

WIN

Improving the position
of Women in the labour
markets of peripheral
Industrial regions

SECOND WIN NEWSLETTER



PROJECT UPDATE

Insights from the second partner meeting

The WIN project team gathered on the 5th and 6th of November 2024 in the town of Locket, Czech Republic, for the second partner meeting. This two-day event provided an opportunity to reflect on the project's progress, exchange ideas, and build connections.

Highlights included:

- A study visit to Karlovy Vary, showcasing sustainable revitalization practices at Lake Medard and insights into the local spa and balneology sector.
- Discussions on project deliverables and next steps.
- A roundtable with inspiring women from the region, sparking ideas on innovation and social participation.

This meeting further strengthened project partners' commitment to improving the position of women in peripheral industrial regions and laid the groundwork for the next steps in the project.

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PROJECT UPDATE

WIN Innovation groups: Driving local change

The WIN Innovation Groups unite stakeholders, including employers, NGOs, researchers, policymakers, and women from local communities to address gender equality and employment challenges across seven regions. By combining a shared methodology with local adaptability, these groups are uncovering creative solutions to empower women and drive social innovation.

Through collaborative discussions, the groups identify key challenges such as barriers to employment, digital exclusion, and underrepresentation in STEM fields. Tailoring their efforts to local contexts, they foster innovative ideas and initiatives to create sustainable opportunities for women.

Emerging solutions include women's networks, mentorship programs, and training initiatives that enhance employability and entrepreneurial skills. From inspiring young women to pursue STEM careers to creating platforms that support rural women and social enterprises, the WIN Innovation Groups are actively shaping a more inclusive and equitable future.

By harnessing local expertise and building on shared goals, these groups are laying the groundwork for meaningful change, fostering stronger, more inclusive labor markets across the Danube Region.

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WIN Innovation groups in Trbovlje, Slovenia

The WIN Innovation Group in Trbovlje have held three online and two in-person meetings, focusing on challenges such as limited entrepreneurial confidence, lack of knowledge about professions, and work-life balance.

Key solutions include:

- A regional "Day of Getting to Know Professions" for students to explore career options.
- A hub for lower-educated women aged 30-40 (and older) to provide guidance, support, and resources for entrepreneurship.

Additional ideas developed include an app showcasing local professions and an innovation environment featuring support groups, networking events, and hackathons.

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WIN Innovation groups in Leoben, Austria

The Austrian WIN Innovation Group comprises 19 female participants from diverse sectors, including industry, politics, education, and culture.

Since September 2024, the group has held an induction meeting and two interactive workshops, focusing on regional challenges and maximizing the potential of female employees. Key initiatives include fostering female networks, mentorship programs, and collaborations with regional schools.

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WIN Innovation groups in Tatabánya, Hungary

The Hungarian WIN Innovation Group, involving municipalities, employment organizations, economic development experts, and a women's association, started its work in September 2024. Through discussions and expert interviews, several issues were identified:

- Lack of flexible work options, with most jobs requiring 3-shift systems designed for men.
- Significant male dominance in entrepreneurship, often linked to forced self-employment.
- Undervaluation of women's unpaid labor, such as childcare and elder care.
- Persistent cultural stereotypes, particularly affecting Roma women.
- Challenges in balancing career and family due to long parental leave periods.

The group will focus on developing targeted solutions to these challenges in January 2025.

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WIN Innovation group in Radomir, Bulgaria

The WIN Innovation Group in Radomir focused on enhancing job opportunities and fostering professional networks to support women's career growth in industrial areas.

Key challenges discussed included limited access to skilled jobs, insufficient flexible work options for mothers, and the need for mentorship and career guidance.

Participants explored strategies to strengthen women's networks, improve access to training and resources, and create opportunities for collaboration and career development. These efforts aim to empower women and promote their inclusion in skilled professions.

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WIN Innovation group in Bosnia

Established in July 2024, the WIN Innovation Group in Bosnia and Herzegovina brings together representatives from local stakeholders, businesses, and target groups, including the association PUŽ, the Linnovate foundation, and regional government officials.

The group has identified key obstacles in the labor market and developed persona maps to better understand the needs of its beneficiaries. Proposed social innovations include subsidized maternity leave contributions, afternoon kindergarten shifts, business education programs, flexible employment options, and support for social and agricultural enterprises.

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WIN Innovation group in Czech Republic

The Czech WIN Innovation Group has successfully established a working group with 9 members, following outreach to 13 key stakeholders. Through surveys and meetings, they identified key challenges in their territory and began developing social innovation proposals, one of which will be tested in their pilot region.

Notably, their target group includes women and 15-year-old youths of both genders, recognizing the potential to challenge and reshape stereotypes among younger generations.

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WIN Innovation group in Serbia

The Serbian WIN Innovation Group held an online meeting, to brainstorm ideas for improving women's participation in the labour market in the Loznica region. Key discussions included training programs, intergenerational collaboration, and social enterprise initiatives, with a focus on enhancing women's roles in tourism and hospitality while addressing gender stereotypes.

The group will refine these ideas in their next meeting, scheduled for mid-January, to identify sustainable solutions for the pilot project.

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AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGN

Launch of the WIN Awareness-raising campaign

We are thrilled to announce the launch of our **Awareness-raising campaign in January 2025!** This initiative aims to spotlight the immense potential of women in peripheral industrial regions and tackle the cultural and institutional barriers that hinder their full participation in the workforce.

The campaign's objectives include:

- *Advocating for gender equality by celebrating women's talents, contributions, and achievements.*
- *Amplifying awareness of the structural challenges women face in traditionally male-dominated sectors.*
- *Fostering dialogue, cooperation, and action among stakeholders to build more inclusive labor markets.*

Through local events, targeted media efforts, vibrant social media engagement, and inspiring storytelling across all seven pilot regions: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Serbia, and Slovenia, the campaign will create a dynamic platform for change.

This initiative seeks not only to raise awareness but to catalyze action, emphasizing the transformational impact of empowering women. Together, we can foster inclusive societies and vibrant economies.



HAPPY 2025!



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE WIN TEAM!

As the year comes to an end, we want to thank all our partners and supporters for your hard work and commitment to the WIN project.

We wish you a wonderful holiday season filled with joy, warmth, and special moments with your loved ones. Here's to a bright and successful 2025!

With warm wishes,

The WIN Project Team

**Interreg
Danube Region**



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