



REGIONALISATION IN PRACTICE

The Regional Advocacy Network for Eastern and South-Eastern Europe (RAN)

Mittagsclub

April 9, 2024

Agenda

- Welcome Note: Matthias Herr
- A brief RAN History
- Key RAN Building Blocks
 - Webinars
 - Regional Conferences
 - #DevPolHack
- What next? Challenges and opportunities

Welcome Note



Matthias Herr

Senior Advisor Market Development
Head of Eastern Europe Unit

Helvetas, Belgrade

Your hosts today



Valbona Karakaçi

Regional Senior Advisor for
the Western Balkans

Helvetas, Albania



Bernd Steimann

Senior Advocacy Advisor
Development Policy Coordinator

Helvetas, Switzerland

A brief RAN History: It all started on the beach...



A brief RAN History: How it all began

- **Recognised need to strengthen advocacy & policy** focus and respective skills across Helvetas projects in the Western Balkans – as part of a broader initiative to foster crosscutting themes through dedicated Communities of Practice (CoP).
- First regional workshop **triggered a lot of momentum** and the desire to exchange and learn more:
 - **Learning** about each other's projects, specific challenges and best practices
 - Using **synergies** across borders
 - Constructive **exchange** with relevant system actors (e.g. government and donor representatives)
 - Opportunity for projects to present themselves internally and **position** towards external actors
- So the story continued...



A brief RAN History



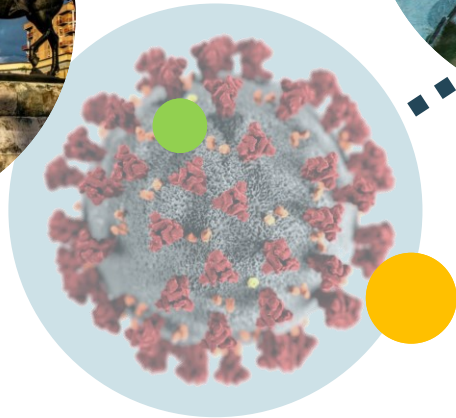
HELVETAS
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EASTERN AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE



Durres 2018



Tirana 2019



2020



Ohrid 2021



Belgrade 2022



Prishtinë 2023

#DevPolHack



Sarajevo 2024



Key Building Blocks: Webinars



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DEMOS Decentralisation and Municipal Support

EYE Enhancing Youth Employment

RECONOMY
Revitalize Reconnect Reshape

RisiAlbania
Partner for Growth

act
FOR AN ACTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY TOGETHER

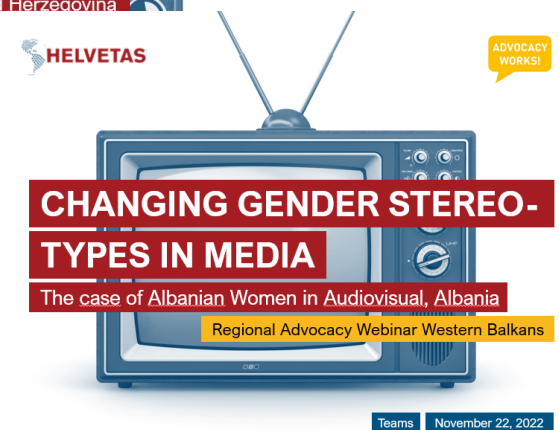
BASHKI të FORTA

Optim
Opportunities through Technologies and Innovation in Moldova

EE@MK

RAN Webinars

- **Various topics** from across Helvetas Eastern Europe, e.g.
 - Advocating for the interests of freelancers (Bosnia & Herzegovina)
 - Climate advocacy (regional)
 - Labour mobility: Push & Pull Factors (regional)
- Taking up **external inputs**, e.g.
 - Changing gender stereotypes in media (Albania)
- **Blog articles** to spread the word
- **Helvetas Advocacy Concept and –Toolbox** as key reference
- **Always with external guests / system actors** from relevant sectors (state, private, CSOs, media, academia) and respective **Helvetas advisors**



Panelists: Labour Mobility (March 2024)



Besart Kadia
Deputy Minister of
Foreign Affairs
Albania



Mila Carovska
Former high-level
policymaker of labor
and social policy
North Macedonia



Russell King
Former Director, Sussex
Centre for Migration
University of Sussex
UK



