

YDEAS

Igniting Innovation in Young Entrepreneurs

*Young Developers and Entrepreneurs
to Advance Start-Ups (YDEAS) – Phase 2*



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YDEAS fosters innovation and social entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans through scholarships, capacity building, networking, and community activities. It helps young women and men develop entrepreneurial skills, creates opportunities, and nurtures an environment conducive to innovative, socially impactful, and eco-friendly start-ups.

Key Project Achievements

Enhanced Entrepreneurial Skills:

YDEAS has helped young women and men (18-25) in the Western Balkans increase their entrepreneurial skills and has established a robust platform for networking and interaction.

Social Entrepreneurship

Network: Leveraging the OSCE's expertise, a network of young social entrepreneurs has been established across the Western Balkans, promoting innovation and human capital development.

Policy Development Knowledge-Base:

A comprehensive resource has been created, supporting future policy developments in human capital and a business-friendly climate for social and green entrepreneurs in the Western Balkans.



Beneficiaries

- Youth aged 18-25
- Regional and Local Authorities in the Western Balkans

Project Budget

€461,262
(Pledged: €390,259)

Project Duration

March 2020 - December 2024

Donors


Italy, Poland, Germany

Investing in the future: enhancing entrepreneurial skills for young women and men

OSCE Scholarship Programme: Thirty young women and men aged 18-25 in the Western Balkans received scholarships to attend the summer acceleration programme at the European Innovation Academy (EIA), a recognized leader in tech entrepreneurship education. The three-week programme in which participants worked with innovation gurus to take their start-ups to the next level was held in July and August 2023 in Porto, Portugal.

Community-based activities: YDEAS held a series of community-based

activities, including innovation weekends, hackathons, workshops and seminars to increase knowledge and capacities in under-served communities.

- **Regional Hackathon, Lake Ohrid,** 4-6 November 2022 - Under the motto “Inspire, Connect, Enable”, 80 participants took part in creative problem solving exercises on business, the environment, data and smart communities.
 - **Responsible Business Workshop,** 9 December 2022 - The OSCE Presence in Albania and Deloitte Legal held a workshop for 20 young developers and start-ups on how to develop and run a start-up in compliance with local legal frameworks, emphasizing integrity as key to success.
 - **National Integrity Week Workshop,** 7 December 2023 - The OSCE Presence in Albania organized a workshop for 16 students, entrepreneurs and startups focusing on business integrity and entrepreneurship.
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- **Toolkit for Start-ups Launch, 7 May 2024 -** The OSCE Presence in Albania in collaboration with Deloitte Legal launched the Toolkit for Start-ups, on how to establish and develop a start-up in Albania. The Toolkit launch included an interactive ideathon workshop for 21 young entrepreneurs on developing business ideas and pitching strategies, as well as information on financial sources and guidance on regulatory frameworks.

Connecting innovators and start-uppers: The Social Entrepreneurship Network

A virtual platform for entrepreneurs:

The YDEAS platform was developed to provide a space for the YDEAS community of social innovators, including investors, support services and other businesses to foster business planning, networking, exchanging experiences, projects, investment and work opportunities.

Networking and continuous learning opportunities have been hosted for entrepreneurs from different OSCE regions and networks of social enterprises through YDEAS events, workshops and study tours.

2023 Youth Forum Skopje: 17 young entrepreneurs from the Western Balkans joined other young innovators and change makers from the OSCE region in Skopje to discuss how entrepreneurship – especially social and green entrepreneurship – can address growing economic, social and environmental challenges, foster inclusive development, bridge inequalities and create peaceful, secure and prosperous societies. Recommendations were presented at the 2023 OSCE Ministerial Council meeting.

Promoting policy-relevant dialogue

Green Paper on Social Economy in the Western Balkans – To promote policy-relevant dialogue and create an ecosystem conducive to youth entrepreneurship, YDEAS produced the Green Paper on Social Economy in the Western Balkans. The Green Paper aims to stimulate a fact-based, consultative process towards improved policy-making on reducing skills mismatch and supporting a positive business climate for social and green enterprises in the Western Balkans.

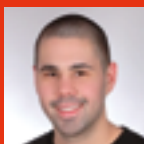
Voices from YDEAS entrepreneurs



Ana Morina
Age: 19
Albania

Ana is a software engineering student and a youth activist on climate change, gender equality and civic engagement. Ana is developing an app to monitor electricity consumption and working to make digital financial literacy tools more inclusive.

“Being a young leader does not entail waiting for opportunities, instead, it signifies the preparedness to create opportunities not only for oneself but also for others.”



Petar Huska
Age: 23
Serbia

Petar is a student at Faculty of Technical Sciences, University of Novi Sad, who looks to the future and is creating an IT solution that enables early detection of hazardous and highly toxic gasses, explosions and damage in the mining, waste management and gas industries. Out of 130 teams at the European Innovation Academy programme, Petar’s was among the top 10 outstanding teams and received three awards from the Academy jury.

“The OSCE’s dedication to amplifying our voices and ensuring that our needs are met with adequate policies, demonstrates the organization’s willingness to invest in the region’s youth for a brighter future!”

Petar and Ana attended the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office’s Youth Forum in Skopje in November 2023 as representatives from the Western Balkans. They addressed some of the challenges young entrepreneurs face in starting businesses and developed and presented a series of recommendations on improving the business climate for youth to the 30th OSCE Ministerial Council from 30 November to 1 December 2023 in Skopje, North Macedonia.



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