



GET IN THE Game!



Improving the
chances of youth on
the labour market



Impress

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Content

4	I. Introduction
5	II. Project partners Carpathian Foundation – Hungary Carpathian Foundation - Slovakia
6	III. Situation of youth unemployment in the target areas
7	IV. Background of the project
8	V. Project activities and events
10	VI. Participants of the project
16	VII. Mentors' and interns' reports
20	VIII. Expert opinion - Michal Vašečka, Consultant – Associate Professor Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University in Brno
21	IX. Recommendation
23	X. Acknowledgements

I. Introduction

The **Carpathian Foundation – Hungary** and the **Carpathian Foundation Slovakia** have **already implemented several successful projects in co-operation** in the recent years. The 'Get in the game! – Improving the chances of youth on the labour market' project was also carried out as a result of a joint initiative.

The project focused on the dramatically increasing tendency of youth unemployment, especially that of youth under 30, and tended to be a cross-border pilot project as a model of a kind of solution, which could be applicable anywhere else.

The activities were carried out between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2013 with the aim of widening the labour market chances of qualified, but disadvantaged young people living in the bordering regions of North-Eastern Hungary and Eastern Slovakia. We made all this possible through an internship programme, which was implemented in a protected environment as the students worked under the guidance of mentors' representing civil organisations whose activities and missions suit the interns' interests. The implementers also wanted to encourage the involved and interested parties, organisations and stakeholders in the target areas to co-operate with each other and to harmonize the measures providing a solution for the problem by sharing their experiences.

The mirror-project also intended to create a network which involves institutions besides civil organisations to promote the co-operation between bordering regions struggling with similar problems – not only about youth unemployment – but on other significant areas, as well.

The primary purpose of our publication is to draw the stakeholders' and relevant authorities' attention to find solution for the growing – still unsolved - problem of youth unemployment within a short time. Besides, we would like the readers to get an insight into the activities and events of the successful project.



Laura Dittel
Director
Carpathian Foundation
Slovakia

Boglárka Bata
Director
Carpathian Foundation
Hungary

II. Project partners

The implementers of the project were the **Carpathian Foundation – Hungary** and the **Carpathian Foundation Slovakia**. These organisations are the members of the International Carpathian Foundation Network, which has been providing financial and professional assistance for more than 15 years in order to encourage the innovative development initiatives of non- governmental, local governmental and business sectors and that of the local communities in the Carpathian region.

The **Carpathian Foundation – Hungary** primarily deals with grant-making through applications, organising programmes to support disadvantaged rural regions and communities, and provides scholarships for marginalized youth. One of its main strategic objectives is to strengthen the attitude of social awareness, especially through popularizing the practice of volunteering and extending the chances of disadvantaged young people. As a cross-border regional community foundation, it provides technical, professional and financial support and assistance for non profit organisations and local governments operating within Hungary – primarily in the counties of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Hajdú-Bihar, Heves, Jász- Nagykun-Szolnok and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg.

The association - together with its legal predecessor - has donated more than 15 million USD to local governments and hundreds of non-governmental organisations since its establishment.



The Carpathian Foundation Slovakia is a unique regional non – profit organisation, and the only one serving Eastern Slovakia – Košice and Prešov administrative regions. It was created in 1994 and, since its creation, has been providing financial support, training and advisory services to active people and non – profit organisations in order to help improve living conditions in Eastern Slovakia. The Foundation’s flagship themes are community – based poverty alleviation and corporate social responsibility concept development. The Foundation’s grant programmes seek to support development of the region in a variety of areas. The Foundation supports collaboration, partnerships on the local level and community engagement into solutions towards local issues. Since its creation, the Foundation funded hundreds of projects with a total amount of over 1,8 million EUR.

III. Situation of youth unemployment in the target areas

The target areas of the **'Get in the game!'** project were the North-Eastern part of Hungary and Eastern part of Slovakia. These bordering regions are considered to be the most marginalized areas of the two countries, because of their unfavourable economic situation, the migration of qualified population and their indicators on unemployment, low incomes, in comparison to other regions.

