

EEN KosInn Newsletter – Issue #2

December 2025

Strengthening Innovation, Digitalization and Internationalization for Kosovo's SMEs

Following a dynamic launch phase in July 2025, **EEN KosInn** (2025-2028) entered its first full implementation period between August and December 2025, focusing on delivering tangible value to Kosovo's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The EEN KosInn's **purpose** is to:

- *improve the competitiveness and sustainability of SMEs and promoting entrepreneurship by assisting them to become more economically, environmentally and socially stable;*
- *supporting their digitalisation and greater resilience to shocks, supporting their innovation and innovation processes, facilitating their access to the single market and third countries, and*
- *helping them to cooperate and where possible integrate with local, regional, national and European clusters, the industrial ecosystem and global value chains.*

The consortium actively supported Kosovo's SMEs in key areas including **sustainability, access to finance, digitalization, and resilience**. Advisory services guided businesses on investment readiness, participation in EU programmes, and adoption of innovative practices, while targeted training sessions enhanced skills in cybersecurity, sustainable tourism, and international business development. EEN KosInn also organized and co-facilitated numerous B2B and matchmaking events, connecting local SMEs with international partners, investors and technology providers. These activities strengthened cross-border cooperation, created new market opportunities and reinforced Kosovo SMEs' capacity to compete in European and global markets.

Backed up by the Enterprise Europe Network and co-funded by the European Union under the SMP-COSME Programme, **EEN KosInn** continued to position itself as a trusted partner for SMEs seeking growth, resilience, networking and internationalisation and access to European and global markets.

Looking ahead, EEN KosInn will continue to provide tailored support, strengthen cross-border partnerships and facilitate international market access, ensuring Kosovo SMEs are prepared for sustainable growth and active engagement in European and global value chains.

Strategic Communication, Digital Outreach and Brand Consolidation

During the initial implementation phase of EEN KoslInn, strong emphasis was placed on building a coherent and recognisable consortium identity to enhance the visibility of the **Enterprise Europe Network in Kosovo** and ensure consistent engagement with SMEs and international stakeholders. Branding and communication were treated as strategic tools to strengthen trust, accessibility and awareness of **EEN KoslInn** services across diverse target audiences.

A key milestone was the development and launch of the EEN Kosovo website (www.eenkosovo.eu) developed by Prishtina REA, serving as the central digital gateway for communication and stakeholder outreach. The user-friendly and fully responsive platform provides comprehensive information on the consortium's mission, partners (Prishtina REA, STIKK, and the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce), SME support services, events, news and resources, while enabling direct interaction through integrated contact tools.

Digital outreach was further strengthened through the establishment of dedicated EEN Kosovo social media channels. An official Facebook page was used for real-time updates, event promotion, and interactive engagement with SMEs, while a LinkedIn profile supported professional networking, dissemination of collaboration and funding opportunities and reinforcement of EEN Kosovo's credibility within the wider EEN ecosystem.

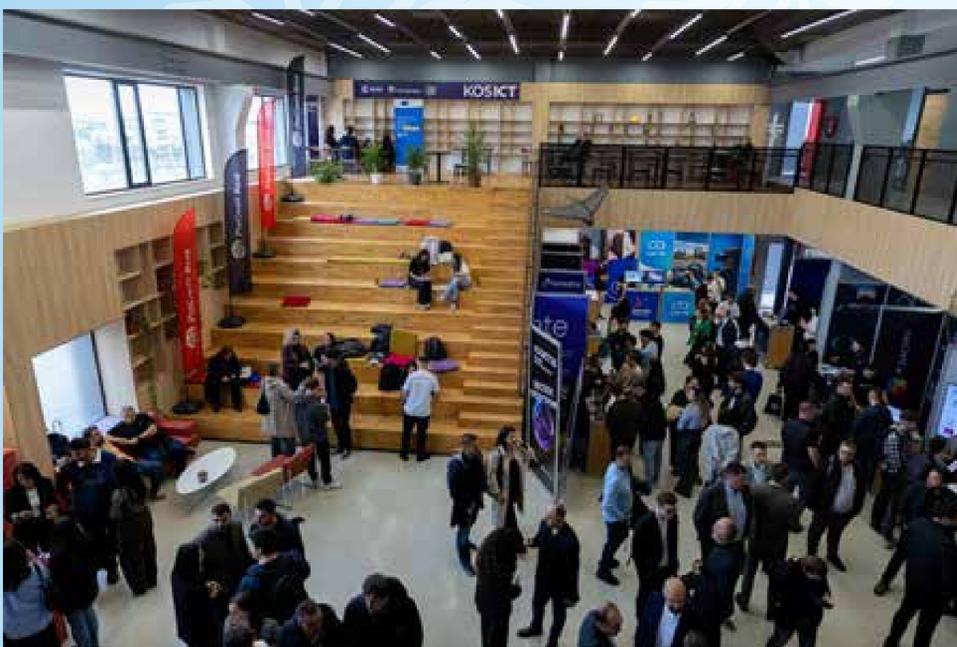
In July 2025, Prishtina REA launched a targeted awareness-raising campaign, including **The first EEN KoslInn Newsletter** and an **e-Brochure**, to promote free and personalised EEN support services. The campaign highlighted assistance related to EU market access, business and tender opportunities, regulatory compliance, intellectual property, **EU funding** and **Digital** and **Green transition**. As part of this effort, a **Practical Export Guide** was developed to provide SMEs with clear, actionable guidance on entering the EU Single Market. Actively promoted through digital channels, the campaign ran until 5 September 2025 and successfully increased SME engagement with the Network.

