

PRESS RELEASE

SMART COMMUNITIES ACADEMIA

28-29 September 2017, Legénd

Interindustria Tudásközpont Alapítvány (ITA), being the leader of the consortium, is carrying out a cross-border project within the framework of Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation Program (website of the program: www.skhu.eu), titled as „Smart Communities” - (SKHU/1601/4.1/210). The project is supported by the European Union, with co-financing from European Regional Development Fund.

Title of project: "Smart Communities" Virtual Education and Research and Development and Innovation Network in the Slovakian - Hungarian border region

Project start date and end date: 1 May 2017-30 April 2019

Priority axis: PA4 | Enhancing cross-border cooperation of public authorities and people living in the border area

Specific objective: SO4.1 | Improving the level of cross border inter-institutional cooperation and broadening cross border cooperation between citizens

Total budget: 453 074,03 EUR

ERDF contribution: 385 112,91 EUR



The event is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund as part of Smart Communities project, No. SKHU/1601/4.1/210.

The content of this press release does not necessarily represent the official position of the European Union.

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Members of the consortium:

1. Interindustria Knowledge Center Foundation, leader of consortium
2. e-Talentum
3. Szent István University
4. Technical University of Kosice
5. Center for Economic and Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences
6. Association for Renewable Countryside
7. ASTRA
8. Gymnázium Fil'akovo

Short summary of the project: The target area of the project is considered as the ‘periphery of periphery’. Despite of the traditional rural development measures, the area has had gradually worsening economic and social indicators at regional, county and micro-regional level as well (e.g. GDP, unemployment, employment, migration, shrinking communities, inefficient use of natural resources, level of qualification, added value).

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the significant improvement of intellectual capital in the disadvantaged regions of Southern-Slovakia and Northern-Hungary by the creation and promotion of innovative cooperation structures resulting in social innovation applied in practice.

Our aim is to establish a network of civil partners, education and research institutions, as well as to organize professional programs, trainings, to establish a mentor system involving our target groups from the early childhood to retired people, including many socially marginalized citizens. The main outputs of the project are to establish two sustainable cooperation systems, i.e. (1) a Virtual Training and R+D+I Network and (2) a Smart ICT Competence Center. Due to these, the project is expected to offer realistic and realizable life career alternatives to the



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target groups, i.e. to the socially marginalized people along the borders. Our concept is to assist the area to break out from the disadvantaged situation by ‘smart communities’ based on endogenous development activities instead of intensive location of industry in the area. Priority sectors of the project are education and R&D&I with thematic focus on (1) sustainability and (2) info-communication technologies. The cross-border approach is extremely necessary, since activities only at national/regional/local level would further increase the regional disparities – that is obviously not the aim either political or project point of view.

As the first step of the project, the **Smart Communities Academia** has been organized between **28 and 29 September 2017 in Legénd, Nógrád county**. The Szent István University, especially the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences was responsible for organizing and professional coordinating of the international workshop and conference.

The plenary speakers of the event were as follows:

- Dr. Dávid Csaba Mezei, deputy state-secretary for agricultural and rural development strategic affairs, Prime Minister’s Office
- Mihály Balla, Member of Parliament, development commissioner,
- Nándor Skuczai, president, Nógrád County Assembly,
- Tamás Tunkel, mayor of Legénd Village,
- Anna Bíró, vice-president, Association for the Renewal of the Countryside
- Gerard Van Berkum, citizen of Legénd Village.



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The aim of the international conference was also to create a common forum for the professionals working in practice and in the academic sphere focusing on the objectives of the project. At the conference, professionals, university lecturers, PhD students could present their research results and experience in topics related to smart communities in 6 – English and Hungarian – thematic sessions. The success of the event is proved by the high number of participants – 100 people from 25 countries.

From the submitted manuscripts, a scientific conference proceeding is going to be published to be coordinated by the HAS Center for Economic and Regional Studies.

For further information about the event can be contacted:

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