



Veszprém-Balaton 2023
European Capital of Culture

Veszprém-Balaton 2023 – Settlements of the Region



GREETINGS

One of the most important achievements of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme is unprecedented regional cooperation, which we can confidently say is unparalleled at both the national and European levels.

The 116 municipalities of the Veszprém-Bakony-Balaton geographical area agreed that the region has a place on Europe's cultural and creative map, and they are ready to prove it. The cornerstone of our programme was to ensure that the wealth of local natural and cultural treasures is not only showcased to visitors but also enhances the pride of locals. The communities formed through the collaboration of residents, institutions, and civil organisations shape the daily lives of the towns and villages and play a key role in shaping the future of the region.

Although the European Capital of Culture year concluded in 2023, our goal remains to strengthen the cultural and creative

industry role of Veszprém and the Bakony-Balaton region and to increase our visibility on the European cultural scene. Beyond putting together a diverse range of programmes, the participants in the project have always aimed to sustain positive, inspiring changes. I believe that the regional cooperation established can ensure the continued vibrancy of cultural life.

The Veszprém-Bakony-Balaton region is a meeting place that will continue to welcome locals and visitors from near and far with many exciting and charming events, offering European standard cultural strength combined with the charm of local communities in the coming years.

Alíz Markovits
CEO
Veszprém-Balaton 2023 Jsc.



NEMESVÁMOS

Nemesvámos is situated near the Baláca Roman Villa Rustica with its own burial mound. The village is famous for the Vámos Betyárcsárda (inn), which operated with high success until the 1900s and where several Hungarian film scenes were shot, including those from The Captain of the Tenkes, The Testament of the Agha of Koppány, and Czardas Queen. Even Sylvester Stallone visited the place.

The village has a long tradition of lentil cultivation, which is celebrated at the Lentil and Sausage Festival. Nemesvámos takes pride in its natural environment, with the proximity of Lake Balaton attracting hikers and cyclists.

In 2023, Nemesvámos implemented its programmes under the theme of 'Hey, Tulip!' The most significant development for the village was realised in the Baláca Roman-age Estate, with funding provided by the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European

Capital of Culture programme, thus enhancing Nemesvámos' tourism appeal.

"The essence of the ECoC programmes lies in connecting various stakeholders, alongside selecting certain segments. Cooperation between Veszprém and the Bakony-Balaton region may result in the continuation of the connected stakeholders and established community platforms. Naturally, the real effects of the programme can only be assessed years later."
Mayor Balázs Sövényházi

5 km →

👤 | 3,158



LITÉR

The Calvinist church of Litér, a 13th-century Árpád-era sacred building, is a listed historical monument. Its portal, adorned with Chartres-style column statues, is unique in Hungary.

Mária Magdolna Bódi lived and died in Litér. Her work serves as an example for today's youth. Not many places can boast of preserving the memory of a woman with such a pure life, whom the Catholic Church wishes to canonise despite her being a factory worker. The documents necessary for her beatification have already been positively evaluated by the Vatican. Her grave and memorial statue attract hundreds of pilgrims annually. A pilgrimage is held every year on the anniversary of her death.

Litér is proud of Zöldág Dance Ensemble, which, over its several decades of activity, has introduced hundreds of children not only to folk dance traditions but also to the broader culture of Hungary.

Part of the local heritage is the annual 'Significant Days in Litér' programme series organised by Litér Zöldág Cultural Association. This event showcases rich folk traditions through local customs like the green branch procession, winter farewell, Easter sprinkling, the plum festival, and, of course, Christmas celebrations.

"The most expensive programme is not necessarily the most important one, as our occasional community-building programmes proved to be just as necessary as the months-long, weekly Drum Jamming sessions led by Dani Franczia, which created a cohesive 20-member community. I could also mention the herbal tours, the reclining chair concerts, the art workshops, and our Advent programmes. The ECoC-supported renovation of CultGarden provided us with the opportunity for a diverse, colorful, and high-quality cultural programme offer."
Mayor Örs Osváth

7 km →

👤 | 2,260



MÁRKÓ

The most renowned architectural landmark of the village is the Neo-classical Márkó Calvary. Every Good Friday at dawn, locals gathered at the starting station and concluded the devotion in the chapel. They prayed and sang in Swabian until Good Friday 1947 when, in the following January, the Swabians of Márkó were taken back to their homeland or to other parts of Hungary. Until 1988, the area around the chapel served as a training ground for armoured divisions of the Russian troops. The stations and the chapel were later renovated with the help of local and expat families, under the leadership of Canon Antal Márton.

One of the most defining elements of Márkó's cultural heritage is Christkindl Spiel, which has been included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage National Inventory, brought by the Swabian ancestors who rebuilt the village. The tradition continues in various forms in the Swabian settlements in the

region: on 24th December, 'Christkindlis' visit the houses of the village, bringing the good news of Jesus' birth.

In 2023, under the auspices of VEB2023 ECoC, 30 events took place in ten thematic categories.

"In terms of visitor numbers, series like the Dancing Children folk dance teaching and barn dancing, and the classical and pop music concerts were outstanding. In terms of innovation, our Eco Márkó series promoting environmentally conscious education and lifestyle was significant. In terms of professionalism and innovation, the Dialogues exhibition series, implemented jointly with House of Arts Veszprém based on the concept related to the four seasons and four communities, was notable.

Márkó, in a cultural sense, has undergone a bit of renewal while continuing to preserve and perpetuate its traditions."
Mayor Antal Hartmann

7 km →

👤 | 1,872



HAJMÁSKÉR

The name of the settlement was first recorded in 1343. The first part of the place name is derived from dialectal 'hajmás' meaning 'onion', and the second part from the tribal name Kér: its original inhabitants belonged to one of the conquering seven tribes, Kér, holders of frontier castles. From the Middle Ages until 1848, Hajmáskér belonged to the Veszprém bishopric. Its church was built in 1747, with a tower added in 1774.

At the turn of the 20th century, the largest artillery barracks of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was built and used as a military facility until the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Situated on a five-hectare site, the three-storey building, with a total floor area of 6,000 square metres, was built in 1906 as an Imperial and Royal artillery 'shooting school'. The artillery shooting school, firing range, 'camp' and its facilities

represented the creation of what was supposed to be the Monarchy's largest military colony, a veritable modern city.

The complex had its own sewage treatment plant, a steam and 'dynamo' engine house, an ice factory, workshops, ammunition depots, an airship hangar, a theatre and casino, a hospital, a church, a school, a slaughterhouse, and a dairy farm. During and after World War I, a POW camp was set up on the barracks grounds. The military cemeteries of World War I and World War II are located near the barracks. It is known from the history of the past decades that it was from Hajmaskér that the first Soviet military train left the country at the time of the withdrawal.

Every summer, locals hold 'Hajma' Day, a community and cultural event in the municipality.

9 km →

👤 | 3,010



FELSŐÖRS

One of Felsőörs' greatest attractions is the oldest preserved Árpád-era provost church in the Balaton Uplands. The sacral building, erected in the Romanesque style, is unique in several ways. It is an important stop for geotourists, as the church, built on a hilltop, is based on a natural outcrop of 240 million-year-old rock. The nearly 800-year-old man-made walls on top of the natural plinth are made of Permian red sandstone, which is unique to the Balaton Uplands.

The building, also intended as a burial place, houses the remains of the oldest known ancestors of the Batthyány family. It is no coincidence that one of the side altars was erected in honour of Blessed Duke László Batthyány-Strattmann, who lived in the 20th century and was known as a doctor of the poor. Hungary's second oldest organ was built here in the 18th century and has remained in its original state ever since.

Due to the good acoustics of the church and its proximity to Veszprém, it served as a venue for Pueri Cantores – International Youth Choir Meeting, held as part of the 2023 ECoC Year, but other events are also memorable.

“Thanks to the support of the Pajta (Barn) Programme, we were able to attend a special monodrama through the eyes of Júlia Szendrey in the context of the Petőfi 200 commemorative year. We could offer drama lessons, instrument demonstrations and a puppet theatre for our pupils, a retro show for the elderly, a father-son programme, handicrafts with local craftsmen and many other events.”

Mayor Balázs Szabó

10 km →

👤 | 2,122



SÓLY

Sóly boasts some extraordinary sights. The now-Baroque-style Calvinist church is the oldest village church in Hungary, and was the site of the ancient chapel built in Sóly by King Stephen after his victory over Prince Koppány. In 2009, an excavation in the church revealed a unique burial under the floor: two bodies buried in a single grave with one embracing the other – the find is known as the Romeo and Juliet of Sóly.

Another landmark of the village is the former Cistercian paper mill, which operated from 1790 to 1851, and of which now only ruins remain.

In the village you can see the world record 18.1 m high Hungarian sabre, carved from wood, which commemorates the battle of Stephen and Koppány, which, according to legend, took place in this area. Also of historical interest is the fact that, according to local memory, the two-hole

stone-arched bridge over the Séd creek was built on Roman foundations.

One of the most important events of the year was the Song of Sóly – Small Area Song Festival, which was also the jubilee event of the 15-year-old Sóly Singing Society. Each of the invited choirs gave a 15- to 20-minute performance, which allowed them to get to know each other even better.

“The event was an enjoyable way for seniors to relax, helping them to spend their free time in a culturally stimulating and useful way. Shared memories were recalled which were dear to them. Participants were able to give each other advice and help each other in their professional work. The ECoC year and the spirit of unity is exemplary, something to be encouraged, for I believe the power of community makes dreams come true.”
Mayor József Kaptur

10 km →

👤 | 576



BALATONALMÁDI

The Óvári Lookout Tower is a symbol of Balatonalmádi and a popular hiking destination. It was named after Dr. Ferenc Óvári, a lawyer and MP, who did much for the town. Saint Elizabeth Park, which extends from the mole to Wesselényi Beach, with its area of 10 hectares is among the nicest on the Lake Balaton waterfront and offers a stunning view in every season. This nature reserve hides several landmarks, including the Bridge of Sighs, the Irredentist Eternal Flame, statues of notable Hungarians, and the 'Handshake' European Sculpture Park with classical statues and non-figurative spatial sculptures.

"The most important ECoC event in Balatonalmádi was a community festival called 'Almádi People's Day' implemented on local initiative. It included a cauldron cooking competition and invited people of all ages. The event provided an opportunity for residents of Balatonalmádi's four districts –

Vörösberény, Budatava, Almádifürdő and Káptalanfüred – to meet.

Additionally, 2023 was significant for several reasons. As part of the VEB2023 ECoC programme, the gardens of the former Jesuit monastery in Vörösberény were redone, and the town gained several new cultural attractions. These developments brought greater attention to the town, increasing its popularity. Thanks to ECoC events, the town attracted a higher number of visitors, which contributed to the growth of the local economy. We hope that these visitors will become returning guests. Several events were held with tradition-making intentions, which we plan to continue to enrich Balatonalmádi's programme offer in the coming years."

Mayor Péter Fabó

11 km

| 10,147



BALATONFÜZFŐ

In Balatonfüzfő, fans of sport, astronomy and culture can all find recreational opportunities. Balaton Observatory is located in this town and offers a magical world of stars. Visitors can learn about the basics of astronomy and get a glimpse into the exciting world of space exploration at the fascinating interactive exhibitions. Telescopes for observing the night sky offer an opportunity rarely found elsewhere.

If you've lost yourself in the stars long enough, you should also visit the lakeside promenade, either on foot or by bike, where you can get in close contact with the lake and the surrounding landscape.

Balatonfüzfő's biggest and most significant event of the 2023 ECoC year was the Festival of Shivers at the end of October, which attracted thousands of people. The event, with its "spooky" and fun atmosphere, had something for all ages.

"Fortunately, we were not short of ECoC programmes in Balatonfüzfő. Our Pajta (Barn) programme kept with us throughout the year; we won at almost all MiniGrant bids with our ideas and in the spring we even managed to hold a Sports Day at the primary school. We had national, sub-regional and city-wide programmes.

I believe that the municipalities that have participated in ECoC will now be much more enthusiastic about planning programmes, because they have been given a very good basis in recent years. They have seen and followed each other's events, drawing ideas and learning from mistakes. The European Capital of Culture programme continues to play an important role in the life of the region and in strengthening links between municipalities. The programme can continue to highlight and celebrate diversity, promote intercultural dialogue and the preservation of identities."

Mayor Szilvia Szanyi

11 km

| 4,305



HEREND

The town is known worldwide thanks to Herend Porcelain Manufactory. Since its foundation in 1826, Herend Porcelain Manufactory has remained faithful to its tradition of producing handcrafted masterpieces.

Porcelain was once known as ‘white gold’, a privilege to own, a prestige item, a coveted object, an asset. From the raw mass of porcelain, through the skilled craftsmen who mould and cast it, to the value-creating fires of the kiln and the finishing touches of the painting brush, work is still done by hand. Respecting the value-creating work of the great ancestors, preserving their spirit and never leaving the path they set: this is how the values that are known and appreciated in every inhabited continent of the world are born.

In Herend, the world’s largest porcelain manufactory, Porcelanium, a modern visitor centre, is the place to discover Herend porcelain, Hungary’s best-known luxury export. Visitors can also spend an

hour or two in the Minimanufactory and the Museum, admiring the beautiful porcelain and observing the production process.

Herend Catholic church is notable for its transparent porcelain lithophane window depicting St Elisabeth of the House of Árpád, donated to the Roman Catholic Church by the porcelain factory in 1935. It is made of porcelain so thin that it allows natural light to flood the church. As there is just one of its kind in the world, its symbolic value is immeasurable.

In Herend, the most important ECoC events were the craft festivals, held every summer as a multi-day event. The exhibition was of international importance and was organised at the initiative of Herend Porcelain Manufactory in cooperation with several European porcelain manufacturers. The exhibition showcased the art of porcelain, presenting the work of various leading workshops in Europe. The exhibition provided a comprehensive picture of the development of art across the ages and artistic styles.

12 km →

👤 | 3,494



LÓKÚT

In one of the highest-altitude settlements in the Bakony, clean air and a tranquil environment, hiking trails, geological excavations and the lookout tower built on Papod Peak await hikers. Those who climb up to the calvary rising behind the church hill find themselves on a true ‘hill of silence’: the 110-year-old calvary stations encircle a garden imbued with the scent of thyme, inviting tranquility. Since 2023, this place has been part of the Via Calvaria programme.

Lókút joined the Pajta (Barn) Programme in the preparatory years, allowing them to assess in time what types of programmes were in demand. Residents discovered their own and each other’s abilities, showcasing themselves at events for locals, neighbours and visitors from afar. They continue their programmes after 2023: one example is the summer Homecoming event that invites expats back.

“We knew from the start that it only makes sense to start if we can not only spark things but also create a demand for quality. It was important to plan for the long term and dream up programmes that could largely be implemented with a small budget, like the recurring series designed for locals called ‘In Nochpa Shof’ (At the Neighbour’s). Thinking on a larger scale: in the Roundtable of Bakony Swabians, we managed to create an online platform that villagers already regularly use to share stories and programmes.

The fact that Veszprém thought in terms of the region in connection with the ECoC project brought participants closer together. We came to see and got to know each other. Something started that is now easier to keep in motion. It would be great if there were targeted grant opportunities in the future which strengthen the process that has now begun.”

Mayor Ilona Adelheid S. Hegyi

12 km →

👤 | 478



HIDEGKÚT

The five-street dead-end village lies in a quiet valley between the limestone cliffs of Recsek and Nagy-Gella hills. It is bordered by fields and pastures to the north and west, and forests to the south and east. At the northern end of the valley, which slopes down towards Lake Balaton, you can find the cold karst spring Hármas, which also appears in the village's coat of arms.

The current area of the village has been inhabited for a long time, with the arrival of the Swabian population, and thus has strong Swabian traditions. The most notable of these is the Christmas caroling tradition called Christkindl Spiel, revived in recent years in the surrounding Swabian villages and in Hidegkút.

The most important events for the village during the 2023 ECoC year included the Swabian Day and the inauguration of

the exhibition space at the bus stop and accompanying events. These were all programmes that the village would not have been able to carry out without support. The VEB2023 ECoC programme also strengthened the sense of the power of unity among the village's leaders and residents, who attach great importance to strengthening and uniting the community in the organisation of programmes and in the life of the village.

13 km →

👤 | 434



LOVAS

The village of Lovas is surrounded by the vineyards of Öreghegy and Kishegy. Between these two hills flows the Séd brook, whose waters powered several mills for centuries. This area, still called Malomvölgy (Mill Valley), is a popular hiking destination.

The village gained worldwide fame in 1951. It was then that a prehistoric paint mine, considered one of the oldest in the history of mankind, was discovered in the territory of the village. The site, which dates back to 30-40 thousand years BC, has been found to contain around 100 bone and several stone artefacts. Prehistoric man may have traded extensively in red dye for ritual purposes.

Another landmark of the settlement is the stone church built in the 13th century. It was one of the Romanesque churches oriented towards the east, which have survived in ruins or in a redesigned form in several places in the Balaton Uplands.

The listed heritage church was rebuilt in Baroque style in the 18th century and subsequently reconstructed and restored in 1911 and 1990.

In the heart of the village, flows the Lovasi-Séd brook. Millennium Park is a place for relaxation, picnics and gatherings of family and friends. There is also a campfire and grill area. The park is also home to one of the village's natural treasures: the 'sour water spring', well-known for its high iron content.

Two of the most important traditional events in the village are the Lovas Mulled Wine Brewing Competition and New Year's Greetings on the first day of every year, and Lovas Days in the summer.

13 km →

👤 | 557



PALOZNAK

Paloznak has been a wine-producing region for centuries. The grapes grown here were processed in the cellars on the hill and the wine was also stored there. The cellars are 10 to 15 metres long, with stone vaults dug into the hillside. In front of them a thatched-roof press house was built of local stone. Larger farms also had larger cellars. These included the cellar of the Pongrácz mansion and the large cellar on the Tódi road, in which, according to the stories of the old people, a horse-drawn carriage could turn round. Today, only a handful of small old cellars and press houses remain to preserve the memory of traditional wine production. A traditional event in the village is the colourful and cheerful harvest parade, which is part of Paloznak Village Days. The village is proud of the Paloznak Choir and the Paloznak Embroidery Circle.

In 2023, the village established the Paloznak Pirates' Story Walk, along which local residents read stories, often of their own creation.

"Singing Lace', an event where choral music meets crafts, where several choirs from the region performed and several workshops were presented. A series of Balatorium events with two workshops and a half-day series of performances entitled 'Balaton-friendly garden'. It gave new ideas for planting, landscaping and caring for gardens and green spaces on Lake Balaton, ideas that we can all take to protect the beauty of the lake and its surroundings, and important rules that should be followed in every garden to avoid endangering the waters and wildlife of Lake Balaton."

Mayor Ákos Czeglédy

13 km →

👤 | 600



TÓTVÁZSONY

Tótvázsony is a Swabian settlement, so Swabian traditions are typical here, and there is one of them that is known only in this one settlement. This is the tradition of Pirgerek, an old custom that was revived in 2000, which refers to a local group of people who, as part of Corpus Christi Day, pay homage to the procession, choreographed and dressed in traditional costumes.