Bashkim Iseni
Member of the Federal
Migration Commission
Switzerland

Panelists: Freelancers (February 2023)



Elena Ivanova
Director, Impact Foundation
North Macedonia



Mike Haynes
Heritage Management and
Responsible Tourism
Consultant, Georgia



Vasilika Vjero
Deputy Minister, Ministry of
Finance and Economy
Albania



Liliana Busuioc
Executive Director, Association
of Small and Medium
Enterprises, Moldova

Key Building Blocks: Annual Meetings



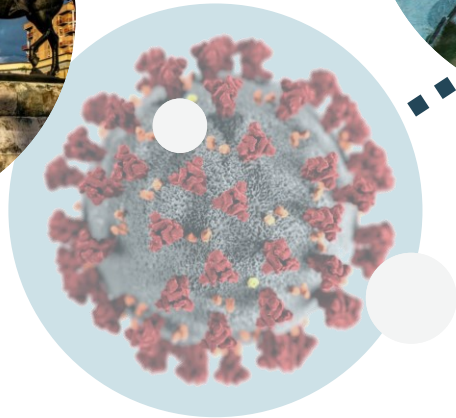
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Belgrade 2022



Prishtinë 2023



Sarajevo 2024



Key Building Blocks: Annual Meetings



Durres 2018
Advocacy
Basics



Tirana 2019
M&E for
Advocacy



Ohrid 2021
Advocacy in a
polarised context



Belgrade 2022
Digital Advocacy



Prishtinë 2023
Climate Advocacy



Sarajevo 2024
Civic Space

2021 Ohrid: Advocacy in a Polarised Context

- **First physical meeting after Covid-19** – high demand for personal exchange, a key ‘revival’ moment for the network
- **Exchange and joint learning** on how to advocate in highly polarised settings without being ‘hijacked’ by political actors / parties
- **Face-to-face Hackathon:** Promoting vocational education in North Macedonia, with government and private sector representatives
- Kicking off **video documentation / blog**



2022 Ohrid: Advocacy in a Polarised Context



2022 Belgrade: Digital Advocacy

- **Exchange and joint learning** on the current state and future opportunities and threats of digital advocacy in the region.
- **Fishbowl discussion** with Serbian activists and development actors, such as the Executive Director of *TRAG Foundation*, the Head of the Serbian Association *Prostor*, or the Head of SDC's Governance Domain in Serbia.
- **Hybrid Hackathon:** Waste Management in Tirana, with the Municipality of Tirana



2023 Prishtina: Climate Advocacy

- How can ongoing projects from different sectors contribute towards effective climate politics?
- How to increase our **future contribution**?
How to make our interventions more climate policy sensitive / transformative?
- Where do **key system actors** stand (governments, municipalities, private sector, donor community, etc.)? How can we improve our collaboration?
- Supporting Helvetas Eastern Europe regional effort on ‘green transition’



Key Building Blocks: #DevPolHack



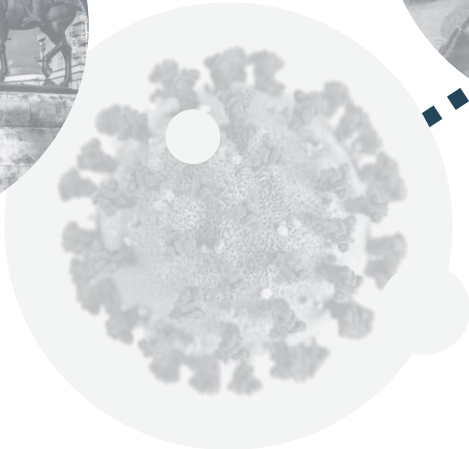
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Sarajevo 2024