Youth unemployment is a huge problem in Europe. According to EUROSTAT (2012), the EU youth unemployment rate reaches 22, 7% under the age of 25, which means the double of the adults' unemployment rate¹. About 5.5 million youth do not have a job and a total of 7.5 million people in the 15-24 age groups are neither in employment nor in education or training. Unfortunately, according to a statistical forecast this tendency will not change in the near future. This problem can be observed more dramatically in the bordering

regions. Unemployment rate is the highest in the North-Eastern part of Hungary. The official rate is 12, 8% (December, 2012. December), in Heves county this number is not less, than 15, 7%. The number of the entrants in the labour market (mainly 20-24 aged) is more than 13.139 person which means the 12, 3% of the national average rate. The official unemployment rate in Slovakia (March, 2013 – Eurostat) is 14, 5%; the youth unemployment rate is 34, 8% (February, 2013. – Eurostat). In the region of Kosice the unemployment rate was 17, 3% at the end of 2009.

For this reason, special attention has to be paid in the region to the high unemployment rate of young people, and to handle their migration to abroad and to the central regions of the two countries. In this field one of the essential problems is that the demand and the supply sides of the labour market are not in harmony with each other, and even among the graduated youth the ratio of unemployment is very high². In addition to the above mentioned problems the lack of key competencies, information and knowledge necessary to undertake jobs, also represents a significant difficulty for young people on their way to find their future in the labour market.

We think this problem can be handled most effectively at the local level with the participation and co-operation of the stakeholders, including the non-profit sector, as well. Major financial expenditures and governmental acts are needed to handle the situation in these regions. According to our opinion, communication between the acting, relevant local participants and organisations on the two sides of the border and the launching of grass-root initiatives would help to solve the current situation.³

¹ Eurostat's main labour market indicators, seasonally adjusted, quarterly data; according to definition, people under 25 considered to be youth, over 25 considered to be adults.

² http://www.husk-cbc.eu/hu/a_regiorol

³ Detail from the Recommendation





IV. Background of the project

As the Carpathian Foundation – Hungary has recognized the growing problem of youth unemployment has initiated the implementation of projects contributing to the success of the participating students on the labour market since 2005.

The **Carpathian Scholarship, and the Volunteer and Intern Program** - represent the background of the 'Get in the game!' project – as supporting the talented but disadvantaged students. The scholarship programme was started in 2005 and it has supported 15 young persons so far with the annual amount of a 2000 USD scholarship, for which in return they developed and implemented a one-year voluntary programme with the title of "Within the region for the region". The scholars' work is assisted by a mentor and a personal consultant (university, college teacher). In the frame of our **Volunteer and Intern Programme** we host interns at the Foundation. During the programme – that has been operating since 2006 – youth through carrying out tasks which fit their studies, acquire the skills that supplement their knowledge, and so contribute to their future professional successes. Recognising the necessity of the programme, we extended it in 2010, and assisted college students (11 persons) in participating in two-month long internship activities at NGOs in Heves county, in line with their studies and their fields of interests.

During the internship period they carried out their tasks with the assistance of mentors. The successful result of the project was that some of the students after the internship period continued their work at the selected non-governmental organisations either as voluntary workers or as paid colleagues.

Our interns in the possession of the acquired essential competencies and experiences, after leaving school have a greater chance to find a job on the labour market. In addition to the gained working experiences they also established personal contacts, which allow them to find their expectations even if they stay within the region. The success of the mentioned programmes encouraged the Foundation to assist its partner, the Carpathian Foundation Slovakia in the frame of the "Get in the game!" cross-border project to start and introduce the internship programme in the Eastern Slovakian region, as well.

The **Carpathian Foundation Slovakia** is engaged in a community-based poverty alleviation topic in Eastern Slovakia having chosen development – oriented community based approaches. The Community – based approach towards poverty alleviation encourages joint actions not only on the part of disadvantaged groups but also engages other institutions and individuals in the community who may benefit from the solutions financially or in other ways.

In its programmatic strategy, the Carpathian Foundation Slovakia focuses on the social poverty concept which does not represent only insufficient income in a form of payment for work or of social welfare. Poverty is also vulnerability, uncertainty, lack of opportunities or lack of access to education, culture, health care or to political power and injustice. A group that finds itself under a serious threat of poverty is youth – graduate students in Eastern-Slovakia. They are threatened by unemployment and lack of chances to be successful in the labour market.

V. Project activities and events

We announced our call for proposal about the 'Get in the game!' project in the beginning of 2013 with the purpose to ensure internship opportunities for the talented, but disadvantaged students in topics adjusted to their studies, in the most outstanding non-governmental organisations of the two regions. Besides, our purpose was to promote the non-governmental sphere and voluntary work among young people. We chose from numerous applicants – in Slovakia and in Hungary – those 10 and 10 students, who carried out their activities at the host organisations with the assistance of mentors during the programme, for 20 hours per month.