Jóska Savanyó, the notorious Bakony outlaw, is a legendary figure of the village and is buried in the Catholic cemetery of Tótvázsony. In the Sós area of Tótvázsony, the famous bandit leader spent the last two years of his life with his brother, and he committed suicide because of the pain he suffered. He became a legend in his own lifetime, a wonder to behold, a spectacle at his friend's café in Pest. The last of the Bakony outlaws was buried in 1907, and was not forgotten even after

his death, his grave still being a tourist attraction. You can also learn more about the life of Jóska Savanyó with the help of information panels placed at his grave.

"The most important events in the ECoC year were of course those which could be held locally, but we are happy to visit events and programmes in Veszprém, as we are very close to the county seat. So we were also very happy that Gyárkert (Factory'ard) was opened."

Mayor Ferenc Sípós

13 km →

👤 | 1,450



ALSÓÖRS

Alsóörs celebrated its 750th anniversary in 2022. Over the centuries, villagers worked in fishing, viticulture and Permian red sandstone mining. A century ago, with the arrival of electricity, shipping and the railway, beach resorts were constructed and tourism became the dominant industry.

The municipality brought a special site to the VEB2023 ECoC programme. In August, an international multidisciplinary arts festival entitled METAMORPHOSIS BALATONENSIS was held at AMFI (amphitheatre) Magic Forest, a multifunctional leisure centre on the site of the former redstone mine. Stones taking shape in a process of collective creation, sounds morphing into melody, reddish blocks of rock forming buildings – this series of events gave an insight into the mysterious world of transubstantiated material in a scenic setting, where anyone could become an artist.

“It has been a pleasure to be part of this great joint effort and success, which has attracted many guests and brought a good reputation to our municipality and the whole region.

It was nearly a hundred years ago that János Iklódy Szabó, a public figure of Alsóörs and an advocate of the Bakony and Lake Balaton cult, was already thinking in terms of a region. Our municipalities successfully cooperated in the course of the ECoC application. We are convinced that there is not only a past and a present, but also a future for joint thinking and collaboration, which we have always believed in and continue to believe in, because we feel that this is the only way forward.”
Zsolt Hebling, Mayor of Alsóörs

14 km →

👤 | 2,000



CSOPAK

The municipality is one of the centres of the Balatonfüred-Csopak wine region; its natural beauty attracts hikers, while its excellent beach and resort area draw scores of holidaymakers.

Water plays an important role in the life of the settlement: Lake Balaton plays a vital role in tourism, the sour water of the area has been shown to be beneficial to the digestive system, and the former water mills played a significant role in supplying the settlement's inhabitants. Viticulture and winegrowing are still prominent.

One of the attractions in the village is the Solitary Tower (the surviving tower of a medieval church). The building and the adjacent park are decorated with a magical display of lights during the Advent season. The Bird Watch and the Star Watch along the Balaton cycle path offer a glimpse into unspoilt nature. Next to the railway station, the past is evoked by an old steam locomotive dating from 1913.

As early as the lead-up period of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture programme, the public was attracted by the programmes of Pont Csopak, more than just an outdoor cinema. Unique in Hungary, open-air screenings, concerts and theatre performances were held in the garden of a functioning water mill from May to September. Beyond the ECoC year, the events are hosted in picturesque Plul Mill with the aim of creating a space where every event is a community experience. The film screenings were never a stand-alone event: discussions, talks, wine tastings, visual arts, collective creative activities accompanied the events and, as the programmes continue beyond 2023, together they provide sophisticated entertainment and cultural experiences.

14 km →

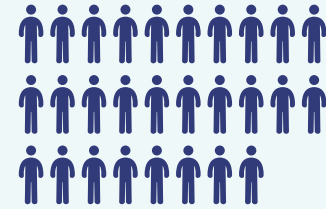
👤 | 2,237

THE REGION IN FIGURES

AREA:
116 municipalities
In 3 counties



POPULATION INFO:
In total, in 116 municipalities,
as of 01/01/2014,
number of permanent residents:



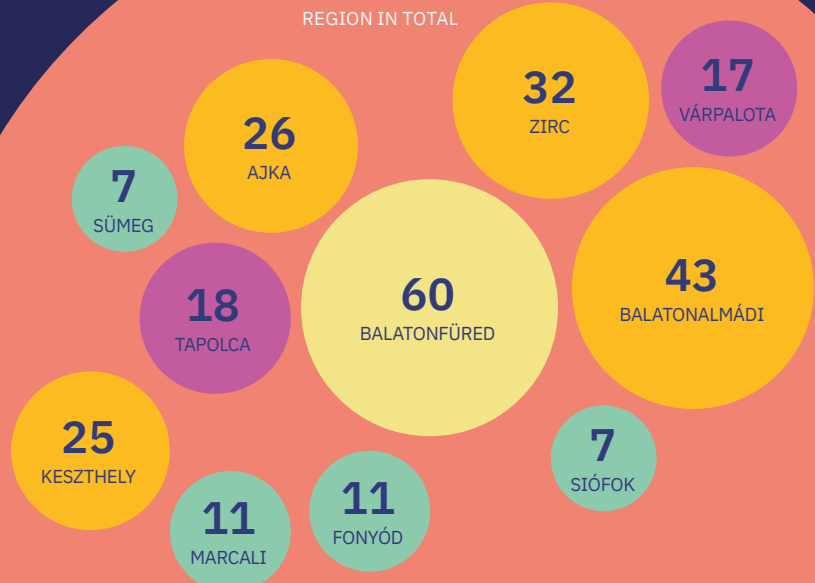
274,812

Source: Population Register

EVENTS:

3,779
WITH VESZPRÉM

967
REGION IN TOTAL



TOURISM INFO

Domestic overnight stays
in the ECoC region:

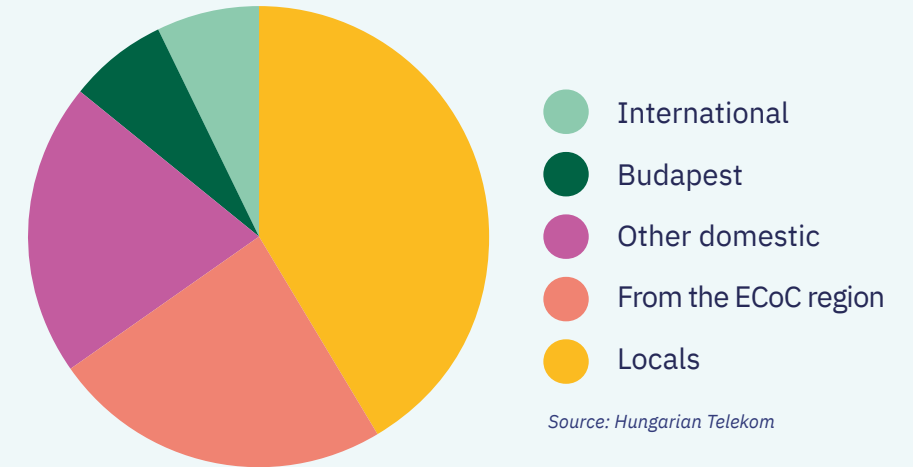
6,016,833

International overnight stays
In the ECoC region:

2,304,325

Source: Hungarian Telekom

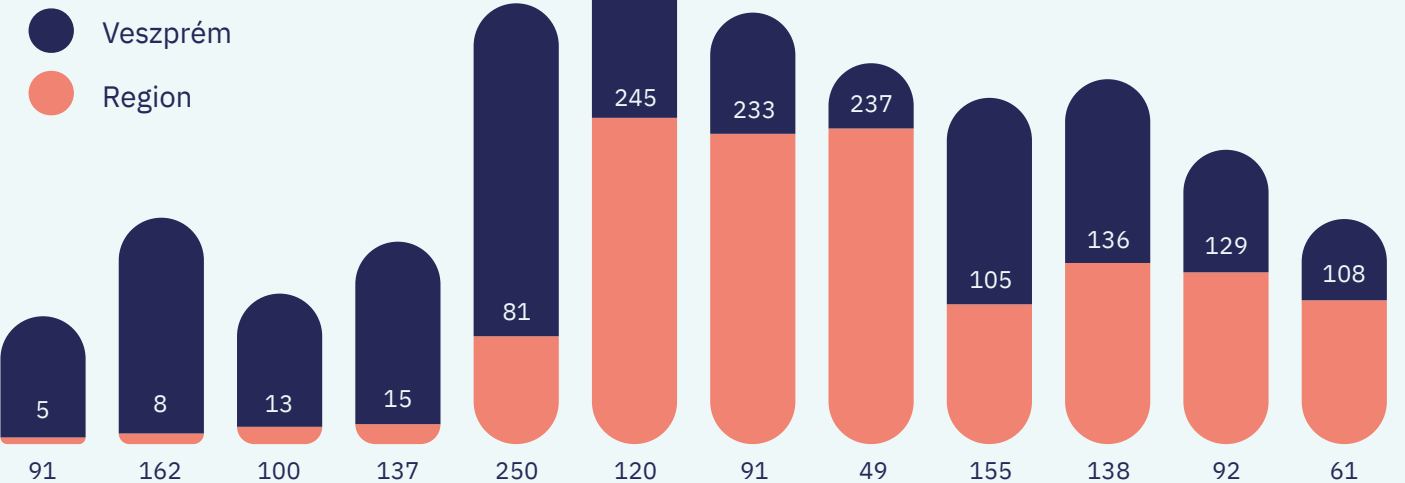
Numbers and composition of visitors
to the ECoC region in 2023:



Source: Hungarian Telekom

DISTRIBUTION OF EVENTS

Veszprém vs region in 2023:



Source: own data collection based on the VEB2023 programme calendar



BALATONFÜRED

From the second half of the 18th century, the town was one of the favourite holiday resorts of the Hungarian elite, thanks to its medicinal springs. Not only was it visited by almost all the important public figures, but their influence on the town's development was also significant.

Anna Ball, now known as one of Hungary's most popular society events, was the closing event of the bathing season in the 19th century. The reason why the ball is now held in the middle of the tourist season is that in the 19th century the middle classes and the nobility retreated to the cities to escape the heat and sunshine of August, and it was also in August that the agricultural harvest, overseen by the landowners who had been holidaying in Füred, began.

One of the most important ECoC events in Balatonfüred was Anna Festival, the accompanying event to Anna Ball, which is

the prelude to a series of events inviting visitors to travel back in time for the 200th anniversary in 2025.

Vaszary Gallery, with support from ECoC, hosted three exhibitions of Hungarian neo-avant-garde art: the exhibitions of Imre Bak and Dóra Maurer, and the exhibition of the Balatonboglár Chapel Studio, which had been banned 50 years before 2023.

In 2023, Modern Art Gallery, Balatonfüred's new art exhibition space, was opened with ECoC support.

"The ECoC year saw the launch of several initiatives that could become an important part of the town's cultural life in the future. These include the Anna Festival programmes, which combine the preservation of the bicentenary past with a modern summer festival programme. Contemporary art has been given greater emphasis in the fine arts exhibition spaces, and through these, Balatonfüred can become an even more important cultural venue for artists."

Mayor István Bóka

16 km →

👤 | 13,500



BALATONSZŐLŐS

Balatonszőlős is situated behind the Tihany peninsula, about six kilometres from Lake Balaton, in the eastern part of the Pécsely-Szőlős Basin, in a picturesque natural setting.

The village has a long tradition of winemaking, so you can walk through the village passing by vine-covered countryside. There are several archaeological sites of cultural value in the village. The built environment includes the Catholic and Calvinist churches with the parsonage, as well as protected buildings of folk architecture: houses, cellars and press houses on the wine hill.

Visitors can enjoy the landscape all year round by bike, on horseback or on foot. For hikers and nature lovers, several trails start from here allowing you to discover the beauty of the Pécsely Basin.

16 km →

👤 | 646



OLASZFALU

Olaszfalu, often referred to as the homeland of potatoes and cabbage, leverages these culinary staples to host the traditional Potato Harvest and Arts Festival. This festival showcases enduring recipes from Swabian cuisine, offering attendees a taste of local culinary heritage.

The village preserves numerous religious customs linked to church festivals, like Easter noisemaking (instead of churchbell ringing), sprinkling, meat blessing, Holy Saturday processions, Christmas Nativity plays, and the village patron saint's feast day known as búcsú.

Surrounded by forests and fields, Olaszfalu offers various hiking trails. Visitors can explore the ever-changing natural landscapes and forage for edible treasures like mushrooms, blackberries, rosehip and bear leek.

A scenic forest path in Olaszfalu is part of the cycling route connecting Zirc to Veszprém, which attracts a growing number of cyclists. From the Kókapu stop, there are stunning views of Lake Balaton and the Bakony. The village also encompasses the Alsóperei Nádasdy Botanic Gardens, a serene retreat featuring rare plants and diverse birdlife, perfect for peaceful walks.

In 2023, the village was invigorated by the Shepherd Meeting and Folk Music Festival, which drew locals and visitors alike. This event celebrated local traditions with shepherd songs, folk instruments, traditional games, whip-cracking, shepherd olympics, horseshoe tossing, dancing and music. The festival's success has inspired plans for its continuation, promising more opportunities to experience these vibrant traditions.

16 km →

👤 | 1,069



BALATONKENESE

Balatonkenese's popular hiking spots include the Soós Hill Lookout, the Tatár caves and the Parragh Gardens arboretum, with 3.5 hectares for fans of nature. In addition, the town offers a wide range of activities for visitors.

The Kenese Civil Picnic is one of the significant events of Balatonkenese, initiated by the municipality in the ECoC year with tradition-making intentions. The annual Pannonia Folk Fest features a number of regional and nationally renowned folk dancers and musicians, thus ensuring a high quality cultural experience for the participants. In the summer, Country Museum Wednesdays offer craft activities. The two-decade-old National Lecsó (Hungarian Ratatouille) Festival always surprises the audience with special lecsó variations and flavours. The autumn Kenese Day – Day of the Kenese people focuses on gastronomic experiences and local civil

society organisations. Everybody's Christmas is the most active and popular event for locals.

With support from ECoC, Széchenyi Park was rehabilitated, including a community space with a floating pier and a water slide, where BalatOn Concerts entertained the audience in 2023.

“Successful programmes and events, as well as positive feedback and support from participants, can provide further motivation for the municipality and local organisations to implement similar initiatives and projects. Through continuous cooperation and collaboration, Balatonkenese can further strengthen its community spirit and cultural identity and provide an inspiring example for other municipalities to participate in similar initiatives and to develop.”

Vice Mayor Jenő Kocsis

17 km →

👤 | 2,715



BERHIDA

The great man of the village was the late 16th-century soldier Péter Berenhidai Huszár, in whose honour a traditional commemoration day is held every year. The oldest building in the town, the Church of the Holy Cross, built in the 13th century, was restored by his daughter. The church's double stone roof structure makes it a unique monument in Europe.

The event and leisure park next to the small lake and the Séd stream is a popular destination for hikers. The municipal park, which was opened in 2023 in the centre of the village, bears the name of János Lakath, who bequeathed his house and property in 1921 to found a girls' orphanage, mainly for war orphans.

Major events in Berhida in 2022 and 2023 included the 'Our Values Days'. Jásd, Küngös and Berhida held joint events that showcased the values and shared traditions of the region.

An ECoC grant made it possible to implement Romani Design's education project, the Together for Berhida programme. It aimed to develop the Berhida community, nurture talent and build the cultural identity of the Roma. The children were introduced to musical instruments, sang together, learnt dances, took part in handicraft activities and learned to sew. The programme was an essential tool for preserving traditions and identity, and it also helped to develop aesthetics, expressiveness, a sense of social interaction, cooperation, adaptation and respect for each other.

17 km 

 | 6,000



BARNAG

Situated in the magical Balaton Uplands countryside between Veszprém and Nagyvázsony, Barnag has a special history: in the Middle Ages it was home to the Hungarian queens' stewards, but then it was deserted during the decades of Turkish occupation. The village was repopulated with Hungarian and German inhabitants in the early 18th century. The settlement has two of everything: a cemetery at the eastern and western ends of the village, and two heritage churches in the centre.

The main events in their cultural life are traditional festivals like Easter sprinkling, the November Patron Saint's Day, but new ones have been added in recent years. They are proud of the Zádorvár Medieval Fair in September and their market on the first Sunday of Advent, and are pleased to note that the February Sowing Seeds Fair has become one of the region's main events.

The most significant ECoC event is fondly remembered for the pleasure of taking part in the Games Festival organised jointly with neighbouring Vöröstó. For two days, the villages came alive with people; games, fun and laughter filled the community spaces and barns.

But perhaps what they are most proud of is the fact that, under the VEB2023 ECoC programme, they were able to create a family park close to nature in a stream-and-marshy area of the village, where the focus is on indigenous plants and animals. The park also serves educational purposes, and has become an important venue for the cultural life of the Barnag community, and from time to time new activities are introduced.

18 km 

 | 150



PÉCSÉLY

Zádor Castle, as a historical landmark, plays an important role in the life of Pécsely and Lace House is also a significant landmark for the promotion and preservation of traditions.

Situated in the Pécsely Basin, the settlement offers numerous opportunities for active recreation thanks to its natural features. There are hiking trails to Zádor Castle, Hideg Hill, Kő Hill and Nagy-Gella Hill, among others.

Pécsely was one of the CultNet bases of the VEB2023 ECoC programme, and it was there that the most significant series of programmes for the municipality was implemented. Forte Company worked in Pécsely for several months. Together with the locals, they worked on Dr. Tivadar Józsa's (pen name György Bodosi) oeuvre, while also showing what contemporary theatre means in a hidden settlement of the region: in situ, on the road and in the making, through readings, open rehearsals

and introductory performances. The end result of this process was the presentation of Making Time Stop – Landscapes from the Life of a Village Writer, with music by Mihály Dresch.

Among other things, the audience was given answers to questions like what it means to be an artist and a citizen in a 'provincial' environment, and how to break into the world of 'high' culture from here. And, perhaps more importantly, what does it mean to engage with the culture of a small, local community?

The life of a former local GP was thus brought to life on stage, his spirit once again enriching the lives of the people of Pécsely and their audience.

18 km →

👤 | 610



PÉTFÜRDŐ

The municipality is favourably situated at the south-eastern foot of the Bakony.

The village was first mentioned in 1082 for its mills along the Péti-víz. The landscape offers excellent hiking opportunities for those who wish to explore the area on foot or on two wheels. The surrounding dolomite cliffs and the rolling steppe landscape are home to a number of protected and highly protected plant species from early spring to late autumn.

Between Pétfürdő and Öskü there is also a part of the excavated Roman military road, the Roman dam, which is 158 metres long and 4.5 metres high. According to oral tradition, it was built during the Roman Empire, using walls of giant cube stones from a nearby quarry, in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD.

Among the built monuments of the village is the Transylvanian Neo-Gothic church, built in 1941, with a puritan interior decorated only with a beautiful painted wooden coffered ceiling.

18 km →

👤 | 4,518



VÖRÖSTÓ

Vöröstó is one of the gems of the Balaton Uplands, where you can find the values of folk architecture and the unspoilt village portals. The almost interconnected stone barns, standing in a dignified row at the end of plots, give the village a special atmosphere.

In addition to dwindling Swabian population, several artists and recreationists who have moved in also feel this settlement is their new home. Folk craftsman and master stone carver László Szabó has built up a rich outdoor collection during his decades-long international stone carving courses.

Another major event in the ECoC year was the Vöröstó Games Festival, a unique idea that turned into a real guest-attracting event. Children and adults alike experienced community play, giving way to their inner creativity, discovering the hidden treasures of Vöröstó and the surrounding area, as well as the games of the past and present.

