Swisscontact's work focuses on inclusive growth driven by an innovative private sector that creates employment and income.

**Skills Development**
Productive employment and earning an income through market-oriented vocational training and improved labour market access.

**Enterprise Promotion**
Strengthening productivity and competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises through sustainable value chain interventions, improved market access and local economic development.

**Inclusive Finance**
Empowering entrepreneurial people by improving their access to financial products, services and financial literacy trainings.

**Climate-Smart Economy**
Creating green jobs through efficient use of natural resources and clean production.

In this way, Swisscontact creates the conditions for a socially and ecologically responsible private sector, contributing to poverty reduction.

As an expert organisation, Swisscontact carries out high-quality project work. The cost-effectiveness and efficiency of its services is proven by well-documented, transparent monitoring and quantification procedures. Recurring internal and external checks provide proof of continued, sustainable development of expertise, skills and practical know-how.

Swisscontact was established in 1959 as an independent organisation by prominent individuals from the worlds of commerce and science in Switzerland. It is exclusively involved in international cooperation and since 1961 has carried out its own and mandated projects. Since it was founded, Swisscontact has maintained close ties with the private sector. Swisscontact is active in 34 countries with a workforce of over 1200 people. The organisation is based in Zurich.
Contents

2016 – Introducing and Fostering Innovation in Western Balkans ....................................................... 4

Eastern Europe Highlights 2016 ........................................................................................................... 7

Swisscontact Working Areas within Eastern Europe .............................................................................. 9

Projects

• Skills for Jobs (S4J), Albania ........................................................................................................... 10

• Coaching for Employment and Entrepreneurship (C4EE), Albania ............................................... 12

• Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE), Kosovo ................................................................. 16

• Increasing Market Employability (IME), Macedonia ................................................................. 20

• Swiss Entrepreneurship Program (SEP), Albania, Bosnia & Hercegovina, Macedonia and Serbia ................................................................. 22

Project Overview ................................................................................................................................. 24

Team Eastern Europe .......................................................................................................................... 26
2016 – Introducing and Fostering Innovation in Western Balkans

Dear Reader,

It is a pleasure to share with you the accomplishments of Swisscontact in the Western Balkans in 2016. This year, Swisscontact has further consolidated its role as the key player related to inclusive Skills Development, Market Sector Development, and Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Promotion through the further growth of our project portfolio. We continue striving for innovation across all our activities in the Western Balkans.

The establishment of a regional office earlier, brought about a much-needed cooperation among our country offices. Building on a coherent regional identity, we enhanced the exchange of good practise and expertise among projects as well as within our external professional network. This allows us to continue making a relevant and meaningful contribution to the sustainable growth of the region.

The “Skills for Jobs” (S4J) project – funded by Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) – started off in 2016 in Albania with a clear focus on innovative learning methods, strong engagement of companies in work-based training for students and smooth work to school transition. The introduction of new innovative
approaches to vocational skills development that integrate the private sector complements the over 20 years of experience of Swisscontact in Albania.

The rationale behind the “Swiss Entrepreneurship Program” (a flagship initiative by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) of Switzerland) is to create jobs by improving the performance and services of growth oriented entrepreneurs, start-ups and companies. In its first implementation year, the Program became operational and provided incubator and accelerator support and mentoring to organizations across Albania, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Macedonia and Serbia.

We take pride in the “Coaching for Employment and Entrepreneurship” (C4EE) project funded by Medicor, Canton of Zurich and Swisscontact. C4EE ended its second phase in 2016 with a remarkable income-generation and employability rate for marginalised jobseekers in Albania. Given its success, Swisscontact will commence a new phase of C4EE in 2017 that focuses newly on private sector engagement for the outsourcing of non-core business processes to jobseekers.

In 2016, the “Increasing Market Employability” (IME) project – another SDC Mandate – consolidated its support for job creation and income generation of unemployed and underemployed men and women in Macedonia.

One of the highlights here is the work toward increased visibility of Macedonian tourism and improving it in line with international standards.

Through an Inclusive Market approach, the “Promoting Private Sector Employment” (PPSE) project in Kosovo works in the food-processing and tourism sectors to create jobs by making the private sector more competitive. In its innovation efforts, PPSE supported the establishment of a brand-new adventure tourism product in Kosovo, an air lift called “zip-line”.