Additional visibility was achieved through mainstream media, notably a national television feature aired on RTK (**Video Link**) on 25 November 2025, which showcased the impact of EEN Kosovo services on local businesses. Furthermore, **The first press release for the EEN Annual Conference 2025** was published on 23 October 2025 and disseminated through the EEN Kosovo website and social media channels, targeting EU institutions, businesses, authorities, and innovators to enhance awareness and engagement at national and regional levels.

KosICT 2025: Driving Innovation, Investment and Cybersecurity in Kosovo

The 14th edition of KosICT, Kosovo's flagship technology festival powered by **STIKK**, took place on 10-11 October 2025 at Tech Park Prishtina, opening the nationwide October Tech Kosova season. The event gathered 2,798 participants, 208 companies, 47 speakers across 22 sessions, 40 exhibitors and 50 young coders in the Future Developers Corner. Around 20% of participants were C-level executives, reflecting strong interest in practical content, credible partnerships and investment-ready opportunities within Kosovo's growing tech ecosystem.

The programme linked strategy with execution across two stages. The Main Stage focused on leadership, skills, AI, cybersecurity and systemic digital transformation, while the Developers Stage delivered applied technical sessions on machine learning, DevOps, private 5G, cybersecurity collaboration, IoT efficiency and privacy-by-design. High-level contributions came from international organisations and industry leaders, positioning Kosovo as an emerging player in regional and European innovation value chains.



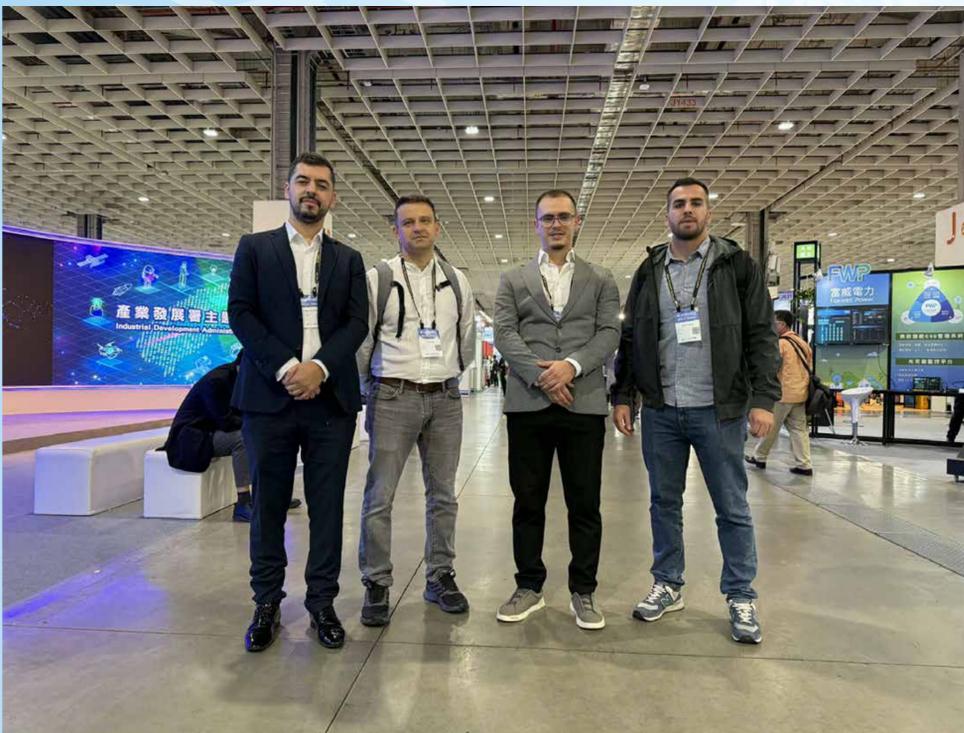
Within KosICT 2025, STIKK organised an *EEN-powered B2B Matchmaking Event using the b2match platform*. Over 40 ICT companies from Kosovo and abroad participated in targeted one-to-one meetings in software development, AI and data, cloud services, cybersecurity and digital solutions. The event strengthened cross-border cooperation and reinforced KosICT and Tech Park Prishtina as a regular meeting point for regional and EU partners.

Investment activity was advanced through the Investors Pitch, where three Kosovo startups secured €10,000 each in early-stage funding in the fields of cybersecurity, agri-tech and digital process optimisation. Community engagement was further enriched through the exhibition area with 40 companies, the Future Developers Corner, and e-Sports activities, underlining KosICT's dual role as a business-driven and community-focused technology platform.

Four Innovative Kosovo Companies Represent Kosovo at TAITRONICS & AIoT Taiwan 2025

Thanks to the facilitation and co-organization of *Prishtina REA* and the *Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Kosovo*, four leading ICT and technology companies from Kosovo participated in *TAITRONICS 2025* and the *Taiwan International AIoT Show (AIoT Taiwan)*, held on 22-24 October 2025 at the *Taipei Nangang Exhibition Center, Hall 1*. The participating companies, *IT Vision*, *Cacttus*, *Frotcom*, and *Sigma Technology Group-AppBits*, represented Kosovo's growing ICT ecosystem and its ambition to expand into Asian markets.

Organized by the *Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA)* and the *Taiwan Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers' Association (TEEMA)*, with *Prishtina REA* serving as co-organizer from Kosovo, *TAITRONICS & AIoT Taiwan 2025* is among Asia's most influential trade fairs for ICT, electronics, and AIoT industries. The 2025 edition, themed "AIInnovation Now", focused on AIoT applications, robotics and smart automation, smart surveillance, smart data centres, industrial IoT embedded systems, and satellite communications. New themed areas on optoelectronics and display technology highlighted AI-driven innovation across manufacturing, logistics, healthcare and entertainment.



