards (classes) as part of the new specialization in the field of study "Computer graphics and multimedia production" at the WSIZ university, including participation of SPPA in the review and update of educational results and study programs for the field of "Computer graphics and multimedia production";
- providing by entities associated with SPPA the possibility of practical vocational training for students by accepting students and graduates of WSIZ for internships under jointly defined conditions;
- participation of SPPA specialists and animation studios associated within it in conducting educational activities for students resulting from the study program;
- conducting additional training for WSIZ students by SPPA specialists;

The cooperation began in the frame of the ALICE stakeholders meetings and was officially launched by signing the agreement between Association of Polish Animation Producers (SPPA) and non-public University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów (WSIZ) on June 28, 2021. The results of the cooperation will be summarized after the students of the first year will graduate from their studies (in July 2024), however until July 31, 2022 it will be possible to prepare preliminary partial conclusions, based on the experience from the first year of cooperation of both entities.

- **Activity 3 - Development of recommendations addressed to universities, concerning teaching standards in artistic and IT faculties / specializations, educating future specialists for the animation industry.**

Recommendations will be developed by the main stakeholder of the project, i.e. the Association of Polish Animation Producers (SPPA) in cooperation with the animation producers' community (including the Animated Film Section of the Polish Filmmakers Association), with universities, including a non-public university in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship - University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów (WSIZ), with whom SPPA has established cooperation under the "ALICE" project and with the support of the PP6. Recommendations will also be prepared on the basis of:

- knowledge and experience of entities operating in the animation industry, including the Association of Polish Animation Producers;
- conclusions and recommendations contained in the report on the work of the ALICE working group No. "Animator & Animation Manager Professional Profiles & Training Courses", which includes, i.e. results of the survey conducted under the "ALICE" project in Poland;
- current conclusions from the cooperation of the SPPA with the WSIZ – however it is important to take into account that this particular activity will be continued at least by July 2024.



Stakeholders involved

- Association of Polish Animation Producers (SPPA) - stakeholder coordinating the activities
- Animation studios associated with SPPA;
- Animated Film Section of the Polish Filmmakers Association
- University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów (WSIZ).

Timeframe

March 2021 - July 2022, with the exception of activity No. 2 "Testing the transfer of experiences and needs of employers representing the animation industry to higher education, which will be continued also after the completion of the Action Plan, until July 2024, however, the first preliminary results of cooperation under activity No 2 can be summarized at the end of July 2022).

Costs

At this stage, the costs are difficult to estimate, they will mainly relate to the labour costs of team members and depend on the time commitment of individual entities / stakeholders in the implementation of activities (time and effort devoted to the implementation of activities).

Funding sources

The cost of all 3 activities will be incurred within the own budgets of individual entities / stakeholders and PP6 (RRDA) involved in their implementation. Due to their specificity, they will not be financed from separate sources / projects.

ACTION 2: Networking and educational activities aimed at increasing the potential of entities in the animation industry and the development of animated production projects to a commercial scale.

The task was inspired by the information and knowledge gained during the implementation of the first phase of the "ALICE" project, thanks to the exchange of experiences between partners and their regional stakeholders, as well as involvement in consulting solutions and operation of the Working Group No. 2 "Entrepreneurship and training", in particular:

- webinar with Jérôme Bétrancourt on July 10, 2020 on, i.e. ways of conducting trainings and sources of their financing;
- webinar with Serge Umé on July 2, 2021 on, i.e., ways of recruiting professionals in the animation industry, using software in the work of the industry and its impact on the training program;
- conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the ALICE Working Group No. 2. "Animator & Animation Manager Professional Profiles & Training Courses";
- information collected from project stakeholders during stakeholders meetings on July 30, 2020 and May 26, 2021.

The task will involve the organization of 4 online networking meetings / workshops aimed at smaller entities operating in the animation industry.

The action will be implemented in cooperation between SPPA and regional funds in Poland with the support of PP6 (RRDA) and is aimed at the exchange of knowledge and experience between experienced producers / animation studios and entities that implement smaller undertakings / projects in the field of animation and special effects to help these young / less experienced companies:

- in the development of animated production projects to a commercial scale;
- to activate them and support their development (this type of networking will make it possible to assess the development potential of an entity operating in the animation industry and support it in its development by commissioning services or joint implementation of activities with an entity / animation studios with extensive experience in the industry, this action will also serve to develop new cooperation and, in the future, animated co-productions).

