

Employment & Inclusion Across Borders



21 and 22 of April 2026

Employment & Inclusion Across Borders – Project-Based Workshop

From Border to Belonging

Via Carpatia EGTC Headquarters. Bačíkova 7 / 040 01 Košice | Slovakia





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Employment and social inclusion remain central challenges in many European border regions, where labour markets, services and vulnerable groups often operate across administrative and national boundaries. In areas such as the Slovak–Hungarian border, these challenges are compounded by skills mismatches, demographic decline and fragmented labour-market governance, despite strong local potential. Interreg has long supported cross-border solutions in these fields, generating practical experience that can inform policies beyond individual projects. Project visits offer a unique opportunity to see cooperation results in action, compare approaches supported by different funding instruments, and reflect on how territorial cooperation contributes to a More Social Europe. This workshop builds on that logic, placing projects at the centre of learning and exchange.

Objectives

The workshop aims to:

- Showcase concrete Interreg results in employment and inclusion, not only to programmes but also the press and decision makers
- Explore complementarities between Interreg and other EU, national and regional funds in the same territory;
- Identify the added value of cross-border cooperation compared to mono-funded approaches;
- Extract transferable lessons for programme implementation and policy development;
- Support the uptake of project results into local, regional and national policies.
- Transfer the TAPE methodology to other areas

Target Group

The workshop targets a strategically mixed audience, including:

- Interreg programme authorities and secretariats;
- Monitoring Committee members, including representatives from DG REGIO and DG EMPL;
- Project partners and lead partners;
- EU institutions, notably DG REGIO and DG EMPL;
- National and regional authorities responsible for employment and inclusion;
- Danube Macro-Regional Strategy (EUSDR) representatives, particularly relevant Priority Areas;
- Local actors involved in project implementation
- Press

Methodology & Format

The event will follow a project-based and participatory methodology, with on-site visits to selected projects forming the backbone of the programme. Each visit will include short presentations focused on challenges, solutions and results, followed by facilitated discussions to encourage reflection and comparison. Interactive group work will further help participants identify complementarities, gaps and policy-relevant messages. Overall, the format prioritises dialogue, peer learning and practical insights over formal presentations.



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Day One

Tuesday, 21 April 2026

08.30 – 9.00

Registration and morning coffee by the Via Carpatia EGTC. Bačíkova 7, 040 01 Košice

09.00 – 9.30

Welcome by Via Carpatia EGTC, Interreg Hungary Slovakia and Interact
Welcome speech by the Vice President of Via Carpatia EGTC: **Rastislav Trnka** (President of the Košice Self - Governing Region)

09.30 – 10.30

Reactivating rural economies across borders: a Cserehát action plan model for jobs and local value chains.

Presentation of the Cserehat TAPE by the Via Carpatia EGTC

[SKHU/1802/3.1/006 - Cserehát AP-CCP](#)

Speaker: **Dr. Julianna Máté** (Director of the Via Carpatia EGTC)

Exchange and debate with the participants

10.30 – 11.30

Travel to Gygyvendégi. **TAPE Methodology** by **Silvester Holop** from Interreg Slovakia Hungary.

11.30 – 13.00

Reconnecting producers and communities across borders: local markets, a model for rural employment activation.

Visit and presentation of St. Stephans (Gygyvendégi, Báthori u. 9, 3816, Hungary) inclusion house and activities

[SKHU/1802/3.1/004 - SKHU Markets](#)

Welcome speech by the **Dr. Boglárka Gál Bánné** President of the Via Carpatia EGTC.

Presentation by the Dean of Garadna: **Pacsai János**

Exchange and debate with the participants.

13.00 – 14.00

Networking lunch at St Stephans

14.00 – 15.30

Travel to Hercegkút. Explanation of the connection between Tokaj – Kosice_ (historical perspective). **Cooperation on 2 sides of the border.**

Speaker tbc

15.30 – 17.30

Heritage as an engine for jobs: the WineCellars cross-border experience

Visit and presentation of the Hercegkút UNESCO World Heritage vine cellars

[SKHU/1902/1.1/051 - WineCellars](#)

Speaker to be confirmed

Exchange and debate with the participants

17.30 – 18.30

Travelling back to Košice



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20:00 – 22:00

Informal dinner at **Gesto cafe & brunch**. SME's supported by Interreg Slovakia Hungary

Gesto cafe & brunch (Námestie L. Novomeského 13, 040 01 Košice)

Welcome speech: Tomáš Szabados - Owner of the restaurant

Day Two

Wednesday, 22 April 2026

08.00 – 08.30

Registration and morning **coffee by the Via Carpatia EGTC**. Bačíkova 7, 040 01 Košice

8:30 - 9:30

Addressing ageing in border regions: a cross-border model for integrated senior services

Welcome and presentation of the activities of the Via Carpatia EGTC (Center of Active Ageing).

[SKHU/1902/4.1/101 - SKHU Ambassadors](#)

Speaker: **Dr. Julianna Máté** (Director of Via Carpatia EGTC)

09:45 – 10:30

Travel to Hidasnémeti. **The importance of short supply chain in this border region** by EGTC.

Speaker to be confirmed

10:30 – 12:30

Empowering producers, sustaining communities: rural agrifood as a driver for jobs

Visit and presentation of the sour cabbage factory

[SKHU/1802/3.1/003 - SKHU Local+ 2](#)

Presentation by the Horváth Family (owner of the factory).

