How Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo Helped Tourism Businesses Achieve Concrete Benefits Through EU Funding



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Supporting tourism SMEs through European funding, digital innovation and sustainable growth

Kosovo's tourism sector offers significant opportunities for economic development, entrepreneurship and regional cooperation. With its diverse natural landscapes, rich cultural heritage, traditional gastronomy and authentic local experiences, the country has strong potential to attract visitors seeking adventure, wellness, cultural discovery and sustainable travel. From the mountains and outdoor activities of Rugova to the historic streets of Prizren and the vibrant urban life of Prishtina, tourism businesses can play an important role in promoting Kosovo as an attractive destination while generating economic opportunities for local communities.

Despite this potential, tourism small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) continue to face challenges that can limit their growth and competitiveness. Seasonal demand, limited access to finance, insufficient digitalisation, restricted marketing capacity and fragmented cooperation among tourism providers remain important barriers. Many businesses need support to diversify their services, introduce innovative solutions, improve their digital presence, develop new partnerships and respond to changing visitor expectations. Addressing these challenges is essential for building a tourism sector that is more competitive, sustainable and resilient throughout the year.

To help businesses overcome these barriers, **Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Kosovo, coordinated by Prishtina REA, has supported six tourism businesses in Kosovo in accessing a total of €90,000 in European Union funding through the PHOENIX 4.0 project, implemented under the EU Single Market Programme.** This achievement demonstrates how targeted business advisory services and access to European funding opportunities can help local tourism SMEs transform their development ideas into practical initiatives with potential benefits for businesses, visitors and local communities.

The six success stories, published on 29 October 2026, illustrate different approaches to strengthening tourism businesses through funding, innovation, sustainability and collaboration. Each initiative responds to specific business needs while contributing to broader objectives related to tourism diversification, digital transformation, environmental responsibility and improved competitiveness.

Through tailored advisory services, EEN Kosovo has helped businesses identify relevant funding opportunities, understand application requirements, structure project proposals and present their development objectives in line with the priorities of the PHOENIX 4.0 programme. The support has enabled participating businesses to pursue initiatives that might otherwise have been difficult to implement with their own resources alone. Importantly, the assistance has extended beyond identifying funding opportunities, with continued advisory support during project implementation where applicable.

A key dimension of this support has been the promotion of **more diversified and sustainable tourism experiences**. By developing new products and connecting complementary services, tourism SMEs can broaden their offers, respond to different visitor interests and reduce their dependence on traditional peak-season activities. Nature-based experiences, outdoor adventures, wellness activities and rural hospitality can create additional opportunities for visitors to discover Kosovo while supporting local businesses and the wider tourism economy.

Digital innovation is another important element of these initiatives. Digital tools can improve the visibility and accessibility of tourism services, help visitors plan their experiences and strengthen the way businesses communicate with potential customers. Initiatives involving digital tourism information, online booking solutions, digitalised trails and coordinated promotional activities demonstrate how technology can support the

development of more accessible and integrated tourism offers. For SMEs, these approaches provide opportunities to modernise their services, reach new customer segments and strengthen their position in an increasingly competitive tourism market.

Cooperation between local businesses is equally important. Tourism experiences often depend on several complementary services, including transport, accommodation, outdoor activities, wellness, gastronomy and local guiding. By working together, SMEs can combine their expertise, coordinate promotional efforts and offer visitors more complete experiences. Collaborative business models can also strengthen knowledge exchange, encourage innovation and create new opportunities for partnerships across destinations and tourism subsectors.

The initiatives supported through PHOENIX 4.0 demonstrate how European funding can help businesses explore these opportunities in practice. Through financial support and business advisory services, participating companies have been able to advance development plans focused on diversification, digitalisation, sustainability and stronger cooperation. These efforts contribute to a more adaptable tourism ecosystem in which businesses are better positioned to respond to market changes, seasonal fluctuations and evolving visitor preferences.

Sustainability and resilience remain central to the long-term development of Kosovo's tourism sector. Promoting responsible outdoor activities, encouraging more sustainable mobility, supporting rural tourism providers and strengthening local partnerships can help businesses develop offers that create economic value while respecting the destinations and communities on which tourism depends. Diversifying services beyond peak periods can also help businesses explore new revenue opportunities and make better use of local tourism resources throughout the year.