Under the *EEN Kosovo* framework, Kosovo companies engaged in targeted B2B matchmaking sessions with Taiwanese firms, technology providers, and distributors. These meetings created concrete opportunities for technology partnerships, joint ventures, and export channels, while offering valuable insights into emerging digital and AIoT trends. Participation in *TAITRONICS & AIoT Taiwan 2025* marked an important milestone in strengthening cross-continental business linkages and enhancing the international visibility of Kosovo's ICT sector.

Kosovo's SMEs Shine on the International Stage at Taiwan Select 2025

On 4 November 2025, five dynamic Kosovar SMEs participated in Taiwan Select 2025 in Kaohsiung City, Taiwan, one of Asia's leading international sourcing and industrial cooperation events. The delegation was co-organized by Prishtina REA and the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Kosovo and organized by the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA), Taiwan's principal trade-promotion organisation.

Taiwan Select offers a distinctive format that combines targeted business matchmaking with in-depth exposure to Taiwan's advanced manufacturing ecosystem. The event spans sectors including machinery and smart manufacturing, automotive parts, consumer goods, green energy, shipbuilding, and smart mobility, enabling participants to gain practical insights into cutting-edge technologies, high production standards and innovation-driven industrial models.



The programme featured *one-to-one meetings with Taiwanese manufacturers and suppliers, complemented by site visits and customised industrial tours. These activities allowed Kosovar companies to assess market trends, identify competitive suppliers and explore opportunities for technology cooperation and export growth.*

The Kosovo delegation included BCG Group, MUQA Solar, Alliance International LLC, Furnico and GET Group LLC, each participating with clear objectives ranging from sourcing new technologies to establishing long-term international partnerships. Their engagement reflected Kosovo's increasingly *outward-oriented private sector and growing readiness for global collaboration.*

Participation under the *EEN Kosovo framework played a key enabling role, providing SMEs with access to international matchmaking, sector-specific partnerships, market intelligence and advisory support for EU programmes and global expansion.*

Co-organized B2B & Matchmaking Events

Throughout 2025, Prishtina REA, as a consortium-lead of the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Kosovo, acted as co-organizer of key international B2B, brokerage and investment events across Europe and Türkiye. Through its role as co-organizer, Prishtina REA strengthened cross-border cooperation, market access, and investment dialogue for Kosovo companies and stakeholders.

A major milestone was *Co-Matching 2025*, held on 28 August 2025 and organised by the Kocaeli Chamber of Commerce and ABİGEM East Marmara, with Prishtina REA acting as the Kosovo co-organizer. The event targeted multiple sectors including machinery, automotive, ICT, chemicals and tourism, enabling Kosovo stakeholders to connect with Turkish and international companies through structured B2B meetings.

Another flagship activity was *Match4Industry 2025*, held on 19-20 November 2025 in İzmit/Kocaeli, Türkiye. The event focused on automotive supply chains, metals, machinery, plastics, ICT and energy, offering companies opportunities to explore industrial cooperation, supplier relationships, and technology partnerships within a strong manufacturing hub.

At the European level, Prishtina REA supported co-organization in the *MADtech Brokerage Event (29-30 October 2025, Madrid, Spain)*, targeting the media, advertising, and digital technology sectors. In parallel, the *Energy, Construction & Green Economy Fair 2025 (29-30 October 2025, Tirana, Albania)* addressed sustainable energy, construction, and the green economy. While no Kosovo companies participated in this fair, Prishtina REA ensured information dissemination and coordination within the EEN Kosovo framework.

Prishtina REA acted as co-organizer in high-level policy and investment platforms, notably the EU-WB6 Investment Forum (13-14 October 2025, Tirana, Albania). Three Kosovo participants attended, taking part in B2B and B2G matchmaking and investment discussions aimed at strengthening regional economic cooperation and investment flows.

The year concluded with participation in *ICEBERG Demo Day 2025* on 17 December 2025 in Düzce, Türkiye, an entrepreneurship and investment event organised with Düzce Technopark and DUSIMER. The event provided a platform for startups and innovators to engage with investors, accelerators, and innovation stakeholders.

Across these activities, Prishtina REA's role as co-organizer under the EEN Kosovo framework was instrumental in reinforcing access to international networks, sector-specific partnerships, and investment opportunities, strengthening Kosovo's integration into regional and European value chains

Training: Bringing Cybersecurity Closer to Kosovo's Businesses

On 20 November, STIKK successfully organized a practical cybersecurity training for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) at Tech Park Prishtina. The training was attended by ten companies, represented by 12 participants, who actively engaged in sessions designed to enhance their understanding of cybersecurity in daily business operations.

The training focused on practical, actionable measures that SMEs can implement immediately to protect their digital assets. Key topics included everyday protection strategies, secure access management, reliable backup solutions, development of basic cybersecurity policies and effective incident response practices. Through interactive exercises and real-world examples, participants gained hands-on experience and a clear roadmap for improving their organisations' cyber resilience.



Participants left the session with concrete steps to strengthen their cybersecurity posture, including practical advice on preventing common threats, responding to incidents and safeguarding sensitive information. By equipping SMEs with these skills, the training not only enhances individual company security but also contributes to building trust with international partners and stakeholders in the digital marketplace.

This initiative underscores the Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo's commitment to supporting safe digitalisation for local businesses. By providing tailored guidance and capacity-building opportunities, EEN Kosovo helps SMEs navigate the evolving digital landscape with confidence, ensuring that they are better prepared to engage in cross-border trade and international collaboration.

