

**balkan  
green  
foundation**



**Annual  
Report  
2023**



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**transforming  
innovative  
concepts into  
powerful solutions**



# A quick look at **BGF**

Balkan Green Foundation (BGF) is a regional organization committed to promoting inclusive and fair progress in sustainable development throughout the Western Balkans.

BGF is a key partner for local, regional, and global communities, organizations, and institutions, working together to advance sustainability and build partnerships both regionally and globally.

# Pursuing our **goals**

We actively promote sustainable development in the Western Balkans by advocating for and supporting policies inspired by the latest global perspectives.

BGF focuses on tackling pressing global issues while also advancing national priorities for EU integration in sustainable development, environmental conservation, energy development, and climate change.



# Our Signature Program

At the heart of our mission is the **commitment to sustainable development**. BGF uses a wide-range approach to **deliver the Green Agenda**, which includes strong advocacy, empowering local communities, and detailed policy analysis.

Our **social innovation program** is a crucial way we empower young people, promote reconciliation, and **support social entrepreneurship**. Through this initiative, BGF aims to foster sustainability and make a positive impact in the Western Balkans by helping businesses achieve these goals.

We firmly believe in the power of **regional cooperation** to achieve our common goals. Whether locally or globally, we stand with our partners to create a greener future for the Western Balkans through collective efforts **toward decarbonisation**.



## Strength in Sustainability

# BGF's Latest Environmental Projects

BGF's latest initiatives aim to drive sustainability through **four impactful projects**.

These efforts span promoting vibrant energy communities, tackling energy poverty, empowering youth with solar and green economy skills, educating on climate adaptation and enhancing Kosovo's energy policies to meet EU standards.

## SolarCollab – A Youth-led Energy Transition

is a youth-driven initiative spearheading an energy transition towards accessible renewable energy and empowering green economy opportunities. Within the project, we advocate for breakdown of barriers to renewable energy systems and promoting energy-efficient investments such as prosumers in national level.

The initiatives equip young people with vital skills for green jobs through specialized training programs. Utilizing a peer-to-peer learning model, university students' mentor high schoolers to foster awareness and action towards sustainability.

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Supported by Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS).





## Decarbonization for Climate Resilience

addresses Kosovo's climate change challenges, particularly those affecting security and regional stability. The project aims to guide policymaking, foster dialogue among key stakeholders, and educate the public on the importance of climate adaptation. Ultimately, the goal is to mitigate climate change impacts in crucial sectors through effective decarbonization.

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Supported by SMART Balkans - Civil Society for Shared Society in the Western Balkans project implemented by Center for Civil Society Promotion (CPCD), Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) and Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs .

## ReRURAL – Renew Rural Areas'

Within the project, our consortium is dedicated to tackling energy poverty in rural Southeast Europe through promoting energy transition and establishing energy communities (ECs). We focus on capacity building among public institutions, potential EC founders, and civil society different activities, with a strong emphasis on engaging youth.

Additionally, we aim to address legislative gaps in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo to empower communities in combating energy poverty effectively.

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Supported by the European Climate Initiative (EUKI), implemented in partnership with SDEWES Centre (lead), City of Đurđevac, RDA Green Karst and LIR Evolution.

## RenovAID – Buildings Renovation

aims to improve energy efficiency in buildings in Kosovo and Albania through evidence-based policy recommendations. We collaborate with local and EU partners to train government officials in developing long-term renovation strategies aligned with EU standards.

Addressing energy poverty, we advise on disseminating energy-efficient renovation information and support the establishment of one-stop shops for streamlined climate-friendly building upgrades, ultimately aiding Kosovo and Albania in their EU compliance journey.

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Supported by the European Climate Initiative (EUKI) implemented in partnership with WISE Europa (lead), Institute for Development Policy - INDEP, Milieukontakt Albania and Energiaklub Climate Policy Institute.

# Continuing Momentum

# Project Achievement

# Update

## Energy Transition and Decarbonisation in The Western Balkans

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Supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented in partnership with Germanwatch (lead), Belgrade Open School and Eko-svest.