This remarkable year would not have been possible without our partners, clients and supporters. We appreciate their cooperation spirit and engagement in moving forward in our joint work towards inclusive economic and social development.

Henry Leerentveld
Eastern Europe Regional Director
Students of Hospitality & Tourism Program at the Vlora Commercial School, during their apprenticeship as receptionist and marketing assistant in a wellness center in Vlora, Albania
Eastern Europe Highlights 2016

5 projects in 6 countries of the Western Balkans: 2 Skills Development projects in Albania, 2 Inclusive Markets Projects in Kosovo and Macedonia and 1 Program for Entrepreneurship Promotion in Albania, Macedonia, Serbia and Bosnia-Hercegovina.

Increased capacity of more than 70 project partners' organizations and institutions in Western Balkans countries was made possible. Swisscontact is determined to make efforts with long-lasting impact.

120 full time jobs were generated in Kosovo as direct result of PPSE interventions for 85 farmers who cultivated 4 types of Medicinal Aromatic Plants. 95% of the products were exported as semi processed.

1677 students/trainees and 60 teachers in 5 partner VET providers directly benefited from various investment, capacity-building and work-based learning activities in Albania.

745,000 CHF is the estimated volume of sales for 156 Macedonian enterprises, due to IME project interventions.

475 participants of coaching cycle, of which 45,47 % women, generated income through employment or self-employment in Albania.

594 participants in the Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industries and Green Economy sectors have improved their skills in Macedonia.

117 hectares planted with high quality industrial varieties of 7 crops (tomatoes, peppers, gherkins, carrots, onions, and cabbage). A total of 168 farmers, 8 processing companies and 2 collection centers were involved in the intervention, generating over 150 full time jobs.

Over 40 new jobs created in Macedonia, and 277 participants benefited financially, as a result of Increasing Market Employability Project.

17 hectares planted with high quality industrial varieties of 7 crops (tomatoes, peppers, gherkins, carrots, onions, and cabbage). A total of 168 farmers, 8 processing companies and 2 collection centers were involved in the intervention, generating over 150 full time jobs.

1677 students/trainees and 60 teachers in 5 partner VET providers directly benefited from various investment, capacity-building and work-based learning activities in Albania.

745,000 CHF is the estimated volume of sales for 156 Macedonian enterprises, due to IME project interventions.

475 participants of coaching cycle, of which 45,47 % women, generated income through employment or self-employment in Albania.

594 participants in the Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industries and Green Economy sectors have improved their skills in Macedonia.

117 hectares planted with high quality industrial varieties of 7 crops (tomatoes, peppers, gherkins, carrots, onions, and cabbage). A total of 168 farmers, 8 processing companies and 2 collection centers were involved in the intervention, generating over 150 full time jobs.

Over 40 new jobs created in Macedonia, and 277 participants benefited financially, as a result of Increasing Market Employability Project.

594 participants in the Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industries and Green Economy sectors have improved their skills in Macedonia.

1677 students/trainees and 60 teachers in 5 partner VET providers directly benefited from various investment, capacity-building and work-based learning activities in Albania.

745,000 CHF is the estimated volume of sales for 156 Macedonian enterprises, due to IME project interventions.

475 participants of coaching cycle, of which 45,47 % women, generated income through employment or self-employment in Albania.

594 participants in the Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industries and Green Economy sectors have improved their skills in Macedonia.

117 hectares planted with high quality industrial varieties of 7 crops (tomatoes, peppers, gherkins, carrots, onions, and cabbage). A total of 168 farmers, 8 processing companies and 2 collection centers were involved in the intervention, generating over 150 full time jobs.

Over 40 new jobs created in Macedonia, and 277 participants benefited financially, as a result of Increasing Market Employability Project.

594 participants in the Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industries and Green Economy sectors have improved their skills in Macedonia.

1677 students/trainees and 60 teachers in 5 partner VET providers directly benefited from various investment, capacity-building and work-based learning activities in Albania.

745,000 CHF is the estimated volume of sales for 156 Macedonian enterprises, due to IME project interventions.

475 participants of coaching cycle, of which 45,47 % women, generated income through employment or self-employment in Albania.

594 participants in the Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industries and Green Economy sectors have improved their skills in Macedonia.