The training also reinforced STIKK's role as a key facilitator of knowledge transfer and innovation support, demonstrating the practical benefits of collaboration within the EEN network.

Sustainable Tourism Training Empowers Kosovo SMEs

From 6 to 16 October 2025, Prishtina REA, serving as the EEN Kosovo Coordinator, successfully organized an Online Sustainable Tourism Training aimed at supporting SMEs in the tourism sector. This initiative provided participants with tailored learning opportunities across six specialized modules, enabling them to strengthen their resilience, improve operational practices and enhance competitiveness in a rapidly evolving industry.

The training covered the following modules:

- Resilience - Risk Management
- Responsible and Diversified Tourism Offer
- Management of Tourism Offerings and Visitor Flows
- Resilience and Sustainability Training
- Awareness Raising Campaigns
- Accessible Tourism Services

A total of 14 participants from various tourism SMEs engaged actively in the program. Participants selected modules based on their specific needs and interests, ensuring that each session was highly relevant and practical. Each online session lasted 90 minutes, featuring up to four trainer presentations per module, followed by interactive Q&A sessions and discussion. To extend the reach of the training, all sessions were recorded for wider access and future reference, and additional sessions were made available according to participant demand.

The training methodology emphasized practical application, allowing SMEs to acquire actionable skills that could be immediately implemented within their operations. By addressing topics such as risk management, responsible tourism practices, and visitor flow optimization, the program helped participants develop strategies for sustainable growth, improved customer experiences and market differentiation. Additionally, the awareness raising and accessible tourism modules provided participants with essential tools to broaden their market reach, including inclusive services that cater to diverse traveller needs.

Attendance analysis revealed strong engagement across all modules, demonstrating the commitment of SMEs to adopt innovative practices and strengthen resilience, sustainability and accessibility within the tourism sector. Participants reported increased confidence in applying the knowledge gained and appreciated the interactive nature of the sessions, which encouraged peer-to-peer learning and experience sharing.

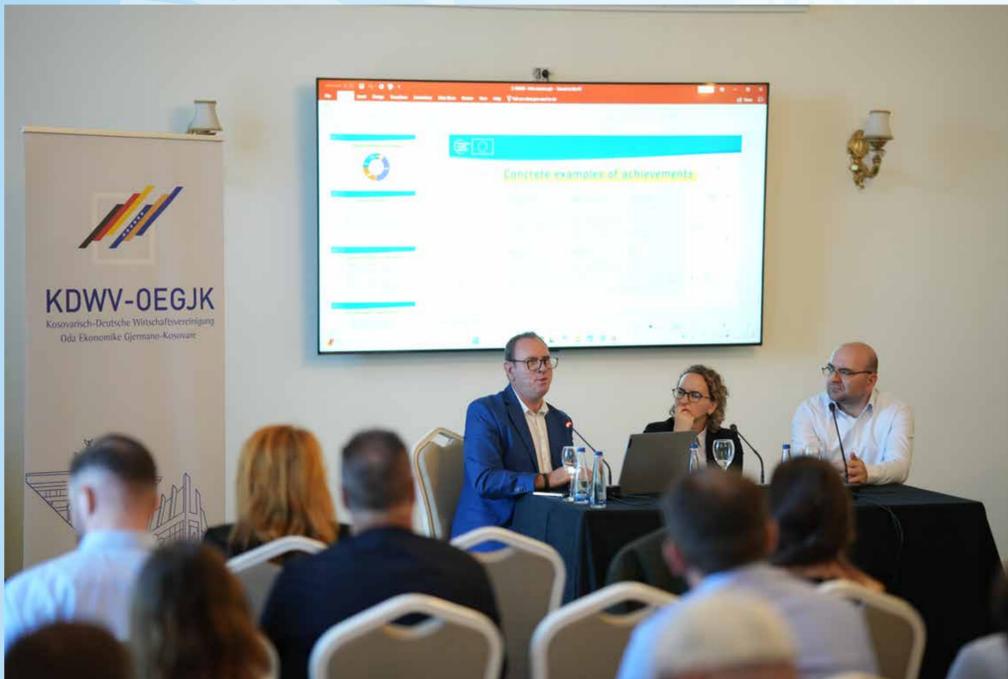
This initiative underscores Prishtina REA's role as the EEN Kosovo Coordinator, highlighting its dedication to providing capacity-building opportunities that enable SMEs to navigate emerging trends, meet international standards and strengthen cross-border cooperation. By fostering resilient, responsible, and inclusive tourism practices, the training contributes to long-term sector development, enhances regional competitiveness and positions participating SMEs to better respond to the expectations of modern travellers and international partners.

EEN Kosovo and EU Single Market Programme Opportunities Presented in Prishtina

On 18 September 2025, the German-Kosovar Business Association (OEGJK) hosted an information session at Hotel Garden in Prishtina, introducing local businesses to the services of the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Kosovo and opportunities available through the EU Single Market Programme (SMP) 2021-2027. As key note speaker, there were also representatives from Prime Minister's Development, Cooperation Office, EBRD- Kosovo office, LuxDev, MINT/KIESA, IFC etc.

The session featured a presentation by Ahmet Jetullahu-Meti, Country Coordinator of EEN Kosovo at Prishtina REA, who highlighted how EEN Kosovo supports SMEs in areas such as innovation, sustainability, resilience, digitalisation, and internationalisation. These advisory services are designed to help businesses scale, identify international partners and navigate EU regulations and markets.

Mr. Jetullahu-Meti also presented the EU Single Market Programme, a €4.2 billion initiative aimed at strengthening the internal market, supporting SMEs, and enhancing long-term competitiveness. Since 2023, Kosovo has been included in the programme, enabling local enterprises to access funding for SME competitiveness, market surveillance, consumer protection and the development of goods and services markets.