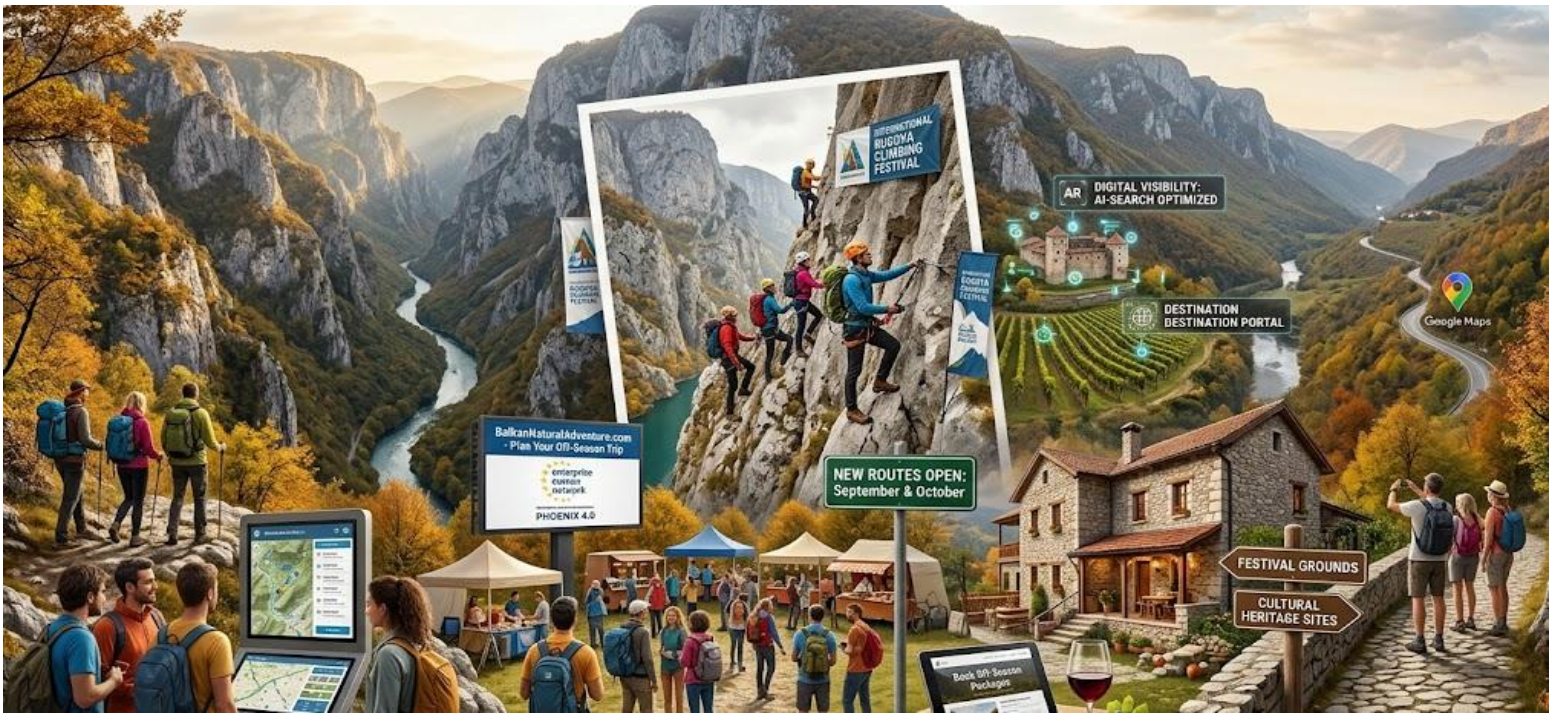
The results achieved through these six success stories also highlight the importance of connecting local SMEs with European programmes and development opportunities. Access to funding is an important first step, but businesses also benefit from guidance that helps them translate their ideas into structured projects, establish partnerships and advance implementation. Through its role in the Enterprise Europe Network, Prishtina REA supports Kosovo businesses in identifying opportunities for growth, improving their competitiveness and building connections with the wider European business environment.

With €90,000 in EU funding secured by six tourism businesses, this initiative represents a concrete example of how European support can contribute to business development and innovation in Kosovo's tourism sector. Beyond the financial investment, the projects demonstrate the value of encouraging SMEs to collaborate, diversify their offers, adopt digital solutions and strengthen sustainable business practices.

These six success stories reflect a shared ambition: to help Kosovo's tourism businesses move from potential to practical results. By combining European funding opportunities with tailored advisory support, EEN Kosovo continues to help SMEs develop new ideas, strengthen their market position and contribute to a tourism sector that is more innovative, collaborative, sustainable and resilient.

As Kosovo continues to develop its tourism potential, the experience of these businesses provides an encouraging example of how targeted support and strategic investment can help local enterprises create new opportunities for growth while contributing to the development of destinations and communities across the country.

Balkan Natural Adventure: Extending Peja's Tourism Season Through Climbing, Festivals and Digital Innovation



With support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, Balkan Natural Adventure secured €15,000 in EU funding through PHOENIX 4.0 to strengthen its digital visibility, promote climbing tourism and develop new opportunities beyond the summer season.