117 hectares planted with high quality industrial varieties of 7 crops (tomatoes, peppers, gherkins, carrots, onions, and cabbage). A total of 168 farmers, 8 processing companies and 2 collection centers were involved in the intervention, generating over 150 full time jobs.

Over 40 new jobs created in Macedonia, and 277 participants benefited financially, as a result of Increasing Market Employability Project.

594 participants in the Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industries and Green Economy sectors have improved their skills in Macedonia.

1677 students/trainees and 60 teachers in 5 partner VET providers directly benefited from various investment, capacity-building and work-based learning activities in Albania.

745,000 CHF is the estimated volume of sales for 156 Macedonian enterprises, due to IME project interventions.

475 participants of coaching cycle, of which 45,47 % women, generated income through employment or self-employment in Albania.

594 participants in the Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industries and Green Economy sectors have improved their skills in Macedonia.

117 hectares planted with high quality industrial varieties of 7 crops (tomatoes, peppers, gherkins, carrots, onions, and cabbage). A total of 168 farmers, 8 processing companies and 2 collection centers were involved in the intervention, generating over 150 full time jobs.

Over 40 new jobs created in Macedonia, and 277 participants benefited financially, as a result of Increasing Market Employability Project.
A Kosovar farmer in a open field day
Swisscontact Working Areas within Eastern Europe

Albania (Regions and towns)
- Tirana
- Durrësi
- Elbasani
- Lushnja
- Gjirokastra
- Saranda
- Fieri
- Vora
- Korça
- Berati
- Lezha
- Shkodra

Kosovo (Regions and towns)
- Pristina
- Gjakova
- Mitrovica
- Deçani
- Peja
- Prizreni
- Gjilani
- Ferizaj

Macedonia (Regions and towns)
- Skopje
- Prilep
- Ohrid
- Mavrovo
- Krusevo
- Strumica
- Veles
- Kocani

Serbia (Regions and towns)
- Belgrade
- Novi Sad
- Niš

Bosnia and Herzegovina (Regions and towns)
- Sarajevo
- Tuzla
- Mostar
- Banja Luka
Skills for Jobs (S4J), Albania

The SDC-funded project Skills for Jobs (S4J) helps Albania to establish a training system relevant to the employers’ needs. The system will support young women and men by equipping them with the skills required in this dynamic technology-based world of work.

By making the Vocational Education and Training (VET) offer demand-oriented and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based, S4J project improves the access of students and trainees to qualitative training, employment and income opportunities, allowing them to find attractive and decent jobs. In this way, the project contributes toward a modern and smart economy.

S4J started its implementation phase in May 2016 and will run until February 2019. It addresses the main challenges of the Albanian vocational skills development system: low quality and status; insufficient financing; weak labour market orientation of VET offer; and poor private sector involvement in VET delivery. S4J focuses on the economic sectors of Hospitality & Tourism, Construction (energy efficiency) and Textiles, with Information & Communication Technology as cross-cutting topic.

The project interventions are implemented through three components with the following scope of operations:

- Improvement of the quality of formal and non-formal Vocational Skills Development in focus sectors, benefiting companies and increasing accessibility to women and youth;
- Functionality at the provider level of inclusive labour market insertion facilities and instruments;
- Sustainable and innovative relations of VET providers with the private sector.

By introducing new ways of learning, optimising the use of technology in VSD, bringing school to the business and businesses to schools, and supporting the transition of students from school to job, S4J seeks to achieve these two outcomes:

- Young people will access market oriented formal and non-formal education and training programmes in selected sectors.
- The private sector will play a strengthened role in the gender-sensitive provision of VSD in selected VET providers.

S4J engages in promoting girls to enroll in VET, especially in ICT programs, and in addressing the drop-out phenomenon through coaching for VSD.
Highlights 2016

- 71 private companies engaged with S4J in VSD cooperation, out of 100 visited by S4J team.
- 70 VET students and 6 trainees from Vlora participated in 2 project-based learning actions on production of festive urban decorations and use of Adobe-Photoshop in social media.
- The Network of 13 Master Trainers for New Ways of Learning is operational.
- First 2 IT labs installed in partner schools, increasing learning opportunities for all ICT program students.
- First 2 business networks started at regional and national level resulting in 150 available places to students for practical training.
- 124 students from 4 vocational schools participated in “Open Day at the Business”;
- 22 employers were live-streamed from 4 vocational schools, where they met with 487 students.
- For the first time in the Albanian VET system, a Career Center was established in Lezha, providing career orientation services to all Hospitality-Tourism and ICT students.
- 1677 students and trainees in partner VET providers have benefited from various S4J activities.