This action is a consequence of the analysis of the potential of entities operating in the Podkarpace region relevant to



PP6 (RRDA), the needs reported by local stakeholders in this area, as well as the demand for networking and advisory activities reported by other regional funds, e.g. Krakow Film Commission, Łódź Film Commission etc. It will also be a form of support for talents / entities with potential who, due to the experienced financial and technical barriers or less professional experience, had difficulty in breaking out on the domestic market and / or applying for cooperation on more difficult animated projects. This action will be directed to all entities interested in cooperation and in need of this type of support.

Stakeholders involved

- Association of Polish Animation Producers (SPPA);
- Animation studios associated with SPPA;
- Podkarpackie Film Commission;
- Łódź Film Commission;
- Krakow Film Commission.

Timeframe

September 2021 - July 2022.

Costs

At this stage, the costs are difficult to estimate, they will mainly relate to the labour costs of team members and depend on the time commitment of individual entities / stakeholders in the implementation of activities (time and effort devoted to the implementation of activities).

Funding sources

The cost will be incurred within the SPPA and PP6 (RRDA) own budgets involved in implementation and will be related mainly to staff costs. There will be no costs associated with the involvement of other stakeholders.

If it is possible to finance the action from external sources as part of the submitted projects, an appropriate update will be introduced to the Local Action Plan.

ACTION 3: Market research of the animation industry in Poland, with particular emphasis on the production of animations for children audiences.

The action was inspired by the information and knowledge gained during the implementation of the first phase of the "ALICE" project, thanks to the exchange of experiences between partners and their regional stakeholders, as well as involvement in consulting solutions proposed by the Working Group No. 1 operating in the area of "Financing", including in particular:

- ALICE's mapping methodology as a result of the work of the ALICE Working Group No 1 - which helps to identify "the available people, organisations, skills and capacities at each stage of the industry value chain" and shows the value of the in-depth analysis for implementation of solutions supporting the development of the animation sector;
- information collected from project stakeholders as part of the overall cooperation with them, including the needs reported by SPPA, stakeholders' feedback during the hybrid meeting in Łódź presenting the Local Action Plans of ALICE partners, which took place on July 28, 2021;
- conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the ALICE Working Group No. 2 "Animator & Animation Manager Professional Profiles & Training Courses" and the need to conduct such research on a larger scale in Poland, taking into account additional research areas (the last, apart from the "ALICE" project, research of the animation market in Poland took place in 2015).



The action will include the following steps:

- Submission by SPPA of an application for funding under the call for applications under the Operational Program "Dissemination of Film Culture" for year 2021 - Priority "Audiovisual market research" announced by the Polish Film Institute.
- Implementation of the animation industry market research in Poland, with particular emphasis on cooperation between animation studios and universities in the field of educational programs and graduate competences.

The implementation of the task began in February 2021, on February 15, 2021, SPPA submitted an application for a research project to the Polish Film Institute, as part of the announced call under the Operational Program "Dissemination of Film Culture" for year 2021 - Priority "Audiovisual market research". On May 23, 2021, SPPA received a positive decision on receiving the grant. The signing of the agreement and the start of the research is planned for the turn of September and October 2021.

The minimum scope of the study will include basic data on the Polish animation industry (without in-depth interviews and comparative analysis with European markets). In the case of obtaining additional external funds, including financial contributions from other stakeholders, it is planned to extend the scope of the research.

Stakeholders involved

- SPPA - as the main contractor and coordinator of the task
- Academy of Fine Arts name Jana Matejki in Krakow - supporting partner
- Animation Center in Krakow - supporting partner

PP6 (RARR S.A.) will support the activities of stakeholders in terms of conducting research in the area of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship.

Timeframe

February 2021 - December 2021

Costs

The financial support granted under the Operational Program of the Polish Film Institute in the amount of 69.99% is PLN 30,000.00 (approximately EUR 6,550.00), the total costs of the action (if it is not possible to obtain additional funding) will amount to PLN 43,000.00 (approximately EUR 9,390.00). The conversion from PLN to EUR is based on the Inforeuro exchange rate from August 2021 (EUR 1 = PLN 4.5782).

SPPA is the main coordinator of this research project and the beneficiary of the financial support granted from the Polish Film Institute.

Funding sources

Policy instrument: Operational Program "Dissemination of Film Culture" for year 2021 - Priority "Audiovisual market research".

