

EUROPEAN
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CARE-GET E-NEWSLETTER Nº 2

European Urban Initiative

June 2025 – November 2025



Co-funded by
the European Union

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1. Introduction

CARE-GET Project Highlights from the Past Six Months

- **Work Package 9 (Transfer and Replication) was developed** in collaboration with the Innovation Expert, the Transfer Expert, and project partners, and subsequently approved by the [European Urban Initiative \(EUI\)](#). It outlines the planned activities, meetings, and deliverables, along with the roles and responsibilities of the transfer partners.
 - An **introductory meeting with the transfer partners** took place in Haskovo and was considered highly successful.
 - **The Evaluation Methodology and Plan was developed**, together with a corresponding database designed to monitor progress in achieving the project indicators.
 - **Work Package 5 (Haskovo Labour Market and Economic Development Strategy) was finalised**, resulting in the preparation of several key documents. More details about these deliverables are presented on the following pages of this newsletter.
 - In addition, **the site survey, conceptual design, and design brief** for the former Home for Children Deprived of Parental Care were **completed and submitted to the Ministry of Culture for approval**. By the end of October, the documentation had been approved, and the public procurement procedure for detailed design is now being prepared for launch.
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2. Opening Event in Haskovo for the Official Launch of the CARE-GET Transfer Partners

On 1 October, Haskovo hosted the official opening event marking the inclusion of transfer partners in the CARE-GET project.

Delegations from Siena (Italy), Komotini (Greece), and Druskininkai (Lithuania) joined the consortium members for the occasion.

The official proceedings were opened by the Deputy Mayor of Haskovo, Ms Maria Valcheva, and the Deputy Regional Governor, Mr Mitko Petrov, who extended a warm welcome to the participants.

The gathering also attracted representatives from Haskovo General Hospital, local primary and secondary schools, as well as young professionals who had returned to their hometown after successful careers abroad or in other cities.



2. Opening Event in Haskovo for the Official Launch of the CARE-GET Transfer Partners

Haskovo Municipality reaffirmed its commitment to attracting and retaining young talent through initiatives including the CARE-GET project – Collaborative Advancement for Renewed Education, Generation, Economy and Technology Transition, reflecting a forward-looking vision for regional development.

Distinguished guests included Mr Romain Turminel, Project Officer at the EUI headquarters in Lille, and experts Ms Sandra Rainero and Mr Donal O’Herlihy.

After the formal session, participants visited the local branch of Trakia University in Stara Zagora, the Regional Historical Museum, and the Revival Houses in Old Haskovo, sites where several CARE-GET project activities will be implemented.



3. WP5 activities, deliverables and outputs (June – November 2025)

All finalised documents can be accessed in the project's [e-Library](#)

3.1 Haskovo Supply and Demand Matching Strategy Report (D 5.2.1)

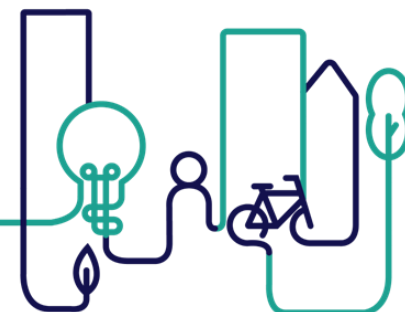
The **CARE-GET project partners** have prepared the **Haskovo Supply and Demand Matching Strategy Report (Labour Market)** (D5.2.1), a framework designed to align local workforce skills with employer needs. The report builds on prior analyses of the labor market and skills gaps, highlighting challenges such as labor shortages in healthcare, agriculture, and manufacturing, underutilized youth potential, and mismatches between education and employer expectations.

The strategy proposes targeted, evidence-based actions, including enhanced vocational pathways, upskilling and reskilling programs, and strengthened coordination among employers, training providers, and local stakeholders.

Consultations with youth, community groups, and other local actors ensured the plan reflects real-world needs.

Key initiatives include the **Local Labor Market Coordination Platform**, interdisciplinary training programs, and mentorship schemes, all designed to strengthen workforce development and support inclusive economic growth.

Embedded monitoring mechanisms allow the strategy to adapt over time, making it a dynamic framework for future action in Haskovo.



3. WP5 activities, deliverables and outputs (June – November 2025)

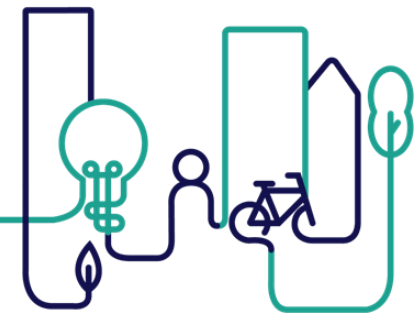
3.2 Haskovo Workforce Framework and Development Plan (D 5.2.2)

The **CARE-GET project partners** have prepared the **Haskovo Workforce Framework and Development Plan** (Roadmap for Upskilling Workforce), providing a clear pathway to equip the city's workforce with future-ready skills. Building on the findings of the *Haskovo Supply and Demand Matching Strategy (D5.2.1)*, the plan focuses on closing skills gaps and delivering targeted training for job seekers, students, and employees.