Participants received practical guidance on engaging with the programme, including registering on the EU Funding and Tenders Portal, obtaining a Participant Identification Code and submitting proposals for open calls. Emphasizing the importance of strong partnerships and alignment with EU priorities, Jetullahu-Meti encouraged businesses to fully leverage EEN Kosovo's advisory services.

The session also featured discussions with representatives from EU institutions, international financial organisations and national agencies, providing valuable insights into additional grants and support mechanisms. This interaction offered a platform for dialogue and knowledge-sharing, reinforcing the ability of Kosovo SMEs to access European funding and enhance competitiveness.

Prishtina REA Hosts Kosovo-Taiwan Business Opportunities Info Session and Company Visits

On 10 December 2025, Prishtina REA organized an Info Session: Raising Kosovo-Taiwan Business Opportunities at Europe House, Prishtina, as part of the official three-day visit of Mr. Mark Liu, Director of the Taiwan Trade Center, Budapest (TAITRA). The session brought together 40 participants onsite, including representatives of Kosovar SMEs, investors and industry stakeholders, to explore trade and investment opportunities with Taiwan.

The session opened with remarks by Ahmet Jetullahu-Meti, Country Coordinator of EEN Kosovo at Prishtina REA, who welcomed participants and outlined the objectives of the event. Mr. Liu presented TAITRA's global network, business potential, and partnerships between Kosovo and Taiwan, including the 2026 trade fair calendar and sector-specific opportunities for Kosovar SMEs.

During the session, Kosovo companies shared their experiences participating in Taiwanese trade fairs, highlighting success stories, challenges, and lessons learned. The Q&A session provided practical advice on exports, partnerships and market entry, offering participants concrete insights into international business expansion.



As part of the visit, Mr. Liu conducted company visits across Kosovo, including Viprint, Green Energy Technology (GET), Sigma Technology, and RADIX.

Local businesses showcased production capabilities, innovative solutions and export-ready products, enabling discussions on potential collaborations in ICT, digital solutions, green energy, solar technology, battery manufacturing and advanced production systems.

The visits highlighted *Kosovo's growing business potential* and the increasing interest from *Taiwan in establishing strategic partnerships*. Participating companies expressed strong enthusiasm for expanding cooperation, leveraging B2B matchmaking and exploring trade fairs and investment opportunities in 2026.

There were several promotional and visibility materials developed, produced and widely disseminated.

Workshop on EU/EIC Investor Readiness ScoreCard Supports Kosovo SMEs

On 21 November 2025, Prishtina REA signed a cooperation agreement with APRE (Agenzia per la Promozione della Ricerca Europea), the Italian agency managing the EEN2EIC project.

On that context, 10 December 2025, Prishtina REA organized a workshop on the EU/EIC Investor Readiness ScoreCard (IRS) Platform from 11:00 to 13:00, targeting innovative SMEs seeking to access private investment and prepare for EIC Accelerator funding.

The session was delivered by Mr. Ahmet Jetullahu-Meti from Prishtina REA and introduced participants to the Investor Readiness ScoreCard, an EU-supported tool designed to assess and strengthen investment readiness. Through practical guidance and interactive discussion, SMEs gained valuable insights into enhancing competitiveness, presenting investment opportunities effectively and attracting funding.



The workshop was attended by 40 participants onsite, reflecting strong interest from Kosovo's innovative business community in accessing investment readiness support and EU funding opportunities. Participants had the opportunity to discuss real business challenges, receive personalized advice and explore how the IRS platform can support business scaling and internationalization.

As part of the initiative, Prishtina REA network advisors will provide ongoing support to innovative and women-led businesses in accessing the IRS assessment. Advisors will guide participants through the platform modules, offer personalized mentoring and help companies strengthen investment readiness, ensuring they can maximize the benefits of the EEN2EIC project.

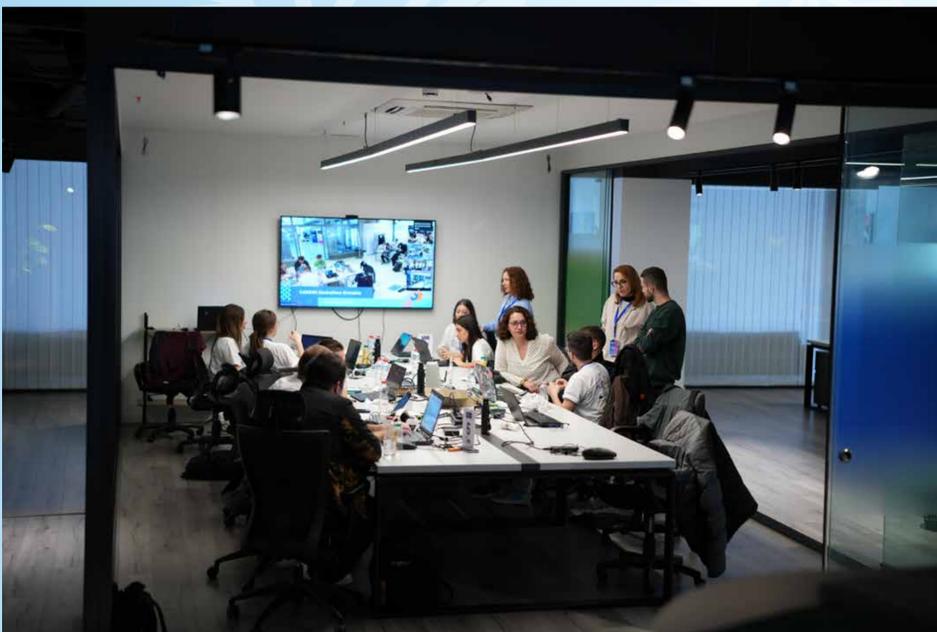
This initiative is part of Prishtina REA's ongoing efforts under the EEN2EIC project to support local SMEs in scaling their businesses and connecting with international investors. By providing tailored investment guidance, Prishtina REA strengthens Kosovo SMEs' capacity to prepare for EIC Accelerator funding, engage with private investors, and implement strategic growth plans.

