

EURES Slovakia for use mobility - internship opportunities and seasonal jobs in Greece, Spain and Austria

Slovakia

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Name of the organisation	Central Labour Office, Social Affairs and Family
Type of organisation	Labour Office
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Topic of the good practice	Youth and students: apprenticeships and the first job in the EU and EEA
Geographical focus	Cross-country (please specify) Slovakia, Greece, Spain and Austria
Duration	05/12/2021
Summary of the good practice	To address critical skill shortages in the hospitality and gastronomy sectors, EURES Slovakia developed an innovative cross-border traineeship mobility model in collaboration with international luxury resorts. Launched after identifying that local vocational secondary schools and universities struggled to secure high-quality practical placements, the program bridges the gap between classroom learning and real-world experience. The initiative began in 2021 through initial cooperation with EURES Greece, leading to a pilot cohort of 12 interns in 2022. It has since expanded significantly: Greece and Spain: Since 2022, 145 young Slovaks have been recruited for summer roles, including 72 interns.

	• Austria: Introduced in 2024 with an initial 7 interns, doubling to 14 in its second year, totaling 31 participants to date. To date, more than 170 Slovak students and graduates have participated across Greece, Spain, and Austria, with plans underway to expand into additional EU countries and industry sectors. EURES Slovakia provides a complete integration pathway, including candidate outreach, CV advising, language and administrative guidance, employer liaison, pre-departure briefings, and continuous support during placements. Candidates - who must possess good English proficiency and study gastronomy or business - receive paid work experience fully compliant with labor regulations, along with complimentary accommodation and meals. While many host companies initially rely on commercial agencies, employers quickly embrace the model upon learning that EURES provides end-to-end recruitment and advisory support entirely free of charge. Ultimately, the project equips young people with vital professional, digital, and intercultural competencies- with several participants securing permanent job offers abroad following graduation - thus fostering fair labor mobility across the EU.
OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES	
Background/context What challenge, need or gap were you trying to solve or respond to? Why was this issue relevant or urgent in your context (sector, region, country)?	► EURES Slovakia launched this initiative after recognizing that local schools and universities needed support connecting hospitality students with relevant internships to build essential culinary and service skills. Equipping students with practical experience significantly accelerates their transition into the workforce after graduation - with several participants even securing job offers directly from their host employers before graduating. ► While placing entry-level candidates with limited experience can present challenges, this three-month internship bridges the gap between classroom theory and real-world application, ensuring graduates enter the labor market fully prepared.

Objectives What were the main goals of this practice (e.g. better compliance, faster processing, improved worker protection)? (Please limit to three) Who or what were these goals intended to help or change? (Please limit to three)	► The primary objective of this initiative is to secure high-quality internship placements for hospitality students in luxury resorts, allowing them to gain hands-on industry experience. By bridging the gap between educational institutions and premier employers, we relieve teachers and schools of the time-consuming search for reliable partners. ► EURES Slovakia guides students through every step of the journey - providing comprehensive support with documentation, application processing, pre-departure logistics, and ongoing assistance throughout their placement abroad. Strong collaboration between EURES Slovakia, Slovak schools, and host employers is crucial to the success of this project.
Main activities What were the main steps or actions you carried out to put the practice into effect? Were any tools, materials, partnerships, or processes created?	► Our first step was securing partner employers interested in collaborating with EURES Slovakia. Given our long-standing relationships with schools, we knew educators frequently struggled to find reliable internship hosts and would welcome the support. We reached out to several properties and successfully partnered with a leading luxury resort group. ► This allowed us to place an initial cohort of 12 students in 2022. Today, this fruitful partnership continues to benefit students, schools, and employers alike. To ensure smooth operations, we streamlined the entire recruitment process - from student interviews to administrative paperwork - creating a seamless workflow for all parties involved.
Funding/organisational resources	This initiative operates without dedicated project funding, as EURES offers all services entirely free of charge to students, schools, and employers. The project was originally spearheaded by a single EURES advisor, whose success inspired team members across EURES Slovakia to contribute. EURES Slovakia itself operates under the EU-funded project "Together We Look for a Job III." While advisor salaries are covered by this broader EU grant, no external financial resources were required to launch or run the internship program itself. Utilizing our existing operating budget, advisors were even able to