Balkan Natural Adventure Sh.P.K. was a tourism SME based in Peja, Kosovo, specialising in outdoor and adventure tourism. The company operated in a region known for the natural beauty of Rugova Canyon and its potential for climbing, Via Ferrata, hiking and other nature-based activities. Despite these advantages, tourism demand remained concentrated during the summer months, while September and October offered opportunities for further growth. This seasonality limited business opportunities outside the peak period and made it more challenging for local tourism providers to maintain a consistent flow of visitors.

The company identified the need to diversify its tourism offer, improve the online visibility of Peja's outdoor experiences and attract new international audiences. It also recognised the importance of international knowledge exchange and stronger cooperation with regional tourism stakeholders to make the destination more competitive.

Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo supported Balkan Natural Adventure in accessing EU funding through PHOENIX 4.0, enabling the company to advance its project, *"Festival and Digitalisation for Longer and Better Seasons."* The initiative brought together the Regional Development Agency of the Peja region and Slovenian climbing tourism expert Jurij Ravnik, combining local knowledge with international expertise in climbing tourism and digital promotion.

The project focused on three main areas: climbing tourism, digital visibility and international promotion. It included the development of an international climbing festival in Peja and Rugova to showcase local climbing areas and Via Ferrata routes, connect the destination with international audiences and promote outdoor experiences beyond the traditional summer season.

The project also addressed the company's digital visibility. An expert assessment of tourism websites identified opportunities to improve website structure, search engine visibility and discoverability through emerging AI-supported search environments. These improvements aimed to make information about local activities, accommodation and tourism services easier for potential visitors to find.

In addition, the project strengthened the promotion of Peja and Rugova through professional content, public relations and targeted advertising. The promotional approach highlighted the wider range of experiences available in the region, including hiking, culture, gastronomy and accommodation, alongside climbing activities.

Cooperation played an important role in the initiative. The Regional Development Agency of the Peja region contributed to the regional dimension of the project, while Slovenian climbing tourism expert Jurij Ravnik brought specialised knowledge and international experience in climbing tourism, destination development and digital promotion. This cooperation strengthened the exchange of expertise and supported a more coordinated approach to promoting the destination.

Through this initiative, Balkan Natural Adventure secured €15,000 in EU funding and developed a stronger foundation for addressing seasonality. The project strengthened cooperation with regional and international stakeholders, improved the company's approach to digital promotion and supported the presentation of Peja and Rugova as destinations offering a wider range of outdoor and cultural experiences.

The initiative also created opportunities to attract visitors during September and October, diversify tourism products and reach audiences interested in climbing and other outdoor activities. The broader regional tourism ecosystem stood to benefit from increased promotion of services offered by local guides, accommodation providers, tour operators, restaurants and other tourism businesses.

For Balkan Natural Adventure, the project represented an important step towards a more diversified tourism offer, stronger digital visibility and improved competitiveness. By combining EU funding, international expertise, event-based promotion and digital development, the company addressed a key business challenge and strengthened its opportunities for future growth.

The experience demonstrated how targeted support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo helped a tourism SME turn its development needs into a structured initiative connecting digital innovation, international cooperation and sustainable tourism development.

As the coordinator of Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, Prishtina REA supported the company in accessing EU funding and advancing an initiative designed to strengthen its market position and contribute to the development of tourism in Peja and Rugova.

From Guesthouse to Smart Stay: How ALPINE JARDIN Connected Visitors with Peja's Outdoor Experiences



With support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, ALPINE JARDIN secured €15,000 in EU funding through PHOENIX 4.0 to strengthen its competitiveness through digitalisation, sustainable tourism and cooperation with local service providers. Through its project, *"Peja Outdoor Experience: Smart Stays & Trails,"* the guesthouse advanced a digital approach to connecting visitors with hiking and cycling routes, climbing activities, local guides, transport services and traditional food experiences.

ALPINE JARDIN, operated by Gramoz R. Halili B.I., was a guesthouse in Peja, Kosovo, a destination recognised for its mountain landscapes, hiking opportunities and growing outdoor tourism community. The region attracted visitors interested in hiking, cycling, climbing and other nature-based activities, supported by local outdoor associations, professional guides and tourism service providers.

Despite this potential, visitors often had difficulty finding reliable information about outdoor activities, trails, qualified guides, local transport and authentic food experiences in one place. Information was spread across different organisations and communication channels, making it more difficult for tourists to plan their stays and discover experiences, particularly outside the main tourist season.

For ALPINE JARDIN, this challenge also presented an opportunity to improve its services and strengthen its market position. By connecting accommodation with local activities, the guesthouse created opportunities to offer visitors more than a place to stay and to encourage them to discover the wider Peja region.

The local outdoor tourism ecosystem had already demonstrated considerable potential. The Peja Outdoor Festival had previously brought together approximately 1,500 active participants and around 40 activities over three days. The wider network included 12 outdoor associations, five tour companies and 37 professional

guides. However, these resources lacked a central digital platform that could help visitors discover activities and services throughout the year.

