

# Newsletter.

PROMOTING  
PRIVATE SECTOR  
EMPLOYMENT



Via Ferrata Panorama in Prizren, photo by Lis Dorambari

## Creating Memorable Experiences for Tourists

An experience within a destination, then another experience within that same destination, and so on until the last day of a tour. A trip that is marked not only by the places visited, the food tasted, or souvenirs bought – rather, a trip marked by experiences, some novel and some more or less familiar but in a new destination. These are the experiences that a tourist will bring back home.

In 2019, many Kosovo tourism product owners have taken the leap to enhance the country's tourism offer with new products.

As a destination of exciting outdoors, the already varied list of things to see and do in Pejë/Peć is further enriched by **Marimangat** with the new Via Ferrata 3 and a unique tourism product in the country—the Tibetan Bridge, the longest of this type in the Balkans at 41 meters length and 60 meters high. **Wander Adventures** brought

a new hostel and camping site. The campsite in Shtupeq i Madh by **Camping LLC** in the heart of Rugova Canyon that is being developed will offer wooden glamping pods, a riverside beach area, open-air cinema and more.

Known for the rich cultural and historical heritage, home to DOKUFEST, Prizren is emerging as a new spot for the adrenaline lovers. With **Supercampers** you can go off mountain biking and kayaking along the rivers in the area. Via Ferrata Panorama just joined the list of other similar trails in Kosovo, a product managed by **Mountaineering Association SHARRI**. With the pilots of **Aero club SHKABA** you can paraglide over the city to enjoy another type of view.

In Prishtina, with its vibrant city life, coffee culture and monuments from different eras, you can still experience the rush of adrenaline, doing something different. **RAZ Escape Room** is

a confined space near the city center where you can unlock a great mystery. If you opt for nature, the trail at the **Bear Sanctuary** offers a chance for a relaxing walk while learning about native species and their habitat. For medieval aficionados, in 2020 they can experience sword fights and more at the medieval-themed park in Gračanica/Gračanicë, a project of **Ordo Draconis**.

Using the gifts of nature and human innovation, 2019 was marked by an abundance of ideas that came to fruition or are on the way to becoming the new experiences that the country will offer tourists in 2020, and make their Kosovo trip a memorable one. All these new products are a result of collaboration between all stakeholders in private and public sectors, with the support of Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, each playing an active role in developing the tourism sector!

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR WORK

# Partners Influencing Change - That is the Way Forward

■“What happens when companies increase production, diversify products and improve quality? Among other benefits, more jobs are created. Through activities in the Food and Natural Ingredients sector, PPSE partners with sector actors that are focused on innovation, growth, and access to new markets. The goal is to influence sustainable positive changes. These partners include exporting companies, collection centers, small and medium producers and lead farmers, input dealers, marketing service providers, or agencies facilitating trade linkages.

In line with the vision of becoming a leader in the sector of medicinal and aromatic plants processing, **ADE Group** has opened a new and modern processing plant in central Kosovo. Through the partnership with PPSE, the company has acquired a harvesting machine. Apart from cultivation and collection of MAPs, ADE Group works closely with farmers providing them with advisory services, new cultivation techniques, inputs, and secures the market. The company has recently received organic certification.

New products are a sure way for companies to stay relevant, competitive and satisfy consumer demand. **TP “N&N” Komerc**, which produces honey cookies “Medenjak Pasha” acquired a new processing line through PPSE. The company’s two new products are: chocolate honey cookies and glazed honey cookies. At least 6 new jobs for rural women from minority communities will be created. The partnership with **Kodra e Diellit** will supplement their list of products with new dried fruit-based products, and rolls and bars made of dried fruit.



This change directly impacts the company’s growth, job creation at company level and penetration into regional and EU markets.

High-quality vegetable seedling growing model in Kosovo is growing itself too! In 2018, our joint activity with **Fidanishtja e Godancit**, a vegetable nursery since 1993, focused on upgrading its seedling production technology in the existing greenhouse. In 2019, PPSE signed the second phase of the collaboration with this business to upgrade an additional 0.1 ha into a specialized vegetable seedling producer. As vegetable production in Kosovo is one of the most important sectors of agriculture, the quality of seedlings to be produced by Fidanishtja e Godancit represent an important step

to higher yield and quality, and contribute to further increasing the awareness of farmers about the benefits of this method of seedling production.

A growing business needs to have a brand that shows this growth energy and makes its products stand out from the crowd. Our partner **Natyra**, a processor of vinegars and different types of tea from medicinal aromatic plants is in the process of increasing production capacities and improving its final products, including packaging. For producers like Natyra, PPSE facilitated marketing services that among others, help companies with their branding and marketing needs. The improved products with improved packaging will be a new addition to the local market.





## Women Entrepreneurs Build Their Vision

■ If we look around with the intention to see where the women are in the private sector, we will find them as business owners, CEOs, managers; we will find them guiding groups around mountains, collecting medicinal aromatic plants, cultivating vegetables, overseeing processes and making sure businesses run and earn a living for their families.

But what does it mean to be a woman entrepreneur? What are their strategies in finding or creating employment? How can they think creatively, network and bring innovative approaches? What drives their vision?

To explore some of these questions and learn from women themselves what they need to thrive in their chosen roles, in November 2019 PPSE organized two different events that in total brought over 70 women entrepreneurs and professionals from tourism, food processing and gastronomy, marketing and ICT sectors.

At the first day workshop, women engaged in an out-of-the-box discussion, exchanging ideas between women from the food processing, tourism, ICT, and marketing fields. The idea behind this mix and format was to provide participants with a space to think creatively in an effort to encourage networking and innovative approaches to dealing with challenges, obstacles and think more clearly about their next steps and vision.