Éden Porta was a Pajta (Barn) Programme point in 2022 and a CultNet base in 2023. Its programmes combined nature awareness, the bonding and community-building power of the arts not just with the passive enjoyment of high art, but also with the active experience and practice of it. A special contemporary art project was the 'Blue Balaton, Vöröstó' Open University, the Artists' Camp and Advent exhibition of Imre Bukta, Kossuth Award-winning artist and his fellow artists at the Dubniczay Palace of House of Arts Veszprém.

The ECoC year was significant for Vöröstó mainly because new innovative ideas were implemented, former barns and courtyards were populated, new spaces and places with new functions were opened up, and the visibility and popularity of the village increased. All this will continue to be true as the programmes that have been started continue with the help of new resources and communities.

19 km →

👤 | 108



ZIRC

Zirc, known as the capital or the heart of the Bakony, is the highest elevation town in Hungary. The deservedly famous Cistercian Abbey, the Church and Monastic History Exhibition, the Cistercian Historical Library, the Arboretum, the Natural History Museum of the Bakony, the Abbey Brewery, Reguly Antal Museum and Folk Crafts House, and the Collection of Agricultural Artifacts attract many visitors throughout the year. From the town, hikers can reach popular destinations along the trails that criss-cross the High Bakony. The railway line through Zirc, a protected historical monument, offers a stunning view of the Cuha Valley, one of the most spectacular parts of the Bakony.

ZIRCikON cultural festival, held under the European Capital of Culture 2023 programme, was a success story. Thanks to the cooperation of the town, the support of civil society

organisations, the municipality and ECoC, Zirc gained new momentum and a rich cultural and community experience.

The ECoC Year brought many benefits to Zirc. The town has become an internationally noted cultural and tourist destination, increasing the number of visitors and improving its economic situation.

The town has believed and continues to believe in the power of joining forces, in the fact that working together will trigger comprehensive economic and social development, and in the visibility of its strong international communication. They believe that the ECoC title has started the process and demonstrated the vision that will enable the region's municipalities to move beyond regional isolation. Zirc has also recognised that it is not able to maximise its true potential on its own.

19 km →

👤 | 6,500



BAKONYNÁNA

A popular hiking spot in Bakonyhána is the so-called Roman Bath waterfall. The rocks in the surroundings are Cretaceous thick-bedded limestone, the so-called Zirc Limestone Formation, with intermittent stretches of waterway cut into it by Gaja creek, eventually forming the waterfall. The formation of the ravine started a few million years ago and still continues in the present. Before and after the ravine and waterfall, resting places await hikers, equipped with fire pits and rain shelters. The National Blue Trail passes through here, between Bakonyhána and Jásd, and the Central Transdanubian Red Hiking Trail also runs nearby.

Dumplings have always been present in Swabian culture, like potato dumplings with bean soup, cabbage dumplings with cracklings, plum dumplings, and cottage cheese dumplings. Thus, the village hosts the Dumpling Festival every year, based

on Swabian traditions and gastronomy, where visitors are greeted with various sweet and salty dumpling variations.

One of the most significant projects of the VEB2023 European Capital of Culture programme was the Pajta (Barn) Programme, implemented together with four villages. An important research project was also conducted by the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg. The experts looked for the values of the villages from an external perspective, which was a great help to the locals. With cooperation from The Central Transdanubian Alliance for Youth (KÖSZI), residents of Bakonyhána were also able to discover new values of their village.

“There is a saying: Strength in unity! I see it this way too; we should not only think at village level but regionally. We need to find the links between the villages so that we can build together.”
Mayor Zsuzsanna Németh

20 km

| 975



KÜNGÖS

Küngös is in a place where the Bakony Hills and the Mezőföld region meet. The foundations of the small palace in the centre of the three-street village were laid down by the Kenessey family at the end of the 1700s. The cemetery has a collection of about 30 tombstones from the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries. The small Calvinist church, built in the 20th century, has no tower but includes a belfry (with a funeral bell). The Catholic church is named after Saint Kinga. The Bürkösrét Creek has its spring in the village.

The VEB2023 European Capital of Culture programme brought significant collaboration to the village. The ‘Value-Circles’ project aimed to implement a complex, multi-phase, value-based, community-building, thematic cooperation development process across nine villages in three regions of Veszprém County: Bakonyhána-Bakonyoszlop-Olaszfa, Berhida-Jásd-

Küngös, and Nyírád-Halimba-Zalahaláp. The initiative focused on local values. In December 2022, a Values Day was held in Küngös, which strengthened local identity. In May 2023, a Regional Values Day took place in Jásd, and in November, a County Values Celebration was held in Nyírád. These events explored local values and allowed participants to learn more about their immediate and broader environment. A successful and forward-looking collaboration developed between the villages, aiming to connect individuals and the community.

After 2023, they feel it is up to them to determine how to use the newly established community spaces, whether the initiatives will become traditions, and if the good relationships established between individuals and organisations based on mutual benefits can be sustained.

20 km

| 550



NAGYESZTERGÁR

Nagyesztergár has several attractions. It is the birthplace of poet Pál Ányos; there is also the Roman Catholic Church and the statue of St John Nepomuk, Ányos Manor – also known as Purgly's Palace –, the Village Museum, the Desert Church, the Millennium Memorial, and the cemetery with German graves. The area around the village is home to the Gaja Springs and is traversed by the Blue Trail.

The most significant involvement of the village in the ECoC programme year was the 'Nothing Special' – Jewels of the Bakony project, which focused on four Bakony villages: Bakonyháza, Borzavár, Jásd, and Nagyesztergár, exploring the hidden cultural gems of the region. Villagers gained an external perspective on their own values, understood their opportunities, and developed close cooperation among themselves. Significant events included the Bakony Window-Opening event, also organised by the four villages. Events were ongoing, with Nagyesztergár leading modules

on the Bakony in literature and history. The creation of a Land Art network along the National Blue Trail was a joint effort, further enhancing the sense of community.

As part of the Pajta (Barn) Programme, a Lángos (fried dough) Festival was held, along with a wine and gastronomy event called Lángos Hospitality, where the audience could taste specialties like truffle-flavoured or jam-filled lángos and take part in a diverse cultural event lineup.

"Our team of four – the Jewels of the Bakony – even beyond the ECoC programmes, jointly participated in an exhibition for Hungarian Culture Day in Budapest. We strongly believe in the community-building power of collaborative programmes and aim to maintain them. The ECoC programmes helped in creating unique events that we definitely want to continue in the future."
Mayor Mrs Tibor Szirbek

20 km

| 1,144



NAGYVÁZSONY

Kinizsi Castle was completely renovated by 2023 with the help of grant support and the efforts of the local government, enriching the exhibition with interactive tools and experiential elements. The Post Museum also introduced innovations in recent years to welcome visitors. At the Hungarian Draught Horse Ecotourism and Landscape Value Center, the audience can experience the world of our thousand-year warrior and working companions, the Hungarian draught horses, through horse-drawn carriage and draught horse-based adventure programmes. Equally noteworthy is the Folklore Museum, which showcases peasant farming and bourgeois lifestyles, and houses a copper craft workshop unique in Hungary. The ruins of the Pauline monastery and Saint Stephen's Church are also special attractions, their baroque interiors being particularly noteworthy. The settlement is made unique by its natural treasures, the landscape created by traditional farming and the coexistence of man and nature.

In the annual calendar of events, the first traditional event is Horse Carnival, where horses also parade in costume. St George's Day in the spring marks the release of the herds, while St Michael's Day in the autumn sees the herding in. These events – the Shepherd Feasts titled 'Huge Cattle Herding' – focus on cultural heritage programmes related to pastoral farming and livestock management. In the summer, medieval Kinizsi castle comes alive with knightly and military demonstrations, artisan programmes and traditionalist events. The event titled 'Váradalom' (Castle Feast) is complemented by cultural and musical programmes. The year concludes with an Advent programme series.

20 km

| 1,900



TIHANY

Abbey, lavender, echo. If you ask anyone what comes to mind about Tihany, these are certainly the things that are mentioned. But Tihany is much more than that. Tihany is nature, landscape, history, and atmosphere. Tihany is the treasure peninsula.

One of Hungary's most beautifully situated villages, it is rich in spectacular cultural, historical and natural assets. This environment, multifaceted nature, Lake Balaton, which truly looks like the endless sea from the promenade by the Abbey, leaves a mark on the soul of the visitor that will be treasured for a lifetime.

Every corner of Tihany is steeped in history, and wherever you go, names like András I, Charles IV, poet Gyula Illyés, sculptor Miklós Borsos or writer László Németh pop up. And also the quiet that makes the village unique in today's noisy world.

But there are days when this quiet becomes an excited murmur. Because the traditions and legends that make Tihany unique come to life on the special days and events that seek to preserve, cherish and pass on these traditions to future generations. Legends and tales come to life on the peninsula, like the goat's hooves, the Tihany echo, and treasures not found elsewhere, such as lavender, which is now being celebrated for the 20th year in a row during Lavender Weeks, or the 'seen fish', knife-fish, which is also commemorated in a festival paying tribute to the fishing history of the village.

But Tihany is not just about the past; it is also about renewal. In recent years, the historic centre of the village has been given a new look, the public squares have been renewed, the boat station has been renovated and the village is now accessible by bike. Tihany is open to visitors and to anyone who wants to discover the treasures of the peninsula, all year round, winter and summer.

20 km

| 1,365



ÚRKÚT

The natural attraction of Úrkút is the Csárdahegy Ancient Karst, which is a unique protected natural treasure in Hungary and by international standards. In 2012 it became a European and Global Geopark within the Bakony-Balaton Geopark, and in 2013 it was declared Geological Treasure of the Year. Located on the route of the National Blue Trail, the spectacular row of dolinas and the surrounding area can be explored from the stairway and nature trail, renovated in 2023. The Fountain of the Lords and the Gubicza Hill Cross are also worth a visit while walking through the village.

The village, like other nearby villages, also has a tradition of Christkindls, the celebration of the birth of Jesus. The Christkindls (four girls and a boy, the Pocema), dressed in beautiful beaded costumes, walk around the village from morning to midnight mass singing in German the good news

that the Saviour has been born. In the past, they used to go from house to house singing in German and Hungarian, but now they sing from street to street in the presence of the gathered participants, only going to doors on special request. Recurring events in Úrkút include a gastronomic tour, a village festival and a nationality day with a Swabian ball.

The biggest event in the village, in partnership with VEB2023 ECoC, was the project 'In 2021, the 240 years of Úrkút's history continues'. The publication of the second volume of the History of Úrkút book, the book launch and the celebration of the village's birthday offered an opportunity to present Úrkút in a new and somewhat different way. The Friends of Úrkút-Oberpleicfeld and the Égig Éró Fa (The Tree That Reaches The Sky) Association were able to hold three events supported by MiniGrants.

20 km

| 1,962



VÁROSLÓD

Városlőd is a settlement with a rich historical past in Szent Mihály Valley, which before the Turkish occupation was called Vallis Paradisii by the monks who lived there, referring to the wonderful natural features of the settlement nestled in the Bakony. St Michael's Church was built on the former foundations of the monastery, with a splendid high altar originally made for the cathedral of Veszprém. The inhabitants of the village have preserved the culture, craftsmanship, traditional costumes and traditions of the Germans who settled here, which can be seen in the three exhibition halls of the German Nationality Village Hall and in an open-air exhibition.

The most important ECoC event for the municipality was Christkindl Fest. This Christmas tradition, which is inscribed on UNESCO's National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage, was kept alive by the participation of groups from the surrounding

villages – 89 Christkindls in total – with their escorts in German national costumes. The programme included a round table discussion, craft activities, exhibitions, ethnographic and local history presentations, a festive mass and a concert.

“The project has encouraged several generations within each municipality to work together. The tradition itself is thus passed down from generation to generation, ensuring its survival. A process has been set in motion; it has been demonstrated that many people are still interested in the old days, and the traditions that can still be found have been put in the spotlight. Thanks to this cooperation, more and more people are getting to know our culture, our traditions and their representatives, and, hopefully, learn to love them. This link is perhaps the most important one. It is not memories that are necessary to remember, but love, and those we love are not forgotten”, locals say.

20 km

| 1,339



ÖRVÉNYES

Örvényes is proud of its nationally famous monument, the overhead water mill built in 1055. The mill was rebuilt several times over the centuries and was given its present form in the 1800s. Its wooden overshot wheel is turned by the water of the Pécsely stream. The miller's house, rebuilt in the 18th century in folk style, houses a collection of ethnographic and folk art.

Nearby is a protected 18th-century monument across the stream, the Baroque-style two-arched stone bridge with a statue of St John of Nepomuk. The ruins of the 13th century medieval church can still be seen in the cemetery. The new church was built between 1778-1783. In the village there are two restored 13th century crosses marking the old settlement boundary.

The Roman villa complex west of the village, which was active from the 2nd to the beginning of the 4th century, is a significant historical monument. In addition to the central building and the

baths, a building converted into a Christian basilica was also excavated in the Hosszú-rétek meadows.

The village boasts a unique landscape, with hillsides overlooking the lake, wooded hills and the enchanting landscapes of the surrounding countryside. For lovers of nature, it is an excellent starting point for hiking, walking and cycling tours in the Balaton Uplands.

This is where Balatorium's open-air lake bar was set up in 2002 for the BALATORIUM ecological x cultural weekend; a straw bale beach installation, talks, workshops, discussions, tastings, water installations and slow landscape tours awaited visitors. In 2023, exciting tastings showcasing ecological processes and environmental issues in the region were accompanied by the opportunity to talk to researchers.

21 km

| 163



TÉS

Tés is in a much higher spot than the surrounding settlements in the Bakony, so wind is the dominant climatic phenomenon. It is no wonder that ingenious people tried to harness the power of the wind, and four windmills were built here, of which unfortunately only two have survived. Their distinctive feature is the six blades, which are unique in the world, and the fact that the former windmills were able to turn the roof to the wind direction from the inside.

A few years ago, the settlement had its own song composed, with lyrics by János Lackfi and music by Róbert Hrutka. The song 'Countryside in an Embrace' turned out a wonderful, hymnal piece of music thanks to their joint work.

The municipality had three successful applications under the VEB2023 ECoC programme. Two series of cultural events were held, attracting a large audience with many innovative events.

The most important event was 'Tésünnep', held as part of the Pajta (Barn) programme and was the occasion for the launch of the video of the song mentioned above.

Infrastructural improvements have also been made, which has brought a major potential for the municipality: it has been possible to purchase and renovate a building of great cultural and tourist importance. The Mill Gate Cultural and Visitor Centre was opened, where a number of programmes were held for the enjoyment of the residents.

"Having been an active participant in ECoC, we can only say that we are looking forward to continuing it, whatever the framework. We believe that the creation and promotion of culture is essential for the strengthening and healthy self-confidence of rural Hungary. And where culture is strong, the economy will also grow stronger."
Mayor István Fodor-Bödös

21 km

| 890



VÁRPALOTA

On the second weekend of June every year, Várpalota Historical Festival takes visitors on a magical journey through time, bringing the past to life at the foot of Palota Castle. Visitors to the castle will witness, among other things, the duel between the Lion of the Danube, György Thury, and the famous Persian champion, from whom Thury won his high-quality sword, and the most famous siege of the castle, when Várpalota people successfully defended the walls against a 16-fold overwhelming force. The Zichy family were the dominant figures of Várpalota for nearly 200 years; therefore, their story is also told.

In addition to this annual event, the city also hosts a number of traditional festivals, many of which have been renewed with the support of the VEB2023 ECoC programme. While maintaining traditions, the Rock Palota Festival and the 10th

David Popper International Cello Competition have been expanded. The grant also enabled the renovation of a symbolic building in Várpalota, the neoclassical Synagogue, and the creation of a multifunctional community space.

A grant from the VEB2023ECoC programme enabled the town to purchase a new Kaway grand piano, badly needed for decades. Popular percussion training has been re-launched at the Várpalota Music School. The participation of the city's choirs in the ECoC Grand Opening and in several other events of the year remains a memorable experience.

21 km

| 19,561



VÁSZOLY

Vászoly is a popular tourist destination with its beautiful location and hospitable inhabitants. The village church, built in 1803, is visible from almost every point of the village. A popular attraction is the village pond, which is fed by springs that flow from several places. In the summer, the performances on the water stage are particularly popular.

The two-and-a-half-month long Vászoly Summer cultural events are well known in the region. Their exhibitions and concerts are frequented by many returning visitors and are regularly attended by visitors from neighbouring villages. The Public Foundation for the Survival of Vászoly held a number of programmes under VEB2023 ECoC. Among recreational programmes, the e-bike programme in the Balaton Uplands was very well received, just like the new guided tour to Veszprém. ECoC brought several opportunities, colourful

performances and concerts that could not have been organised without support. It was also possible to make films on the history of the village as part of visual culture development.

The village intends to cooperate with neighbouring settlements in the future, and in addition to joint programmes, they also consider it important to coordinate programme plans. In particular, they would like to focus on the involvement of young people, who have expressed an interest in many of the programmes.

The plans for Vászoly also include the continuation of the highly successful music programme with Bakonybél under the VEB2023 ECoC programme.

21 km →

👤 | 290



BAKONYBÉL

The municipality boasts a wealth of natural assets. Protected plants, animals and natural curiosities can be seen on forest hikes. Village Hall, the church and the nature museum are just some of the attractions: St. Maurice's Monastery, the Amber Fountain and Chapel, which is at its best in autumn, and Pannon Observatory, where those interested in astronomy can immerse themselves in extraterrestrial sights.

For two years, St Maurice's Monastery of Bakonybél took part in the VEB2023 ECoC professional programme as a CultNet Base, welcoming audiences open to the worlds of sacred and classical music.

The establishment and cultivation of the classical music tradition, and education in the noblest sense of the term, is one of the centuries-old commitments of the Benedictine monastic community. The project, which took the public into

the finest worlds of classical music, offered a unique experience and an opportunity for further education and musical learning to interested communities in the region through concerts, instrument demonstrations, workshops and the invitation of distinguished Hungarian and international artists.

The project was based on a meeting point between special local cultural and spiritual values and visitors in search of this spirit, with the essence of these meetings discovered in the messages of art that points beyond art itself and its community-forming power. Classical values merged with contemporary initiatives, which, in forming a new professional base, contributed to the unfolding of a new cultural-creative region with their approach.

22 km →

👤 | 1,139



BORZAVÁR

The village is a popular destination for those who want to relax, owing to its unspoilt countryside and clean air.

For the village, the most important programme was the social innovation project Nothing special? Jewels of the Bakony, which was connected to the VEB2023 theme 'Community development – Livable town, livable village' conducted by the Institute of Advanced Studies of Kőszeg in Bakonyhána, Borzavár, Jásd and Nagyesztergár. Experts carried out surveys on the hidden treasures and values of the villages. More importantly, links between the villages have been brought to life. They got to know each other's values and plans in a way they never would have done without this project.

"The growing network of links between the small settlements in the region will not weaken and is likely to grow stronger in the upcoming period. And since, in view of Borzavár's potential, researchers have

also drawn up a bold strategic development concept that could make the village a unique ecotourism destination in the coming years and decades, many different continuations are possible. We don't know if the special Csodaliget (Wondergrove) Walkway is going to be built, which anyone can join with their own park plans. How many new thematic and specialised hiking trails will be opened to birdlife, rare medicinal herbs, mushrooms, snowdrops, giant trees, ancient trees, and fruit trees from the multifunctional eco-garden, the huge stone hut dominating the valley landscape, which is still to be renovated? Will forest garden or ethnoecology experts be returning visitors here? Will the forest library, the library of the woods or the forest gallery be created? Will the seed collecting and seed sharing workshop come to life? But we do know that a development concept has been laid out, offering an exciting vision and action plan."