With support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, ALPINE JARDIN secured €15,000 in EU funding through PHOENIX 4.0, under the EU Single Market Programme, to implement *"Peja Outdoor Experience: Smart Stays & Trails."* The project introduced the concept of a "Smart Stay," transforming the traditional guesthouse experience into a digital starting point for discovering outdoor activities and local services.

The initiative focused on developing a mobile-friendly digital platform that brought together information about hiking and cycling routes, climbing activities, local outdoor associations, professional guides, transport services and traditional food providers. It also aimed to provide a lasting online presence for the Peja Outdoor Festival, helping visitors discover activities beyond the event itself.

QR codes in guest rooms and common areas were incorporated into the project approach to make tourism information easier to access. Guests could use their mobile phones to explore available activities and identify relevant local services, reducing their reliance on printed materials and recommendations at reception. The platform also brought trail information and local tourism resources together in one accessible digital space.

Through the implementation of this initiative, ALPINE JARDIN strengthened its approach to digital tourism and developed a more integrated way to connect accommodation with outdoor experiences. The project created opportunities to improve the guest experience, promote local tourism services and encourage visitors to explore more of what Peja had to offer.

The initiative also strengthened the connection between the guesthouse and the wider tourism community. By linking visitors with guides, outdoor associations, tour operators, transport providers and traditional food businesses, the project supported a more collaborative approach to tourism promotion and created opportunities for tourism-related spending to benefit local businesses.

Another important benefit was the potential to diversify visitor demand beyond the traditional peak season. By presenting hiking, cycling, climbing and other outdoor activities alongside accommodation, ALPINE JARDIN developed a stronger basis for attracting different visitor segments and promoting Peja as a destination for outdoor experiences throughout a longer period of the year.

The project also created a digital foundation that could remain useful beyond individual tourism events. By connecting accommodation, activities and local services through a central platform, the initiative supported continued promotion of the region's outdoor tourism offer and created opportunities for future cooperation among local tourism providers.

For ALPINE JARDIN, access to EU funding provided an opportunity to pursue digitalisation, strengthen its market positioning and connect its accommodation services with the wider tourism potential of Peja. The project demonstrated how a small tourism business could use digital tools and local partnerships to develop a more connected and resilient business approach.

As the coordinator of Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, Prishtina REA supported the company in accessing EU funding and advancing an initiative that connected business development with digital innovation, local cooperation and sustainable tourism.

The experience demonstrated the value of helping tourism SMEs turn their development needs into practical initiatives that strengthened their competitiveness and supported the wider tourism ecosystem.

Bringing Prizren's Cultural Heritage to Life Through Digital Storytelling and Sustainable Tourism



With support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, ADVEKS LLC secured €15,000 in EU funding through PHOENIX 4.0 and implemented a project focused on digital storytelling, sustainable tourism and the promotion of Prizren's cultural heritage. Through the project, *"Digital Storytelling and Sustainable Tourism Experiences in Prizren,"* the company strengthened its approach to digital marketing, improved the presentation of its tourism services and enhanced cooperation with a specialised marketing partner.

ADVEKS LLC was a tourism SME based in Prizren, Kosovo, a destination known for its historic architecture, rich cultural heritage, traditional identity and diverse visitor experiences. Although Prizren had considerable tourism potential, the company faced challenges common to many tourism SMEs, including seasonal demand, strong competition and the need to reach new audiences through digital channels.

The company recognised that conventional promotional approaches did not fully communicate the diversity and authenticity of its tourism offer. It needed to present local heritage and visitor experiences in a more engaging way, improve its digital presence and explore opportunities to attract visitors beyond peak travel periods. Access to specialised marketing expertise and financial resources was also important for developing more effective promotional activities.

With support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, ADVEKS secured €15,000 in EU funding through PHOENIX 4.0, under the EU Single Market Programme, to implement its project. The initiative was developed in collaboration with KS Marketing Agency, combining ADVEKS's knowledge of tourism and the local destination with professional expertise in digital marketing, communication and promotional content.

The project focused on reviewing existing tourism experiences and digital visibility, developing heritage-based and sustainable tourism experiences, preparing digital storytelling content and promotional materials, and implementing targeted communication activities. These activities helped the company present Prizren's cultural heritage and local experiences in a more structured and engaging way.

Through its collaboration with KS Marketing Agency, ADVEKS strengthened its access to specialised digital marketing expertise and developed a more coordinated approach to promoting its tourism services. The partnership brought together complementary skills from the tourism and marketing sectors, helping the company connect its business development objectives with practical promotional activities.