We both thought ICT is for boys, you know, fixing PC hardware with a screwdriver. Now we know better, and have persuaded our girlfriends to join ICT program in “Kolin Gjoka”.

Eduala Pjetri (16) Ledidjana Syla (16), ICT students in 10th year, at “Kolin Gjoka” Vocational School in Lezha.
Coaching for Employment and Entrepreneurship (C4EE), Albania

Enabling disadvantaged groups to enter the labour market

Albert, after completing the coaching cycle, got a job as a fitter for duralumin constructions
C4EE, a project funded by Medicor Foundation, Canton of Zurich and Swisscontact, facilitates the integration of marginalized unemployed youth in the labour market and promotes private sector cooperation.

Coaching for Employment and Entrepreneurship (C4EE) is a set of tools for school-to-work transition and labour market accessibility for vulnerable groups. This methodology is based on a coaching cycle of 12 months of support for job seekers in difficulties. It uses the individual development plan, (the profile and potential career path of a participant) and the business plan (when the participant would like to open a business or choose self-employment) as main guiding instruments to support the jobseeker. It is implemented in close partnership with 12 regional offices of the National Employment Services (NES), 8 local partner NGOs and the private sector. The project enables the labour market integration of youth from marginalized groups through employment, self-employment support and entrepreneurship. This implementation stage was completed in December 2016.

The private sector plays a crucial role in offering jobs, providing internships and on-the-job learning for vulnerable jobseekers. C4EE facilitates the mobilization of companies and business developers’ teams to create innovative approaches and business ideas about how to become potential buyers of the services delivered by coaching cycle participants.

The expansion and institutionalization of the C4EE approach is ensured by integrating it with the New Service Model. The model will be provided by public employment offices throughout Albania to promote social responsibility among involved private companies and their associations.

Main project interventions consist of:
1. Support and guidance for the participants during the process of the coaching cycle and job search;
2. Modular Training for staff of (NES) and local NGO partners on coaching vulnerable individuals seeking employment;
3. Institutionalization of the approach under the services for jobseekers provided in NES;
4. Development of innovative and sustainable products and services by participants of the coaching cycle that link them to the private sector.
Meet Anton, a coaching cycle participant, now the library assistant in the “Arka” youth center, Shkodra.
I learned that I was able to do something and it was worth working for it.”

Naxhije Rexha (25), a participant of the coaching cycle groups, now employed as cook in a coastal resort in Lezha, her home town.

**Highlights 2016**

- The National Employment Services acknowledge Coaching for Employment and Entrepreneurship as an adequate approach to serve job-seekers in Albania.
- 347 coaching cycle participants (50.4% women) benefited from partnership agreements with 7 civil society partners.
- 404 marginalized unemployed participants (40.7% women) benefited from coaching cycles implemented by the newly trained coaches.
- 22 coaches from NES staff certified successfully as coaches.
- 3 local co-trainers completed the training of trainers successfully organised by Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts.
- 6 functional models of cooperation established with the private sector. 17 participants benefited from self-employment activities and vocational training posts created through these models. Success stories were broadcast in national media for visibility.
- An impact study that analyzed the factors and results of the approach, informed the design of the upcoming the C4EE phase with a stronger focus on private sector cooperation and the regionalization of the C4 brand in Kosovo.
The main goal of the SDG-funded project “Promoting Private Sector Employment” is to attain large-scale sustainable impact on employment in Kosovo through improved competitiveness of the private sector.

Having the sustainable and gainful employment for men and women as its main target, the PPSE project interventions seek to create significant change for SMEs that operate in well-organized economic sectors, e.g. increased productivity leading to increased income and generation of new jobs. On the other hand, better organized SMEs influence respective sector policies and support development of public policies that are a better match for private sector needs. PPSE interventions also seek to reduce barriers for women to access sustainable gainful employment and to increase their decision-making power.