Cassini Hackathon Kosovo 2025 - Mentorship by EEN Kosovo Advisors

EEN Kosovo played an active role in the Cassini Hackathon Kosovo 2025, held from 7 to 9 November 2025, through the mentorship of two advisors from Prishtina REA. During the hackathon, these advisors guided participating teams on innovation, business development and strategies for internationalization, drawing on their extensive experience within the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN).

The mentorship sessions focused on providing practical guidance to startups and innovators, helping them refine their business models, identify potential international partners and develop scalable solutions. Advisors encouraged participants to integrate market insights, adopt sustainable innovation practices, and consider cross-border collaboration opportunities to expand their business impact.

Beyond mentoring, the Prishtina REA advisors actively promoted EEN services, raising awareness among participants about the support available for scaling businesses, accessing international markets, and engaging in European innovation networks. This exposure provided participants with valuable insights into how EEN Kosovo can support SMEs and startups in navigating EU funding opportunities and innovation programmes.



The contribution of EEN Kosovo not only facilitated knowledge transfer and practical advice but also strengthened the visibility of the network in Kosovo. By participating in events such as the Cassini Hackathon, EEN Kosovo fosters stronger connections between local innovators and the broader European innovation ecosystem, enhancing collaboration opportunities and promoting entrepreneurial growth.

This engagement demonstrates Prishtina REA's strong commitment, in its role as EEN Kosovo Coordinator, to supporting innovative SMEs and startups in building capacity, expanding internationally, and adopting best business practices. Through the mobilization of 18 professional business mentors and advisers, Prishtina REA actively supported hackathon participants by providing tailored guidance on business development, market validation, and scaling strategies.

Kosovo IT Barometer 2023-2024

The Kosovo IT Barometer 2023-2024, conducted by STIKK - Kosovo ICT Association/ EEN Kosova consortia partner, provides a comprehensive overview of the ICT and creative services sector in Kosovo. As one of the most established annual industry assessments in the country, the IT Barometer serves as a trusted source of insight for policymakers, business leaders, educational institutions and international partners.

Covering developments during 2023 and 2024, this edition highlights a sector characterized by rapid growth, strong entrepreneurial activity and increasing integration into international markets. More than half of surveyed companies were founded after 2020, reflecting the dynamic nature of Kosovo's digital economy and the emergence of technology-driven enterprises.

The findings show that the sector is dominated by micro and small enterprises, accounting for nearly 90% of respondents. While this structure enables flexibility and innovation, it also presents challenges related to company scaling, access to finance and long-term sustainability. The concentration of companies in Prishtina highlights the need for stronger regional ICT development.

Software development and web development remain the backbone of the sector. JavaScript continues to be the most widely used programming language, followed by C#, Python, and the growing adoption of TypeScript. A major development in this edition is the widespread use of artificial intelligence (AI), which is now embedded in daily business operations across both technology and creative services, supporting productivity and innovation.

Despite positive progress, the skills gap remains the most critical challenge. Companies report difficulties in recruiting programmers, data and AI specialists, and cybersecurity professionals. While salaries have increased, particularly in technical and leadership roles, they remain below international standards, affecting talent attraction and retention.

The IT Barometer also emphasizes workforce development and the relationship between industry and education. Findings show limited engagement with educational institutions and low participation in Dual Vocational Education and Training (Dual VET) programs, despite strong interest from companies. Stronger education-industry collaboration and more practical training pathways are essential.

Overall, the Kosovo IT Barometer 2023-2024 presents a resilient, innovation-driven and globally connected sector with strong growth potential. Targeted efforts to strengthen talent pipelines, support business growth and scaling, promote regional inclusion and deepen international cooperation will be essential for enhancing the sector's competitiveness and contribution to Kosovo's economic and social development.

Analytical Proposal on the Establishment of an Independent Research and Innovation Institute

With the request of the OEGJK, the analytical proposal, conducted by Prishtina REA, addresses the strategic need for the establishment of an Independent Institute or Centers for Research and Innovation at the University of Prishtina (UP). The analysis responds to growing pressures from labor market demands, technological change and the increasing importance of innovation-driven development, which together require a fundamental rethinking of the university's academic and research model.

The assessment identifies that UP is at a critical turning point. While it remains the largest public higher education institution in Kosovo, it faces persistent structural and developmental challenges, including the lack of a clear research strategy, limited institutional autonomy, growing competition from private colleges, and weak mechanisms for patenting, technology transfer and commercialization of research. Participation in international programs such as Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, and Digital Europe remains limited, while brain drain continues due to insufficient conditions for modern research.

The analysis further highlights systemic issues such as fragmentation of research and development, absence of modern laboratories, weak links between academia and industry and a limited culture of innovation and academic entrepreneurship. As a result, university research rarely translates into market-ready technologies, products or services, reducing its overall economic and social impact.

To address these challenges, the proposal recommends the establishment of an Independent Research and Innovation Institute. This entity would serve as a bridge between university, industry and government, creating a structured ecosystem for applied research, innovation and knowledge commercialization. The institute would provide modern research infrastructure, attract international funding and expertise and support student employability through closer alignment with industry needs.