The main activities of the project were implemented simultaneously on the two sides of the border. Events were carried out jointly contributed with the co-operation of the two partners and helped the participants in making contacts and sharing their experiences with each other. Prior to the internship work, the Slovakian and the Hungarian students met their mentors, representing the civil organisations, during a specific preparatory workshop. The **workshop** provided the opportunity for the participants to get acquainted with each other. Mentors' and interns' tasks were also introduced at the event.

The participants of the project met for the first time – over the border – at the Opening Conference, held in Eger in April, 2013. We considered it to be significant that they get to know the current labour market situation, the specialties and the related datas of the two target areas of the project. We invited experts specialised in the topic from both countries to the event. They introduced the problems of North-Eastern Hungary and Eastern Slovakia through their presentations. People who were interested also received advice and information on the successful employment of young people and about internship work opportunities available for them.

The mentors and interns met again in Eger in May. The purpose of the **Best practice visit and experience exchange'** meeting was to introduce opportunities in all the three sectors that may represent a local level solution regarding employment of youth. We visited the Heves County Voluntary Centre, we became acquainted with the internship programmes of ZF Lenksysteme Hungária Ltd. and we listened to a brief report at the Teaching Confectionary of **Szent Lőrinc High School** about the practical training. In addition to playful tasks, the event also gave the opportunity for the representatives of





the non-governmental organisations and the youth to share the experiences they had already acquired. We arranged and prepared a 'Recommendation' together, in which we summarized significant problems regarding youth unemployment based on the experiences during the project and we suggested possible solutions for it.

The international conference that closed the project was kept in Košice under the title of „How to Improve Preparedness of Youth for the Job Market“. At the Conference a number of experts with an academic or business background presented the facts and upcoming trends of youth unemployment and functioning approaches towards partial solutions of the current troubled situation. Also, the Conference presented best practices of how non-profit organisations could help young people to acquire hands on experience their future careers.



The audience could also get acquainted with the details of the internship work done at the non-governmental organisations through interactive presentations. As the closing of the event and at the same time as the popularising of the non-profit sector, the active and successfully operating NGOs appeared as exhibitors at the 'Colourful Townlet of Non-Profit Organisations 2013' -, where the visitors could get to know their activities.

VI. Participants of the project

NGOs took part in the project allowed students to get an insight into the operation of civil organisations and how the experiences gained there will contribute to their success in the job market. The profiles of the involved organisations were in line with students' interests and studies, so each student could find the most suitable organisation.

The project partners also hosted interns. Tímea Suhai (Culture Management Studies, Eszterházy Károly College, Eger) spent her internship at the Carpathian Foundation – Hungary and Lenka Jambrichová (Faculty of Public Administration, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice) spent it at the Carpathian Foundation Slovakia.



'Beehive Rock' - Nature Conservation and Cultural Association [Kaptárkő Természetvédelmi és Kulturális Egyesület]

www.kaptarko.hu

Mentor: Gergely Juhász

Intern: Mónika Póczik – Geography, Msc, Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The primary purpose of the association - founded in 2003 - is to protect the living and inanimate natural values and cultural heritages. The activity scope of the association has been significantly extended since its foundation as it deals with knowledge dissemination, environment conscious education and information providing. Priority areas are nature protection and geosciences. Within the association there is a Climbing and Caving Club, a Wildlife Protecting, a Hiking and Water Tourism Sections function as well.

Eger Regional Development Association [Eger Térsége Fejlesztési Egyesület - ETFE]

www.etfe.hu

Mentor: Éva Hídvégi Pozsikné

Intern: Ramóna Bicskó – Geography, Msc, Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The Eger Regional Development Association was established by ten local governments of the region and the Agria Innoregion Knowledge Centre of Natural Sciences Faculty, Eszterházy Károly College. The mission of the association is to strengthen the co-operation of the local governmental, private and non-governmental sectors operating in the micro region, in order to allow the settlements to search and find solutions together for their common problems. In addition, the objective of the association is to improve the quality of life and to increase the rural inhabitants' income generating capability.

Among the tasks of the organisation there is the preservation of natural and cultural heritages, enhancement of self-sustaining capability of the region, and establishing the social economy.