The project has two focus sectors. The food processing sector includes fruit and vegetable processing and non-wood forest products processing. In 2016, the project supported farmers in cultivating additional industrial varieties of crops and medical aromatic plants, and processors in participating to international trade fairs.

The tourism sector concentrates its work in the western part of Kosovo in developing new products and building capacities to generate sustainable employment. In 2016, PPSE has significantly enriched the tourism opportunities with the opening of the Radavci cave; the opening of ZIP line; the local and international promotion of attractions in western region and Kosovo in general.

The PPSE project is implemented through the Inclusive Markets approach. This approach influences the necessary and long-term changes in market systems through its interventions resulting in increased growth rates in focus sectors, and in companies supported through the Opportunity Fund. The Opportunity Fund is a granting mechanism to boost private sector growth and job creation for young people. It funds interventions that test new, innovative and risky ideas, and offer an opportunity for a market shift.
Cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants is a sector that employs many women in Ferizaj.
Highlights 2016

- 117 hectares planted with high quality industrial varieties of 7 crops: tomatoes, peppers, gherkins, carrots, onions, and cabbage. A total of 168 farmers, 8 processing companies and 2 collection centers were involved, generating at least 150 full time employments.

- At least 85 farmers cultivated 4 types of Medicinal Aromatic Plants: mallow wild, oregano, pot marigold, and cornflower. 95% of the products are exported as semi processed. At least 120 full time jobs were generated.

- Kosovo tour operators supported in their exhibit at 3 international tourism fairs: WTM London, ITB Berlin and Izmir Tourism Fair. Around €156,000 and 15 FTEs (direct and indirect) were generated.

- Intervention for tourism product development through the co-facilitation of local partner Gears-up Solutions aimed to enrich the tourism offer for domestic, diaspora and international tourists. Preliminary data show an income increase of around €20,000 from this intervention.

- Inaugurated Radavci cave in the Western Kosovo region as a tourism attraction as the first restored cave with lighting, guides, safety equipment and a souvenir shop.

- Vegetable processor Ananas Impex –LLC introduced a new automated drying processing line that increased industrial processing capacities of red peppers from 300 t/year to 1,400 t/year. More than 80% of raw material is sourced from domestic producers through an expanded network of collection centers and farmers.

- PPSE co-invested in The Zip Line, a brand-new adventure tourism product in Kosovo in partnership with NGO Marimangat e Pejës and Pejë/Pëc Municipality.
Adventure tourism lovers climbing the Via Ferrata in Peja
Increasing Market Employability (IME), Macedonia

Enabling economic growth through job creation.

*Increasing Market Employability is a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, implemented by Swisscontact with the assistance of PREDA Plus.*

Increasing Market Employability (IME) aims to create jobs and increase incomes of unemployed and underemployed women and men in Macedonia, with a focus on youth. The project will run for five years. Implementation started in April 2014.

IME programme is strengthening the business sector in Macedonia by improving the quality of products and services offered; expanding markets; and creating an enabling environment in selected sectors. The selected sectors are: Tourism & Hospitality; Creative Industries (IT, Software Development, Product Design); and Green Economy (Organic Agriculture, Sustainable Building).

The project targets systemic changes in the market systems to increase growth in the selected sectors, by addressing the key underlying causes for the bottlenecks that hamper job creation. The aim is to produce sector-wide change and have sizable results that affect job creation in the whole market segments that are targeted.

Goals of the project include the following:
- Enterprises in Tourism & Hospitality, Creative Industry and the Green Economy will grow by expanding the existing market and accessing new market opportunities.
- Access to improved services (skills support functions, financial services) will be enhanced for enterprises in the three sectors.
- The policy and regulatory frameworks will be more conducive to private sector growth in targeted areas.
Highlights 2016

- 277 beneficiaries directly benefited financially (Benefit Outreach) from IME interventions.
- 41 additional jobs created during the first half of 2016, 32% of whom were women and 64% youth.
- 3,665 beneficiaries are accessing improved services/inputs/market linkages, out of whom, 796 individuals were upskilled in 2016.
- Estimated volume of sales of 745,000 CHF for 156 Macedonian enterprises in 2016 due to IME interventions.
- Co-organized regional Adventure NEXT Balkan Conference in Ohrid showcasing Macedonia’s adventure travel assets to 287 delegates, 43 of whom were international buyers and 26 international media.
- Organic certified beans seeds planted on 3-hectare demonstration plot. Bio Suisse certification facilitated; beans are to be exported to Switzerland with planned upscaling to 20 hectares in 2017.
- 8 week pre-accelerator programme with 21 teams with 47 young entrepreneurs.
- Bringing Swiss hospitality in Macedonia through training and certification of 18 Master Trainers organized by the Swiss Hotel Management Academy of Lucerne, with co-investment from the Ministry of Economy.