International best practices analyzed in the study - including KU Leuven, TU Munich, Politecnico di Milano and Wageningen University - demonstrate that institutional autonomy, professional technology transfer offices, strong industry partnerships and access to international research networks are critical success factors.

The proposal outlines strategic objectives focused on building a sustainable innovation ecosystem, strengthening research and entrepreneurial capacities, establishing specialized research centers and enabling spin-offs and start-ups. A phased three-year implementation plan is proposed, beginning with the legal framework and institutional setup, followed by laboratory development and industry projects.

Overall, this analysis positions the establishment of an Independent Research and Innovation Institute as a strategic national priority. By enabling knowledge-based development, strengthening international cooperation, and reducing brain drain, the initiative would reposition the University of Prishtina as a central driver of innovation, competitiveness and sustainable economic development in Kosovo.

Decentralised Online Info Session on Balkonnnect 2026

On 18 November 2025, Prishtina REA, as the national coordinator of the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Kosovo, hosted a Decentralised Online Info Session dedicated to EEN Advisors, focusing on Balkonnnect 2026. The session attracted over 60 participants from the Western Balkans, the EU and partner countries worldwide, providing a platform to familiarize advisors with the regional innovation and matchmaking ecosystem.

Led by Ahmet Jetullahu-Meti, Country Coordinator of EEN Kosovo, the session offered a detailed overview of the Balkonnnect platform and its mission to connect businesses, innovators, investors, institutions and development partners.



The session reviewed the achievements of Balkonnnect Prishtina 2025, which hosted participants from 37 countries across four continents, facilitating 688 transnational meetings and 151 national meetings. These results underscored the strong interest of international actors in collaborating with Western Balkan SMEs and demonstrated the readiness of local companies to expand across borders.

Looking ahead, the session introduced Balkonnnect Tirana 2026, scheduled for 21-23 May 2026.

Advisors were encouraged to leverage Balkonnnect to enhance the visibility of regional SMEs in global innovation networks and provide strategic guidance on matchmaking and international cooperation.

Meti concluded by emphasizing that Balkonnnect is not just an event, but an evolving regional ecosystem. The session reaffirmed the commitment of EEN Advisors, Western Balkan actors and EU partners to foster innovation, competitiveness and sustainable collaboration, setting the stage for a highly impactful Balkonnnect Tirana 2026.

EEN Kosovo Representation at the Enterprise Europe Network Annual Conference 2025

Prishtina REA and STIKK, as core members of EEN Kosovo, participated in the Enterprise Europe Network Annual Conference 2025, held from 26-28 November 2025 at the Aalborg Kongres & Kultur Center in Denmark. The conference brought together partners, policymakers, and stakeholders from the global EEN network to share insights, build collaborations and strengthen support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Themed “Driving innovation, decarbonisation and security for SMEs: a stronger Network in action,” the event served as the central meeting point for EEN partners since the start of the new programme period in July 2025. The conference provided two-and-a-half days of interactive sessions, networking, workshops, and matchmaking aimed at enhancing the quality, visibility and impact of services delivered to SMEs across Europe and beyond.



Key discussions revolved around four strategic areas reflecting EU priorities and EEN objectives.

The conference also featured dedicated networking areas, exhibition stands and one-to-one matchmaking that generated over 740 scheduled interactions, enabling EEN partners to identify new cooperation opportunities and partnerships.

EEN Kosovo’s involvement underscored its commitment to fostering international connections, sharing best practices, and bringing global innovation opportunities to Kosovo’s SMEs. By participating in this flagship EEN event, Prishtina REA and STIKK strengthened their engagement with the broader network, while gaining insights that will inform future support services, including internationalisation, access to finance and sustainable growth, for businesses in Kosovo.

CBC Montenegro-Albania-Kosovo Capitalisation Event

Prishtina REA as country coordinator of EEN Kosovo, participated in the CBC Kosovo-Montenegro Capitalisation Event, organized on 16 December 2025 in Podgorica, bringing together a wide range of institutional representatives, project partners and tourism stakeholders to reflect on best practices, project achievements and the long-term impact of cross-border cooperation.



A particular highlight of the event was the participation of Ahmet Jetullahu Meti, Country Coordinator of EEN Kosovo at Prishtina REA, who contributed as a panelist in the session on Tourism and Cultural Heritage / Outdoor Tourism success stories. His intervention focused on lessons learned from project implementation and on practical pathways for scaling impact through digitalization, internationalisation and capacity building, with a strong emphasis on EU-aligned approaches. Mr. Jetullahu showcased concrete examples of how outdoor tourism, cultural heritage and sustainability can be transformed into measurable cross-border results.

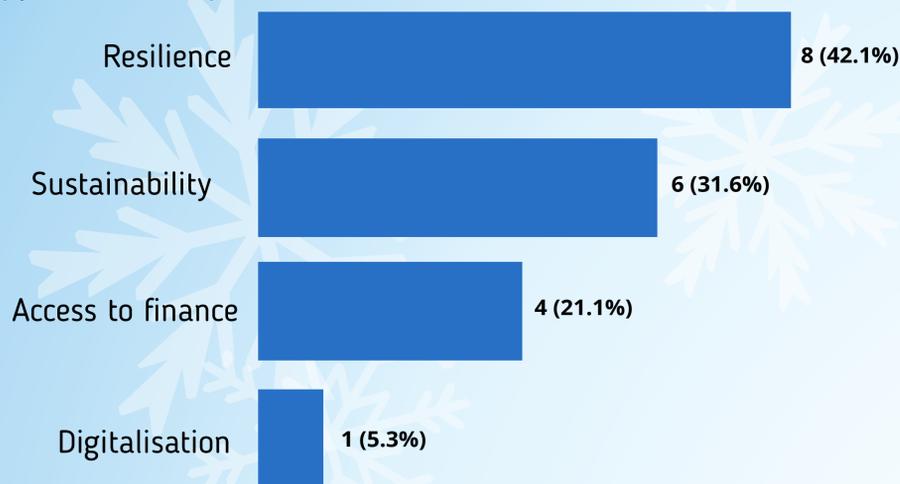
Capitalization goes beyond project completion; it means transforming successful initiatives into sustainable systems and policies. Prishtina REA remains committed to strengthening cross-border cooperation, supporting innovation in tourism and contributing to the development of a resilient and competitive tourism sector that is fully aligned with European standards and markets.