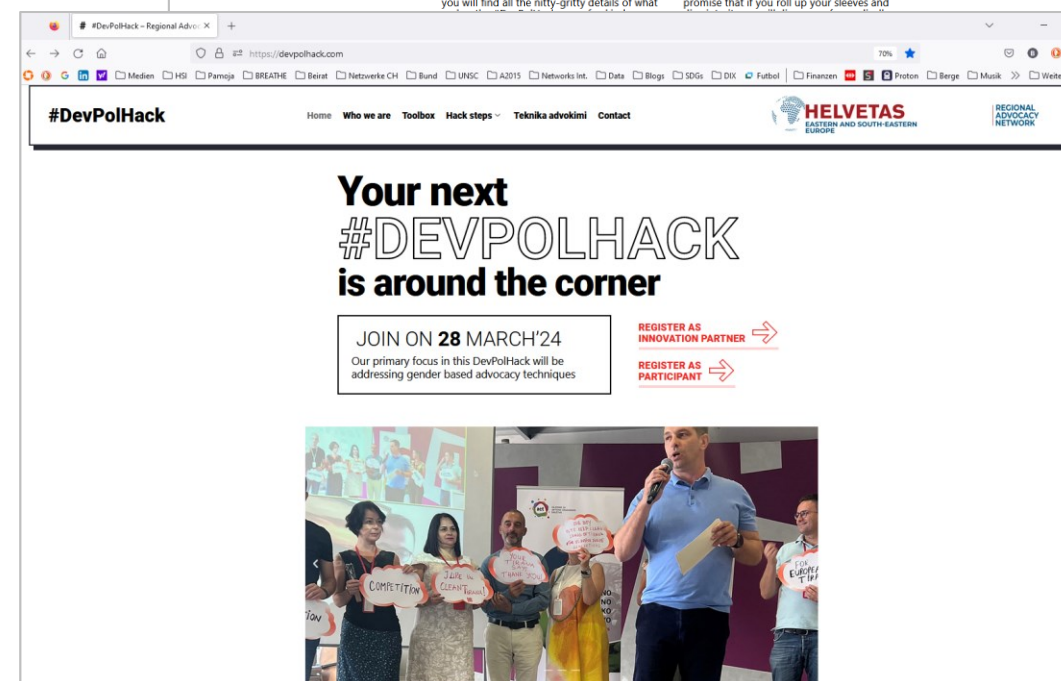
#DevPolHack



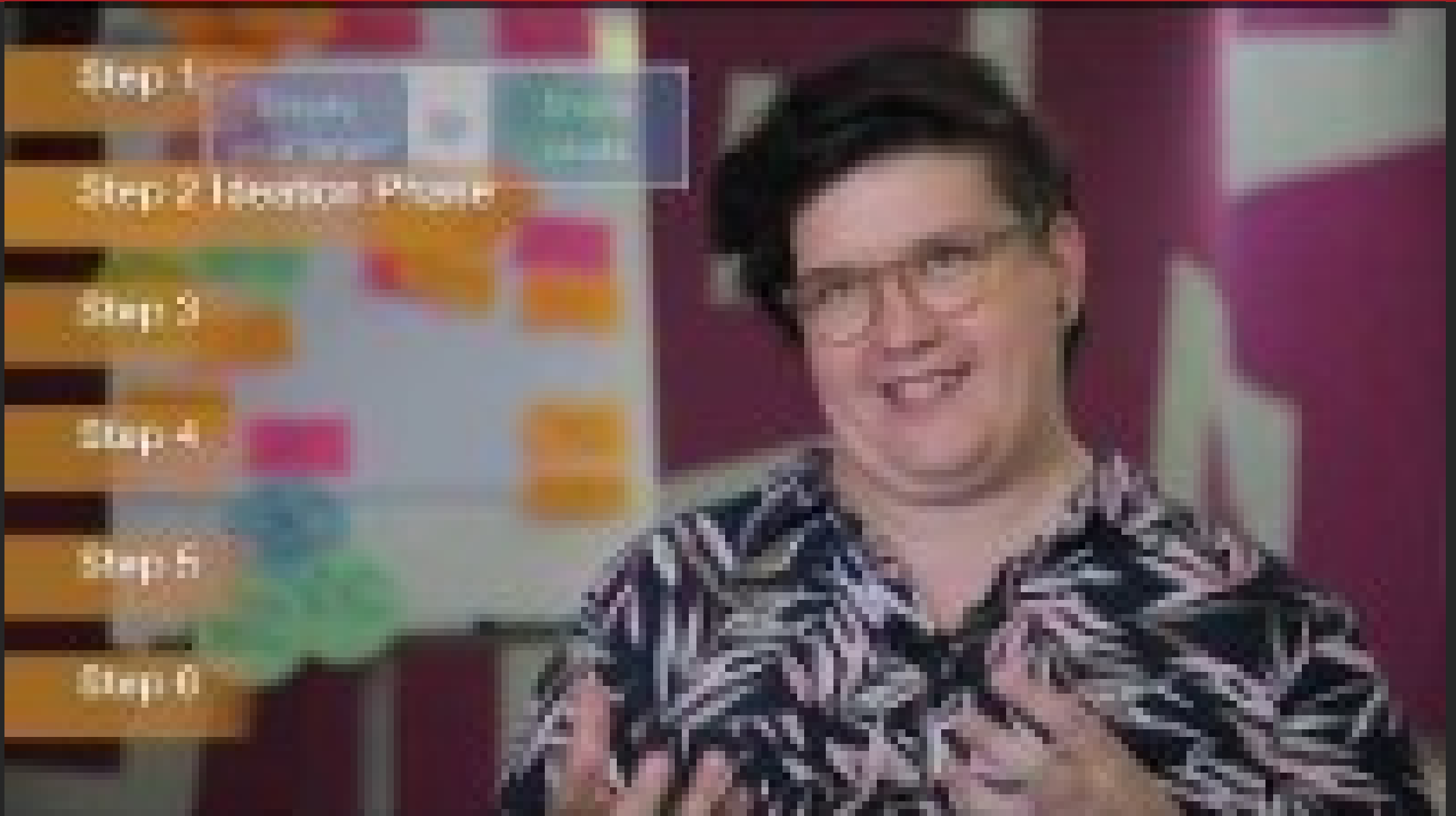
Key Building Blocks: #DevPolHack

- Bring together a mixed group of **enthusiastic development experts to jointly develop solutions** for a very specific challenge
- First **tested** in the Annual Meeting 2021 in Ohrid (f2f), further refined in the Annual Meeting 2022 in Belgrade (hybrid)
- Winner of the **Helvetas Innovation Award 2022**
- Transformed to work in a **virtual setting**
- Launched **website** in 2022
- First **virtual test run** in January 2024

#DevPolHack



Key Building Blocks: #DevPolHack



A brief RAN History



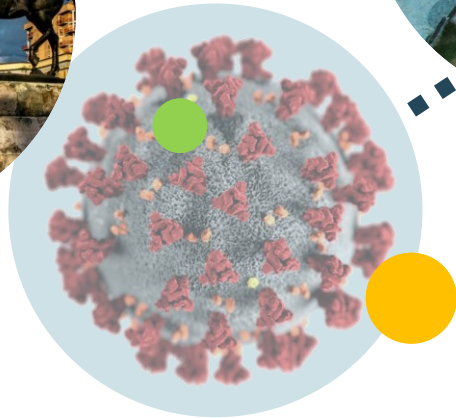
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#DevPolHack



Sarajevo 2024



What next? Challenges and opportunities

Major strengths

- A growing innovation network & lab, going far beyond Helvetas itself
- Good positioning & branding for Helvetas, creating external demand (e.g. advocacy training session for Albanian School of Public Services)
- Demonstrates that advocacy is not just a 'governance thing', but equally relevant for e.g. private sector development or vocational education.

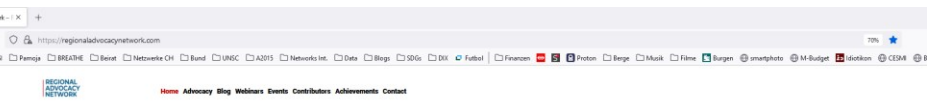
Key challenges for the future

- Financial viability: RAN entirely Helvetas-funded so far > need to explore new funding sources
- Ownership and commitment of members and participants > need to broaden it beyond Helvetas
- To what extent can the RAN inspire other Helvetas regions?

Internal reflection process started

... supported by a BSc study from the University of Lucerne

Curious? Visit regionaladvocacynetwork.com



ABOUT US

Regional Advocacy Network: The knowledge broker

Helvetas Eastern Europe has been instrumental in implementing numerous development projects in the Western Balkans for over two decades. Our approach is firmly centered around people, valuing the knowledge each individual contributes. We drive systemic change by leveraging this collective knowledge through projects, initiatives, partnerships, and networks. Our goal is to be recognized as a credible knowledge broker, reliable development partner, and effective implementer of projects and initiatives.

Advocacy is a key aspect of all our interventions, including those addressing social inclusion, sustainability, good governance, and creating new perspectives. The Regional Advocacy Network, established in 2018, is a product of the knowledge and experience we have accumulated over the years.