Debate and buffet lunch by the Horváth Family

12:30 – 13:00

Departure to Košice Airport and back to Košice

End of the event



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Meaningful projects with an actual impact on the ground

1) Cserehát AP-CCP project

This “Coordination and Communication project” has empowered the cross-border **revitalization of the Cserehát micro-region by uniting seven Interreg projects** under a cohesive strategy to **tackle high unemployment and unlock local potential**. It has coordinated partners and amplified results through dynamic communication tools — videos, conferences, articles, and social media — that have boosted visibility and community engagement. By supporting new multipurpose centres, market creation, and networking of local producers, **it has contributed to sustainable job creation** and regional pride. The project has delivered tangible outcomes across all action plan initiatives and showcases how strategic coordination accelerates impact in rural development. In a nutshell, this initiative highlights how collaboration and smart communication can transform challenges into shared success stories.

2) Markets project

The SKHU Markets project has revitalised the Cserehát micro-region by creating a **modern training centre in Gagyvendég** and establishing a **cross-border network of vibrant local markets in Buzica, Moldava nad Bodvou, Encs, Hidasnémeti and Gagyvendégi**. These marketplaces have provided essential social and economic functions, boosting quality of life and local entrepreneurship across rural communities. The project has brought **producers closer to consumers, strengthened regional cooperation and helped diversify income opportunities for residents**. It has not only filled gaps in urban services but has also fostered sustainable, community-driven growth in border-area economies. Therefore, this project exemplifies how targeted investment can revitalise rural regions and connect communities for lasting impact.

3) WineCellars project

The SKHU WineCellars project has revitalised historic wine cellar heritage in Hercegkút (Hungary) and Malý Horeš (Slovakia) by upgrading infrastructure, services, and facilities to **transform these centuries-old sites into attractive cultural and wine tourism destinations**. It has improved accessibility and visitor experience with paved walkways, social spaces, gastronomy areas, and modern amenities, boosting local appeal without altering the character of historic buildings. Also, by creating new tourism programmes and spaces, the project has strengthened rural identity, has **increased local employment opportunities**, and has **enhanced income generation for residents and small producers**. The initiative showcases how heritage-based tourism can drive socio-economic growth in rural regions.

4) Ambassadors project

The SKHU Ambassadors project has **enriched the quality of life for seniors in the Slovak-Hungarian border** region by establishing dedicated Active Ageing Centres in Košice and Miskolc that promote health, socialisation, and lifelong learning. Through regular courses, volunteer days, and a unique online “Favour Bank”, **it has empowered over-60s to stay active, engaged, and connected across borders**. A cross-border team of senior ambassadors has been created to share expertise and inspire healthy lifestyles, fostering strong community bonds and peer support. Furthermore, the initiative has strengthened institutional cooperation between Slovakia and Hungary, laying the groundwork for sustainable services and joint



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activities for older adults. This is a clear example of how coordinated action can combat social isolation and enhance well-being for ageing populations.

5) Local + 2 project

The SKHU Local + 2 project has boosted cross-border entrepreneurship and rural competitiveness by **helping local businesses scale up value-added production** in the Cserehát micro-region. Two partner companies have **established a sauerkraut processing facility in Hidasnémeti and a confectionery production site in Košice**, strengthening food processing capacity and expanding market presence. This investment has improved the quality, diversity and popularity of regional products, opening new opportunities for local producers and **job creation**. By fostering collaboration between Hungarian and Slovak enterprises, the project has reinforced economic cohesion and cross-border value chains. This initiative showcases how targeted support can transform rural production into sustainable business growth.



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Practicalities



Starting Point and Meeting Venue

Via Carpatia EGTC Headquarters. Bačíkova 7 / 040 01 Košice | Slovakia

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/ePA6BHQFTXHn4PFh8>.

Floor: Office – first floor

Meeting room - ground floor (Centre for Active Ageing)

How to reach meeting venue:

- The walking distance from the suggested hotels to the meeting venue is approximately 5–10 minutes
- A few minutes by car from the suggested hotels (parking available in the courtyard of Via Carpatia EGTC, Bačíkova 7, 040 01 Košice – **please request a reservation in advance**)
daniela.kolcunova@viacarpattia.eu
- Tram #1; #2; #6; #9 (Stop: Námestie Maratónu mieru)
- Bolt taxi service: <https://bolt.eu/en-sk/>
- e-bike sharing service: <https://www.antiksmartway.sk/en/ebike-sharing>

Travel arrangements

By plane

Košice Airport is connected by daily flights to many European destinations.

To book a flight to Košice, choose from the list of airlines flying to Košice:

www.ryanair.com , www.austrian.com , www.lot.com , <https://www.wizzair.com/en-gb>

The price from Košice Airport to the city center is approximately €30.

For more information, current prices, and contact details, please visit:

<https://www.air-taxi.sk/en/>



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The next nearest airport is Budapest Ferenc Liszt International Airport, located 260 km from Košice (approximately 3 hours by car). For those arriving in Budapest, several companies provide airport transfers between Budapest and Košice, for example:

<http://izijet.sk/en>

<https://www.cassoviaexpres.sk/en/>

<https://airtrans.sk/en/>

<https://koscicetransfer.sk/en>

By train

If you choose to travel by train, you can find all the necessary information at the website:

<http://www.slovakrail.sk/en.html>

Košice Railway Station is located in Station Square, just a 5-minute walk from the city center. Taxi service is available directly outside the station entrances.

By car or by bus

If you are travelling by car from western countries, you can take the northern route (E75 and E50) or the southern route (E51). If you are coming from Hungary (Budapest), use the M3 motorway.

Please note. The last day after the project visit we will take you to Košice airport in time to take the connecting flight through Vienna

Accommodation

Suggested hotels:

Hotel Maraton **** <http://www.hotelmaraton.sk/en/> - within a 3-minute walk from the meeting venue

Hotel Michael's Palace *** <https://www.hotelmichaelpalace.sk/> - within a 5-minute walk from the meeting venue

Hotel Crystal *** <https://www.hotelcrystal.sk/en> - around 10-minute' walk from the meeting venue