Mayor László István Dombi

22 km

| 761



JÁSD

The Holy Spring of Jásd is one of the oldest pilgrimage sites in Hungary, a Marian shrine, a summer mass site, a chapel and a calvary.

One of the five dressable statues of the Virgin Mary can be found in the chapel of the Holy Spring. Tourists are welcome to Bodzaház and Rural Museum Visitor Centre, where there is an interactive exhibition space, and to the gallery. The church in Jásd is a unique treasure, decorated with exceptional works of art. The village hosts a wide range of cultural events, be it theatre, concerts, or exhibitions.

Several major ECoC programmes took place in the municipality: participation in the four-village project 'Nothing Special', which led to a joint Pajta (Barn) Programme. Locals were also involved in the 'Our Values' project together with nine municipalities. As a sacred event, a church music festival was held, and based on

the local plant, a programme entitled 'Jásd people, elderberry people! The journey of elderberry from the meadow to the milk loaf' was launched.

"The future of initiatives and cooperation is up to us. If we don't let the links we have built up in terms of joint work or even the implementation of a cultural programme wither away, we can surely find opportunities to strengthen and enrich each other's work and culture together. Obviously, it would be easier with a suitable form of financing, but thinking together and exploring the possibilities does not cost anything. And we can find the resources if we want to."

Mayor Tünde Győry

22 km

| 690



DUDAR

Perhaps the most beautiful gorge in the Bakony is Ördög-árok (Devil's Gorge) running between Dudar and Bakonyoszlop. This almost two-kilometre-long gorge was created by the destructive force of water combined with the collapse of several caves. There are nearly fifty caves of all sizes in Ördög-árok, the largest of which is Ördöglik (Devil's Hole), the largest of its kind in the Bakony. The bottom of the gorge is full of huge moss-covered rocks. The gorge is narrow and winding; the overhanging foliage makes it look dark and gloomy. It is a pity that by now water only trickles in between the rocks when the snow melts or after heavy rain.

Every section of the ravine is interesting. Crossing the rocks and exploring the caves, caverns, niches and hollows is a real experience for visitors. The entire area of the gorge is protected as part of the High Bakony Landscape Conservation Area.

You can also visit Csapóné konyhája (Mrs. Csapó's Kitchen) in the Dudar forest, taking the road next to the football pitch on the side of Magas-hegy, where there are several caves hidden in the karstic limestone. Csapóné konyhája is a cavern with side passages, about 20 metres in total length. The inhabitants of the area consider the caves to be a hideout for former outlaws.

The most significant ECoC event for Dudar was the Festival of Trees and the photo exhibition held as part of the 'Bakony Landscape Protection in the Spirit of Ecology and Art' programme. The opportunities provided by ECoC have brought new contacts, new colours in the life of the cultural centre, new insights and new programmes.

23 km

| 1,753



MENCSEHELY

Mencshely is known as 'the village of three towers' because three religious denominations built churches in the village.

Every year, at the end of July and beginning of August, the village celebrates 'Ments (Save) Days' with cultural and sports programmes as well as traditional activities aimed at preserving heritage.

As it stands in the village website intro, one of the traditional handicraft activities in Mencshely is making bobbin lace. It was in the 1940s that the women of Mencshely learned the art of bobbin lace making, and the post-war decades saw the peak of lace production.

With the establishment of the Agricultural Cooperative, women no longer had time for this activity, which required great patience and skill. In the mid-1990s, the then Lutheran minister, István

Gyarmati, recognised the potential for reviving traditions. From 1994, a workshop was started, and in the following years, the Mencshely Lace-making and Heritage Preservation Circle was established. Since its formation, the circle has put on exhibitions and demonstrations locally and in neighbouring villages. In 1999, they presented their work at a national exhibition in Kiskunhalas. Thanks to this initiative, Mencshely was included in the list of villages in Hungary where traditional lace is made.

Visitors to the village are invited to explore the geological trail and enjoy the breathtaking view from Kossuth Lookout Tower on Halom Hill.

23 km

| 304



PULA

Pula, also known as the ‘nest of fledgelings village’ is the easternmost settlement in the Eger Séd (Eger stream) valley. Its name derives from the Hungarian words for swaddling-clothes and child, with a general meaning of ‘small’.

The border of the village is rich in rare natural treasures. According to the descriptions of the village, the largest basalt cave on the continent is located in the Fölső-erdő woods, and Hungary’s largest open-cast colliery of alginite is located west of the village. The four-million-year-old algae mass, some forty metres thick and an excellent soil conditioner, is the site of remains of paleontological animals, ancient fish and ancient trees. The remains of the cone of the former geyser spring at the southern edge of the alginite deposit are worthy of note. The remains of the fossilised calcareous shells of the Congerian shell-natozoic, called goat’s hooves, can also be

found in the Rétek area. An unusual specimen of a hawthorn that has grown into a tree can be admired on the edge of the Alsó-Szélesföldek part.

The most significant architectural monument in the border area of the present-day village is the ruin of the monastery of Tálad; the first documentary record of the building dates back to 1263.

It is a protected monument, as is the three-hole stone-arched bridge built of basalt at the end of the village on the Vázsony-séd stream.

23 km

| 180



SIÓFOK

All year round, Siófok offers a wide range of cultural and family events, active recreation, gastronomic specialities and thousands of experiences for both residents and tourists. The season-opening Pentecost Rose Festival and the Fish Festival in October have become iconic events.

The Water Tower, which has become a symbol of the city, not only offers a magnificent panorama but also hosts exhibitions. Every hour, the tower marks the passage of time with an emblematic excerpt of Czardas Queen, a tribute to Imre Kálmán, the world-famous composer born in Siófok. Siófok is also home to the Rose Garden, scented by over 6,000 rose bushes. The town’s charming villas tell a story of its past, and are worth exploring in the quieter months outside the bustling summer season.

During the ECoC year, according to the municipality, it managed to show a side of the town that had not been widely known before.

The organisation of the Siófok55 Town Day and the activities of the whole jubilee year had a strong community-building effect and succeeded in strengthening the town’s identity. The artistic and cultural status of Siófok has been enhanced: the long-dreamed-of local history exhibition was completed with the help of the local population, and a new permanent art exhibition was opened in honour of sculptor Imre Varga.

In Siófok, it is believed that the developments, investments and events carried out with ECoC support will continue to contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the municipalities and to a deeper understanding and expansion of their cultural offer.

23 km

| 24,761



BALATONUDVARI

A unique feature of Veszprém County is the Balatonudvari heritage cemetery, with 63 special heart-shaped gravestones, most of which still have clearly legible inscriptions. The heart-shaped gravestones date from the years 1800-1850 and underwent a restoration in the late 1990s. As a result, they can still be admired in their full glory today.

An interesting fact is that, by knowing the names from birth registers of the period, restorers managed to reconstruct several previously difficult-to-read inscriptions on the gravestones. The heart-shaped headstone cemetery is one of only four protected historic cemeteries in Hungary.

Among VEB2023 ECoC events, it was the Keserü exhibition that served as a source of great pride for the municipality.

'Keserü 90 – From the Balatonudvaro Gravestones to Pompidou Centre, Paris', a public photography exhibition in the Pajta (Barn) programme paid homage to Ilona Keserü, who turned 90 in 2023, and her exceptional creative oeuvre.

24 km →

👤 | 396



BALATONVILÁGOS

The most beautiful panorama of Balatonvilágos is from the Panorama Lookout, from where you can enjoy the view of the eastern basin of Lake Balaton and the Bakony Hills. This is where Géza Mészöly and István Csók, among others, drew inspiration for their Balaton paintings.

The high shore is lined with monuments, statues and the Bridge of Lovers. Among the significant events in the history of the village, the first civic association – the Balaton Yacht Club – was founded here in 1912, which achieved great results in the development of sailing sports on Lake Balaton, and the first women's sailing competition in Hungary was also held here.

The traditional events of the village include the annual Wine Festival and Season Opener and the Village Day. Of the three events implemented within the framework of ECoC, the most significant for the village is the Panorama Walk in

Balatonvilágos, which enabled the creation of an open-air museum on the high shore of the village, presenting the sights of the settlement, some of its milestones and the works of local artists.

24 km →

👤 | 1,468



FARKASGYEPŰ

The village of Farkasgyepű lies at an altitude of almost 400 metres. Its attractions include the church, consecrated in 1909, the School Museum and the Bakony Wildlife Museum next to it. The charming beauty of the small village, the clean, sub-alpine air of its forests, pleasantly cool in summer, the peace and quiet that surrounds hikers and the gentle trickle of the Köves stream are a refreshing way to relax and unwind. In this peaceful, clean little village, both the passing visitor and the tourist who spends a few days in the area can enjoy a deep and lasting experience. Noteworthy tourist attractions are Csurgó Spring, three kilometres from the village, accessible by a forest road, and Trout Lake in the direction of Németbánya.

The first Saturday of every year is Village Day, which has been held in conjunction with German Nationality Day for some

time. The festive days of the year are also celebrated together: every year there is a Retirees' Evening, a Santa Claus party for the children and a Community Christmas.

The settlement also hosted the VEB2023 ECoC Out-of-the-ordinary Spaces series: a theatre performance in the forest.

In the words of local residents, all this has put Farkasgyepű on the cultural and tourist map.

24 km →

👤 | 368



ÓBUDAVÁR

Óbudavár, one of the smallest villages in Hungary, is located eight kilometres from Lake Balaton, nestled in the picturesque northern tip of Nivegy Valley, halfway between Zánka and Nagyvázsony. The village is surrounded by forests, meadows, vineyards, hills and valleys, which attract many tourists due to their natural beauty.

A key attraction in Óbudavár is the Roman Catholic Church, built in 1836 and designated as a historical monument. An exact replica of this church has been consecrated at the Szentendre Open-Air Ethnographic Museum. Another notable site is Mosóház (Washing House), a vaulted cellar building with a water spring; historically, this is where the women of Óbudavár did their laundry. The Mosóház is part of St Martin's Recreation Park, a popular venue for family and community leisure activities.

Additionally, the park is the starting point for an eight-station forest fitness trail, lined with a unique avenue of trees. In 2006, the village erected a memorial, which also serves as the starting point of the forest fitness trail. This combination of historical and natural attractions makes Óbudavár a charming destination for visitors seeking both cultural heritage and outdoor activities.

24 km →

👤 | 60



DÖRGICSE

The best known historical sights of Dörgicse are its well-preserved Árpád-era church ruins. With four functioning churches, Dörgicse could be called the ‘village of churches’.

People here are keen on preserving their traditions and love of nature; they cherish the quiet, rural environment and the architectural traditions they inherited from the past. The rich fauna and flora of the area and the magnificent panoramic views make hiking a pleasant experience.

All ECoC events in the village were memorable, but the most moving one was the Dörgicse night hike: all ages were enchanted by the experience. Nearly 100 participants got to explore the treasures, history, traditions and legends of Dörgicse in a night edition.

Another favourite event series was the educational Pub/Culture, implemented with MiniGrant support. The five-night series sought answers to the ecological crisis and generated an active community forum to discuss and learn about the issues.

Dörgicse people feel that with the help of ECoC grants they have been able to hold events that would have taken a long time or been of a lower quality if they had managed them on their own. There is also a new cultural demand among the locals, and the aim is to continue the programmes. They believe that the continuation of regional and local cooperation could result in a well-functioning four-seasonal Balaton living space with community retention based on strong cultural traditions and sharing knowledge.

25 km →

👤 | 300



ÖCS

Öcs is visited by tourists mainly because of its proximity to nature, the beauty of the landscape and its peaceful atmosphere. Among its natural assets, the Big Lake and its surroundings, formed on the basalt plateau, stand out.

Walking around the village, you can look back into the past with its authentically preserved houses and the draw well. Among the architectural monuments, the three churches are noteworthy: the Roman Catholic church, which is a heritage monument, the Calvinist church, also a heritage monument, and the Lutheran church. The churches are complemented by worthy examples of the valuable facilities of the recent past, including the Village Hall, the Stone Quarry Sports and Leisure Centre, the Village Oven and the Millennium Memorial Park. Regular events in the village include the St Michael’s Day

Village Day and ball, Maypole raising and Maypole farewell dancing, the harvest parade and the St Martin’s Day feast.

The municipality was part of the “EGER-VÍZ” Stream Art Guard project implemented by the Kapolcs Cultural and Nature Conservation Association in 13 municipalities. In this project, Edina Szirtes Mókus and her band performed in the Lutheran Church with a programme entitled ‘Invented songs by the side of the Eger.víz’. The villagers believe that their traditional events and the cooperation with the VEB2023 ECoC programme have contributed to strengthening the links between communities and generations.

25 km →

👤 | 223



SZENTJAKABFA

Szentjakabfa is a small village on the northern shore of Lake Balaton, in picturesque Nivegy Valley.

According to descriptions of the village, its houses were typical Swabian buildings in the 19th and early 20th centuries. They consisted of a 'clean room', a living room and an open-chimney kitchen. Several generations lived together in these buildings. In the 1960s the village was modernised, many new houses were built and the old ones were renovated.

Szentjakabfa has always been a producer of good wines, and the main source of livelihood for the inhabitants has been grape growing. From the village wine hill there is a magnificent view of the valley and Lake Balaton. There are well-trodden hiking trails and even mountain bike trails, and Balatoncsicsó, Mencshely and Óbudavár are a pleasant walk away.

The wonderful natural environment surrounding the village is ideal for hiking and outdoor recreation.

The village's recreation park and sports field provide an excellent setting for family and leisure activities. Numerous benches, tables, bowling alleys and fire pits make for a pleasant leisure time.

25 km 

 | 126



AJKA

The cultural, intellectual and architectural heritage of Ajka is primarily rooted in its industrial past.

The Mining Museum's Minerals and Rock Collection houses Hungary's largest open-air industrial museum, with a unique collection of artefacts. The Municipal Museum and Photo Gallery is the repository of the intellectual heritage of author István Fekete, adventure story writer and hunter Gábor Molnár, and the Miklós Borsos collection. In the Crystal Museum, visitors can see masterpieces of world-famous Ajka Crystal glass.

The town is home to the world's first Krypton Factory, a testimony to the intellectual heritage of Imre Bródy, revived as a multifunctional events venue in association with the 2023 ECoC Year.

The Forest Reading Cabin, a collaboration between VEB2023 ECoC and Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest, was

created in the intimate, tree-covered environment of Csinger Valley, offering the opportunity to relax in the embrace of the forest with a book in hand while on a pleasant hike or after a day outdoors.

As part of the Regional Show, Ajka held a series of cultural events called Ajka Art City, where everyone could find something to their liking: from art and gastronomy to family programmes, several venues in the town were filled with a variety of activities.

Ajka used to be a drab industrial town on people's mental maps, but it has now become an exciting place full of creative energy, boosted by the ECoC year.

The people of Ajka feel that the joint effort has helped to change their attitudes and since 2023 they have developed a new and fresh approach to their place of residence.

26 km 

 | 27,239



VIGÁNTPETEND

There are two listed heritage buildings in the village. One is the Lutheran belfry, which has been completely renovated under the Folk Architecture Programme, and its inauguration was held in conjunction with the implementation of VEB2023 ECoC MiniGrant project 'The Well of Our Knowledge' – Renovation of the Calligaro Well and the 'Eger-víz' Stream Art Guard's Vigántpetend programme – thus providing a rich activities offer for the participants. Another monument and attraction is the Roman Catholic Church.

The village is also noteworthy for the serpentine road leading to Nagyvázsony, the ever-improving built and natural environment on the Vigántpetend section of the promenade leading to Kapolcs, where landscape art works were placed under the VEB2023ECoC programme. Vigántpetend will in the future enrich the Bridge Landscape Art Trail, which was

started under the 'Eger-víz' programme, with further works of art.

26 km 

 | 203



BAKONYOSZLOP

Bakonyoszlop is located in the heart of the Old (High) Bakony, in a lovely natural setting. One of its treasures is the Roman Catholic church, built by Ferenc Eszterházy between 1726 and 1746. Another landmark of the village is also connected to this family: the Eszterházy family built their palace in Bakonyoszlop in 1870; today it is used as a children's home.

Bakonyoszlop, together with several nearby villages, is the jewel of the Bakony, where visitors can choose between hiking, rock climbing, horse riding, gastronomic delights and quiet relaxation.

The municipality was also part of the Values Circles project, where municipalities could discover their own values, taking a fresh look at local intellectual, natural and built treasures. For Bakonyoszlop, the most important ECoC event was the Values Tour, which attracted both locals and visitors from far and wide.

27 km 

 | 459



BALATONAKALI

The notable sites of the former small fishing village, now a holiday resort, include the Fish Trail stretching from the boat harbour to the beach entrance. The fishes of Lake Balaton can be learned about with the help of text descriptions and photos. Starting from Forrás Park, you can take a Values Walk, which introduces the specific values of the settlement in a smartphone-guided way.

The Open-Air Stage, suitable for presenting major productions, is set in a lovely environment. In the summer, the outdoor cinema is a favourite spot for villagers and visitors. Main Square, located at Kossuth Street, is also a resting place for cyclists. Here, every day of the year, after sunset, you can see a light show and hear Zoltán Kodály's Evening Song.

Recurring events every year include Akali Wine Day during almond blossom season, the Wheel of Fire rolling event, and

the Almond Harvest. Last year, this latter event was held in partnership with the VEB2023ECoC programme. During the three-day festival, audiences could attend talks on almond cultivation and its diverse uses. The event provided an opportunity for professional networking, exchanging ideas, learning, and gaining experience, while the broader community could enjoy entertaining activities and unique flavours. The programme included an almond cracking competition, a classical music performance and a concert.

Thanks to ECoC, Balatonakali has enriched its cultural attractions with colourful and interesting programmes, strengthened both international and domestic relations, and gained tourism advantages.

27 km

| 716



BALATONCSICSÓ

The 750-year-old village in the Balaton Uplands is a little jewel in Nivegy Valley. The ruins of the church of St. Blaise and two other Árpád-era ruins prove that it was inhabited as early as that time. Every year, a holy mass with St Blaise's blessing is celebrated in the church, which has been preserved in its original state, and open cellars await visitors.

The Germans who arrived in the late 1700s and spoke the Rhineland-Franconian dialect also lived in the settlement, so Hungarian and Swabian families, traditions and customs still live on here. At Christmas time, the Christkindl and the shepherds' Nativity go well together.

In 2023, events in the village – ruin concerts at the church ruins of St. Blaise, literary hikes, art workshops in the spirit of recycling, the creation of a children's play – were organised in accordance with the principle of "with the locals, for the

locals, by the locals" and brought the indigenous people closer to settlers, introduced local producers to visitors and contributed to community building. Cultural events bring people together, so ECoC has helped people to get to know each other, and visitors have pointed out values that people who live there might not notice in the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

"You've probably heard the eternal classic: You can't do it alone, ... Talk, think together and be willing to compromise and accept each other. Cohesive, cooperative communities can achieve anything for a common, good goal."