H-Union Association [H-Union Szövetség]

Mentor: Gábor Nagy
Intern: Judit Báthory – Geography, Bsc,
Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The H-Union Association was established in 2000, and it has been operating in its present form – as a public benefit social and economy development association – since 2006. It has already implemented a number of programmes connected in some way to traditions, to the culture and customs of all the Hungarians. During the last three years its primary mission was to popularize sustainable lifestyles and the local values. Their main target is to merge – no matter whether the issue is about culture, lifestyle or consumption – the thousand-year traditions of Hungary with modern European thinking in such a manner that they should save and carry on the values and to develop an attitude that looks towards the future but which is based on traditions. In the recent years their outstanding target was to popularize a sustainable lifestyle and local values. At present they are working on implementing the city horticulture and community horticulture related projects. Their intern could also participate in these projects.

Hungarian Association of Provincial Houses [Magyarországi Tájházak Szövetsége]

<http://www.tajhazszovetseg.hu/>
Mentor: Márta Majnár Hegedűsné
Intern: Gyöngyi Váradi – Geography, Bsc,
Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The primary purpose of the association is to preserve the Hungarian provincial houses, to foster their professional reconstruction, operation and maintenance. In addition, the members, colleagues of the organisation, provide professional support for creating new houses and they participate also in scientific researches connected to these houses and to their collections.



They are trying to promote good professional co-operation of organisations and persons operating these houses. They annually organise nation-wide meetings and special professional training courses concerning topics that define the operation of these houses, under the leadership of certified experts. Their tradition-creating event is the Day of the Provincial Houses, which is tied to the day of Saint George. This year more than fifty provincial houses of the settlements opened their gates for the visitors. The programme provided an opportunity for getting acquainted with the former village, farm lifestyle and the resuscitation and revival of the former customs.

Friends of Eger Castle [Eger Vára Baráti Köre]

<http://www.varbaratikoreger.hu/>
Mentor: Gáborné Román
Intern: Sándor Böszörményi, Geography Bsc,
Communication - Media Science BA,
Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The society has been operating continuously since 1957. The civic organisation aims to mediate cultural values and to nurture the traditions. In co-operation with Dobó István Castle Museum – with paying attention to the very important role that the Castle of Eger played in history for several centuries – it

preserves and strengthens the castle, the cult of István Dobó, the heroic castle defenders and Géza Gárdonyi. It considers important the preservation of the physical and scientific values, the traditions of the Eger castle museum and introducing them to its members. Its activities include the organising of a lecture series, which present results of the most recent researches of the specific fields of archaeology, ethnology, literature, local history, etc. Their most significant programmes are the following: Gárdonyi Géza Birthday Garden Ceremony, Gárdonyi Memorial Day, Play Houses of the Celebration Circles; Castle Camp, and the Day of Children organised jointly with the Castle Museum. They also join the special castle events in several areas.

Agria Geography Public Benefit Foundation for the Teaching, Research and Application of Geography
[Agria Geográfia a Földrajz Oktatásáért, Kutatásáért és Alkalmazásáért Közhasznú Alapítvány]

Mentor: Dr. Csaba Patkós
 Intern: Flavián Füleki, Geography Msc, Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The primary objectives of the Foundation include supporting the professional, methodological renewal of higher education geography training, improving its quality, and continuously improving its personal and physical conditions. It is considered to be important the involvement of talented students into the education and research work and into the development of education devices. The Foundation encourages the participation of students in further training events and professional competitions and assists the job finding and further education of the graduating students. The society organises study-excursions, in connection publish brochures on the topic of nature protection and tourism.



Kárpátikum Public Benefit Foundation
[Kárpátikum Közhasznú Alapítvány]

<http://www.karpatikum.hu/>
 Mentor: Dr. György Kajati
 Intern: Magdolna Horváth, Geography, Msc, Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The objectives of the foundation include the popularizing of the Hungarian cultural and natural heritages and to support their presentation to the public at large. Its members consider to be significant the strengthening of the regional role of values, products ("Hungaricum"), traditions and activities that are tied to the Hungarian nationality- and through this to increase the identity consciousness of the people. The foundation helps the co-operation of generations and nationalities living in Hungary and beyond the border, and their acquaintance with the everyday life, world of customs and local culture of each other. The main purpose of the scientific and research activities of the foundation are to save the cultural heritage.

'Egri Norma' Public Benefit Foundation **[Egri Norma Közhasznú Alapítvány]**

<http://www.egrinormaalapitvany.hu/>
Mentor: Mónika Somogyi Kovácsné
Intern: Nikolett Radványi, Geography, Msc, Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The purpose of the foundation is to nurture the cultural and historic heritages, economic relations of the city of Eger and of its region and to assist initiatives that promote the interests of Hungarians living beyond the border. It initiates and supports programmes that teach healthy lifestyles and family life with special regard to the interests of the children and the youth. Its members also co-operate in developing energy saving and environment saving way of thinking. In July, 2012 the Foundation became a Non Governmental Information Centre, and as such it provides assistance for NGOs operating in the county regarding legal, IT, accounting and tender related issues.