The €15,000 in EU funding enabled ADVEKS to implement development and promotional activities that would have been more difficult to finance independently. The project gave the company an opportunity to invest in digital storytelling, strengthen its marketing approach and promote authentic experiences that reflected Prizren's cultural identity.

Following implementation, ADVEKS strengthened its digital marketing capabilities and established a stronger foundation for presenting its services online. The collaboration supported a more structured way of communicating the value of local heritage and engaging potential visitors through targeted promotional activities. These capabilities also provided the company with a basis for continuing its digital marketing efforts beyond the project.

The initiative helped ADVEKS place cultural heritage and authentic local experiences more prominently within its tourism offer. By focusing on heritage-based tourism and responsible visitor experiences, the company strengthened its approach to differentiating its services in Prizren's competitive tourism market. The project also created opportunities to reach new visitor segments and promote experiences beyond the traditional peak season.

Another important benefit was the strengthened cooperation between ADVEKS and KS Marketing Agency. This cross-sectoral partnership demonstrated how collaboration between tourism businesses and specialised service providers could help address practical business challenges, introduce new promotional approaches and support innovation in tourism services.

The project also created a foundation for future development. ADVEKS gained experience in combining tourism promotion with digital communication and strengthened its capacity to pursue further marketing initiatives, develop additional heritage-based experiences and explore opportunities to reach new markets and customer segments. Any future increases in bookings, revenue or visitor numbers would need to be assessed through continued monitoring.

For Prizren, the initiative contributed to the wider promotion of cultural heritage and sustainable tourism by supporting a business that focused on presenting the destination's distinctive identity and authentic experiences. The project demonstrated how digital communication and cooperation between local businesses could contribute to a more diversified tourism offer.

EEN Kosovo Empowers Butterfly to Diversify and Modernise Its Tourism Business



With support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, Butterfly Outdoor Adventure Sh.P.K. secured €15,000 in EU funding through PHOENIX 4.0 and implemented a project that strengthened its tourism offer through diversification, digitalisation and improved understanding of visitor preferences. The initiative, *"Kosovo Active: City to Mountains – Smart Experiences and Visitor Insight Tools,"* connected urban tourism experiences in Prishtina with outdoor adventures across Kosovo, creating opportunities for a more integrated and flexible approach to tourism development.

Butterfly Outdoor Adventure was a Kosovo-based tourism SME that offered city experiences in Prishtina alongside outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, snowshoeing and ski touring across Kosovo. The company operated in a market with considerable potential for combining cultural and urban experiences with the country's natural attractions.

However, the business faced challenges related to seasonal demand and the separation of urban tourism from outdoor activities. These factors limited opportunities to cross-sell experiences, encourage longer stays and attract visitors during different periods of the year. The company also needed to improve its understanding of customer preferences and satisfaction to make better-informed decisions about its tourism products and promotional activities.

Recognising these needs, Butterfly sought financial support and practical solutions that would help it diversify its services, modernise its marketing approach and strengthen its competitiveness. With support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, the company accessed the PHOENIX 4.0 funding opportunity under the EU Single Market Programme and secured €15,000 to implement its business development project.

The project focused on connecting city tours in Prishtina with outdoor experiences across Kosovo. By bringing these activities together, Butterfly developed a more integrated approach to presenting its tourism offer and created opportunities to serve visitors with different interests, preferences and travel schedules.

An important element of the initiative was the introduction of digital visitor insight tools. QR-based feedback mechanisms, post-activity surveys and the use of booking data supported a more structured approach to collecting information about visitor satisfaction, preferences and seasonal interests. These tools helped the company strengthen its understanding of customer needs and provided a better basis for reviewing and adapting its services.

Through the implementation of the project, Butterfly strengthened its approach to tourism product development and digital marketing. Connecting urban experiences with hiking, biking, snowshoeing and ski touring created opportunities to promote complementary activities, encourage visitors to explore more destinations and present Kosovo as a place offering both city experiences and outdoor adventures.

The introduction of visitor feedback tools also improved the company's capacity to make more informed business decisions. By gathering information about customer experiences and interests, Butterfly established a more systematic approach to understanding its audience and identifying opportunities to improve its tourism offer. These insights supported more targeted promotion and helped the company align its services more closely with visitor demand.

Another important benefit was the opportunity to address seasonality through a more diversified range of activities. Combining urban tourism with outdoor experiences available at different times of the year gave Butterfly a stronger basis for promoting alternative activities beyond traditional peak periods. This approach created opportunities to attract different visitor segments, cross-sell services and encourage longer stays.

The €15,000 in EU funding enabled Butterfly to implement activities that supported product innovation, digitalisation and business development. Rather than relying on a single type of tourism experience, the company strengthened its capacity to present a broader range of activities and develop a more flexible approach to responding to market demand.