EEN Kosovo Strengthens SMEs with Advisory and Partnering Achievements July-Dec 2025

Prishtina REA and STIKK, as core members of EEN Kosovo, delivered a wide range of services aimed at empowering local SMEs to innovate, internationalise and access new markets. As part of the EEN Advisory Services, the Kosovo Consortium provided hands-on support that strengthened both the capabilities and global reach of Kosovo’s business community.

In total, 25 achievements were completed across advisory and partnering activities. Prishtina REA led with 21 achievements, including 18 advisory activities, providing SMEs with tailored guidance on areas such as investment readiness, participation in EU programmes, innovation adoption, and regulatory compliance. In addition, Prishtina REA facilitated 3 partnering achievements, helping companies establish cross-border collaborations and connect with international technology, investment and market partners.

Type of advisory services



Meanwhile, STIKK contributed 4 achievements, focusing on both advisory and partnership support. Their efforts included 1 advisory activity and 3 partnering achievements, demonstrating a strong commitment to linking SMEs with practical international opportunities and creating avenues for strategic cooperation.

Advisory services performed by EEN KosInn were mainly focused on resilience, followed by sustainability and access to finance, with digitalisation receiving the least attention. Specifically, resilience-related advisory services represented the largest share, reflecting a strong emphasis on strengthening stability and adaptability. Sustainability advisory services were the second main area of focus, supporting long-term and environmentally responsible practices. Access to finance services also formed a significant part of the advisory work, while digitalisation services were limited in comparison.

The impact of EEN Kosovo extends beyond local client interactions, with 3 notable contributions of achievements in other countries. By sharing expertise, implementing best practices and fostering collaboration, Kosovo has also contributed to 61 client journeys in other countries, demonstrating its commitment to excellence and global development.

Together, these efforts illustrate how EEN Kosovo acts as a strategic connector and enabler for local enterprises. By combining tailored advisory support with targeted partnering initiatives, Kosovo SMEs gained the tools, knowledge and networks necessary to scale their operations, increase competitiveness, and engage confidently with global markets.

What's Next in 2026?

Building on the strong foundations established in 2025, EEN KosInn will scale up its activities in 2026 with a clear focus on delivering deeper impact, higher-quality services and stronger international positioning for Kosovo's SMEs.

In 2026, **EEN KosInn** will further intensify internationalization efforts, facilitating increased participation of Kosovo SMEs in B2B matchmaking events, trade fairs, brokerage events, and sector-specific missions across Europe and beyond. Strategic markets and value chains, particularly in ICT, green technologies, advanced manufacturing and tourism, will remain a core focus, supporting SMEs in expanding cross-border cooperation and accessing new market opportunities.

At the same time, the consortium will expand tailored advisory services in key priority areas, including innovation management, access to finance, sustainability, digital transformation and resilience. Special emphasis will be placed on investment readiness, participation in EU programmes and structured preparation for international growth.

Capacity-building will continue through targeted trainings, workshops, and mentoring programmes, addressing practical SME needs such as cybersecurity, sustainable business models, export readiness, and compliance with EU standards.

In 2026, Prishtina REA will continue to lead and scale the Balkonnnect initiative, organising Balkonnnect Tirana 2026, the second edition of the flagship regional innovation and investment platform for the Western Balkans. Following the strong success of Balkonnnect Prishtina 2025, the 2026 edition will take place on 21-23 May 2026 in Tirana, Albania, further consolidating Balkonnnect as a recurring, high-impact regional ecosystem. Organised and powered by Prishtina REA, the festival will bring together SMEs, startups, corporates, investors, public institutions and international partners to foster strategic alliances across priority sectors including ICT and digital technologies, green economy, advanced manufacturing, agri-innovation, tourism, fintech, smart cities and public-sector innovation.

Prishtina REA is continuously building partnerships with key institutions, including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) as main supporter, AIDA, Chambers, KESH, Innvest Fund, Albanian ministries, including EEN Albania and other regional and international collaborators, to make the festival possible.

STIKK, on the other hand as a core member of the EEN KosInn consortium, will organize KosICT 2026 in October 2026, Kosovo's flagship technology festival. The event will serve as a key platform for innovation, investment, and international matchmaking, further strengthening the visibility of Kosovo's ICT ecosystem and creating concrete opportunities for cross-border collaboration under the EEN framework.

These initiatives reflect the coordinated approach of the EEN KosInn consortium in 2026, combining strategic advisory support, internationalisation, flagship regional platforms and ecosystem-driven events. Through the complementary roles of the partners, EEN KosInn will continue to strengthen Kosovo's innovation capacity and SME competitiveness.

Happy Holidays from EEN KosInn

The EEN KosInn team wishes all our SMEs,
partners and stakeholders a joyful holiday season and a successful New Year!

We look forward to supporting your innovation, internationalization and growth in 2026!