Society of the Diabetes Patients of Eger **[Cukorbetegek Egri Egyesülete]**

<http://egridiab.egaln.net.hu>
Mentor: Katalin Jakab Jakabné
Intern: Eszter Oláh, Hungarian, BA, Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

The society deals with the training of diabetes patients, the prevention and early diagnosis of the disease and its complications. Within the framework of club events they teach the members (about 500 members) and they also take care of interest protection tasks. The workers of the society take approximately 2000 blood glucose level measurements annually. They organise numerous town events; as the Day of the Diabetes Patients of Eger, the International Diabetes Patients Meeting, and they also join other events, as the Festival of Eger. The Society moved to a new place located in the centre of the city.

Rév – Service for Helping the Addicts **[Rév – Szenvedélybeteg-segítő Szolgálat]**

<http://egerrev.hu/>
Mentor: Anika Fülöp Várkonyiné
Intern: Csilla Csuka, Geography, Bsc, Eszterházy Károly College, Eger

This Service has been operating and has been sustained by the Charity Centre of the Archdiocese [Főegyházmegyei Karitászi Központ] for 15 years, and it has been implementing the primary task of preventing and managing the risks and disadvantages that are connected to addictions. For this its service covers the unit of the triumvirate of prevention-therapy-rehabilitation. RÉV with its work wishes to contribute to the development of a more differentiated and more efficient helping/service system, which is based on well operating organisations and which is able to give adequate responses to addiction related challenges. Our activity includes: giving advice, providing, consultation, private, family and group therapies, keeping preventive lectures and programmes in kindergartens and in schools. Preventive work within the schools and beyond the schools is an outstanding task of RÉV. We continuously make efforts to involve as many voluntary colleagues as possible into carrying out this work.

'OZ SOSNA' **SOSNA Ecological Training School**

www.sosna.sk
Mentor: Štefan Szabó
Intern: Juraj Hruška, Faculty of Mining, Ecology, Process Control and Geotechnology, Technical University Košice

SOSNA Eco Centre is serving as a functional demonstration of clean, healthy, aesthetic, low-cost and low-energy buildings with a natural bio-garden. The whole complex of Eco Centre and its bio-garden is serving for the visitors as an inspiring example of „how to do it this way”, as well as the training and education facility for our activities (lectures, courses, exhibitions, etc.) on all sorts of topics relating to eco houses, bio gardens, climate change issues and sustainable living.



'Arcidiecézna Charita' **Charity of the Archdiocese, Slovakia**

www.charita-ke.sk

Mentor: Igor Kupec

Intern: Judita Volčková, Faculty of Public Administration, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice

Caritas Slovakia, as a non-profit NGO, provides charitable, social, healthcare and educational services to people in need, without regard to their race, nationality, religion or political orientation. The vision of Caritas Slovakia is to offer professional help to people in need and thanks to the support of our donors, to decrease the number of people in Slovakia and abroad who find themselves in any kind of need, be it material, social or both at the same time.

Karpatský rozvojový inštitút **Carpathian Development Institute**

www.kri.sk

Mentor: Michal Schvalb

Intern: Renáta Kmecziková, Faculty of Public Administration, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice

The Carpathian Development Institute is an independent, professional, non-profit organisation of the „think-tank“ type, inspiring and enforcing the comprehensive

environmental, social and economic development of regions and municipalities. The mission is to promote systematic changes in favour of sustainable development of territories through the formation of an ideologically independent and critical intellectual environment. It is also a research and advisory centre and it provides analysis about the opportunities for development, as well as professional development studies and scenarios.

Rodinné centrum Stonožka **Infant-Mother Centre**

www.mcstonozka.sk

Mentor: Natália Niguthová

Intern: Rozália Gyenesová, Faculty of Arts, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice, Department of Social Work

Mother centre Stonozka is a civil nonprofit association. It was founded by moms on their maternity leave, who became its managers. It arose from the need to move forward and do something for moms on maternity/parental leave, their children and families. The mommies do the work for mother centre on a voluntary basis in their free time. The inspiration for the activities comes from the needs of their own children. MC Stonozka is not financed by any company or organisation, it gathers the means necessary for its activities from the mommies, their families and sponsors. On 28th September 2007 MC Stonozka became a corporate member of The Mother Centre Union. The main message of the Union is "to reach respect and recognition of maternity in the society and form supporting conditions for maternity in the best interest of children and families."