The project also provided a foundation for future growth. Butterfly could build on the experience gained through digital visitor feedback, booking-related insights and integrated tourism promotion to continue refining its services, strengthen customer engagement and explore new sales opportunities. Although these improvements created potential for stronger business performance, any measurable increases in bookings, revenue or visitor numbers would need to be confirmed through ongoing monitoring.

For Butterfly, the main benefit extended beyond access to EU funding. The project helped the company strengthen its tourism offer, introduce more structured visitor insight methods and establish a foundation for more informed marketing and service development. It also supported a more resilient business approach by connecting different tourism experiences and creating opportunities to respond to changing customer preferences and seasonal demand.

As the coordinator of Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, Prishtina REA supported Butterfly in accessing EU funding and advancing an initiative that connected financial support with practical business improvements. The project demonstrated how targeted assistance could help a local tourism SME translate its development ambitions into concrete activities that strengthened its capacity for innovation, diversification and sustainable growth.

From European Funding to Sustainable Tourism: Superxplorers' Success with EEN Kosovo



With the support of Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Kosovo, Superxplorers LLC secured €15,000 in EU funding through the PHOENIX 4.0 project, implemented under the EU Single Market Programme. The funding enabled the company to implement “Resilient Trails: A Collaborative Model for Sustainable and Diversified Tourism in Kosovo” in partnership with Outdooring Prizren.

Superxplorers LLC is a Kosovo-based tour operator specialising in outdoor adventures, nature-based activities and experiential tourism. Like many tourism SMEs in Kosovo, the company faced challenges related to seasonal demand, limited product diversification, insufficient cooperation among tourism operators, and the need to strengthen sustainability practices and digital promotion. These challenges limited opportunities to attract visitors throughout the year and strengthen long-term competitiveness.

Through EEN Kosovo, Superxplorers accessed a European funding opportunity that helped transform its business development objectives into practical actions. As the lead applicant, the company implemented the project in partnership with Outdooring Prizren, bringing together two complementary tourism operators to develop more sustainable and diversified tourism experiences.

The initiative focused on diversifying tourism products, promoting off-season travel, strengthening cooperation between tourism SMEs, exchanging knowledge and good practices, improving sustainability awareness, and coordinating digital promotional activities. The partners also worked on pilot activities and visitor data

collection to support the development of tourism experiences that respond more effectively to visitor preferences and market needs.

With the support of EEN Kosovo, Superxplorers LLC successfully implemented its initiative, strengthening collaboration with Outdooring Prizren and supporting a more diversified tourism offer. The project encouraged tourism beyond peak periods, promoted more environmentally responsible business practices and supported improved coordination in marketing and promotion. It also contributed to building more resilient business models capable of adapting to seasonal fluctuations and changing market demands.

The collaborative approach developed through the project offers a model that other tourism SMEs in Kosovo and similar destinations could adapt to strengthen cooperation, diversify their services and improve their competitiveness. The initiative contributes to the objectives of the EU Single Market Programme by supporting SME collaboration, sustainability, innovation and business development.

This success demonstrates how European funding, combined with the business support provided by Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, can help local companies turn development ambitions into concrete initiatives. By connecting SMEs with funding opportunities and encouraging strategic partnerships, EEN Kosovo continues to support a more sustainable, diversified and competitive tourism sector in Kosovo.

Outdoor Kosovo: Boosting Sustainable Tourism in Rugova



Outdoor Kosovo successfully secured €15,000 in EU funding through the PHOENIX 4.0 project, implemented under the European Union's Single Market Programme, with application support from Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo. The funding enabled the company to advance "SMART RUGOVA – Digital E-Bike & Wellness Tourism Network," an initiative designed to strengthen sustainable tourism in the Rugova Valley by combining e-bike experiences, digital solutions, outdoor wellness and rural hospitality.

Outdoor Kosovo is a Kosovo-based tourism SME specialising in outdoor experiences and e-bike tourism in the natural surroundings of the Rugova Valley. Despite the region's significant potential for nature-based tourism, businesses in rural destinations face challenges related to seasonal demand, limited service diversification, digital visibility and cooperation between tourism providers. Developing a more integrated tourism offer required financial resources, innovative solutions and stronger partnerships with local businesses.

Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo supported Outdoor Kosovo in identifying and accessing the PHOENIX 4.0 funding opportunity, helping the company structure its project concept, prepare its application and demonstrate the relevance of its proposed activities to European priorities for sustainability, digitalisation and SME competitiveness. EEN Kosovo also supported the development of a collaborative approach involving three local businesses: Outdoor Kosovo as the e-bike tourism provider, Zanasyogalate as the wellness service provider, and BLETA/KAQAKU RUGOVE as the rural accommodation provider in Drelaj, Rugova Valley.