Mayor József Schumacher

27 km

| 274



SZENTANTALFA

In Szentantalfa, at the heart of Nivegy Valley, there is still a tradition of viticulture and family winemaking, where fathers, sons and grandsons show that wine is still a key value in Nivegy Valley and not only an important part of tourism, but also the livelihood of most of the families living here.

In Szentantalfa, a local farmers' market is held on Fridays, with popular music concerts – if not every Friday, at least once a month – to keep visitors entertained until late in the evening.

The village has a long tradition of a thriving sporting life that builds and binds the community together. There are generations of people who take pride in the fact that their grandfathers started playing sport at the local football club and now their grandchildren are striving for sporting success.

In the 2023 ECoC year, it is the Mesepajta (Fairy Tale Barn) series of events that will be remembered as the most significant one in the municipality, and the power of teamwork is also important.

“In addition to the many timely developments that have taken place in the county seat, investments have been made that will allow the lives of people in the ‘countryside’ and their connection to culture to flourish and grow stronger. Thanks to ECoC and the extended concept, many people have got to know and visit the area. In addition, the already unrivalled cohesion of Nivegy Valley has once again been demonstrated.”

Mayor Csaba Kiss

27 km →

👤 | 530



TAGYON

Tagyon is an Árpád-era settlement; its name is mentioned in a document from 1292. It was repeatedly raided by the Turks and, apart from two serf families, was uninhabited until 1720, only to be repopulated in the late 1700s.

The livelihood of the families here was typically based on agricultural work and animal husbandry. The natural environment makes the area suitable for the cultivation of vines, which produce excellent wines. This has led to the development of wine tourism, which has increased the income potential. The Zánka Nivegy Valley Wine Route Association opens its cellars to wine enthusiasts every year.

Nowadays, it is not only the wine that brings in visitors, but also the many attractions and places to visit, including nearby Hegyestű and St Balázs Hill. All this has led to an increase in the number of accommodation providers in the village.

Many of the visitors return to the village, and some of them have even settled here permanently.

27 km →

👤 | 115



CSESZNEK

The best-known landmark of Csesznek is the castle, but it also has many architectural monuments and natural treasures. Its Catholic church has one of the oldest bells in Hungary. The Porva-Csesznek part of Cuha Valley, the wild hiking trails of The Devil's Ravine and Stone Ravine also belong to the municipality's territory. The Csesznek area boasts Hungary's first Via Ferrata trail, which attracts many visitors to Kómosó Gorge.

A traditional village event is No Motor, with a history of over a decade and a half. The programme is a stamp collecting hiking game with several optional routes, complemented by cultural events in Csesznek: exhibitions, craft fairs and music programmes. The brochure about the village reads: *"It's time to get started! Either you've experienced it or you have an idea of it: this is a place where you have to struggle for pleasure."*

If you want to breathe the fresh air, listen to the quiet of the forest, hear the birdsong or watch the deer, you have to get up, grab your boots, your bike, your horse, and sweat, pant and tire, because you'll miss out on all that if you sit in front of a screen! But isn't that the beauty of it? If you move, if you get tired, the pleasure is not lost: you get the forest, the flower, the squirrel, the rock, the landscape, the quiet or the birdsong, the spring water, the forest puddle, the blister on your footsole – in short, everything that makes you feel alive."

28 km 

 | 595



KAPOLCS

Kapolcs is a village of mills and arts, nationally known for the Valley of Arts festival and its special atmosphere. The ten-day multidisciplinary arts festival offers audiences the freedom of concerts and the stunning surroundings of the Balaton Uplands, as well as the chance to be part of a genuine creative community. Valley of Arts transforms the streets, buildings and institutions of three villages, Kapolcs, Taliándörögd and Vigántpetend, into concert halls, galleries and theatres, filling them with hundreds of programmes.

In addition to the major national festival, Kapolcs also hosts smaller events, temporary or permanent exhibitions outside the summer season.

The HÍD (BRIDGE) – Landscape Art Trail exhibition, which is still on display after 2023, is a highlight of the art programmes of the Eger-Víz Landscape Art Trail promoted by the Kapolcs

Cultural and Nature Conservation Association, and presents the outdoor landscape art works of contemporary artists along the hiking trail in the Eger-Víz stream bed from Nagyvázsony to Monostorapáti, in casual exhibition spaces, including green spaces along the streets of Kapolcs.

The village is rich in other attractions, too, with the Village Mill and Miller's House and the Blacksmith's Workshop being notable among the built monuments, which can be visited by appointment.

For hikers, it is worth exploring natural attractions like Királykő cliffs, Kálomisz Lake, Mill Island with the Eger Stream, the Sárfé spring-fountain, the Seven Springs, Pokol-lik cave and the Stone Quarry. The village is also part of the Valley of Mills hiking trail, which takes you on a tour of 13 former mills in five villages in the Dörögd Basin.

28 km 

 | 375



MAGYARPOLÁNY

Magyarpolány is a Swabian village located on the southwestern slope of the Bakony. Its uniqueness lies in the juxtaposition of the greenery of the hills and the cultivated plains. Hikers are welcomed by the surrounding hiking trails, and the village itself is worth exploring. With nearly a hundred heritage buildings, Magyarpolány is recognised as part of National Heritage, and the community has been awarded the Europa Nostra Prize for the preservation and maintenance of its monuments.

The traditional event of the Magyarpolány Passion has become emblematic over the past 30 years, representing Christian values authentically. The passion play commemorating the suffering of Jesus is rare in Europe, and it is only performed annually in Magyarpolány, continuing for 30 years now. Out of the village's approximately 1400 residents, about 150

participate in this performance each year, spanning across all age groups from 3-year-olds to those in their 80s.

In 2023, on the occasion of its 30th anniversary, a new passion play was written according to the Gospel of John, with a focus on rebirth rather than suffering. This Gospel is often referred to as the Gospel of joy or love. Thus, this story is not about the crucified Jesus but about Jesus revealing himself.

Magyarpolány was also a CultNet VEB2023ECoC venue, where the experimental events of the theatre, alongside the International Artist Colony, were significant events for the village. The creators of CultNet – actors, musicians, painters – worked together in open workshops to create and present a contemporary drama.

28 km

| 1,385



HALIMBA

Halimba is usually known for its bauxite and medicinal herbs. It was in this area that the mineral was first discovered in Hungary. Later, there was considerable mining activity, which helped the development of the village, otherwise poorly endowed in agricultural terms. Reminders of the bauxite mining of the past are still preserved and passed on to children and tourists. Geotrails have been set up on the outskirts of Halimba, showing the traces of bauxite, among other attractions.

The village honours and preserves the memory of rural dean Dr. Miklós Szalai, who lived and worked in Halimba from 1947 until his death in 1990. In addition to his pastoral duties, he was engaged in the collection of medicinal plants, the study of their medicinal properties and the blending of teas. His teas made him famous both within and outside Hungary. His surviving knowledge is passed on to younger generations. Today, his former house is

a memorial building and his garden is a wonderful living collection of herbs and serves as a community space.

A memorial plaque in Halimba indicates that Lajos Kossuth's children were kept in hiding in a house in Petőfi Street for a while in the summer of 1849. Dániel Berzsenyi's daughter Lídia lived in Halimba as a married woman. There is evidence to this in Dániel Berzsenyi's correspondence; he wrote: "I ran away from cholera to Halimba".

The 'Halimba herbal ART DRIVE' project was implemented in the municipality as part of ECoC. Compiling the material for the outdoor exhibition and recording the music was a community bonding experience. Meanwhile, various events took place: an Instaphotography course, workshops, a commemorative hike, Midsummer Night's Eve, and the Herbal Festival.

29 km

| 1,200



TALIÁNDÖRÖGD

A great place to visit is the Romanesque St. Andrew's church ruins, locally known as Cloister, built around 1100 and later rebuilt in Gothic style. In the centre of Alsó-Dörögd stands the Romanesque Church of Our Lady, whose original walls support the Baroque Roman Catholic Church.

In 2023, the chapel of St Ilona was discovered on the outskirts of the village, believed to be one of the first Pauline monasteries. The news has spread across the country, as a long-sought ancient site has been unearthed in the Dörögd forest.

In Taliándörögd, the VEB2023 ECoC programme supported a number of events under the Barn Programme, which brought quality and well-known performers to the village. The 'Art of Dörögd with artists from Dörögd' programme, held as part of the Taliándörögd Festival of Values, attracted locals from all over the village, and many from the surrounding area and further afield.

The strengthening of the Treasure Club (KincsesKlub) programme for schoolchildren also had a community-shaping effect, involving the 7-10 age group in community life. There was also a big boost for the KincsesKlub+ programme for upper primary school students and the Youth Council for secondary school students. A major achievement of these programmes is that a dilapidated barn was transformed into a community space through the hands-on work of young people. The Taliándörögd Embroidery Workshop was also established with a VEB2023 ECoC grant, and soon after its foundation, the Dörögd pattern was recovered from attics as a great treasure.

"The programmes that have been implemented have helped to strengthen local communities, which can form a solid basis for community and cultural development in the near future. As a result of this cooperation, the region can become a key cultural base in the country, where cultural tourism can be combined with local needs."
Mayor József Mohos

29 km

| 685



ZÁNKA

The most famous building in the village is the Calvinist church, first mentioned in the notable papal tithe register of 1333-1335.

The most popular event in Zánka is the grape harvest parade and fair in October.

Nine clubs are active in the municipality and take part in all the events. Cohesion has always played a very important role in the life of the village. Every year, wine producers, representatives of civil organisations, the municipality, local residents, entrepreneurs and holidaymakers enthusiastically prepare for this event. Weeks before the festival, puppets and props are displayed, and each year they are renewed to attract people passing through the village. The route of the parade changes frequently, but the atmosphere hardly ever does. 800-900 people accompany the harvest bell and the riders and enjoy the delicacies, wines and short programme elements on offer at the stops.

The parade always ends with a fun Harvest Ball.

For Zánka, the ECoC year brought a varied and colourful programme. As a promoter, the Bakony-Balaton Values Day, hosted by the municipality, was held with the help of craftsmen from the Bakony and Lake Balaton settlements, amateur traditionalist and cultural groups from the region, and as a host venue, Kisbirtok CultBase ('Colourful Village Colourful House' programme series), and the children's performance of Monsters and Mermaids, courtesy of the Arts for Rural Development Foundation.

30 km

| 906



BALATONHENYE

The first mention of Balatonhenye dates back to 1181, but archaeological finds show that it was inhabited as early as Roman times. The Pauline monastery, built in the Árpád era in honour of St Margaret, is mentioned in documents from 1365. It was twice plundered by the Turks, but the settlement and its inhabitants survived the attacks.

There are several fine folk architectural monuments built in the 18th and 19th centuries: the former Kenessey house with its vaulted porch and small columns was built in 1844, while the former Körösényi and Ágoston houses are equally impressive.

The village's five crater lakes, the largest of which is five acres in size, are popular with hikers.

On the promontory of the hill there is a steep rocky cliff, which is popularly known as the 'Death of the Turks', because

according to legend, a Turkish squad was cornered and forced to jump down the hill by the Hungarians and died in this way. The legend may not be so much a legend, as Turkish weapons and jewellery were indeed found under the row of rocks during excavations.

ECoC brought a number of opportunities for the village: among others, the performances of the Káli Kultúrpaĵta (CultureBarn) – KL Theatre, the Easter, Advent and Christmas shows and the traditional pork sausage feast were important and popular events in the everyday life of the local people.

31 km 

 | 138



KÖVESKÁL

Köveskál is located on the northern shore of Lake Balaton, in the heart of the Balaton Uplands National Park and the Kál Basin. This area, considered a natural wonder, is home to plant communities and rare plant species unique to this region, as well as the natural environment surrounding the basin, including the famous historical volcanic hills. The most well-known and famous among these are Fekete Hill, with its glacial relict lakes containing rare ice age plants, and Hegyestű, which houses a geological museum.

The first written mention of Kál village dates back to 1098. Its name derives from the Kál clan of Hungarian settlers, whose members held the high rank of 'harka' (war leader and judge). Viticulture used to be the main source of livelihood in the region, and in the early Middle Ages, the Hétkál region supplied wine to the royal table. Today, the village's

main attraction is wine tourism, enhanced by gastronomic specialties, but the natural and geological curiosities of the Balaton Uplands National Park also attract many visitors.

In 2023, storytelling afternoons were held monthly in the rooms of the local history exhibition, where invited guests shared their life stories and village events with a large audience. With the support of ECoC's MiniGrants, a video camera was purchased to record these conversations, preserving them for posterity. The storytelling afternoons will continue in the coming years, allowing more films documenting the village's past and present to be preserved for future generations.

34 km 

 | 375



SZENTBÉKKÁLLA

The picturesque and very lively little village is perched on a south-facing hillside, nestled in the forested hills that close the Balaton Uplands Kál Basin to the north. Looking down from the church, you can first see the village's winding streets and thatched roofs, and beyond them the flat, sometimes marshy plain of the Kál Basin. The view runs freely all the way to Lake Balaton.

On the hillsides, below the forest, vineyards begin to grow. These are not large-scale vineyards, but small family estates, tended with love and skill, producing distinctive white wines typical of the region. Pleasant walking paths lead from cellar to cellar, from press house to press house. If you happen to find the owner there, a glass will soon be found, and conversation will be accompanied with offers of wine.

In March, the hillsides are already covered in white and pink flowers as the almonds bloom among the vines. It is an old

fruit of this region and, like wine, almonds have a distinct but pleasant flavour in this volcanic landscape, thanks to the earth and the sun. The largest plantation, with nearly 2000 trees, is just above the village.

The whitewashed houses with plaster decoration preserve the centuries-old tradition of local architecture. It's not an open-air museum, not a dead museum, but a community that lives on in its centuries-old site, with more children than elderly people. A village where visitors feel at home.

The village is also known as a regular venue for Kőfesz.

35 km →

👤 | 210



SZÓLÁD

The main attraction of the village is the loess cellar row. The part from the village centre to the outskirts, mainly to the vineyards, is divided by 'loess roads'. The steep sides of these dirt roads, known as 'hooks' by the villagers, have been used by the people of Szólád since time immemorial to make loess cellars. The cellars that still exist today were carved into the high loess walls, sometimes up to 6 to 8 metres high, at the beginning of the 20th century or even earlier.

Initially, the cellars were built as a hiding place, and only part of the wine was stored there to hide it from excisemen. The temperature inside, which is around 15 degrees Celsius both in winter and summer, is ideal for storing wine and produce.

Well over a hundred cellars are still in use today. The municipality has spent millions on renovating the cellars, and in 1999 they were awarded the European Prize and the Henry Ford Prize for Conservation of Historic Value.

Another important site is the Chieftain Kupa-Koppány memorial park, a shrine and place of pilgrimage, also known as the Scythian Golgotha. To the left is a panorama of Lake Balaton, to the right a splendid landscape with gentle hills and dense forests, with statues, a belfry, a lookout tower, a double cross and, a little further away, the small chapel of St László. The villagers have long known the place – for its healing powers. In olden days, old people who had difficulty moving were pushed up in wheelbarrows to heal. Legend has it that chieftain Koppány is buried here.

A traditional event in the village, implemented in 2023 with the support from VEB2023 ECoC, is Balaton Contemporary Art Workshop and Artist Residency Programme. Every year, the event provides an opportunity for artists and art fans to meet, and is accompanied by talks and workshops.

35 km →

👤 | 526



HEGYESD

The settlement and its surroundings are a perfect place for hiking, with its clean air and tranquillity. Although little remains of the castle of Hegyesd today, the panorama is unparalleled: you can see the castle of Szigliget, the whole Tapolca Basin, all the volcanic hills and Lake Balaton. On the eastern border of the village you can visit the fish pond created by the damming of the Eger stream.

Three programmes were implemented in Hegyesd with the support of VEB2023 ECoC.

The St Stephen's Day bonfire, a long-established tradition in the village, was extended to include more activities in 2023. This was implemented through a bid by the municipality, as well as the Natural Assets of Hegyesd programme, which mapped and preserved several local treasures of natural, community, local historical and economic importance.

With the help of the Central Transdanubian Organic Culture Association, villagers built a community oven, which they have been firing up every week since then to bake delicious bread.

From the very beginning, the village decided not to hold big events, but to focus on community building and bringing local people together. One of their projects was made possible by means of MiniGrants, and it was especially gratifying for locals that it was not restricted to a specific theme or purpose, but they could implement their own ideas.

36 km →

👤 | 170



MINDSZENTKÁLLA

The village is located in the Kál Basin, southeast of which, on a volcanic hill called Kereki, tradition holds that the fortresses of Kál horka (warrior leader) and chieftain Bulcsú once stood. Only the ruins of the medieval village's Gothic church are visible today, referred to as 'Pusztatemplom' (Desert Church). The current church was built in 1829 in the Neo-classical style. Before 1945, much of the village's land was owned by the Diocese of Veszprém. Today, it is home to the largest vineyard of the archdiocese (in uninterrupted cultivation since 1277), producing wine for church ceremonies.

One of the area's most touching sights is the beautifully carved, whitewashed stone crosses. Located between Mindszentkál and Szentbékáll, perhaps the most famous attraction of the Kál Basin is the 'Sea of Stones'. From 330-metre-high Kopasz Hill, there is a breathtaking view of the entire Kál Basin and Lake Balaton.

The village's annual events begin with a traditional pig slaughter, aimed at preserving rural traditions and fostering community cohesion. The tradition of erecting the Maypole is also preserved, which is a joint program for the community. During the August Village Day, families and friends spend the day together, cooking, doing sports and participating in playful activities. For decades, Mindszentkál and Szentbékáll have jointly organized the Harvest Parade, a cheerful, entertaining event that also serves as a community-building programme. In the World War I Memorial Park, every November, the villagers commemorate the fallen together. On the Sunday before Christmas, the village celebrates together: children and adults prepare a Christmas programme collectively.

In the year 2023, the village was one of the venues for Kőfesz festival as part of the European Capital of Culture programme.

36 km →

👤 | 227



NYIRÁD

Nyirád, a charming village, holds historical significance as the place of Hungary's first statue of Queen Elisabeth (Sisi), from 21st May 1899. This statue remains an important symbol for the community. The people of Zala County chose to honour Queen Elisabeth with this first monument because she was the first to express her condolences at the funeral of Ferenc Deák, a notable native of the county. A local legend persists about Queen Elisabeth resting and quenching her thirst at a spring on the northeastern border of Nyirád during her journey from Budapest to Keszthely.

Another significant attraction in Nyirád is the Nyirád Racing Center, a rallycross track that hosts European and World Championships events. The track is uniquely situated in a former open-pit bauxite mine.

As part of the VEB2023 European Capital of Culture (ECOC) programme, Nyirád hosted the 8th Veszprém County Values

Festival. This event allowed visitors to explore and appreciate local values and see examples of how various communities across the Carpathian Basin cherish and preserve their treasures. The festival enriched the Veszprém County Values Repository with eight new treasures, including the Queen Elisabeth statue in Nyirád. The event showcased the cultural life, value exploration, and gastronomy of nine collaborating villages.

In addition to the festival, one of the greatest achievements of the VEB2023 ECOC programme in Nyirád was the regularisation of folk music, folk art and folk dance events. These activities have engaged all age groups in vital value-preserving and tradition-transmitting work. Consequently, the Kökényvirág Folk Song Circle and a folk dance workshop at the local school were established, promoting the continuation of these cultural traditions.