TIMI, n.o.

TIMI

www.centrumliberta.sk

Mentor: Renáta Megyešiová

Intern: Nikola Hroncová, Faculty of Public Administration, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice

TIMI is a non – profit organisation which was established in 2010. It established LIBERTA, centre for families with children with physical disabilities. It is oriented on diagnosis of cerebral palsy of children. From 2012 the centre started to offer complex intensive treatment for children and youth with locomotor ataxia.

OZ Haliganda

Haliganda

www.haliganda.sk

Mentor: Silvia Sorgerová

Intern: Ľudmila Kostelníková, Faculty of Arts, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice

Haliganda is a non – profit organisation that operates the biggest and oldest mother centre in Košice. It focuses mainly on these fields: organisation and production of cultural and educational events for all generations, production of its own programmes for children and families and free time activities for families. The organisation is actively involved in building community and supports healthy lifestyle and modern interactive forms of education. It flexibly reacts to the needs of families with small children.

OZ FRIGO

FRIGO

www.frigomania.eu

Mentor: Iveta Hurná

Intern: Anna Petreková, Faculty of Public Administration, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice

FRIGO is a non profit organisation working with children. Its aim is to prepare and realize

activities for children and youth in their free time, during holidays. Together with the schools, they motivate children and youth during the education process. The main forms of our work are camps, trips, club meetings, cultural and sport activities, trainings.

OZ ResPublica

ResPublica

www.respublica.szm.com

Mentor: Gabriel Eštok

Intern: Ján Volečko, Faculty of Arts, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice, Department of Political Science

ResPublica, non-profit organisation was established in 2011 in close collaboration with the Department of Political Science at the Faculty of Arts, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice. The activities are focused on informing the public about political and social issues. Together with the students of the faculty, ResPublica organises educational activities for students at basic and secondary schools. The organisation cooperates with NGOs and other subjects in Slovakia and abroad.

Cinefil

Cinefil

www.bioke.sk

Mentor: Alexandra Mireková

Intern: Štefan Puškár, Faculty of Public Administration, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University, Košice

A non – profit organisation CINEFIL was established in 2003 and its main aim is to organise cultural activities, but – first of all – to run a film club in an old small cinema and so to preserve the atmosphere of classic small cinemas known before big multiplex cinemas grew up. During the year, they offer diverse of films in the last „old – fashioned“ cinema in Košice – Cinema Úsmev. The organisation is involved in international cultural projects.

VII. Mentors' and interns' reports

As a first step of the work in the months of April-May, 2013 interns became familiar with the everyday activities of the selected organisations. They get an insight into the operational structure, and thus they were able to participate actively in the work. The main tasks of the interns included among others administration activities, writing tenders, designing websites and assisting in the organisation of events.

Mentors helped young people in carrying out their activities. They played a significant role in motivating the students through professionally useful and creative tasks. The common work was rated as useful by all the participants.



Due to the project many young people realized their expectations and had an opportunity to become a participant in the work of the community in the future as well.

From the aspect of the mentors and the interns...

Igor Kupec, Mentor, Archdiocesan Charity, Slovakia

I work as a volunteers coordinator in the Archdiocesan charity Košice, where I'm responsible for the hiring of new volunteers, interviews, trainings, supervision and managing of volunteers work. When I received information about programme, „Get in the Game!“ I decided to join. An intern in my office could help me a lot and with her help I will be able to improve whole volunteers programme. After time, I can approve it.

After some formal meetings in the Carpathian Foundation, the new intern Judita came to my office. A young student of public administration with a big smile on her lips and with a great amount of energy appeared to be a good part of the team.

I offered her a table and computer in my office. I explained to her how the whole volunteers programme works and how I organise hiring and trainings etc. Then I told her what she will be responsible for. I offered her my full assistance and help but she had to manage her time and work tasks. Judita took responsibility for the organisation of workshops and fundraising activities, but also she was helping me with trainings, interviews, grant applications and many other activities. All of the mentioned activities were mutually enriching. She helped, me and I taught her how those things work.

After time I can say that I was very satisfied with whole program. We also became friends with Judita and she is cooperating with our organisation until now.

Judita Volčková, Intern, Archdiocesan Charity, Slovakia

„Join the Get in the Game! Programme“. This slogan I found on our school's website. So I said to myself: „*Why not?*“ Two months of internship in a non-governmental organisation could be a nice adventure and it could be enriching. So without any doubts, I sent my application to the Carpathian Foundation Slovakia. An answer came quite quickly. I was chosen as one of 10 trainees in *Get in the Game!* Programme. But I still didn't know in which organisation I will work and mainly what exactly should I do?