This network brings together like-minded individuals from diverse sectors, such as the private sector, national and local governments, academia, civil society, educators, and interest groups. Through regular virtual and in-person exchanges, participants discuss successful solutions applied by various Helvetas projects and partners. The network fosters consistent knowledge sharing, allowing participants to learn from best practices and tackle challenges specific to their country and the broader region.

Library / Blog

Global ShareWeek – the Regional Advocacy Network shared the Prototype of the #DevPolHack web platform

On November 28th, 2023 Helvetas hosted a global ShareWeek focused on innovation and digitalization. During the event, the Regional Advocacy Network shared the Prototype of the #DevPolHack web platform, which stands for the 2022 Helvetas Innovation Award. Over 30 colleagues...



Mainstreaming Climate Change: Showcase the Green Future

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. It affects livelihoods, governance, health, and social economic development and poses a risk to the achievement of sustainable development goals and. To address this challenge effectively, mainstreaming climate change has...



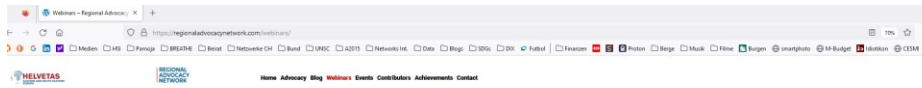
Greening the Western Balkans

Uniting for Sustainable Infrastructure, Biodiversity Protection, and Effective Governance Unlocking the Future: Western Balkans Unite for Smart Cities The Western Balkans, a region with a GDP that accounts for less than 1% of the European Union's GDP, stands at a...



Cities for Green Agenda

The Inaugural Local Self-Governments Forum "Unlocking the Future: Innovate, Eco-vote, Elevate - Western Balkans Unite for Smart Cities," held on October 12, 2023 in Tirana, marked a significant step in advancing the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans at the...

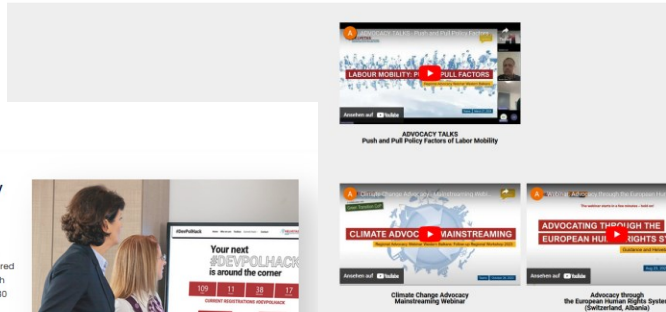


WEBINARS

Join us for exciting webinars hosted by our Regional Advocacy Network! These exciting online events empower individuals and organizations across different regions to drive meaningful change in our communities. Explore topics like community organizing, policy advocacy, coalition building, grassroots mobilization, and effective communication strategies.

Connect with like-minded individuals, learn from esteemed speakers and experts, and gain practical skills to make a tangible impact in your region. Be part of our mission to create stronger, more resilient, and inclusive communities.

Join our webinars now and be a force for regional us!



CONTRIBUTORS

Our Knowledge Brokers: Fueling Positive Change in the Region



Deputy Minister at Ministry of Finance and Economy Vasilika Vjetro (Albania)



Heritage Management, International Development & Responsible Tourism Consultant Mike Haynes (Georgia)



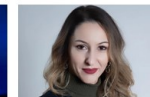
Director at JET Learning Center Emina Vukovic (Montenegro)



Market Systems Development, Private Sector Engagement, Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Elena Ivanova, MBA (North Macedonia)



Vice President Consultative Council of SMEs Liliana Busuioi (Moldova)



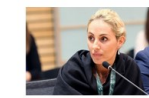
Gender Expert, MA in Gender, Violence and Conflict Ljupka Trajanovska (North Macedonia)



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Team Leader Erton Kashta (Albania)



Former Vice Minister at Ministry of Tourism and Environment Ometa Cveti (Albania)



Tourism Sector Manager Mirtjon Mita (Albania)



Senior Intervention Manager Gramos Osmani (Albania)



Environment and Climate Change Manager Anastasia Beklish (Georgia)

STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE

ALBANIA

Achievements in STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE

NORTH MACEDONIA

Achievements in STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE

KOSOVO

Achievements in STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Achievements in STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE

MOLDOVO

Achievements in STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE

GEORGIA

Achievements in STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE

BELARUS

Achievements in STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE





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