As part of **Work Package 5**, the roadmap supports Haskovo's vision of becoming a **MedTech-driven hub** integrating health, technology, and nature-based innovation. It establishes a framework for collaboration among employers, educational institutions, training providers, and local authorities to ensure workforce initiatives are demand-driven, inclusive, and sustainable.

The roadmap prioritises sectors such as healthcare, MedTech, wellness, digital technologies, and green skills, while promoting partnerships, continuous upskilling, career guidance, and talent retention. It also lays the human foundation for CARE-GET initiatives, such as the MedTech Hub, Green Therapeutic Garden, telemedicine solutions, and business incubators.

By turning challenges like youth out-migration into opportunities, the roadmap aims to support Haskovo's transition into a regional leader in health-driven innovation and inclusive workforce development.



3. WP5 activities, deliverables and outputs (June – November 2025)

3.3 Stakeholders' mapping and engagement strategy and initial setup of the Haskovo Growth Catalyst Coalition (D 5.3.1)

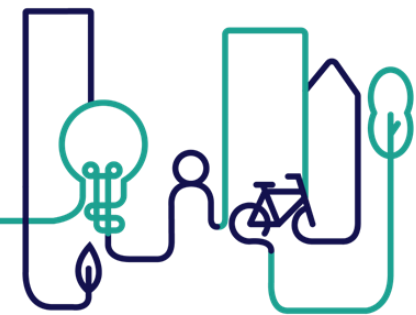
This deliverable presents the **stakeholder mapping, engagement strategy, and initial setup of the Haskovo Growth Catalyst Coalition (HGCC)** under the CARE-GET project. Its purpose is to support Haskovo's economic transformation through skills development, MedTech innovation, and inclusive growth, via a transparent governance model anchored in the Quadruple Helix of government, industry, academia, and civil society.

The methodology combined desk research, WP5 evidence, and consultations with local experts to identify and categorize stakeholders by helix and participation in an ecosystem map, database, and power-interest matrix.

Key findings highlight the Municipality of Haskovo and the regional health institutions

as high-power actors, with Trakia University, the Chamber of Commerce, and SMEs driving skills and innovation, while NGOs, youth, and community groups ensure inclusion. Challenges include sector fragmentation, limited participatory capacity, and demographic and skills pressures. The engagement strategy combines consultations, workshops, working groups, and feedback loops, with an action plan running from 2025–2027 and supported by monitoring indicators.

The deliverable recommends institutionalizing the HGCC as a standing platform for cross-sector collaboration, creating a durable mechanism for co-creation, long-term impact, and a transferable model for partner cities.



3. WP5 activities, deliverables and outputs (June – November 2025)

3.4 Sectors Growth and Action Plan for Health Sector (medium- and long-term) (D 5.3.2)

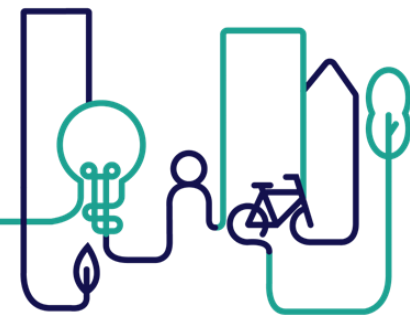
The **Sectors Growth and Action Plan for the Health Sector (D 5.3.2)** provides a medium- and long-term roadmap for sustainable economic growth in Haskovo's health sector.

Building on CARE-GET interventions - including the **Growth Catalyst Coalition, Match-Making Strategy** (D5.2.1), and **Workforce Development Plan** (D5.2.2) - the plan identifies opportunities for sector expansion, talent development, and investment attraction, aligned with local and regional economic priorities. It defines actionable measures such as workforce capacity building, innovation promotion, and inter-sector collaboration.

Short-term objectives include training programs, start-up mentorship, and telemedicine deployment, while medium -

and long-term goals focus on a MedTech hub, green and digital solutions, and scaling successful initiatives.

By implementing this plan, Haskovo can enhance sector competitiveness, retain skilled professionals, stimulate innovation-led growth, and foster inclusive and sustainable development, guiding coordinated efforts among public authorities, businesses, educational institutions, and civil society.