It started to be quite clear after the first formal meeting in the Carpathian Foundation. Archdiocesan Charity Košice became my organisation and Mr. Igor Kupec became my mentor. Such a good choice. He explained to me how the whole organisation and volunteers program that he manages works. He gave me a list of tasks and fields I was responsible for. So during those two months I was organising a street-art workshop, I was helping with interviews with new volunteers.



I started to organise some fundraising activities and I also applied for one grant programme, success and I made such a good coffee ☺ which improved relationships in the office ☺

And how do I evaluate two months in Archdiocesan Charity Košice? I was very satisfied. I gained many experiences and I found out how does NGO's work I met many inspiring and interesting people and also I gained good friends.



Volunteer work at 'Friends of the Eger Castle'

Gáborné Román, President of the EVBK, mentor

Our society joined as a host organisation the "Get in the game!" project which was announced with the aim to promote volunteer work. Great interest and commitment towards work and the public welfare characterized the college students who were looking for internship opportunities matching their studies, at non-governmental organisations in Eger. The management of the 'Friends of the Eger Castle' hosted *Sándor Böszörményi*, (Communication and Media Studies BA and Geography BSc, Eszterházy Károly College) and assisted him in implementing his voluntary internship tasks. During the two months of mentor facilitation our intern got an insight into the development of the organisation, its publications, its contact system– with special regard to our relation with the Dobó István Castle Museum and with



domestic and international non-governmental organisations. We introduced him to our fund raising strategy. We paid great attention to the events of the 'Gárdonyi Memorial Jubilee' and to the conceptions of 'The development of the fortress of Eger and its fortification system tourist attractions project'. As an assistant he participated among others in the children's day's "chivalrous trial". He will publish the activities of the organisation in the public journal, *Lyceum Palette* of the Eszterházy Károly College. During the internship work Sándor's concepts and recommendations served well in strengthening the cultural and art history values of the castle of Eger. As a member of the the 'Friends of the Eger Castle' he was constantly looking for possible ways to encourage youth and students to promote association works. He was forming the methods, contents and PR tasks of programme organising, as well. He was pleased to undertake the involvement of his geography section colleagues by inviting them to different programmes. His suggestions - concerning the development of non-governmental organisation life - will be useful for the society in the long term as well, and his novel concepts will strengthen the culture mediating purposes and spirit of the 'Friends of Eger Castle'. His work is highly appreciated.



Voluntary work in the Castle of Eger

Sándor Böszörményi, Intern

I carried out voluntary work at the 'Friends of the Castle of Eger' in the framework of the internship programme that was announced by the Carpathian Foundation – Hungary. The period of co-operation was from April – to May.

During the mentioned two months I carried out a number of interesting and diverse tasks in the castle of Eger. Among others I assisted in programmes organised for children. I visited other programmes, the general assembly and exhibitions of the organisation. In addition, I tried to contribute to the efficiency of internal and external communication with my ideas, and I tried to find out the recreation needs of college students which the organisation may orient later on.

One of the useful yields of the above listed activities is that I had the chance to learn

some basic steps of programme organising. However, I consider it to be even more useful that I had the chance to get an insight into the operation, the everyday life of a non-governmental organisation. I acquired the knowledge through my observations concerning the structure and operation mechanism of the society, which I will be able to utilize without any doubts, in case I find a job within my profession. Last but not least, my personal contacts had been also enriched, since in the Castle of Eger I had the chance to work among friendly people standing always by me, under good circumstances.

However the joint work did not end after the two month period that was set by the programme. I try to assist with the work of the organisation continuously: so that I participated in organising several summer programmes. And whenever there is a possibility I would like to participate in the future in both planning and implementation of programmes at the organisation.



VIII. Expert opinion - Michal Vašečka, Consultant – Associate Professor Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University in Brno

'Get in the game!'

The project 'Get in the game!' represents an intriguing attempt to tackle one of the most pressing problems of Eastern Slovakia - youth unemployment. Slovakia has the fifth highest youth unemployment in the EU, according to Eurostat (November 2012) every third young Slovak citizen up to 25 is jobless. The Carpathian Foundation, being the most important civil society organisation in Eastern Slovakia, understands the scope of the problem in the easternmost part of Central Europe - therefore the project is aimed at improving opportunities for educated but disadvantaged youth to be successful in the labor market.