36 km

| 1,948



RÉVFÜLÖP

One of the finest natural attractions of Révfülöp is the panorama of Lake Balaton from Fülöp Hill. The imposing red stone Millennium Lookout was erected on Fülöp Hill to commemorate the thousand-year anniversary of the founding of the Hungarian state. Opposite the railway station are the ruins of the red sandstone church of the medieval village of Fülöp. In addition to the remains of the 13th century walls, the church's beautifully carved stone-lined doorway is worthy of note. The rose garden near the mole invites for a spectacular and fragrant walk. The exhibition halls, the buildings of the local villas with their timber-framed fronts from the beginning of the century, the new buildings of Villa Filip Square and the tranquil surroundings of the promenades along the waterfront are also special attractions for hikers and walkers. In the spring sunshine, a unique carpet of Common Grape Hyacinth blossoms can be seen in the Csuki forest on the eastern edge of the village.

The abundance of this early spring protected bright blue wildflower is a botanical curiosity unique in the country.

The traditional events of the municipality include Révfülöp Winter Evenings, a series of talks on a variety of topics, Villa Filip Days, Country Music Fest and Révfülöp Blues, the latter being considered the most important event of the ECOC programme year. The event, held for the 16th time in 2023, features blues stars every year. With the support of VEB2023 ECOC, the programme of the event was extended with a photo exhibition, instrument demonstrations and chamber concerts.

The Balaton swim-across between Révfülöp and Balatonboglár, with a history of over four decades, is also linked to the village.

36 km

| 1,218



KŐVÁGÓÖRS

Kővágóörs is located in the Balaton Uplands, extending all the way to the shore of Lake Balaton with its Pálköve settlement part. The village is situated in an exceptional landscape, with the magnificent views of the Kál Basin to the north, gardens with wells and springs, and unique geological features like the Outer and Inner Sea of Stones. Further east lies Kis Hegyestű Hill, while to the south, the scenery includes Fülöp Hill and the surrounding hills, along with ancient oak forests, making this an area of extraordinary beauty. Near the village is Kornyi Lake, with Imre Veszprém's 'Human Comedy' sculpture group made of steel and limestone on its shore. The Theodora nature trail starts from Kékkút, showcasing the wildlife of the region through multiple stations.

A historical attraction is the Ecsér church ruin, the remains of a Romanesque church built in the 12th-13th centuries,

a significant relic of Árpád-era architecture. At the end of the village is the Sea of Stones, where stone was quarried for centuries to make millstones. One such millstone can be seen in a sculpture park at the corner of Ady Endre and Petőfi Streets, alongside statues commemorating the 1848 Revolution, the 1956 Revolution, and World War I.

There are two museum buildings in the village: a former petty noble's residence and the Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Endre Memorial Museum. Traditional events in the village include celebrations of national holidays and notable days, various traditional day-related events, and commemorations of Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky. The village also hosts the Peasant Olympics, which attracts more and more teams each year. Kővágóörs was one of the venues for Kőfeszt in 2023.

37 km →

👤 | 685



BALATONRENDES

The sunny slopes of Balatonrendes used to draw veterans of the Roman Empire to settle here. The remains of Roman villas have been found on the right side of the road leading to the quarry on Tepécs Hill. Although nothing but stone was ever quarried here, the Roman emperor Probius considered the area a treasure trove, making viticulture compulsory. After the Hungarian conquest, Balatonrendes became a residence of the princely tribe. For the Hungarians who settled on the hillside, grapes, the abundance of fish in the lake, the thick reeds along the shore and livestock farming provided a livelihood in the turbulent centuries of the Middle Ages. Today, Balatonrendes is the smallest waterfront settlement on the shores of Lake Balaton. The architectural monuments of the village are the church and the bell tower on Fő (High) Street.

Old folk traditions are kept alive in the village, like the burning of the puppet figure of winter in February, the St Peter and Paul Day's celebrations with the village festival on the last weekend of June every year, and the spectacular Harvest parade at the end of September.

It has become a tradition to celebrate the 70th birthdays of villagers by planting almond trees at the end of October each year.

39 km →

👤 | 190



KÉKKÚT

Based on excavations, it is known that the history of the settlement dates back to the 3rd millennium BC. It was a populous settlement as early as the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. It was deserted in the period of the Turkish raids, but was slowly rebuilt by the returnees who moved back after the attacks had ceased. The church was built in 1716. Even today, there are still traces of the old livestock breeding in the stables, barns and pens, which are built adjacent to houses.

Kékkút's most interesting feature is the Rural Museum built in 1799, one of the oldest residential buildings in Transdanubia. The lower, western part is called 'Kütyü', while the upper area, where the local government's offices, the surgery and the shop are located, is called 'Centre' by the locals.

An interesting feature of the village is the Rural Museum housed in a former country home built in 1799, one of the

oldest in Transdanubia. It is an exhibition space furnished by Laczkó Dezső Museum and run by the local government.

Rumour has it that the sour water of the village spring was Empress Theodora's favourite drink. The village owes its reputation to the bottled mineral water named after her.

39 km →



ZALAHALÁP

There is an old legend linked to the name of the settlement: the last giant to live there was called Haláp. In the centre of the village, in a beautifully landscaped area, you can see the works of master woodcarver Sándor Szakonyi. The carved wooden statue of the last famous Bakony outlaw in Bogyay Mansion, where the ever-expanding Local History Collection is on display, is a reminder of times gone by. The village's attractions include St Joseph's Church, whose walls are decorated with frescoes by Maulbertsch. The Haláp embroidery, typical of the village, was known for its red and blue patterns.

A walk along the three-kilometre-long Haláp Hill Educational Trail in the former basalt quarry area, admiring the Awakening Volcano Sculpture Park with its panoramic lookout and quarrying memorial, are special sights to enjoy while in Zalahaláp.

And what did the ECoC year bring for the municipality?

"Running water and electricity for the Crater Concerts on Haláp Hill. Three major concerts in a special venue, the eight-hectare quarry crater, with Bikini in 2022, Magna Cum Laude and Lord in 2023. Value Circle events and Long Table Picnic in Veszprém. Lots of experiences, lots of new friends."

Mayor Lajos Sándor Bedő

39 km →



SALFÖLD

The village has many attractions: a meadow with native animals, the spectacular Sea of Stones, and the Pauline Monastery, which is not far from the village and can be reached on foot or by horse-drawn carriage.

Salföld is home to Bányakert, also a VEB2023 ECoC CultNet base. This is how the site summed up the ECoC year: “2023 was the year when we set sail in the sandpit, had huge chess tournaments and pub quizzes, lots of DJ friends playing music, joy yoga with Vera Gergő, children’s workshops with Béla Raffay, Zsófi Posta, Vera Bodó and Zsófi Kleb, movement training with Zoli Greccsó, lots of drumming with Berci Sárkány, lots of concerts; world stars like Erik Truffaz, Lőrinc Barabás, Tony and Roby Lakatos performed with János Vázsonyi, and in September, Modern Art Orchestra. There was a vintage boutique with Anita Kántor and midnight shopping with

Kamala Kaftán, two photo exhibitions, the MINE Festival and Balatorium – where we sampled the flavours of Lake Balaton. There was also an open-air cinema and raised beds with plant communities and delicious pizzas, Mediterranean dishes and cold drinks, and we had lots of good times with you.”

Here, in Bánya, we held the Balatorium event for the release of the album Sounds of Lake Balaton, produced by Banana Records, on which the best of the Hungarian popular music scene convey the importance of protecting Lake Balaton with a song.

Káli Fecske was opened in the old building of the former church school, where an exhibition hall, a covered outdoor stage and a restaurant were set up.

40 km



ÁBRAHÁMHEGY

Water meets forest here, with picturesque landscapes rich in detail, beautifully planted vineyards, hillsides covered with hawthorns, dense oak woods, juniper groves and silky grass meadows. Characterised by the harmony of nature, man and landscape, the thousand faces of the lake, silence and tranquillity. Its beauty offers protection, meaningful leisure and serenity, as described on the village website.

Ábrahámhegy is one of the most popular resorts on the northern shore of Lake Balaton for a reason: its hills provide a semicircular shelter from the winds from both the west and the north; located in a valley, its climate is warmer than average. But there is always something to do for those looking for entertainment and culture.

One of the main attractions of the village is the exhibition of Aurél Bernáth and his students, as the famous painter used

to spend his summers in Ábrahámhegy. His experiences were immortalised in his paintings as well as writings. In the exhibition room, alongside his works, you can also see paintings by his renowned students.

In July 2023, Ábrahámhegy hosted a classical music festival – along with Káptalantóti, Kékkút and Badacsonytomaj, it took part in the Kál Classics Festival.

41 km



BALATONBOGLÁR

One of the symbols and interesting sights of the settlement is the Spherical Lookout. Standing on the Castle Hill, the 15-metre-diameter structure overlooks the lake.

The Lake Balaton Screw Steamer Museum is also a special place: Balaton, the first and oldest screw steamer on the lake, is now a museum.

The two sacral buildings, the Red and Blue Chapels, are the guardians of Boglár's cultural heritage and tradition.

The Boglár 50 chapel project recalled that between 1970 and 1973, György Galántai's Balatonboglár chapel studio was a bustling centre of artistic life. The artist held exhibitions, performances, art meetings, music and literary programmes in the summer. The neo-avant-garde movement then fell victim to politics: the series of events was banned.

Balatonboglár was also one of the successful locations of the Personal Lake Balaton project in 2023. Balatonfüred library's programme started with a research and collection project: stories and people were sought out who were willing to share important events in their lives related to the region through photos and personal stories. The municipality was also involved in the preparatory and collecting work, and then hosted one of the venues for the exhibitions of memorabilia.

Local people believe that, based on the lessons learned from ECoC projects and using the established links while maintaining continuity, it is possible to create a diverse image of the municipality and the region, which in turn could become a basis for the development of comprehensive cultural cohesion around Lake Balaton.

41 km

| 5,651



KÁPTALANTÓTI

Over 750 years old, the village is nestled among volcanic hills. From the highest point of the settlement, where St Martin's church stands, the panorama is enriched by the castle ruins of Csobánc to the north, the basalt rock-lined Szent György Hill to the west, the "sugarloaf" formation of Gulács Hill to the southwest and the basalt dome of Tóti Hill to the south. In the distance, the castle of Szigliget rises majestically, and finally, the gentle, watchful gaze of Badacsony Hill's flat slopes graces the magnificent view. Káptalantóti's rich built heritage preserves the folk architectural features of the Balaton Uplands, evidenced by numerous residential houses. Many unique wine press houses and vineyards delight the eye on the way out of the heart of the village. The busts of Sándor Petőfi, St Martin and St Stephen by sculptor József Kolop are also characteristic features of the village.

The settlement served as a venue for the Kál Classic Classical Music Festival, and the Káptalantóti Parish Coworking was part of the Pajta (Barn) Programme, which offered small community programmes and a variety of events for local residents.

41 km

| 493



GYULAKESZI

The village is situated in the Balaton Uplands, about four kilometres from Tapolca, at the western foot of Csobánc Hill. Traces of all ages can be found in the ancient settlement. It was first mentioned in a document in 1180 as Kesző, and from 1522 it is called Gyulakeszi. From 1678 the Esterházy family was lord of the settlement. In 1869 a great tragedy befell the village: the entire village burnt down in a fire. After the disaster, reconstruction was slow.

The proximity of Lake Balaton, Tapolca, Badacsony Hill, the Kál Basin and Szent György Hill has a positive effect on the tourism of the settlement.

Everyone is warmly welcome to visit the castle of Csobánc. The construction of the castle was probably begun in the 1250s; in the 1270s it was mentioned in a document as a completed castle. By the road leading up the hill, you can see the crumbling walls of the ruined church of Csobáncszög

village. The Romanesque building, dating from the early 13th century, was nicknamed “Bad Church” by the local people.

The hilltop is home to hang gliders. At the foot of the hill lies Kómagas, also known as Papsapka (Priest’s Cap), a geological formation also known as the Sea of Stones. Gyulakeszi and its surroundings are a nature reserve, part of the Balaton Uplands National Park; two equestrian tourism bases are located on its borders.

The sights of the village include the chapel of St Donatus on the wine hill and two 18th century buildings, the Esterházy palace and the Csigó palace.

Traditional events are the spring Gypütiprás (re-marking vineyard boundaries), the summer Village Day, the Virgin Mary’s Feast and the Harvest Parade in September and People’s Christmas in December

42 km →

👤 | 639



TAPOLCA

Beauty above and below ground. This is the simplest way to describe what a visitor to the small town in the Balaton Uplands can find when they see the municipality surrounded by volcanic hills.

A great way to start exploring the town is with a huge walking tour of the sights. The boating lake cave, which made the town famous, has a hospital section that has cured many respiratory ailments and is home to the largest recently discovered underground lake in Hungary. While walking around, it is worth visiting the lakeside, the Roman Catholic church and the town museum with a memorial statue of poet János Batsányi, native of Tapolca, and an exhibition on the history of the town and its schools. It is also home to the gallery of sculptor László Marton, one of Tapolca’s most famous residents, a Kossuth Award winner. Many people also visit the monuments of the former Jewish community in the town, the wine cellar system

under Fő utca, the old synagogue and the restored Israelite cemetery.

Several VEB2023 ECoC events and projects have been implemented in the town. The “TÜNdökölj Tapolca” programme series, which was held in the summer of 2023 and renewed in its content, can be considered the greatest success, even in terms of the thousands of daily visitors. In addition to the music stage, literary walks and writer-reader meetings were also popular with the audience.

A tangible result was the cooperation that accompanied the implementation of the projects. Never before was there such cooperation between organisations, individuals, cultural and events professionals, local media and the local government as in the case of the ECoC projects. The town believes that this momentum will be carried over to future local programmes.

42 km →

👤 | 14,206



NEMESGULÁCS

The village is surrounded by a landscape dominated by a 393-metre-high basalt hill, sometimes referred to as a sugarloaf – poet Dezső Keresztury called it the Hungarian Fujiyama. The Blue Trail leads to the top of Gulács, and although it is not easy to climb to the summit on the serpentine path starting from the village, if successful, the persistent hiker is rewarded with a magnificent view of the western basin of Lake Balaton, Szent György Hill, and Badacsony.

Among the natural attractions is the Sour Water Spring located in the Bányatelep (Quarry) area. During times of drought, it dries up, but for most of the year, its water is drinkable. Sér Spring is located halfway along the path leading to the top of Gulács, and tourists can relax at the picnic area set up in the clearing and even roast bacon.

In July 2023, with support from VEB2023 ECoC, Nemes-Cool-Tour at the Foot of the Volcanic Hills music festival was held, created by merging traditional events and elevating the village's annual festival to an international level.

“The ECoC programmes have redirected attention to the small villages in the area, revitalising tourism and increasing the number of rural visitors. Additionally, local values have become more visible and demonstrable, and local amateur artists have come to the forefront. During the programmes, new, developing communities have been formed, and further development can be achieved through their cooperation. Furthermore, we have been able to host performances by world-class artists, proving that high-quality culture is accessible even in small villages,” residents said in summary.

43 km

| 980



BADACSONYTOMAJ

Badacsonytomaj and its surroundings are known to most people as a wine-producing region; however, not only wine, but also history, literature and art are closely linked to the village.

At the foot of the basalt rocks you can visit Kisfaludy House, one-time home to poet Sándor Kisfaludy, and next to it the lovely rustic Baroque house of Róza Szegedy, now a museum and visible from afar.

Close to the mole, the former house of Kossuth Award-winning painter József Egry can be visited as a museum. The village also features the two-towered Roman Catholic parish church of St Imre, built in 1931-32, said to be the only church in Central Europe made of basalt. And the list goes on and on.

In the 2023 season, Egry József Memorial Museum hosted several events supported by ECoC, including the exhibition

of Kossuth Award-winning graphic artist and painter Győző Somogyi. In addition, gastronomic and cultural events were held in partnership with the VEB2023 ECoC programme.

44 km

| 2,144



KISAPÁTI

“A small village in the land of dragons” is the motto of Kisapáti, one of the gems of the Tapolca Basin and the Balaton Uplands. The village is located at the eastern foot of Szent György Hill, within the Balaton Uplands Cultural Landscape, which is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage candidate site, and also within the Balaton Uplands National Park. It enjoys nationwide tourism popularity. The basalt organ pipes of Szent György Hill are a unique natural attraction in the world, just like the stunning panorama from the higher points of the hill, offering views of Lake Balaton, Csobánc, Badacsony, and other volcanic hills. One of the dormant volcano’s jewels is the Chapel of the Holy Cross, built in the Árpád era, and the historic Kaán Károly tourist house located on the National Blue Trail.

The flora is also remarkable, as on the continent, the Cselling fern is found only here, in the vicinity of the village.

A traditional event of the village, held every first weekend of August, is ‘Kisapáti Festivities’ – Village Day.

With the support of VEB2023 ECoC, an outdoor community complex called ‘The Pier’ was built as part of the Community-Space-Village project. It was designed by university students participating in the Common Points Nonprofit Ltd programme based on the requests of Kisapáti residents. A community space, a meeting point has been created where locals can gather for joint programmes and relive the traditions of the former outdoor cinema.

44 km →

🧑 | 365



BADACSONYTÖRDEMIC

Most of the village still retains its authentic rural character. The outskirts of the village include Badacsonylábdihegy, which has been transformed from a vineyard into a holiday resort with a stunning panorama.

The village is a paradise for hikers. Almost every tourist makes a pilgrimage to Rodostó House, built on the 200th anniversary of the death of Prince Rákóczi II, from where you can enjoy an unparalleled and magnificent view of Lake Balaton, the Somogy coast and the Tapolca basin.

The Steps of Exiles, also located here, are a real challenge, with 464 basalt stairs to climb to the top of the hill, but those who make the effort to the lookout tower at Törдемic are rewarded with a spectacular panorama. Fortunately, there are several resting places named after famous Kuruc fighters.

Ranolder’s Cross is also a beautiful sight, located on the 400 m high southern edge of Badacsony Hill, on the cliff of Harangozó (Bellringer) Börc, and is another popular spot for hikers. The huge structure has inspired fables, legends and poems. This is also the birthplace of one of the treasures of Badacsony folklore, the legend of the Harangozó Börc. The name refers to a part of the rocky bed below the cross, which extends freely into the air. When the protruding rock is struck with a hammer or a stone, it makes a sound similar to the ringing of a bell, which can be heard far and wide. It is said at these times that Harangozó Börc tolls. The term ‘börc’ means cliff.

Among the main events of the village are the summer Ignatius Patron Saint’s Day and the Village Days, the Village Hall exhibition series, the motorcyclists’ meeting, and the season is closed by Michaelmas Day.

46 km →

🧑 | 942



RAPOSKA

Raposka, a 717-year-old small village in the Tapolca Basin, is located at the western foot of Szent György Hill.

Grape growing and winemaking have always played an important role in the life of the village. Four of the village's more than ten annual traditional events are related to grape and wine – Vince Day, the Harvest Festival, the Mulled Wine cooking competition and the three-decade-old Szent György Hill Days. Every year, guests are invited to visit St Michael's Wine Trail, where you can sample wines from family cellars. The April event is linked to the legend of the dragon of the hill. Oral tradition has it that a local knight named George, fed up with the evil dragon's ravages on the settlement, armed himself to the teeth and defeated it in a fierce fight. The people called George a warrior after his deed, and the hill was named St George after him. Named after the hero, a drinking fountain was set up by the

local government at the entrance to the Raposka hill pass, from which participants can sample a drink of 'dragon's blood', or red wine during a wine tour. The Carnival of the Women and the February Feather Plucking event are also Raposka traditions.

