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| Call Type – Open Call 1 for SOFT projects |
| Acronym & Project code | UNITYROHU00041 |
| Project title | Fostering sustainable cross-border cooperation for a more effective support of youth career guidance |
| Priority | P3 - A more sustainable, community-based and effective cross-border cooperation |
| Specific Objective  | ISO6.3 - Building up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions |
| Implementation period | 12 months (30.12.2024 – 29.12.2025) |
| Objective | Fostering sustainable cross-border and cross-sectorial collaboration between at least 20 institutions and organizations, active in educational and economic sectors (schools, companies, NGOs and institutions) in Satu Mare and Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg counties, in order to improve the career orientation support of the middle and high (vocational) school students.  |
| Partnership | Main/Lead Partner: LP1 - Asociatia AGES / AGES Association (RO) |
| Project Partners: PP2 - Ötlet a Vidékért Egyesület/ Idea for the Region Association (HU)PP3 - Centrul Județean de Resurse și Asistență Educațională Satu Mare / County Center of Educational Resource and Assistance Satu Mare (RO) |
| Total budget | EUR 198,765.00, of which ERDF EUR 159,012.00  |
| Summary | Satu Mare and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, as a cross-border region, face shared challenges related to demographic trends, depopulation, and an under-skilled youth workforce. High unemployment and a lack of collaboration between education and the economy contribute to young people leaving for better opportunities elsewhere. To tackle these challenges, the project aims to create a more supportive cross-border environment for youth career development, emphasizing early intervention. It targets middle and high school students, offering career guidance as a foundation for future employment and economic growth. Research by LP1-AGES and PP2-OVE revealed a shift from unemployment to inactivity among young people, particularly the NEET category. Factors like knowledge, diplomas, and professional experience are highly valued in Satu Mare, while relationships are prioritized in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg. These factors can be nurtured through cross-border collaboration among relevant stakeholders and communities. The project promotes a sense of unity and collaboration between the two cross-border communities, encouraging stakeholders to work together towards common goals. The project establishes cross-border connections between various stakeholders involved in career guidance, including counselors, teachers, NGOs, and students. At least 80 members of the target groups will participate in cross-border actions, the capacity of 8 schools, 4 NGOs, and 12 companies will be developed for a more comprehensive approach to career guidance. Joint strategic thinking and cross-border cooperation will be promoted, with 72 participants in joint actions across borders. A joint Strategy of the project partners will be developed, in order to maintain and support the initiated cross-border collaboration of the target groups, stakeholders of the career guidance process of students. The results of the project, the Strategy will be shared through the improved and updated bilingual *Laboro.ro* platform. The establishment of cross-border connections empowers counselors, teachers, NGOs, and students, allowing them to collaborate, share experiences, and gain insights into common career guidance challenges, ultimately improving the quality of career advice and support provided to students. Promotion of joint strategic thinking and cross-border cooperation will foster a culture of collaboration among all stakeholders. This collaborative approach leads to sustainable solutions and improved services for youth. On a long term, local communities may also benefit from reduced youth unemployment and enhanced economic and social development. The project fosters cross-border collaboration, involving multiple stakeholders from different sectors, which is a pioneering step in aligning the efforts of various entities to tackle common problems on both sides of the border. Today's youth often seek career information outside of school, and our project adapts to this reality. The project updates and improves the existing bilingual *Laboro.ro* platform, making it a resource for career guidance. This improvement ensures that students have access to up-to-date information relevant to their career choices, getting information from local relevant stakeholders. |
| Main results | The main results of the project are:* The **creation of cross-border connections** **between at least 80 Romanian and Hungarian members** **of the target groups** (counselors, teachers, representatives of NGOs, and middle and high (vocational) school students) from Satu Mare and Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg counties. These members of the two communities will participate at **5 joint cross-border actions**, connecting them to initiate collaborative relationships in order to improve the field of career guidance throughout the target area;
* **Joint development of the capacity of at least 8 schools, 4 NGOs and 12 companies** from the counties of Satu Mare and Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg, for a more structured, transversal approach to the career guidance process of middle and high (vocational) school students, through joint strategic thinking and cross-border cooperation. By addressing career guidance as a multifaceted process, the cross-border and cross-cutting interventions of the involved target groups aim a more sustainable and deeper improvement of their activities;
* **Elaboration and dissemination** through bilingual laboro.ro platform, **of** **a** **common strategy** which aims to maintain the cross-border relationship between the target groups and the stakeholders involved in the project activities carried out in the youth vocational guidance sector.
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