With this support, Outdoor Kosovo secured €15,000 in EU funding to implement its initiative. The project focused on connecting e-bike tourism with wellness activities and rural accommodation to create more diverse and attractive visitor experiences. It also promoted digital tourism solutions, including digitalised e-bike trails,

QR-code information points and online booking functionality, aimed at improving access to information and making local tourism services easier to discover and book.

EEN Kosovo's support continued beyond the application process, with advisory assistance during project implementation. This ongoing cooperation helped the company advance its development objectives, strengthen partnerships and pursue a more integrated and sustainable tourism model.

The initiative strengthened cooperation among three complementary local businesses, supported the diversification of tourism services and advanced the digital development of tourism experiences in Rugova. By combining outdoor activities, wellness and rural hospitality, the project created opportunities for joint promotion, improved visitor experiences and the development of services that can appeal to different visitor segments and extend tourism beyond peak periods.

The project also demonstrated how European funding can help rural tourism SMEs invest in innovation, develop partnerships and improve their competitiveness. Its collaborative approach offers potential for adaptation in other nature-based and rural destinations across Kosovo and the wider region.

For Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, Outdoor Kosovo's achievement demonstrates the value of tailored business advisory services that connect SMEs with European funding opportunities and provide continued support throughout their development journey. By helping the company secure €15,000 and advance SMART RUGOVA, EEN Kosovo contributed to the development of a more diversified, digitally enabled and sustainable tourism offer in Kosovo.

The Benefits: Stronger Businesses and a More Competitive Tourism Sector

The successful implementation of six tourism projects supported through PHOENIX 4.0 demonstrated how European Union funding, combined with targeted business advisory services from Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Kosovo, can help tourism SMEs in Kosovo turn their development ambitions into practical results. With a total of €90,000 in EU funding secured by six businesses, these initiatives supported the development of new tourism experiences, encouraged digital innovation, strengthened cooperation and promoted more sustainable approaches to tourism development.

Beyond the financial support, the projects demonstrated the importance of helping businesses identify their development needs, explore innovative solutions and establish partnerships that can contribute to their long-term competitiveness. Each initiative addressed specific business challenges while contributing to a shared objective: building a tourism sector that is better equipped to respond to changing market conditions, attract different visitor segments and create opportunities for sustainable growth.

Improved digital visibility and promotion. Digitalisation played an important role in helping tourism businesses improve how they present and promote their services. Through digital promotional activities, improved online information and the development of digital tourism solutions, businesses were better positioned to communicate their offers to potential visitors. Digital tools can make tourism experiences easier to discover, provide visitors with relevant information before and during their trips, and support more coordinated marketing activities. Strengthening digital visibility also creates opportunities for SMEs to reach new audiences, improve customer engagement and compete more effectively in an increasingly digital tourism market.

More diversified tourism products and experiences. The projects supported the development of tourism offers that respond to a broader range of visitor interests and needs. By combining activities such as outdoor adventures, cycling, wellness, cultural discovery and rural hospitality, tourism businesses can create more comprehensive and attractive experiences. Product diversification also provides opportunities to respond to different market segments and develop services beyond traditional tourism activities. By expanding their offers, SMEs can strengthen their market position, explore additional revenue opportunities and reduce their dependence on a limited number of products or seasonal activities.

Stronger partnerships and business cooperation. Cooperation among tourism SMEs was another important benefit. By connecting businesses with complementary services, the projects encouraged the development of collaborative approaches to tourism development. Partnerships between tourism operators, accommodation providers, wellness businesses, marketing specialists and other local stakeholders can help create integrated visitor experiences and improve the coordination of services. Collaboration also allows businesses to exchange knowledge, share promotional opportunities and explore joint initiatives that may be difficult to develop independently. These relationships can provide a foundation for future business partnerships and wider cooperation within Kosovo's tourism ecosystem.

A better understanding of visitors and market needs. Developing competitive tourism services requires businesses to understand visitor preferences, expectations and behaviour. The initiatives highlighted the importance of using visitor feedback, surveys, booking information and other available data to inform service development and promotional activities. A better understanding of customer needs can help businesses identify opportunities for improvement, adapt their offers and develop experiences that are more relevant to their target audiences. By making more informed decisions, tourism SMEs can strengthen customer satisfaction and improve their ability to respond to changing market demand.

Greater sustainability and business resilience. Sustainability and resilience were important themes across the supported initiatives. By promoting nature-based tourism, sustainable mobility, diversified tourism products and stronger cooperation, the projects encouraged businesses to explore approaches that support long-term development. Diversification can help reduce reliance on peak-season demand, while collaboration can strengthen the capacity of businesses to respond to challenges and identify new opportunities. Promoting tourism experiences throughout the year can also contribute to a more balanced distribution of visitor activity and create opportunities for local businesses and communities. These approaches are particularly relevant for rural and nature-based destinations, where tourism development depends on both the quality of the visitor experience and the responsible use of local resources.