ACTION 4: Support for the incubation of business ideas, development and innovation in the animation industry

The task was inspired by the information and knowledge gained during the implementation of the first phase of the "ALICE" project, thanks to the exchange of experiences between partners and their regional stakeholders, as well as involvement in consulting solutions of the Working Group No. 1 "Financing" and operation of the Working Group No. 4 "Clusters and smart specializations", including in particular:

- ALICE's mapping methodology as a result of the work of the ALICE Working Group No. 1 - which refers to the value of exploring the industry network to improve the relations between the entities and support their competitiveness and innovation level;



- conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the ALICE Working Group No. 4 operating in the area of "Cluster and smart specialization", including those based on the analysis of creative clusters and forms of associations of entrepreneurs supporting their development, operating in ALICE partner countries;
- information collected from project stakeholders during national meetings with stakeholders on February 8, 2021, March 17, 2021 and during the dissemination meeting on June 29, 2021;
- good practice of the ALICE PP2 - Pictanovo: "Decision making process";
- good practice of the ALICE PP4 - Apulia Region: "Apulia Film House, regional audio-visual hub".

The action consists of obtaining funding for the implementation of projects to support the incubation of business ideas, development and innovation of the animation industry and strengthening support for the industry in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship through participation in the creation of the Regional Innovation Strategy, in particular:

- **Activity 1 - Submission by PP6 (RRDA) of the project on March 5, 2021 for the implementation of the "Originator's Zone" under the "Intelligent Development Operational Program 2014 - 2020"**, Measure 2.4: "Cooperation within the national innovation system" OP ID, Sub-measure 2.4.1 "inno_LAB - Center for analyzes and pilots of new instruments" with a total budget of PLN 4,999,500.00 (approximately EUR 1,092,023.00) - The conversion from PLN to EUR is based on the Infopreuro rate of August 2021 (1 EUR = 4.5782 PLN). The project assumed the creation of the Originators' Zone with properly equipped workshops, including a photographic and film studio and computer design Hi-end AR, VR, 36 Audio-video, a 3D printing and scanning studio as well as a creative and educational space and the support of a network of experts from various industries and specialties for the selected originators who will submit interesting and innovative solutions in the areas of thematic areas defined by National Smart Specializations, responding to important socio-economic problems. The target group of the project are natural persons - creative and inventive authors of innovative solutions, innovators, inventors, visionaries, students, researchers, people interested in technological progress, who, after qualifying for the project, will receive specialist support, including business, legal, marketing and technological assistance in the testing and development of their innovative ideas. The project also provides support in the form of workshop, educational events for people interested in innovation, including students, to help shape pro-innovative attitudes.

The assumption of the project was to support the development of innovative ideas in various areas of operation, also in terms of the operation and functioning of the Audiovisual industry and the animation industry.

The project passed the formal evaluation on March 31, 2021, however, based on the final content evaluation on May 12, 2021, the project was not selected for funding. 12 entities, including consortia, participated in the call, among others PP6 (RRDA).

- **Activity 2 - Submission by PP6 (RARR S.A.) of an idea to the Marshal's Office of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship for the development of the current Business Incubator at PP6 permits to the position of an Incubator and accelerator of creative entrepreneurship**, aimed at supporting the creation and development of companies from the creative industry, including animation and cooperation of this industry with the cultural sector. The idea is a response to the announced call for applications for co-financing in the first pilot edition of the Polish Order Government Fund: Strategic Investments Program, under Priority 4, action "Construction and organization of business incubators". Call is directed to local government units - based on the received ideas, the Marshal's Office of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship will select the best ideas for the implementation of which it will submit an application to this program. Call under the program lasts until August 15, 2021. The program is implemented through investment promises granted by BGK (Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego).
- **Activity 3 - consultation of the assumptions of the Regional Innovation Strategy in terms of supporting the development of the creative sector, including the animation and gaming industry**. Participation of P6 (RRDA) in strategy consultations, preparation of recommendations for changes to the provisions of the strategy regarding the coverage of thematic areas related to animation and gaming.

Stakeholders involved

- Association of Polish Animation Producers - solutions consultation (support for PP6)

Timeframe

February 2021 - December 2021

Costs



At this stage, the costs are difficult to estimate, they will mainly relate to the labour costs of PP6 team members and depend on the time commitment of its staff in the implementation of activities (time and effort devoted to the implementation of activities).

Funding sources

The cost will be incurred as part of PP6 own resources and will be related mainly to staff costs. There will be no costs related to the stakeholder involvement.

Action 3 relates directly to the policy instrument - Regional Innovation Strategy of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship for 2021-2030 - document at the stage of elaboration - social consultations.

Date: 06.08.2021

Name of the organisation(s):

Signatures of the relevant organisation(s):