A memorial stone in honour of Ignác Joó, a former inhabitant of the village, was unveiled with the help of the local government and relatives still living in the village, supported by a VEB 2023 ECoC MiniGrant. Ignác Joó was the last Hungarian soldier of 1848-49, who died in 1930, in the 101st year of his life, and is buried in the cemetery of Raposka.

For many locals it was an uplifting feeling to attend the opening gala of the Veszprém-Balaton 2023 European Capital of Culture in Veszprém, the inauguration ceremony of Gyárkert (Factory'ard), and the wine, gastronomy and cultural gatherings in several neighbouring villages.

46 km

| 270



HEGYMAGAS

Hegymagas is located in the middle of the Tapolca Basin, on the south-southwest side of Szent György Hill, bordered by volcanic hills. The village is mainly characterised by viticulture, but due to its proximity to Lake Balaton it is becoming increasingly involved in tourism. Visitors like to go on hikes up the hill. Attractions include the Lengyel Chapel and Lion's Head Spring, and wine tastings in the cellars of local winemakers.

Traditional events in the village include the celebration of several special days, as well as the Szent György Hill Days, the Hegymagas Summer Evenings and the Lőrinc Day Village Festival.

In 2022, classical music concerts and an organ recital were held in the church. In 2023, the 'Musical and literary roaming around Szent György Hill' programme was implemented. Events at local cellars featured renowned performers and

cultural programmes combined with gastronomy and wine culture. As a closing event, pianist Tamás Érdi performed on the terrace of the Tarányi heritage building in a splendid setting, impressing the audience with his skill. An outdoor exhibition of paintings by József Egry, the painter of Lake Balaton, was opened on the same site.

47 km

| 307



FONYÓD

In the past, you could stroll along the 29-building Bélatelep villa row, founded in 1894 by Manó Szaplanczay, chief physician of Somogy County, on the northern side of Várhegy.

In the area now known as Fácános, Palánkvár (a palisade fortress) was built after 1547 and resisted Turkish conquest for nearly 30 years.

One of the prides of Fonyód is the 1st Children's Hussar and Artillery Banderium. All the educational institutions in Fonyód have little hussars. They give all the national celebrations and events of Fonyód town special prestige. Their creed, apart from cherishing the memory of the Hussars, is to teach order, discipline and shape communities. Uniformed little hussars regularly perform at regional and nationwide events, and during the visit of Pope Francis to Hungary, they formed the guard of honour outside the Hungarian President's Office.

For many years, the municipality has been welcoming residents and tourists with varied programmes and traditional events. Thanks to ECoC projects, new cultural elements have been introduced and professional links have been established with several municipalities, which the town would like to sustain.

Four events were held in Fonyód during the 2023 ECoC Year, with awareness-raising, local history walks and star performers. The focus was on water, land and air, and the programmes were structured around these elements, complemented by the Classic Balaton Row-Across recreational kayak-canoe race. For Fonyód, the most important event was Water Day on 1st July, with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of water and the protection of Lake Balaton as a national treasure.

48 km

| 5,209



SZIGLIGET

A historical monument and a much visited attraction of Szigliget is the castle, towering over the village for over 750 years, often referred to as the castle of Lake Balaton. The recently renovated historical attraction recalls life from the 11th to the 17th centuries: it has a furnished Baroque kitchen, a weapons exhibition, a castle chapel and a castle history exhibition. The castle regularly hosts concerts and events, and the view from the top of the castle hill is spectacular.

According to the descriptions of the settlement, the first dwellings of Szigliget were built under the castle, clinging to the hillside. The small, irregularly shaped plots of the streets of the Old Village, which run parallel to the level line, still bear the marks of centuries of building. There are still a number of buildings dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries, most of which are listed as historical monuments. Among the

village's monuments are the Lengyel Mansion, the Eszterházy House Creative Centre, Óvárhegy in 'the Queen's Skirt' part, the Rókarántó Chapel, and the Réhely (also known as Avás) ruins and their surroundings. The local cellars and press houses are also among the characteristic buildings that show the viticulture that once characterised the settlement.

The well-known events of the village: the Szigliget Pike-perch Festival, the New Year's splash on the winter beach or the sauna open in winter, all show the effort to offer visitors unique opportunities not only in the summer season but all year round.

48 km

| 944



LESENCEISTVÁND

The highest point in Lesenceistvánd is the Kő-orra lookout, standing at 403 metres. From the Virgin Mary's Chapel above the village, there is a stunning view of the entire Tapolca Basin and the volcanic hills of the Balaton Uplands. This chapel, probably built in the 1870s, is associated with a series of miraculous apparitions. According to legend, vineyard watchers passing by noticed a great brightness and then saw the Virgin Mary. The watchers later attached a picture of the Virgin Mary to a walnut tree, and many people went there to pray. The miraculous brightness reportedly occurred multiple times, and as long as the Virgin Mary's visits continued, snow would not melt under the famous walnut tree. It is said that the chapel was built on the site of the former walnut tree, and interestingly, there are still two walnut trees in front of the chapel.

Traditional events in the village include the carnival and winter farewell, Easter preparations, Midsummer Night at the chapel, the Village Day, the September FEST – Harvest Meeting of Village People in Lesenceistvánd, Saint Martin's Day festivities and wine tour, and the shared Advent anticipation.

Thanks to the VEB2023 European Capital of Culture programme, the village was able to host several events that they could not have held on their own. Among the most important were the outdoor performance of the play Nuns by the Zenthe Ferenc Theatre, chamber concerts by the Szeged Trio Classic, and a solo evening by Péter Scherer at a special venue, the Virgin Mary's Chapel.

It turned out that the presence of contemporary arts and high culture not only piqued the interest of locals but also became a significant tourist attraction.

49 km →

👤 | 990



SÜMEG

A Baroque jewel box, the gem of the Transdanubian region – this is what the city is called; it offers significant historical and architectural monuments.

The castle of Sümeg has been towering over the town since the post-Mongol Invasion period, and today it is the venue for spectacular events and castle games. The Bishop's Palace, renovated a few years ago, is an outstanding religious historical monument and tourist attraction at national level. Its interactive and entertaining exhibition presents the life of Bishop Márton Padányi Biró, Baroque fresco painting, the work of the famous Viennese painter Maulbertsch and the building phases of the palace. The Franciscan Chapel and Monastery is a Marian shrine and pilgrimage site. Every autumn, in connection with the day of the Mother of Sorrows, a church feast is held, which attracts many pilgrims from across the border.

The Kovakő Visitors' Centre on Mogyorós Hill presents the geological and scientific treasures of the settlement and its surroundings – the ancient flint quarry and the most interesting ancient paleontological remains of the Bakony – with the valuable private collection of local quarryman Lajos Kocsis, donated to Sümeg. Fehér-kövek nature reserve is also of great geological and flora significance.

The Sümeg 'Barock' Festival in the ECoC programme year was conceived in the spirit of fusing tradition and modernity. Participants were taken on an extraordinary journey through time and style, with Hungarian pop and rock music taking centre stage in the small Baroque town. The Szentegyháza Children's Philharmonic Orchestra performed several times at the festival to great acclaim. The Kisfaludy2023 Street Theatre Festival and the Grape Harvest Festival were also memorable events.

49 km →

👤 | 5,846



UZSA

The village still preserves and honours the work of local jurist János Uzsa. The canon of Esztergom, who lived in the 14th century, studied in Bologna, where he became rector of the university and was the first publisher of law books.

Uzsa's historical monument is the remains of a 14th century Pauline monastery. As the former structure is located in the area of a working quarry, it can only be visited by permit, but there are efforts to ensure permanent access to the historic architectural monument nestled in the forest.

During the ECoC programme year, the village was part of the Lesence Region cohesion: Uzsa, Lesenceistvánd, Balatonederics, Zalahaláp and Hegymagas jointly implemented events to promote the cultural diversity of the region, strengthening regional cohesion and identity. The Lesence Rural Contemporary Art Festival in Uzsa included music and visual arts programmes.

Also important was the Pajta (Barn) Programme, which offered gastronomic adventures for younger generations to learn about their grandmothers' recipes in regular baking and cooking clubs, and there were talks, nature and children's programmes.

The gastronomy and the programmes around it brought the community together and increased the number of participants. As the built infrastructure provides opportunities and demand for similar events, they are set to continue.

49 km

| 320



NEMESVITA

Nemesvita is located in the southwestern corner of Veszprém County, in a quiet, protected valley at the western edge of the Tapolca Basin. It is surrounded by the Keszthely Hills to the west and north, which protect the village from the winds. The settlement features typical hilly terrain with winding streets. It is part of the Balaton Uplands wine region, known for producing excellent wines. From the lookout in the Nemesvita forest, visitors can see the volcanic hills, the Keszthely Hills, and part of the southern shore. The area around the village has numerous interesting hiking destinations.

As part of the 'Trading Time for Experience: Lesence Region and Nemesvita' programme series under ECoC, an organ concert series was held in the village. In addition to providing a musical experience, the programme aimed to introduce audiences to the treasures of the region and the village through music.

51 km

| 357



BALATONEDERICS

The Africa Museum, the village's most famous attraction, is located in a picturesque setting. It was founded by the famous Africa explorer, the late Dr. Endre Nagy, who used the mansion as a hunting lodge for many years. The museum is the result of almost four decades of collecting, with a wealth of European and African trophies, but also on display are indigenous tools, hunting and fighting implements, furniture and folk art representing the culture of the African peoples, as well as Endre Nagy's personal belongings, his favourite weapons and hunting equipment in his study. The museum is surrounded by a small zoo, where you can see the typical animals of Hungary and many species of African wildlife.

With its more than six kilometres of length and stalactite richness unique in Western Hungary, Csodabogyós cave is a significant treasure of our country. It was named after the

prickly *Ruscus aculeatus* that grows in the area. The most impressive point of the cave is the 20 x 20-metre hall of the 'Hanging Gardens', where thousands of stalactites glisten in the company of dozens of stalagmite columns as tall as a man.

The village is one of the municipalities in the Lesence Region that have been brought together under the ECoC programme. Its events are traditional, linked to special days and wine culture. The most important events in Balatonederics are the summer programmes: the children's art camp and the beach activities. All of this has brought art to the shores of Lake Balaton, and community building has also been enhanced, with a deepening of the bond between the local and holidaying public.

52 km

| 1,099



LESENCEFALU

One of Lesencefalú's greatest prides is the Chapel of St Donatus, the patron saint of vintners. Built in Baroque style on a hill among the vineyards in the second half of the 18th century, the exact date and the builder of the chapel remain unknown. The sacred building has no tower, only an open bell holder above the entrance housing a single bell. Masses are still held in this chapel today. It also hosted the village's most significant event under the European Capital of Culture programme, the 'Little Evening Picnic'. The event began with young local poet Szabolcs Villányi reading his own poems, followed by a talk on the chapel's history by local history teacher Béla Kardos. Finally, attendees enjoyed a jazz evening with Happy Dixieland Band.

The village is pleased to have offered high-quality and diverse programmes to both locals and visitors, demonstrating that

even a small village can host quality cultural events. The success of these programmes highlighted the demand for similar events from both residents and visitors, leading to plans to establish traditions based on these initiatives.

52 km

| 311



VÁRVÖLGY

The first mention of the village dates back to 1121, from the foundation charter of the monastery of Almádi. At that time the village had been inhabited for some time under the name of Zsid. The village's monument is the Roman Catholic church of Alsózsíd, built in the 14th century in Gothic style. The church was rebuilt in 1899 in the Romantic style, so its original form was lost. Its bell, still in use today, was cast in 1524, making it the oldest bell in Hungary still in use. In Felsőzsíd there is a Baroque cemetery chapel built in the 18th century.

Many stone crosses and statues adorn Várköly. There are several memorials in the village and along the forest roads. One of Hungary's ancient trees was a 20-metre-high turkey oak with thin foliage, over 150 years old. The picture of the Virgin Mary with the Infant was found in one of its natural hollows. A few years ago, a storm knocked down the picture-

tree, so a new memorial was built near the original one. Kisláz Hill, north-east of Várköly, was the location of the largest Late Bronze Age highland settlement in Transdanubia in terms of its size. Its remains are known locally as the Devil's Stones.

The village has an active cultural life. Among the civil organisations, it is important to mention the Várkölyért Association and the Várköly Women's Club, the lifeblood of community life.

A memorable event of the ECoC year was the Old Year Farewell Value Trail Tour, which provided participants with interesting and useful information.

53 km →

👤 | 1,036



BALATONFENYVES

Balatonfenyves has been a family holiday resort on the southern shore of Lake Balaton for decades, known for its peace and quiet. Its five extensive outdoor beaches are an inviting attraction for families with little children. The recently established harbour with its high quality services caters to a discerning clientele with a high purchasing power. A curiosity is the Balatonfenyves Narrow-Gauge Railway, the only such means of transport on Lake Balaton. MÁV-START operates narrow-gauge trains to Somogyzentpál and Csisztafürdő, passing through legendary Nagyberk, every day of the year, making not only the destination but also the journey itself an experience for young and old alike.

A Mini Festival was held in the municipality in 2023 with the support of an ECoC grant. The basic idea came from the former Szín-Folt Gallery in Kaposvár, who for decades

had organised international exhibitions of miniature works. This exhibition was revived in Balatonfenyves with the help of twenty-two professional and amateur artists and complemented by various 'mini' accompanying activities, including experiential painting, a model show, minigolf and a Mini Band tribute concert.

55 km →

👤 | 2,305



BALATONGYÖRÖK

The best known place of Balatongyörök is Szépkilató viewpoint, from which you can see not only the southern shore of Lake Balaton, the Fonyód hill, but also the northern shore, the monadnocks of the Tapolca basin and the castle of Szigliget. The Györök JazzFiesta concert series, which has been held in the village for over ten years, is one of the traditional events in the village. Among the most important ECoC events is the popular series of performances of the Györöki KultúrMorzsázó programme entitled Me and My Instrument and one of its events, which invited two of Hungary's musical legends – Zsuzsa Koncz and János Bródy – to a meet-and-greet. The occasion was the 60th anniversary in 2023 of the meeting of the two young musicians on the Balatongyörök mole. From this encounter came a lifelong friendship and professional relationship.

In Balatongyörök, artistic, singing, dancing and community-building programmes were also organised, which were enjoyed by the local residents and visitors alike.

“We feel that every municipality that has participated in the ECoC project has increased its visibility. This was clearly reflected in the turnout. The grant also allowed us to try things we could not have done on our own. It gave us room to experiment. The spirit of the ECoC and the horizontal expectations – visitor-friendliness, child-friendliness, environmental sustainability, volunteering – helped us to learn new things and made us think responsibly. We continue most of the programmes we have launched using our own resources. We would be happy if the name Pajta (Barn), associated with ECoC, could continue to function as a sort of brand, which is a sign of the spirit and quality of those who have joined this project over the past two years.”

Mayor Róbert Biró

57 km

| 1,495



ZALASZÁNTÓ

The sights of the village include the Kotsy water mill, which serves as a demonstration site, as well as the nearby Castle of Tátika and the geological attraction of Basalt Street. Overlooking Lake Balaton from Világosvár Hill is Europe's largest stupa, the Peace Stupa, which contains Buddha's teachings, relics and a 24-metre Tree of Life inside.

The Zala County village has a tradition of hosting the Eggs Festival in May as a spring celebration: an exhibition of decorated eggs, a children's show, concerts and a crafts fair, and a performance by the local theatre group to close the day. In September, the Szántó Horse Riding Days-Pusztá People's Horse Race is held in conjunction with the grape harvest parade. The three-day event usually starts on Friday with an exhibition and folk dance, folk music and barn dancing, followed by the harvest parade and cultural programme on

Saturday and the horse race on Sunday after the morning Mass. Apple Day is held in early October, with an apple fair, a farmers' market and cultural programmes.

The Municipality of Zalaszántó participated in two VEB2023 ECoC calls.

In one of them, eight concerts and six exhibitions were held in the municipality, which would not have been possible without the grant. The other project was a series of programmes on vineyards and chapels on wine hills, and was carried out in cooperation with four other municipalities (Hollád, Kéthely, Balatongyörök and Lesencefalú). Participants also visited each other's events to learn about the culture, vineyards and chapels of the settlements involved.

57 km

| 1,022



VONYARCVASHEGY

“Behind us, the forest, ahead of us, water!” – This short but apt slogan reflects the magnificent natural features of Vonyarcvashegy, which also defines the social and economic conditions of the settlement, both in the past and in the present. The beach, the numerous sports facilities, the varied events, the rich gastronomic and wine culture and the other tourist and leisure facilities make Vonyarcvashegy one of the most popular holiday resorts in the West Balaton area.

The village's most beautiful and best-known attraction is the Fishermen's Votive Chapel on Szent Mihály Hill, a popular destination for excursions and weddings. Every year, the village commemorates the legendary event that led to the erection of the chapel.

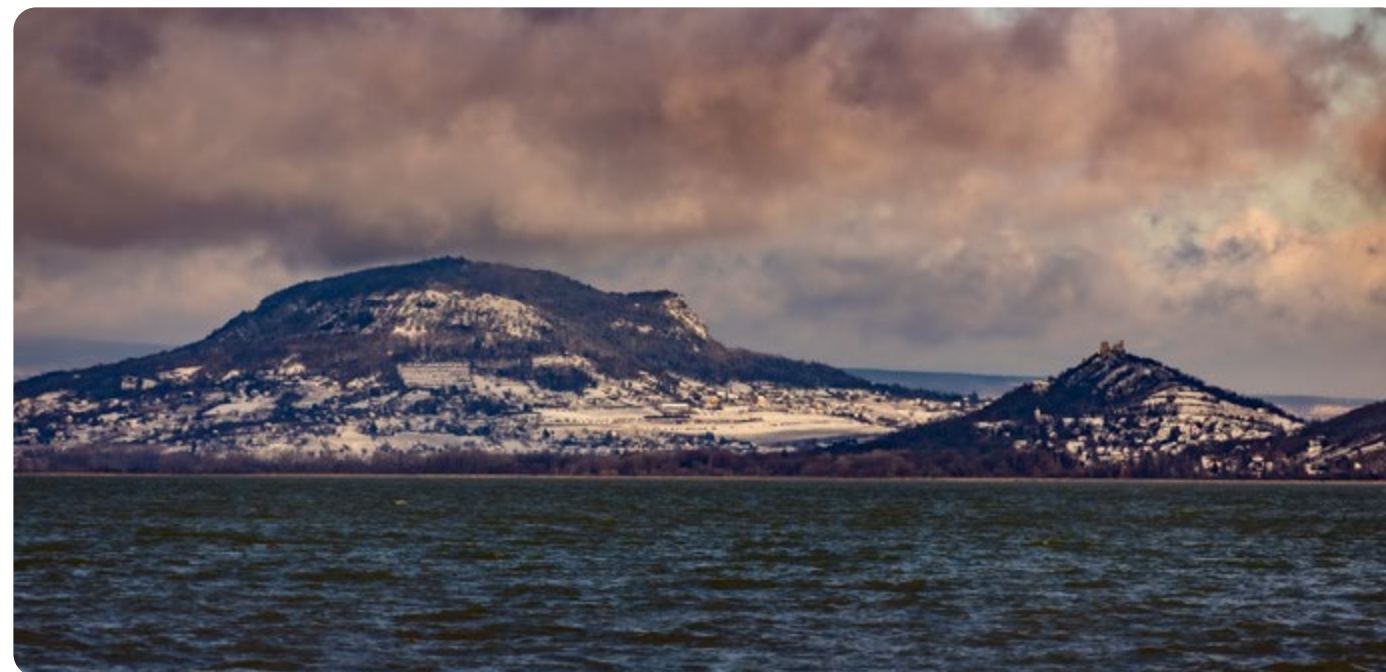
Vonyarcvashegy implemented a special series of theatre performances with the support of the VEB2023 ECoC grant.