	conduct on-site monitoring visits to support students during their placements in Chalkidiki and Corfu, Greece.
PARTICIPATION	
Stakeholders involved Organisations or entities actively contributing to the design, implementation, monitoring, or support of the good practice (e.g. labour inspectorates, social security institutions, trade unions, employers' associations, or other).	► The project relies on a focused network of key stakeholders to ensure seamless operations: • Public Employment Services: Led by EURES Slovakia and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, with support from regional Labour Offices across Slovakia. • Educational Institutions: Over the past five years, we have partnered directly with approximately 30 vocational high schools and 3 universities across the country. • Host Employers: International luxury resorts and hotels providing structured internships and seasonal employment opportunities. ► No external third parties or commercial agencies are involved. EURES Slovakia engages with academic partners through direct outreach, school presentations, and dedicated listings on our official website.
Target groups Main groups or categories that the practice is directly aimed at, who should receive its services or who engage with it (e.g. employers, mobile or posted workers, labour inspectors and social security officers, or other).	► Students & Graduates: Students aged 18 and older enrolled in vocational secondary schools and universities specializing in hospitality, tourism, or business studies. ► Educators & Schools: Teachers and academic advisors who guide students in selecting internship specializations that best match their career goals and skills. ► Host Employers: Industry partners providing structured, paid internships and seasonal positions for qualified candidates. ► EURES Slovakia Team: A lead project coordinator supported by EURES advisors nationwide who manage recruitment, logistics, candidate advising, and ongoing support.

Final beneficiaries

Individuals or groups that ultimately benefit from the outcomes of the practice, even if they are not the direct target or user (e.g. mobile or posted workers, vulnerable workers at risk of exploitation, employers benefiting from clearer rules or reduced admin burdens, or other).

- ▶ While the initiative creates a win-win scenario for all parties involved, the primary beneficiaries are the students. Participating in these internships allows young people to acquire essential professional skills, earn an income, build international networks, experience new cultures, and dramatically improve their foreign language proficiency.
- ▶ Secondary beneficiaries include:
 - Schools & Educational Institutions: Partnering with EURES elevates a school's prestige and recruitment appeal, offering concrete success stories that prove how students can gain practical skills and independence abroad.
 - Families: Parents and families benefit as their children gain financial independence, personal responsibility, and confidence without requiring ongoing financial support during their placements.
 - Employers: Host resorts secure motivated, qualified young talent to meet their seasonal staffing needs.

GOOD PRACTICE CRITERIA

Achievements and outcomes

What specific results did the practice achieve? (e.g. How many workers or employers were reached, number of publications created? What processes became faster?)

What kind of broader benefits did it bring? (e.g. Did it improve understanding of rights and obligations, enhance cooperation between authorities, or reduce legal uncertainty and inconsistent application of rules?)

- ▶ Since launching in 2022, the initiative has placed 177 students and recent graduates in internships and seasonal employment across Greece, Spain, and Austria.
- ▶ Greece and Spain: In partnership with a major resort group operating properties in both countries, we have placed 146 young people in summer placements lasting a minimum of three months.
- ▶ Austria: Working with a network of boutique hotel partners, we have placed 31 students in winter internships lasting between 3 and 6 weeks.
- ▶ What began in 2022 as a pilot program with just 12 students in Greece has steadily expanded, giving participants a choice of destinations and seasonal tracks. Looking ahead, EURES Slovakia aims to

