

2026 ReferNet partnership forum

18 -19 March 2026,
Budapest, Hungary

Guide for participants



Welcome to 2026 ReferNet partnership forum



The IKK Innovative Training Support Center - the host organisation of ReferNet Hungary - is pleased to welcome you to the international Partnership Forum in Budapest!

Vocational education and training (VET) is a key element of Hungary's education and economic strategy, supporting competitiveness,

innovation, and adaptation to digital and green transitions. Hungary positions VET alongside higher education as an important driver of skills development and long-term economic resilience.

The current VET system is shaped by a major reform launched in 2019, which strengthened VET as an independent pillar of the economy, underlined the strategic importance of VET, and enabled a stronger response to labour market needs.

A core strength of the Hungarian VET system is its close alignment with labour market demands. Curricula are developed with strong industry involvement, and work-based learning plays a central role. Through this model, students gain practical experience in real work environments, are employed during their training, and receive financial support, which significantly improves employability.

Cooperation between VET and higher education is also a priority, creating clear progression pathways. Certified technician programmes aim to position VET as a key pathway to higher education. Continuous professional development of VET teachers and the EQAVET-based quality assurance system further support the quality and relevance of VET provision.

Flexible learning pathway programmes have been introduced in school-based VET to reduce early school leaving, keep at-risk youth in education, and help them gain at least a partial vocational qualification through alternative methods.

This Forum offers a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas and strengthen European cooperation in VET.

We hope your stay in Budapest will be both productive and enjoyable!

Welcome to Hungary & Budapest!

Hungary is a country with a rich history, strong cultural traditions, and a unique language.

Budapest, often called the “Pearl of the Danube”, combines stunning architecture, vibrant cultural life, and a relaxed café atmosphere. The city unites two historic parts — Buda and Pest — divided by the River Danube yet connected by iconic bridges.

Transport

- **From Budapest Ferenc Liszt International Airport (BUD) to the city centre**

- **Option 1: Airport Bus 100E (direct) – recommended**

- Take bus 100E (Airport Express) from the airport.
- The bus runs directly between the airport and the city centre.
- Main central stops:
 - Kálvin tér
 - Astoria
 - Deák Ferenc tér (major metro hub)

Travel time: approx. 35–45 minutes (depending on traffic).
This is the easiest option as the hotels are in the inner districts.

- **Option 2: Bus 200E + Metro**

- Take bus 200E from the airport to Kőbánya–Kispest metro station.
- From there, take Metro Line M3 (blue line) toward the city centre.
- Change to other metro lines if needed at Deák Ferenc tér.

Travel time: approx. 45–60 minutes.

- **Railway stations (Keleti, Nyugati, Déli)**

There are different railway stations (Keleti, Nyugati, Déli), each located next to a subway station (Metro). It is quick and easy to get to the city centre from the railway stations.

- **Taxi services from/to airport**

A taxi ride from Budapest Ferenc Liszt International Airport (BUD) to the city centre (e.g. Dohány

Street area) takes approximately 25–40 minutes, depending on traffic conditions.

Estimated fare:

- The typical cost of a taxi journey between the airport and the city centre is around 9,000–12,000 HUF (approximately €25–€30) one way.
- During peak hours or heavy traffic, the fare may reach 12,000–15,000 HUF (approximately €30–€40).

Important information:

- Official airport taxis operate from the designated taxi rank in front of the arrivals terminal. Simply walk to the taxi booth, tell the staff your destination, and they will assign you a licensed taxi.
- Taxi fares in Budapest are regulated and metered, based on a fixed base fare plus distance and time.
- Payment by credit/debit card is widely accepted.
- Ride-sharing services are also available in Budapest and can be booked via mobile applications.
- You can also use apps like Bolt or Uber to request a taxi ride after you land. The app will show you the designated pickup point at the airport.

- **Tips for a smooth taxi pickup**

- Official taxis (Főtaxi) are usually bright yellow and have regulated fares.
- Always avoid unmarked vehicles inside the terminal offering rides — only use the official stands or reputable apps.

Public Transportation Tickets & Payment

Budapest has an extensive network of buses, trams, trolleybuses and metro lines.

- **Tickets**

- A single ticket is valid for one ride (no transfers), the price is approx. 1 EUR.
- A time-based ticket or travel pass (e.g. 24h, 72h, weekly) is often more convenient for visitors.
- Airport bus 100E requires a special airport shuttle ticket.

- **Tickets can be purchased**

- At ticket machines at the airport and metro stations
- In mobile apps
- At newsstands and ticket offices
- On the Airport bus 100E.

Important: Tickets must be validated before travel (or at metro entry gates).

Accommodation

Accommodation has not been pre-arranged, so participants are responsible for booking their own rooms. Below are a few conveniently located options within walking distance of the venue. We negotiated a discounted price at the following hotels:

1. **ibis Styles Budapest Center: 75 EUR/day** (incl. breakfast and taxes)

Email to: Eniko.BODNAR@accor.com , code: IKK ReferNet

2. **ibis Budapest City: 75 EUR/day** (incl. breakfast and taxes)

Email to: Norbert.BALASI@accor.com, code: IKK ReferNet

In both Ibis hotels the price is valid for advance payment if the transfer is made on or before March 8.