The integrated company of the Imre Sándor Love Theatre and the TheatreStudio, with a company of people with disabilities, presented performances in special places, which were also related to the theme of the theatre: the play *The Book of Jonah* was performed at the chapel and the play *The Square Around Forest* was performed in the forest-side quarry. The series provided an unforgettable experience for the large audience.

For Vonyarcvashegy, the ECoC programme series was an opportunity to strengthen the local community, as the participants in the performances developed friendships, not just acquaintanceships. The troupe attracted participants from neighbouring villages, building a sort of cross-border network. Vonyarcvashegy plans to host similar non-traditional theatre, music and cultural events in the future.

58 km

| 2,751



BALATONMÁRFIAFÜRDŐ

The foundation of Balatonmárfiafürdő is linked to a special event: the phylloxera (grapevine root aphid) crisis of the 1880s led to the establishment of a vineyard for impoverished north shore vineyard owners on the south shore, on the outskirts of Balatonkeresztúr. The area was chosen because the grapevine root aphid could not build its tunnels in the sandy soil and thus destroy the vines. The Hungarian state leased the land from the local estate owner, Tasziló Festetics, where the planting was supervised by Count Imre Széchenyi, an agricultural expert and government commissioner from Somogy County. In 1896, the vintners of Györök, Vonyarc and Badacsonytomaj, who were given the opportunity to settle here, named the area Mária-telep in gratitude, after Széchenyi's wife, Mária Andrássy. Thirty years later, the settlement, which had been part of Balatonkeresztúr until then, became a municipality in its own right and was named Balatonmárfiafürdő.

The most important ECoC event for the municipality was Mária Days – International Wind Orchestra Meeting Balatonmárfiafürdő in the summer, which was renewed with the help of a grant: the festival was given more attention with the promotional concerts. The involvement of volunteers had a significant community-building effect.

ECoC's MiniGrant also supported an event called Dance Connects and Liberates, which gave a dance group of people with disabilities the opportunity to perform on stage. Integration and social inclusion became important elements in strengthening local identity.

59 km

| 892



SOMOGYSZENTPÁL

The small village is located in the south-western resort zone of Lake Balaton, partly in the nature reserve of the Fehérvíz marsh.

One of the attractions of the village is the narrow-gauge railway that runs between Balatonfenyves and Somogyszentpál, which dazzles its passengers with the magnificent beauty of the Balaton Nagyberek marsh and its wildlife. Every year on the first Saturday of September, hundreds of tourists come to visit the railway day, full of exciting activities.

The village's attractions and built heritage include the rural museum, the first room of which is furnished with traditional folk art furnishings, and the central part is an events hall with a traditional and a modern kitchen. Walking around the village, one can also admire the thatched-roofed houses with antechambers and 'clean rooms', preserving folk architecture.

For the village, the most important ECoC event was the Street Art Festival, where 16 artists transformed the walls of local institutions into unique pieces of art over two days. Since then, the spectacle has attracted many tourists. The municipality plans to hold this event every year.

60km

| 884



VINDORNYAFOK

When interpreting the name of the village, the prefix 'Vindornya' should be taken separately. This name is derived from the Latin occupational name 'vinitor', which means 'grape worker' in Hungarian. Another explanation is that the original meaning of the word 'vindornya' refers to a peaty, marshy area, in this case the once large Vindornya lake on the outskirts of the village. The origin of the second part of the name, 'Cape', is that it is here that the Vindornya stream flows into the Gyöngyös stream, and the people used to call such estuaries 'Cape'.

The village near Hévíz becomes a popular excursion point in the spring: the cherry-plum blossoming on the outskirts of the village in April is a spectacular sight.

Two events were held in the municipality during the ECoC year, which helped both the local population and guests from neighbouring municipalities to get to know each other better,

and also encouraged the formation of micro-communities. The first was the very well-received White Sausage Filling Pigstickers' Meeting and the second, the Dill Festival. Cooking and baking competitions were also held, where participants could learn about each other's habits, tips and tricks, as well as culinary culture.

61km

| 138



KESZTHELY

Keszthely is a settlement of the Lake Balaton region with unparalleled beauty and diverse natural surroundings as well as significant historical and cultural heritage. Festetics Palace is the most visited residence in Hungary, with its exhibitions and high-quality programmes. Georgikon, Europe's oldest agricultural college, the restored Fenékpusztá Manor and the Georgikon Manor History Exhibition Centre are also significant parts of the Festetics heritage. The spirit of the cultural patronage of this aristocratic family is carried on by Helikon Festivities, a tradition of over two centuries renewed in the modern age.

The legacy of the bourgeois era is marked by iconic establishments like the Island Bath, the buildings on Main Square, and Balaton Museum, which uniquely presents the history of the entire region, the lives and customs of our predecessors.

The city's most important ECoC event was KeszthelyFest, which, thanks to the support, developed into a multidisciplinary

art event attracting unprecedented crowds. Several smaller but equally important elements also enriched the city's cultural offerings, such as the unconventional Helikon, CultYard, the Artist of the City residency programme, the installation of a smart bench, and the Talking Cities-Keszthely Stories project.

"We established a Cultural Roundtable to develop a joint city strategy and to implement individual projects. Their work is also commendable, as in the course of the ECoC year, we managed to engage and attract a broader community to culture with unconventional and new approach events. We are developing best practices and partnerships that we owe to this exciting and successful period. As the cultural and intellectual centre of the Western Balaton area, this is not only a particularly important task for us but also a moral obligation inherited from our predecessors."
Mayor Jenő Manninger

62 km

| 18,400



BALATONBERÉNY

One of the most popular nature reserves of Balatonberény is the Csicsergő Peninsula, an area of willow and poplar groves, reeds and grassland, named after its diverse birdlife. The Somoshegy lookout is a favourite spot for visitors and offers an unrivalled panorama of Lake Balaton from Keszthely Bay to the Tihany peninsula.

The geographical location of Balatonberény is extremely favourable for the production of grapes. There are almost a hundred listed press houses on the wine hill, the oldest of which were built at the end of the 18th century. The wine region of Balatonberény was an inspiration for writer Béla Hamvas, who wrote The Philosophy of Wine under one of the arbours of Öregbokros. Elemér Futó (1939-2010) is one of the greatest natives of the village: a forester, nature conservation supervisor of Lake Balaton Kis-Balaton and former chief nature conservationist of the Balaton Uplands National Park.

The most significant project in the village in 2023 was the inauguration of Múlház (PastHouse) Museum, which was renovated thanks to the VEB2023 ECoC grant. The thatched-roofed, earth-foundation and earthen-walled building built in 1829 houses a covered outdoor demonstration and activity area with tools related to agriculture, viticulture and winemaking, and events that can link the past and present.

Other memorable ECoC events included a musical fairy tale production of Monsters and Mermaids, a music and dance performance of The Message of the Star of Bethlehem and a temporary exhibition entitled Where He Was Born Was Bethlehem, which revived the folk traditions of the winter festive season.

63 km

| 1,320



KÉTHELY

One of the village's notable landmarks is the chapel built on Kéthely Hill in 1870, where Mary Day Patron Saint's Fair is still held today. The Baroque-style Hunyady Palace has stood here since 1760 and was later expanded in the Neo-Baroque style. Fancsi Castle was built during the years of Turkish occupation by the local lords. The grassy area between the moat and the inner castle is now a Jewish cemetery. Within the ditches of the earthen castle, a protective palisade line was built.

Kéthely is becoming increasingly known for its Easter decorations. Every year, nearly ten thousand eggs and a growing number of Easter decorations adorn the centre.

Among the programmes implemented with support from VEB2023 ECoC, the vineyard walk and the cultural event held at the chapel were the most important ones for Kéthely. The event was part of a project aimed at the community-based

cultural rediscovery of the sacred heritage of the vineyards in the Western Balaton area and the tradition of vineyards as cultural landscapes, involving the collaboration of several villages. At each location, community life with decades of history has developed around the chapels and vineyards.

The beauty of the event was enhanced by a wide range of programmes: a pleasant hike in the vineyards, learning about agriculture, visiting enclosed gardens, exploring local cellars and wine tasting. The afternoon concluded with a gastronomic and cultural programme: attendees were welcomed at the chapel with oven-baked delicacies and local wines for tasting. In the picturesque setting, an exhibition of local photographs was put on, and the day ended with a concert. Seeing the success of the event, the participating villages plan to continue the programmes beyond 2023, contributing to sustainable land use and the preservation of landscape treasures.

64 km

| 2,099



HÉVÍZ

The first spa building over the unique Lake of Hévíz was built in 1795 by the estate owner Count György Festetics I, as the reputation of the beneficial effects of the muddy medicinal waters found there became increasingly widespread. There is no other lake of this size with natural medicinal water, where you can bathe in water with a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius in summer and around 24 degrees Celsius in winter.

Even with its popularity, Hévíz has remained a small town, offering its visitors a relaxed atmosphere, green spaces and a protected forest around the lake. The Egregy district also offers historical monuments like the Árpád-era church and the ruins of a Roman country villa.

For Hévíz, the most significant aspect of the cooperation with VEB2023 ECoC was the new type of event management principle that was implemented with the eco-conscious

'Forest Mystery' events. The sustainable transfer of cultural programmes into a natural environment brought people, nature and culture closer together.

"The initiative takes Hévíz further on the road to becoming one of the greenest tourist destinations in Hungary. The programmes in the Protective Forest and the museum gardens in Egregy show that there is a strong demand for quieter, more sustainable, creative and nature-oriented programmes. Similar events can complement, and, in some situations, even replace mass festivals, and they fit perfectly with the image of Hévíz, where naturalness and closeness to nature are a priority. Our goal is to hold more sustainable events in Hévíz in the future, in unusual and innovative venues and ways."

Mayor Gábor Papp

65 km

| 4,707



ALSÓPÁHOK

The village, which has a history of more than 750 years, stands out among the settlements around Keszthely with its well-kept environment, a wide range of services and a variety of programmes available to tourists. Visitors can relax in a modern village that keeps its traditions and protects its natural environment.

Alsópáhok joined the VEB2023 ECoC programme with the green area of the Páhok Kapo(l)cs Creative House. In the project 'Flourishing Orchard in Alsópáhok', a public (community) garden with native fruit species was envisioned. An 'experiment' was launched, which could serve as an example for small villages in an increasingly urban environment. Among other things, possible solutions for water retention through landscaping, cultivation methods for slopes and green fences were presented. Those interested in the garden have created opportunities for deep

connection with each other and with nature, and locals have changed from landscape users to responsible caretakers of the land.

They also joined the Pajta (Barn) Programme, making Páhok Kapo(l)cs Creative House a home of aesthetic education, tradition and innovation, combining the spirit of the place with the values of contemporary culture and bringing it to villagers. This has been done by organising creative cultural and artistic events, and by implementing garden-related educational and attitude-shaping programmes with a community focus.

Through value-mediating cultural activities, people of different ages and abilities have had the chance to enjoy creative work in a community and experience unity. Local communities reconnected by sharing their skills.

68km

| 1,575



VÖRS

The main attraction of Vörs is Europe's largest indoor Nativity scene, built by a team of locals every year since 1948.

Today, visitors can admire it on more than 60 square metres every year from the first Sunday in Advent until the end of January. The giant Nativity scene is made of plaster and, except for the human and animal figures, only natural materials. The construction of the Nativity scene, using 3 cubic metres of thuja, 20 pine trees and 4 cubic metres of wood, takes 10 days and is the result of a tenacious and well-organised team effort by the villagers. Every year, a completely different layout and constant innovations await tens of thousands of visitors from home and abroad, mostly German, French or even American tourists.

The other attraction, open to visitors all year round, is the firefighting museum, inaugurated four decades ago in the village's renovated fire station, the first rural exhibition centre of its kind in Hungary.

It also preserves the memory of József Gulyás, the 'man of the marshland'. This fisherman from Vörs was Hungary's first national park employee, appointed in 1922 to preserve the Little Balaton egret colony. Egret keeper József Gulyás can be considered the predecessor of today's nature conservation guards. It is thanks to his work that the egret population of Lake Kis-Balaton was saved.

The most important ECoC event, as the village recalls, was the exhibition 'On the Fair Borders of Bethlehem a Great Brightness Arose' and the nativity play of minority Hungarians from beyond the borders.

68 km

| 564



HOLLÁD

Hollád is proud of its traditions. A custom that is still alive today and unique to this region is the Nativity play with puppets, which is actively cultivated by the traditionalist group and is taken to many places in the Carpathian Basin during the Advent period. Another particularly valuable cultural treasure is the vineyard heritage, which locals have worked hard over the past decade to promote.

The municipality of Hollád was able to take the initiative in two collaborative ECoC projects building on the local heritage of the municipality. One programme, which lasted for two years, drew on Nativity traditions, while the other sought to reinterpret the sacral heritage of their vineyards by bringing together five municipalities in the West Balaton area. In both cases, useful and important community programmes were implemented.

“For the municipality, the ECoC Year brought, first and foremost, a sense of unity by being an active part of a cultural network. It allowed us to showcase our rich heritage as a small village. The valuable human relations and cooperation based on trust that have been established must be continued. With the right incentives, these programmes can continue, which can give further dynamism to shared thinking in the region.”
Mayor Gergely Kabai

69 km →

👤 | 277



MARCALI

The beneficial effects of the certified medicinal water of the Marcali Thermal Bath, along with the wellness and experience services, serve the physical and mental health of the guests.

The town's famous native, Aurél Bernáth (1895-1982), a two-time Kossuth Award-winning painter, is commemorated at Bernáth Aurél Gallery, where his artistic legacy and life journey are presented in the interactive permanent exhibition entitled Masterful Blues.

In Marcali, two international programmes were implemented under VEB2023 ECoC.

During the Festival of Nations, a four-day events series, Hungarian and European dancers and musicians showcased their talents, allowing guests to explore the cultures of various nations through exhibitions, processions, stage performances, and culinary events.

The International Nativity Meeting, with the professional leadership of the Marcali Museum and the participation of puppetry Nativity groups from Balatonberény, Hollád, Kéthely and Vörs, as well as presentations of Nativity plays from Csallóköz (Žitný ostrov) and Vojvodina, was a genuine community-building and identity-strengthening programme. Sustaining the tradition of Nativity scenes is deemed important by local communities actively engaging in their long-term preservation. There is also international interest in the puppet nativity traditions of the Marcali district.

The assessment by the municipality indicates excellent cultural programmes, fostering meaningful collaborations and exchanges of experiences among local, regional and international partners. Communities had the opportunity to showcase their cultural heritage to a wide audience, and numerous partnerships were formed, which could be sustained and further developed in the future.

69 km →

👤 | 11,328



ZALACSÁNY

Zalacsány, surrounded by forests and the Zala river valley, is blessed with a splendid natural environment and was probably inhabited as early as Roman times, as the Roman road of the time crossed the Zala valley. The village was deserted during the Turkish occupation and in the 1500s it became the property of the Batthyány family, who built two mansions in the village, which are now used as palace hotels. The historical landmark of the settlement, the monastery of the Order of St Paul, stood on Örvényes Hill. The walls of the monastery, which had been deserted, were demolished by the inhabitants who returned after the Ottoman occupation, and the village was rebuilt from its stones and bricks. Archaeological research of the monastery site started in 2017 and excavation is ongoing. The owner of the Pauline Resort, in collaboration with the Hungarian Order of St Paul, has created a memorial site on the former grounds of the monastery.

Örvényeshegy is home to Örvényesvölgy Festival, which offers concerts, literature, performances, children's programmes and gastronomy every year on the forest-edge stage with its wonderful acoustics.

The support of the VEB2023 ECoC programme contributed to the success of two major events: Örvényesvölgy Festival attracted 5,000 visitors, had 2 weekend programmes with 4 international acts including Grammy Award-winning Gipsy Kings and Grammy nominee Candy Dulfer; the Meeting of Pauline Settlements was also a major event for the village and its guests.

It is also worth mentioning that the Körtvélyes nature trail, which introduces the wildlife of Zala County forests, starts from the reservoir, which serves as a leisure centre and fishing lake, and that one of the largest golf courses in Central Europe – with 18 holes, suitable for world competitions – and a practice course are located on the outskirts of Zalacsány.

69 km →

👤 | 1,118



SZENTGYÖRGYVÁR

One of the most significant buildings in the Zala County village is the Széchenyi Cellar Wine and Events House. The almost 300-year-old cellar is named after the family that owned the village and the cellar for 250 years, and who gave the nation outstanding patrons and statesmen in the persons of Count Ferenc Széchenyi and his son, Count István Széchenyi. Behind the building is a huge 44-metre-long cellar in the bowels of the hill.

One of the village's landmarks is the Lipizzaner stud farm. Lipizzaner is widespread all over the world and has been bred for 400 years. The Hungarian stock stands out for its outstanding genetic value. These noble animals can be admired on the former Széchenyi estate: the horses are reared in a picturesque setting on the banks of the Zala stream. The village has a tradition of a decade and a half of carriage driving competitions, in which both county and Hungarian champion

carriages compete, and the aim of the Horse Days is to strengthen the county's equestrian sport.

Major events include the Martin's Day Festival, which is a tradition and a great success in the local community, with more and more people coming from further afield.

Since 2021, Margó Literary Festival has been held in Zala, hosted by Szentgyörgyvár. For the last two years the event has been supported by the VEB2023 ECoC programme. Thanks to the marketing provided by the event, the name of the municipality has become better known and more and more people have visited the village. There were several elements of the event – tours, workshops – which helped participants to explore the area and learn more about its culture. One of these was the unique 'Sántakutya' series, which brought together local people to tell exciting human and local stories.

70 km →

👤 | 381



SÁRME LLÉK

The village is located west of Lake Balaton, on the plains of Kis-Balaton. In its northern part lies the eastern slope of the Zala hills. The proximity of the Kis-Balaton makes it a popular tourist destination for cyclists and hikers. Hévíz-Balaton Airport, the largest international airport in Transdanubia, is located in the area.

Sármellék's history is also known from literature: Túskevár, the northern part, known from István Fekete's novel, is the oldest section of the village.

The Roman Catholic church in Dózsa György Street, built in 1839, is a listed monument of the village.

In Sármellék, the HangART Arts Without Borders event was held at the end of August 2023 in the former Russian barracks, a closed part of the airport in Sármellék. The three-day

HangART Youth Festival focused on the creative energies and community-building powers of modern art. The aim was to reach out to the young generation and shape their tastes through the use of multidisciplinary artistic means, using the unique atmosphere of Kis-Balaton and a special location.

The organisation and implementation of the event, supported by ECoC, provided a wealth of experience for local people; new professional contacts were made and the reputation of the municipality was enhanced.

71 km 

 | 1,762