“Going to the Chile World Adventure Travel Conference through the IME Programme helped me understand the adventure tourism community, the future developments in the industry and what direction will it take, but most of all I was able to see the enormous potential of developing this type of tourism in Macedonia. The IME Programme helped me establish business relations with Swiss and US tour operators and I will work hard to ensure that many other will follow.”

Emilija Fildishevska from Macedonia Travel, Skopje.
Swiss Entrepreneurship Program (SEP) Albania, Bosnia & Hercegovina, Macedonia and Serbia

This flagship initiative by SECO creates jobs by strengthening entrepreneurship ecosystems in Albania, Bosnia & Hercegovina, Macedonia and Serbia. Swiss Entrepreneurship Program (former SECO Entrepreneurship Program) supports ecosystem organizations to improve their business models and acceleration programs. Growth-oriented entrepreneurs, startups and companies profit from the program’s systemic approach by receiving state of the art services in order to grow and sustain their business.

The overall objective of the Swiss Entrepreneurship Program is to create and sustain jobs. This long-term impact will be achieved by strengthening the entrepreneurship ecosystem in the selected countries. Through the systemic approach of the program, ecosystem organizations and actors are supported in improving their services, performance and thus sustainability. The target groups of these improvements are growth-oriented entrepreneurs, startups and companies. Wherever possible and appropriate, Swiss Entrepreneurship Program builds up links to other initiatives with the same aim and target groups in order to create synergies.

Swiss Entrepreneurship Program also includes these cross-cutting interventions and activities:
- Increasing the number of and enhancing women entrepreneurs and fostering their participation within the ecosystem, for instance through NexGen Women Bootcamps;
- Activating diaspora members as mentors, investors and in the media;
- Peer-to-Peer Learning Exchanges.

The Swiss Entrepreneurship Program methodology includes four main interventions:
1. Incubator & Accelerator Support - This intervention aims at developing or enhancing self-sustained business models and management capacities in partner organizations as well as introducing up to date acceleration programs for growth-oriented entrepreneurs.
2. Mentoring - Enabling local organizations to build their network of local (and diaspora) mentors and define a value proposition to help engage and retain those mentors. Partner organizations are supported to provide mentor and master mentor training.
3. Angel Investments - Supporting partner organizations to activate and engage with angel networks and jointly organize angel investor workshops to ultimately facilitate private investments in startups.
4. Media Buzz – Supporting partner organizations to increase their capacities for producing and sharing content regarding entrepreneurship. Local media representatives and journalists are sensitized to increase publications on entrepreneurial topics and success stories.

1. Incubator & Accelerator Support - This intervention aims at developing or enhancing self-sustained business models and management capacities in partner organizations as well as introducing up to date acceleration programs for growth-oriented entrepreneurs.
Highlights 2016

- Assessments and mappings of each ecosystem and its actors were conducted in the initial phase of the program. Based on the findings, a country specific strategy was elaborated, taking into consideration the preconditions and readiness of existing ecosystem actors.
- Swiss Entrepreneurship Program achieved the status of positive recognition and acceptance by ecosystem actors through dialogue, trust building and offering a sound proposal.
- In each country, negotiations with various ecosystem actors were conducted and led to agreements being signed with a total of 24 partner organizations in the Western Balkans. However, Swiss Entrepreneurship Program remains open towards new partners.
- Intervention focused on Incubator & Accelerator Support, Mentoring, and on content creation as one part of Media Buzz. Partner organizations were supported by SEP on how to work with media.

"The session with Swiss EP experts have helped us to see our business by another wide and objective point of view. They’ve helped us identify and solve problems that we didn’t consider in the beginning. Our business functions have become more clear and it has become easier for us to present our business in the front of potential investors. A big support has been regarding the way we should and shouldn’t highlight."