Tackling youth unemployment is becoming without any doubts one of the greatest challenges for public policy makers in

countries of late modernity. Bearing in mind recent structural changes of society, conventional solutions won't be successful in the 21st century we need paradigm changes of employment policies. In the whole area of the European Union we are facing a new situation that has been described recently as a "jobless world", and therefore consequences of false solutions can be even more dramatic than in the past.

In this respect, the project Get in the game! is innovative and might become a role model for others precisely due to its focus on development of the social capital of young people. The low social capital of regions such as Eastern Slovakia and neglect of this phenomenon proved to be missing link of developmental strategies in the past. In other words, the Carpathian Foundation project tries to tackle non-civility in a region that has been lagging behind of decades.

The Carpathian Foundation, adopting a social capital perspective, emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the value, usefulness, and dynamics of social ties. By offering working experience in non - profit organisations it is ensuring that individuals have the opportunity to participate fully in society. Let us hope that projects such as this one will be followed by others in the future.



IX. Recommendation

In the frame of this recommendation we, ourselves, the concerned parties would like to contribute to tackling this problem by providing our opinion on how to increase the opportunities of youth living in the border region in the labour market.

The background facts of the problem – about we cannot hear a lot - but essential in respect of this topic

Generally:

- The Hungarian-Slovakian border region (North-Eastern part of Hungary, Eastern Slovakia) is lagging behind comparing it to the centre areas in respect of its economic, educational and employment conditions.
- In this border region, the opportunities and employment rates of youth are much lower, than in the central areas of the two countries.
- The educational system and the demand side of the labor market are not in accordance with each other.

Concretely:

- The employers generally prefer experienced employees at workplaces. In opposition to this fact, most of the graduates appear in the labour market without the necessary skills and competences.
- There is not enough emphasis on practical knowledge and experiences in the governmental education systems.
- In respect to educational systems, the motivation of youth is not in focus. They are not well- informed about their future opportunities. Unfortunately, vocational guidances, carrier-orientation programmes are less available for the youth.



- The number of visual aids and programmes that would facilitate the prevention of early school leaving is either so low in the current educational systems or difficult to access them. Besides, there is not enough attention and support drawn given to this field. The fostering methods of educational reintegration generally are not adequate, less accessible and there is not enough support and attention given to them.
- The governmental and business sectorial internships generally do not provide enough useful practical experiences. In addition, these are less accessible or available in the marginalized rural areas.

Recommendation – for the stakeholders to give more attention to the followings.....

- The European Union and domestic development funds should support the local, effective programmes of all the three sectors dealing with youth unemployment.
- The skill-development, vocational guidances and other motivational systems should get more emphasis. High priority needs to be given to the teaching of foreign languages and enhancing mobility programmes.
- The early skill development of youth and children is required in the schools, mainly for underprivileged children and their families (with the involvement of mentors/tutors) by providing improvement programmes to them.
- The inspiration of voluntary and intern works should be inevitable from the part of the government with different types of support, and with tax benefits provided to stakeholders applying volunteer and internship programmes. The substantial involvement of non-profit organisations into projects directed to the above mentioned, is also important to be supported and highlighted. The involvement of more and more civil organisations is necessary to propagate the voluntary and intern works, as they would contribute to the integration of the youth into the labour market.
- It is also required to give more emphasis on teaching entrepreneurship and self-employment related knowledge and to develop skills of children and youth in this respect. A more reasonable preparation and transaction of the support of becoming an entrepreneur is necessary as well. The involvement of the non-profit and business sectors into this process at the very beginning stage of it is also unavoidable.

- It is necessary to support the social mobility of marginalized children and youth through education since the primary school till the end of higher education. We recommend building up mentor networks in each school which improves the skills, and key competencies of the students and motivates them in reaching their aims. – An adequate motivation system is inevitable to implement it, too.
- The fostering methods of educational reintegration and prevention of early school leaving must be highlighted. We also recommend supporting the co-operations of the governmental, business and non-profit sectors in this field. In the frame of it, the development of a motivation system should be carried out – on the basis of this co-operation.

We would like to draw the stakeholders' attention with this recommendation to the importance of handling this huge problem at the local level, to the importance of reconciliation of the acts and to the dialogue among the sectors, to the concerned civil organisations' best practices, as their flexibility and quick reactions can be the effective device of handling the problem.

Date: 6th June 2013, Kosice

Prepared and signed by:

Youth, mentors, non governmental organisations and experts, who participated and got involved in the project

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