3. WP5 activities, deliverables and outputs (June – November 2025)

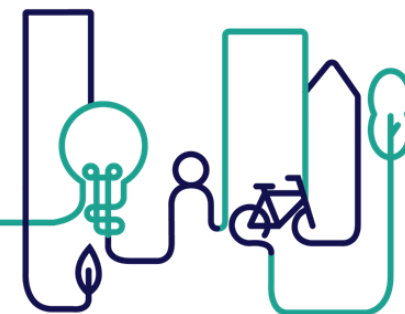
3.5 Best Practices and Knowledge Sharing Catalogue (D 5.3.3)

The **Best Practices and Knowledge Sharing Catalogue** (D 5.3.3) collects and disseminates European experiences aligned with CARE-GET's vision, focusing on external good practices from regions that have advanced labour market transformation, workforce upskilling, and local economic revitalisation through collaborative, multi-stakeholder approaches. These examples offer actionable insights for Haskovo to enhance resilience, promote innovation, and attract talent during the green and digital transition.

The catalogue compiles 25 best practices that complement WP5 deliverables, including the Supply and Demand Matching Strategy, Workforce Development Plan, and Sectors' Growth and Action Plan, offering a practical evidence base for designing and implementing local workforce and sectoral strategies.

Linked to the **Growth Catalyst Coalition**, the catalogue serves as a shared learning platform, enabling partners to adapt, scale, and apply lessons for coordinated action and sustainable capacity-building. It highlights practices connected to the **EU Green Deal, the Digital Europe Program, and the Just Transition Mechanism, demonstrating** how cities navigate green and digital twin transitions through re-skilling, circular economy initiatives, and digital innovation.

By consolidating these examples, the catalogue becomes both a knowledge repository and an actionable reference for policymakers, educators, and employers in Haskovo.



3. WP5 activities, deliverables and outputs (June – November 2025)

3.6 Haskovo Supply and Demand Matching Strategy Report (Output 5.1)

The **Match-Making Strategy for the Haskovo Local Market** (Output 5.1) provides a practical, partnership-oriented framework to strengthen collaboration between enterprises, educational institutions, research organisations, and local authorities.

Building on CARE-GET's previous analyses, it translates findings into an actionable roadmap to enhance employment, stimulate business competitiveness, and retain skilled professionals in Haskovo.

The strategy focuses on cooperation mechanisms, including talent brokerage platforms, dual-education programs, innovation vouchers, sectoral networking events, and a *Local Match-Making Desk*.

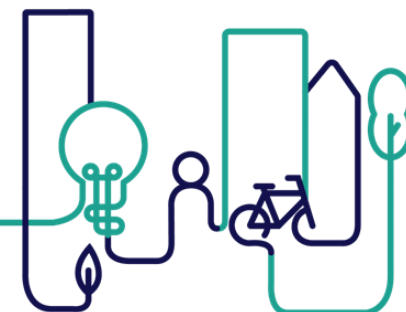
Priority sectors include healthcare and emerging green-digital industries, key to

Haskovo's sustainable development.

It establishes four practical mechanisms: a *Skills Needs Register*, *Career & Skills Days*, internships and apprenticeships in health and care, and a *Care Career Path pilot*.

Complementary recruitment support and a "*Work in Haskovo*" communication campaign promote upskilling, transparency, and community engagement.

By fostering continuous learning, partnerships, and innovation-driven recruitment, the strategy positions Haskovo as a model for inclusive, resilient, and future-oriented local labor markets.



3. WP5 activities, deliverables and outputs (June – November 2025)

3.7 White paper on Haskovo Growth Catalyst Coalition (Output 5.2)

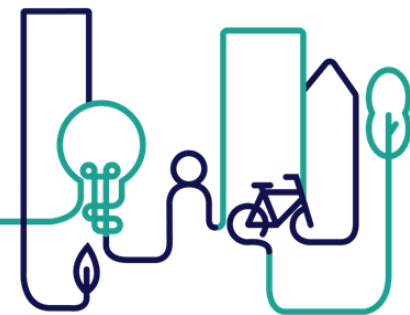
The **White paper** (Output 5.2) purpose is to establish the **Haskovo Growth Catalyst Coalition** (HGCC) as a forward-looking platform that mobilizes the region's collective strengths to tackle socio-economic challenges and unlock new growth opportunities.

In response to demographic decline, skills mismatches, and economic fragmentation, it brings together public authorities, businesses, academic institutions, medical providers, and civil society to foster innovation, strengthen the workforce, and advance sustainable development.

Anchored by the Municipality of Haskovo and supported by URBASOFIA and Bulgaria Economic Forum, the coalition coordinates expertise, aligns with local and regional priorities, and translates collaboration into

action. Its initial focus includes workforce upskilling, digital and MedTech innovation, and cross-sector partnerships, particularly in the health sector.

Structured around a core board of high-influence stakeholders and thematic working groups, the coalition ensures inclusive co-design and delivery, engaging youth, women, and rural communities. It provides a flexible yet robust framework for cooperation, measurable outputs, and trust-building, aiming to evolve into a structured partnership capable of scaling initiatives and sustaining long-term regional impact.





**Lead partner of the
CARE-GET project**

**Municipality of Haskovo,
BULGARIA**

**[https://www.haskovo.bg/
bg/kontakti](https://www.haskovo.bg/bg/kontakti)**