3. **Danubius Hotel Astoria City Center: 110 – 130 EUR** depending on room type

www.danubiushotels.com/hu/szallodak-budapest/danubius-hotel-astoria

4. **Danubius Hotel Hungaria: 98 – 118 EUR** depending on room type

<https://www.danubiushotels.com/hu/szallodak-budapest/hotel-hungaria-city-center>

Discount Program: [Danubius Friends - Kedvezményprogram](#)

- **Extending your stay**

If you wish to stay longer, please check with the hotels for availability.

Keep in mind that room rates may differ from the prices above.

1st day program

- **Venue location**

Budapest Economic Vocational Training Centre (Budapesti Gazdasági Szakképzési Centrum - BGSZC)

Dohány Street 65
1074 Budapest, Hungary



The venue is located in the city centre (District VII), close to major public transport hubs and within walking distance of the hotels. There are many restaurants, sights, shops and cafes nearby.

Budapest Economic Vocational Training Centre (BGSZC) is one of the largest VET centres in Hungary, operating several VET schools in Budapest. It provides education and training mainly in the fields of business, economics, tourism and trade. BGSZC combines practical training with strong labour market cooperation and participates actively in international projects and mobility programmes.



For navigation assistance, please use the following Google Maps link:
<https://maps.google.com/?q=Dohány+utca+65,+Budapest>

The building is easily accessible by public transport, with Astoria metro station (M2 line) located approximately an 8–10 minute walk away.

Social activities

Guided Tour

The guided tour is scheduled for Wednesday, 18 March, at 17:30. Participants should gather in front of the VET Centre (BGSZC building). The tour will last approximately one and half hours and will take you through the city centre. The tour will conclude at around 19:00 near the restaurant where the group dinner will be held.

Please take comfortable shoes for the walk!

Dinner

The group dinner will take place at 19:00 in the city centre.

We kindly ask our partners to cover their own dining costs. Restaurants accept both credit cards and cash payments in HUF and EUR.

The hosts will give us a short presentation about dual training in the hospitality sector.

If you do not wish to join the guided tour or the dinner, please inform us in advance on the registration form.



Location of the restaurant: 1051 Budapest, Vigadó tér 2.



<https://vigvarju.vakvarju.com/>

Day 2: Visit to the VET School

The Petrik Lajos Technikum is one of Budapest's oldest and most prestigious vocational schools, founded in 1879 and named after chemist, educator and mountaineer Lajos Petrik. For over 140 years, the school has combined strong academic foundations with high-level vocational training, consistently ranking among Hungary's top vocational institutions.



Students typically begin their studies at the age of 14–15 and finish at the age of 19-20. The school also offers adult education and post-secondary vocational training programmes. Originally renowned for training chemical industry specialists, Petrik has expanded its profile to include environmental protection, IT education (software development and network administration), and related technical fields. The school works closely with major multinational companies, supplying highly qualified professionals to Hungary's chemical and digital industries.

 1146 Budapest, Thököly út 48-54.

 www.petrik.hu

Hungary & Budapest



Hungary has almost 10 million inhabitants, and Budapest is home of nearly 2 million people. The country is known for its thermal baths, cuisine, music traditions and historic cities. Hungarian (Magyar) is the official language, but English is widely spoken in Budapest, especially in hotels, restaurants and tourist areas.

Budapest is famous for its:

- Danube panorama (UNESCO World Heritage)
- Historic thermal baths
- Grand architecture from the Austro-Hungarian period
- Lively café and restaurant scene

The city offers a unique blend of imperial elegance and modern urban life.

Time

Budapest is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT +1) throughout the year.

Currency

The Hungarian national currency is the Hungarian Forints

(1 EUR = approx. 390 HUF).

Foreign currency can be exchanged, preferably at banks and exchange offices.

Weather

Typical March Weather in Hungary:

- Spring transition month: March marks the move from winter to spring, so the weather can vary a lot — some days feel chilly, while others are mild and pleasant.
- Cool but milder than winter:
 - Average daytime temperatures are around 12 -14°C.
 - Nights are cooler, typically around 5-7 °C.
 - According to the forecast, the weather from 17 to 19 March 2026 will be partly sunny and cloudy, with possible rain.

What to see

● Main sights

- Hungarian Parliament Building – one of Europe's most impressive parliament buildings
- Buda Castle District – historic streets, Royal Palace, Fisherman's Bastion, Matthias Church
- Chain Bridge – iconic bridge connecting Buda and Pest
- St. Stephen's Basilica – panoramic view from the dome
- Heroes' Square & City Park – museums, green areas
- Great Market Hall – traditional food and local products

● Baths

Budapest is known as the City of Spas: Széchenyi Thermal Bath, Gellért Bath, Rudas Bath.

● Culture & Museums

- Hungarian National Museum
- Museum of Fine Arts
- House of Music Hungary
- Hungarian State Opera House

Shopping

In the city centre you will find:

- Váci Street – main pedestrian shopping street
- Fashion streets and international brands near Deák Ferenc tér
- Shopping malls within easy reach by public transport

Enjoy your stay in Hungary!