Nesila Hajdini, Co-Founder of Arch.
## Project Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Donors/Partners</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Results to date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills for Jobs (S4J)</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>2015-2019</td>
<td>1677 VET students and trainees have accessed improved VSD by 5 VET providers in Vlora, Lezha and Berat. Smoother transition from school to work was facilitated by an operational Career Center in Lezha, serving all ICT and Hospitality -Tourism students. The ground work was prepared for Twinning Agreements with Swiss schools. E- platforms for labour market integration, relations with employers and school management were developed for school modernization (to be implemented in 2017).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching for Employment and Entrepreneurship (C4EE)</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>Medicor Foundation, Canton of Zurich, Swisscontact</td>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>817 participants (50.3 % females) were supported with coaching, entrepreneurship and job matching activities by 22 trained coaches from 12 regional offices of the National Employment Services and 16 coaches from 8 partner NGOs. 475 participants (45.47 % females) generated income through employment/self-employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SME Promotion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss Entrepreneurship Program (SEP)</td>
<td>Albania, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia</td>
<td>SECO</td>
<td>2015-2019</td>
<td>Collaboration agreements signed with 24 partner organizations in the Western Balkans. More than 20 workshops held on accelerator management and programs and 15 workshops on mentoring with more than 150 mentors attending. 15 organizations upgraded their business model and/or acceleration programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing Market Employability (IME)</td>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>About 141 jobs created in the first 16-month period of the implementation phase. Out of 3,665 beneficiaries reached in private businesses, public institutions and civil organizations, 1,626 used and/or applied the service, input on market directly as a result of IME interventions, and 482 benefited financially. IME up-skilled more than 594 participants (284 women; 97 youth) (employees, managers and owners) in the three sectors of the programme, and increased the skills of 845 unemployed people (308 women; 674 youth). Regional and international promotion and cooperation was established for expanding the markets for organic agriculture, software and tourism products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE)</td>
<td>Kosovo</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>2014-2017</td>
<td>500 Full Time Employment places, generated mainly in the food processing sector (84%), where over 550 SMEs in the food processing and tourism sectors have generated more than €850,000 net additional income. PPSE has supported the sectors with interventions in: capacity building (improvement of national tourism statistics, introduction of fair management system); advocacy initiatives (late payment law, internal trade law, UNWTO membership); introduction of internal firm organization services and awareness campaigns on business-relevant legal issues and property rights; and training for gender inclusion in the business sector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Team Eastern Europe

**Skills For Jobs (S4J), Albania**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henry Leerentveld</td>
<td>Regional Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rozandi Louw</td>
<td>Deputy Regional Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fation Dragoshi</td>
<td>Deputy Project Manager &amp; Component Manager for Labour Market Insertion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidita Dibra</td>
<td>Component Manager for VET &amp; New Ways of Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena Dimashi</td>
<td>Component Coordinator for Business Relations and Organisational Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brikena Sallaku</td>
<td>MRM Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maksim Konini</td>
<td>Senior Expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eriola Shingjergji</td>
<td>Gender and Communication Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albana Lapaj</td>
<td>Labour Market Insertion Expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borana Barjami</td>
<td>Labour Market Insertion Expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steljana Shiba</td>
<td>Finance and Admin Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ines Troqe</td>
<td>Junior Business Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riselda Dani</td>
<td>Project Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iva Stratoberdha</td>
<td>Event Management Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serjan Llazari</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coaching For Employment And Entrepreneurship (C4EE), Albania**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henry Leerentveld</td>
<td>Country Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kleidor Rustemi</td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brikena Sallaku</td>
<td>MRM Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elvira Idrizi</strong></td>
<td>Coaching and Training Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena Dimashi</td>
<td>Senior Business Relations Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steljana Shiba</td>
<td>Finance and Admin Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ines Troqe</td>
<td>Junior Business Relations Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riselda Dani</td>
<td>Junior Business Relations Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iva Stratoberdha</td>
<td>Event Management Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serjan Llazari</td>
<td>Logistics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Increasing Market Employability (IME), Macedonia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rozandi Louw</td>
<td>Programme Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijana Milevska</td>
<td>Deputy Programme Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biljana Solakovska Mihajlovskva</td>
<td>MRM Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena Ivanova</td>
<td>Tourism and Hospitality Sector Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoran Todorovski</td>
<td>Tourism and Hospitality Sector Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igor Mishevska</td>
<td>Green Economy Sector Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriela Micevska</td>
<td>Green Economy Sector Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boban Cvetkovic</td>
<td>Creative Industries Sector Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emilija Jovanova Stoilkova  
Skills Development and Youth Specialist (on maternity leave)
Zaklina Gestakovska  
Gender Specialist
Lidija Damceska  
Skills Development and Youth Specialist
Ema Ilkovska  
Finance and Administration
Dejan Stojanov  
Communication Officer
Stojan Mishev  
Project Administrator
Angel Milosev  
Driver and Logistic Support