	maintain a steady momentum by placing 30 to 40 young professionals annually.
Cost effectiveness How did you keep costs low while still achieving results? (e.g. Did you reuse existing tools, automate processes, or share resources across teams?) Can you show that the outcomes were worth the investment? (e.g. Did small changes lead to big improvements, or were expensive tools avoided?)	► All EURES Slovakia services are offered completely free of charge to students, educational institutions, and host employers, making the initiative highly cost-effective for all parties involved. Furthermore, because all placements are paid, students earn a steady income during their stay, supporting their financial independence. ► With 177 participants to date - including current interns - the project has demonstrated clear and measurable success. We are exceptionally proud of these results, which are consistently reinforced by enthusiastic, positive feedback from students, participating schools, and host employers alike.
Transferability What are the key features that make this practice work well? (e.g. a digital platform, clear guidelines, a joint inspection process, or strong coordination) What would another country or organisation need to make this work for them? (e.g. certain laws, IT systems, or staff training)	► At its core, this practice matches schools and students with host employers to secure high-quality internships. While originally launched as a regional initiative, the project has since expanded nationwide across Slovakia and is fully applicable to any EU member state. ► Any regional Labour Office or EURES office in Europe can replicate this model - wherever there are students seeking practical skills and employers requiring seasonal support, the framework is applicable. The process requires no specialized funding or complex technical infrastructure; its success relies entirely on building direct connections. ► Sourcing committed host employers who are willing to mentor young talent requires dedicated effort. Generally, project setup and candidate preparation take about six months. For instance, our team initiated groundwork in December 2021 and successfully deployed the first student cohort by the summer of 2022.

Sustainability

How is the practice sustainable from a social, financial or environmental perspective?

What makes this practice able to continue over time? (e.g. It is now part of regular work or has been built into law or procedures?) and how are you making sure it lasts beyond the pilot or project phase?

- ▶ Having operated successfully for over five years, this initiative has proven its long-term viability and will continue to grow based on strong interest from students, educational institutions, and host employers alike.
- ▶ The project delivers multi-layered value across society:
- ▶ For Students & Families: Beyond practical skill acquisition, paid placements foster financial self-reliance and ease the financial burden on participants' families.
- ▶ For Host Employers: In an enduring global tourism market, resorts require reliable, well-trained staff to maintain high service standards during peak seasons.
- ▶ For Society & Public Services: Demonstrates how effective cross-border public coordination creates lasting economic and educational value.
- ▶ Tourism and hospitality remain essential industries; as long as people travel, the demand for high-quality service will endure. So long as Slovak students seek hands-on international experience, EURES Slovakia remains committed to delivering these cost-free, high-impact opportunities.

Innovativeness

What makes this practice new or different in your field or country? (e.g. Is it the first of its kind, or does it combine actors who don't usually work together, or activities not performed before?)

How does it improve older or less effective approaches? (e.g. By reaching more people, using data better, or simplifying complex procedures)

- ▶ To our knowledge, this initiative is a pioneering model within the EU, successfully addressing a longstanding gap in practical skill acquisition for students in the gastronomy and hospitality sectors. While EURES Slovakia has historically maintained strong ties with educational institutions, this represents our first dedicated cross-border internship program - and a landmark first of its kind in Slovakia.
- ▶ Building a new program required adaptability. During the first two years, our team actively refined processes based on early outcomes, systematically optimizing administrative workflows, employer coordination, and candidate support. Today, having overcome those early implementation hurdles, we have established a highly

	efficient, proven framework built for long-term sustainability and continued growth.
Digitalisation What kind of digital tools or platforms were used in this practice? (e.g. online portals, automated case tracking, data sharing, digital databases or other) How did these tools help in reaching your goals? (e.g. Did they save time, facilitate access to data in real time, reduce errors, help detect fraud, or improve coordination between authorities?)	▶ We utilize a targeted multi-channel strategy to promote internship openings to students, schools, and candidate networks. Recruitment cycles begin in the autumn and remain open continuously until all vacancies are filled, restarting as new positions open up for upcoming seasons. ▶ EURES Portal & Web Channels: Our primary hub for advertising open positions, delivering detailed program information, and providing central resources for educational partners. ▶ Social Media & Storytelling: Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube are used to raise awareness, share client success stories, and showcase authentic participant experiences from their stays abroad. ▶ Direct Communication: Regular email campaigns keep partner schools, educators, and interested students updated on application deadlines and open roles.