Improved access to European funding and development opportunities. Access to finance enabled the six businesses to advance initiatives that supported their development objectives. Through PHOENIX 4.0, implemented under the EU Single Market Programme, the businesses secured a combined €90,000 in funding. EEN Kosovo's advisory support helped them identify a relevant funding opportunity, understand application requirements and develop proposals aligned with their business needs. This support illustrates how European funding can provide SMEs with opportunities to invest in innovation, develop new services, strengthen partnerships and pursue business improvements that may otherwise be difficult to finance.

Stronger competitiveness and opportunities for growth. By combining funding, innovation, digital development and cooperation, the projects helped participating businesses advance their strategic objectives and explore new opportunities for growth. More diversified services, improved promotional approaches and stronger local partnerships can help tourism SMEs develop a clearer market position and respond more effectively to visitor demand. The experience gained through project implementation can also provide a foundation for future investments, additional partnerships and further participation in European initiatives.

Taken together, these benefits demonstrate the value of supporting tourism SMEs through a combination of financial assistance, practical guidance and opportunities for collaboration. The six projects contributed to the development of a more innovative, connected and competitive tourism ecosystem in Kosovo, while illustrating how targeted support can help businesses turn development ideas into concrete activities.

Prishtina REA and Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo: Turning Opportunities into Results

As the coordinator of Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo, Prishtina REA plays an important role in connecting local businesses with European opportunities and supporting them in strengthening their competitiveness. Through tailored advisory services, funding guidance and support for business development, Prishtina REA helps SMEs identify suitable programmes, prepare project proposals, apply for funding and explore opportunities for innovation, international cooperation and access to new markets.

The experience of the six tourism businesses supported through PHOENIX 4.0 demonstrates the practical value of this role. By connecting businesses with an EU funding opportunity under the Single Market Programme, EEN Kosovo helped participating SMEs pursue projects that addressed their specific development needs while contributing to broader priorities for tourism sustainability, digitalisation and competitiveness.

The support provided went beyond simply informing businesses about funding opportunities. It involved helping them understand the requirements of the funding programme, structure their project ideas, define relevant activities and present the expected benefits of their initiatives. Where applicable, advisory assistance also continued during implementation, supporting businesses as they progressed from successful applications towards the practical delivery of their projects.

This approach reflects the importance of making European opportunities accessible and relevant to the needs of local SMEs. For many smaller businesses, preparing a competitive funding application and translating a development idea into a structured project can be challenging. Access to appropriate guidance can help them better understand available opportunities, develop clearer project concepts and identify how European programmes can support their business objectives.

The six success stories also highlight the importance of connecting financial support with wider business development priorities. Funding can create the conditions for investment, but long-term competitiveness also depends on the ability to innovate, cooperate, understand market needs and adapt to change. By supporting businesses in these areas, EEN Kosovo contributes to strengthening the foundations for sustainable growth and encouraging SMEs to explore further opportunities for development.

Through its role in the Enterprise Europe Network, coordinated by Prishtina REA in Kosovo, the network also provides a connection between local enterprises and the wider European business environment. This creates opportunities for SMEs to explore international partnerships, learn from other businesses, identify potential collaborators and consider future funding and innovation initiatives. For tourism companies, such connections can support the exchange of good practices, the development of joint offers and the exploration of new markets.

The results achieved through PHOENIX 4.0 demonstrate how European funding and tailored business support can work together to create opportunities for local enterprises. The six businesses were able to advance initiatives focused on tourism diversification, digital solutions, sustainability and collaboration, contributing to the wider development of Kosovo's tourism sector.

For Prishtina REA and EEN Kosovo, these achievements reinforce the commitment to supporting SMEs in preparing project proposals, applying successfully for funding, accessing EU programmes, embracing innovation and building international partnerships. By helping businesses identify opportunities and move towards implementation, the network continues to support enterprises in transforming their ambitions into practical development initiatives.

The experience also underlines the value of continued cooperation between European programmes, business support organisations and local enterprises. When funding opportunities are combined with relevant advisory services and a clear understanding of business needs, SMEs are better positioned to pursue innovation, strengthen their operations and contribute to the development of their sectors.

Six businesses. Six successfully implemented projects. €90,000 in EU funding. One shared achievement: stronger tourism businesses and new opportunities for sustainable tourism development in Kosovo.

These results represent more than a financial milestone. They demonstrate the potential of Kosovo's tourism SMEs to innovate, diversify their services, build partnerships and contribute to a more resilient and competitive tourism ecosystem. They also illustrate how European support, delivered through accessible funding opportunities and practical business guidance, can help local enterprises take meaningful steps towards sustainable growth.

Enterprise Europe Network Kosovo – Supporting businesses to innovate, grow and connect with European opportunities.