



Budujeme partnerstvá



Press release

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Railways in Miskolc and Košice succeeded in the competition of nearly 200 projects

Historical narrow-gauge railways in Miskolc, Hungary and Košice, Slovakia, successfully competed with almost two hundred projects and gained funding for their further development. In Košice they plan to build a station building, reconstruct a railroad and repair an engine. In Miskolc, they will reconstruct one of the stations and put into operation a brand new passenger car. The joint project of the Košice Children Railway and the narrow-gauge railway in Miskolc was awarded a financial injection from the Interreg International Grant Program.

The Project *"Narrow Gauge Railways as Attractions and Gates to Nature"* (RailGate) is a Slovak-Hungarian project for the reconstruction of two neighboring narrow-gauge railways – the Košice Children Historic Railway (KDHŽ) and the railway in Miskolc – Lillafüredi Állami Erdei Vasút (LÁEV) – which deal with same unsolved problems. The total budget of the project is 577,929.38 €, from which 268,708.27 EUR goes to children's railway in Košice, and the rest 222,531.70 € to the Hungarian partner. The project started on 1 January and runs until 31 December 2019. The project is funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund.

"Thanks to the financial support we would like to complete the construction of a station building in Čermel', rebuild the Front station and partly repair the railway superstructure. In addition, we would like to strengthen the transport by another diesel locomotive which will be called Vlasta and also the railway station which will be revamped by a railway memorial – another locomotive, this time on a pedestal which will be called Miskolc. Our goal is to bring the children's railway in Košice its original look, but we also have to incorporate the modern requirements for operating such a railway as an attractive tourist point," says Ľubomír Lehotský, chairman of the civil association Košice Children Railway.

ÉSZAKERDŐ Zrt. within the project develops the Miskolc-Dorottya utca station (station on Dorottya street) of the LÁEV, where after small modifications of the track a new railway scenery will be available. This will give the station a new, distinctive look which will attract more potential passengers. The idea of a visual space can later be taken over by other forest railroads. As a further element of the project a new passenger car will be exposed, which will be identical with the already used small closed passenger car. A new car in the spirit of partnership will be named "Kassa" (Košice) and its equipment will be customized on this theme.

Miskolc (LÁEV) and Košice (DŽK) historic narrow gauge railways (HNGR) have common history and belong to common cultural heritage in the Central Europe. Over time both HNGRs have been transformed into distinctive specific thematic tourist destinations and „gates to nature” and now there are up to 250 000 local and foreign tourists yearly. Because of poor attention and care in the past, both railways suffer from similar serious problems and face similar challenges how to restore and preserve this specific cultural heritage.

"Our goal is to preserve this cultural heritage and through common solutions enhance their attractiveness to visitors. This way we can ensure their long-term and sustainable use for future generations. In the coming years, passengers of both rails should feel the increased quality of infrastructure and equipment services. Together we will elaborate a common Master plan with a marketing strategy that will bring solutions for the preservation, restoration, management and promotion of both railways in the spirit of integrated tourism area with its own products and brands including new green tourist possibilities," added **Lubomír Lehotský**.

Interreg is a key instrument of the European Union for cross-border, transnational and international cooperation. The aim is to jointly solve problems and seek solutions in the fields of health, research and education, transport or sustainable energy. Interreg programs are funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

A list of approved projects. 199 projects were submitted under Priority Axis 1, <http://www.skhu.eu/news/summary-of-the-1st-call-for-proposals> and approved 29 projects <http://www.skhu.eu/news/summary-of-the-7th-monitoring-committee-meeting>.

For more information in SK <http://www.skhu.eu/podporene-projekty/narrow-gauge-railways-as-attractions-and-gates-to-nature>

For more information in HU <http://www.skhu.eu/tamogatott-projektek/narrow-gauge-railways-as-attractions-and-gates-to-nature>

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