The goal was to find out from women themselves what has been done well and what still needs to be done and feed this information in the upcoming activities and interventions.

The second day was a networking event with two key goals. Firstly, it brought together two panels of women leaders in their fields from Kosovo and Albania to discuss about their path and growing their businesses, the importance of networking, mentoring, leadership skills that women of 21st century should possess, and how women from the private sector and other sectors can come together in a powerful network of their economic empowerment. The panel discussions were followed by networking opportunities among audience participants (all women entrepreneurs) and panelists.

Swisscontact's Kosovo project Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE) works in the food and natural ingredients and tourism sectors. Project interventions actively seek to mainstream gender equality and women's economic empowerment in all sector activities, and across all levels. Indeed, over 40% of the full-time employment and people who have benefitted from project activities in 2019 are women. PPSE aims to advance mainstreaming of women in all interventions with both sectors and empower them through targeted activities.



## DID YOU KNOW...?

A

...that branding, design, marketing and social media management services can be creative, professional and affordable for micro and small food processing companies? Through a partnership agreement between PPSE and **United Pixels Academy**, a group of creative young graduates of the academy worked closely with small food processing companies to improve the branding and marketing of new final processed products. **Biofruti**, a company that collects and processes medicinal aromatic plants, now has a newly designed modern brand through this partnership. Zarije Malsiu, owner, said she is very pleased with the service and end product by one of the young designers.

B

... that the hospitality sector is crucial to the development and sustainability of destinations? The "impact wheel" is a useful tool for hotel owners and managers to understand the impact of their activity in the surrounding businesses, areas, people and, at a larger scale, the economy. This tool was elaborated during a workshop facilitated by Swisscontact for hospitality industry representatives in Kosovo, where participants discussed how this information is crucial for improving visitor experience and growing. "I will take measures to effectively increase the positive impact of our hotel on the social, economic and environmental aspects," said Rron Jupa, owner of Çarshia e Jupave Hotel, who attended the workshop.

C

...chef Kurt Scheller arrived in Kosovo through Swisscontact's Senior Expert Corps, to work directly with the cooks and managers of Vila Park restaurant to introduce significant changes to their menu? During the two-week mission with Vila Park, chef Scheller supervised closely the training of one young cook. "In these two weeks I learned a lot about gastronomy, important things," said Riza Çollaku, the trainee. The SEC assignments are making a mark worldwide, wherever the experts travel and share knowledge [Click here to watch the video.](#)

D

...the new laser sorting machine that **Produktet Natyrale të Kosovës** acquired with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation sorts the pumpkin seeds based on size, shape, consistency, and other parameters needed to meet the international quality standards? Through this co-investment, in 2018 only PNK had 6 new full-time employees at the factory, 2 of whom are women; and engaged 12 additional seasonal workers for 8 months. "I have a 4-year contract with the company, and for 4 years now I am cultivating pumpkin. This gives me more security in life," said Drin Mula, one of the 45 contracted farmers. [Click here to watch the video.](#)

## BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE

# Rural Women in Kosovo Create Jobs and Better Lives

Increased women inclusion in the food and natural ingredients value chain is one of the PPSE result indicators. In 2018, all activities in this sector have generated some 475 full time employments of which, 189 are women, and some 1,731 additionally gainful employment for people, of which 676 are women.

Afërdita Murati, is proud of her line of fresh berry juices and jams, and rightfully so. It all started in 2014, when Afërdita had a high yield of raspberries from her 4 ha of land and used the surplus to make raspberry jam for her children along with and fresh, hand-squeezed aronia berry juice. Her business now sells a growing list of products to over 500 stores around the country.

Once started, Afërdita became a regular exhibitor in every food fair she could. "I would never achieve anything without networking. It is the missing ingredient on top of the idea and willingness if you want to achieve your vision," is Afërdita's word of advice to any woman entrepreneur. Apart from the business, Afërdita established an NGO to foster networking between women in the region and give them skills to earn a living.

In 2017, Afërdita expanded into cultivation of

aronia berry and fresh natural aronia juice that sells €15 a litre. As the client list grew, she hired her family and other women from the village to keep up with the demand.

With the support of the municipal authorities and donors, like the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, [Afërdita registered her business](#), bought the first pieces of equipment and built the production facilities. Through Swisscontact support, she purchased an automatic bottle-filling and capping machine. "It took 4 people to work a full day to fill and cap 500 bottles. With this machine, we complete the process in less than 30 minutes," says a happy Afërdita with the efficiency of the process that translated into more profit.

According to her, donor support, especially women-owned business, is the key. Through the

collaboration with Swisscontact, she will develop the new brand for her growing list of products, patent her recipes and do a proper marketing plan. Her goal is to maintain the unique artisanal character of products that differentiates them and begin exporting.

[Click here](#) to read the full story published on the occasion of the International Day of Rural Women.



Str. Sylejman Vokshi Nr.42 |10000 Pristina, Kosovo  
Tel: +383(0)38220403  
email: [ppseinfo@swisscontact.org](mailto:ppseinfo@swisscontact.org)  
website: [www.ppse-kosovo.org](http://www.ppse-kosovo.org) and  
[www.swisscontact.org/kosovo](http://www.swisscontact.org/kosovo)  
[www.facebook.com/ppse.kosovo](https://www.facebook.com/ppse.kosovo)  
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<https://www.instagram.com/ppsekosovo/>

### Promoting Private Sector Employment

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation project Promoting Private Sector Employment is implemented by Swisscontact and Riinvest Institute.