**Promoting Private Sector Employment (PPSE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigrid Meijer</td>
<td>Country Director and Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisnik Recica</td>
<td>Deputy Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanjima Ali</td>
<td>Monitoring and Results Measurement Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisnik Bajrami</td>
<td>Monitoring and Results Measurement Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dafina Balidemaj</td>
<td>Market Sector Facilitator, Food Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Besnik Cecelia</td>
<td>Market Sector Facilitator, Food Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avni Ramadani</td>
<td>Market Sector Facilitator, Food Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alida Muhashiri</td>
<td>Facilitator, Women’s Economic Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blerina Batusha Xerxa</td>
<td>Market Sector Facilitator, Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dren Zatriqi</td>
<td>Market Sector Facilitator, Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivana Bozic</td>
<td>Facilitator, Minorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malva Govori</td>
<td>Facilitator, Private Sector Development Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibrahim Bejtullahu</td>
<td>Opportunity Fund Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Baleta</td>
<td>Communications &amp; PR Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lendita Haziri Daka</td>
<td>Head of Finance and Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venera Dyla Azemi</td>
<td>Accountant/Administration Support Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agim Malazogu</td>
<td>Driver/Logistics Support Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Swiss Entrepreneurship Program (SEP)**

**Albania**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blendina Cara</td>
<td>Project Officer and MRM Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasianilda Nika</td>
<td>Finance Manager and Administration Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keti Gjipali</td>
<td>Eco-System Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasken Spiru</td>
<td>Eco-System Facilitator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Serbia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milos Lazovic</td>
<td>Project Officer and MRM Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svetlana Basaric</td>
<td>Finance Manager and Administration Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luka Prisunjak</td>
<td>Eco-System Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milena Milic</td>
<td>Eco-System Facilitator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Macedonia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nina Nikoli<code>k</code></td>
<td>Eco-System Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakob Modéer</td>
<td>Regional Entrepreneurship Program Manager Western Balkans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We create opportunities.

Swisscontact – Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation

Albania
Swisscontact
Rr. Skenderbej
P. 6, Hyrja 1/1
Tirana, Albania
Tel/Fax: +355 42 232 778

Kosovo
Swisscontact
Rr. Major Mehmet Bushi
L.12, Nr.1
Prishtina, Kosovo
Tel: +381 38 520 403

Macedonia
Swisscontact
Str Debarca no. 11
1000 Skopje
Macedonia
Tel: +389 23 100 131

Serbia
Swisscontact
Palmoticeva
22/5, 11000
Belgrade, Serbia
Tel: +381 11 324 4767

www.swisscontact.org

Publishing Information:
Cover: Increasing Market Employability (IME), Macedonia
Photos: Swisscontact staff
Layout: Elda Pineti, Albania

Swiss NPO Code: The structure and management of Swisscontact conforms to the Corporate Governance Regulations for Non-Profit Organisations in Switzerland (Swiss NPO Code), issued by the presidents of large relief organisations. An audit conducted on behalf of this organisation showed that Swisscontact adheres to principles of the Swiss NPO Code.

ZEWO Seal of approval: Swisscontact was awarded the Seal of Approval from ZEWO. It is awarded to non-profit organisations for the conscientious handling of money entrusted to them, proving that donations are allocated appropriately, efficiently, and effectively. In addition, it stands for transparent and trustworthy organisations with functioning control structures that uphold ethics in the procurement of funds and communication. Swisscontact is regularly audited for compliance with these criteria. (Source: ZEWO)

April 2017