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| **1st Open Call – Renewable energy** | |
| **Project code & acronym** | ROHU00414 - GEOCBC |
| **Project title** | Harnessing Geothermal water: A Cross-Border Initiative for promoting the use of Renewable Power |
| **Priority** | P1 - Cooperation for a green and more resilient cross-border area between Romania and Hungary |
| **Specific Objective** | RS02.2: Promoting renewable energy in accordance with Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001, including the sustainability criteria set out therein |
| **Implementation period** | 30 months (30 May 2025 – 29 November 2027) |
| **Objective** | The project objective is to promote renewable energy use in the Zerind-Bekes area, within 30 months, by informing min. 10,000 people, and by showcasing the use of renewables for public and private buildings  The project contributes to protecting the environment and reducing dependence on traditional energy sources, and promotes a deeper understanding and promotion of the benefits of this transition among various stakeholders, building the capacity needed to effectively implement renewable solutions. |
| **Partnership** | **Lead Partner:** Comuna Zerind (Romania) |
| **Project Partner:** PP2 Békés Város Önkormányzata (Hungary) |
| **Total budget** | EUR 2.159.305,65 out of which  ERDF EUR 1.727.444,51 |
| **Summary** | The project addresses the common territorial disparities and challenges from the Zerind-Bekes area, by replacing traditional heating systems with heating systems based on geothermal water resources in public and private buildings from Zerind and Bekes.  Through joint project preparation activities, the 2 partners have found a joint solution consisting of valorizing the existing geothermal resources from the cross-border area for heating purposes, covering part of the local needs. This will be done by installing a geothermal heating system in Zerind (Iermata Neagra, which is the location of the existing borehole) and in upgrading the existing heating system in Bekes Town which currently functions on gas.  The innovative approach is reinforced by a joint plan envisaging long-term cooperation between partners in the field of using renewables and involving other stakeholders. The collaboration fosters ongoing efforts to enhance energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.  Awareness-raising campaign regarding renewables and ”Open days - how it works”, will be Jointly organized in order to educate, inform, and engage the target audience from the Zerind-Bekes area about the benefits, significance, and opportunities associated with renewable energy sources.  Two joint study tours involving participants as major polluters and public authority representatives and partner delegates from both Zerind and Békés will visit various localities approximately 700 km away from Zerind to explore facilities using green energy and gain firsthand knowledge and insights into renewable energy sources and sustainable practices implemented in other localities. |
| **Main results** | Main results:   1. 78 public and private buildings in Iermata Neagra (Zerind Village) will benefit from a new and improved thermal water heating system. 2. Two public buildings in Bekes will benefit from a new thermal water heating system. 3. One joint plan regarding the territorial potential to use renewable energy, the extent of the transition to green energy, and innovation, will be developed by the 2 partners. 4. A minimum of 1,000 people informed through awareness-raising and promotion campaigns about the benefits, significance, and opportunities associated with renewable energy sources. 5. Joint study visits with the participation of major polluters, public authority representatives, and partner delegates from both Zerind and Bekes, can serve as a valuable educational and capacity-building opportunity that can enhance the project's effectiveness and contribute to the successful implementation of renewable energy initiatives in the Zerind-Bekes area. 6. The 2 institutions, Zerind Village (RO) and Bekes Town (HU) will cooperate in the long term for improved environmental protection in the Zerind - Bekes cross-border area, in implementing the joint plan and organizing other joint events and activities that will be continued after the project ends. A cooperation agreement will be signed among the 2 partners, ensuring the continuation of cooperation after the end of the supported project. 7. As a continuation of cooperation, some of the joint actions will be implemented after project closing by the 2 partners. There will be min. 237 participations in joint activities for local communities from the Zerind - Bekes area (such as environment awareness activities, promotion of renewable resource use, etc). |

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