The initiative aims to speed up energy transition and decarbonization in Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia. Its mission is to build strong civil society networks advocating for reforms at national and regional levels, involving academia, the private sector, and labour unions in coal-dependent areas.

The project emphasizes gender equity in tackling the climate crisis and follow a regional strategy to create a collaborative roadmap with clear actions.





## 1. National Core Group

To create a powerful network of stakeholders to tackle energy transition and decarbonization, BGF formed a national core group. This group consists of nine diverse institutions, including NGOs, academia, business associations, and legal experts, all united to advocate for a just transition.

The core group's primary focus is to drive the upscaling of energy efficiency. Why? In Kosovo, electricity consumption is notably high, particularly in the household sector, which also holds the greatest potential for savings. There are sufficient mechanisms in place to implement impactful measures to address this issue effectively.

## 2. Phasing in Renewables in North Macedonia, Study Visit

Our visit to North Macedonia aimed to witness the country's energy transformation firsthand. One striking example of the visit was Oslomej, a small village in Kicevo. Once a lignite mine since the 1980s, Oslomej is now a symbol of renewable energy. By 2030, mining will completely stop, replaced by solar panels that already provide enough electricity for up to 5,000 households. This remarkable shift highlights the Western Balkans' transition from coal mining to becoming a renewable energy leader in Europe.

National core groups visiting PVPP Oslomej in North Macedonia



## Kosovo Green Action

promotes collaboration among stakeholders to enhance social accountability on climate and energy issues, aligned with the EU-endorsed Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. It aims to ensure social accountability and enable data-driven policymaking in line with the Green Agenda in Kosovo. Furthermore, 'Kosovo Green Action' is the first project from Kosovo to receive the GPSA Grant.

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Supported by World Bank through the Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) grant, implemented in partnership with Lëvizja FOL and Open Data Kosovo.



Panelists Besjana Qorraj (ME), Abdullah Pirçe (MESPI), Ilir Muçaj (Office of PM), and Avni Sfishta (GIZ) at the project launch event discussing the 'Commitment and Progress on the Green Agenda in Kosovo' moderated by Nora Cimili (Cjelbër), highlighting achievements such as setting 2030 targets, advancing the Energy Strategy, and drafting laws on Renewable Energy Sources (RES).

## The Balkan Green Ideas program

aims to foster the growth of sustainable local initiatives in the region. It actively promotes green innovation by involving communities in creating environmentally friendly businesses that leverage local resources and community-based markets.



### Regional Highlights 12th Edition

- 18 national finalists showcased their green idea in front of the international jury.
- 5 selected teams as the winners of the 12th edition.
- \$ 40,000 in prizes awarded
- 1 documentary recapping the editions highlights.

### National Highlights 12th Edition

- A total of 171 applications from across the Western Balkans were received to be part of National Green Ideas Competition.
- 4 informational sessions were organized, both on-site and online, attracting 104 participants interested in the program.
- A total of 81 teams from across the region pitched their green ideas to a national independent jury.
- 2 competing categories – Concept and Advanced LOT

- ▲ The national winning teams selected by the Trag Foundation in Serbia: Bleja Woolen Balls (left), Zadrugarstvo (middle), and Connect Clean Roma Group (right).



Supported by Rockefeller Brothers Fund and implemented by Balkan Green Foundation in partnership with Partners Albania for Change and Development (Albania), Mozaik Foundation, (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Venture Up (Kosovo), Fund for Active Citizenship (Montenegro), ARNO (North Macedonia) and Trag Foundation (Serbia).

Mirjana Josifoska's pitch at the National Competition organized by ARNO in North Macedonia. ▶



## Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs (RISE)

helps young people develop and launch ideas that solve social issues in their communities. Through a structured process of brainstorming and prototyping, RISE empowers these individuals to drive positive change. Additionally, the project strengthens six local incubators by developing new educational tools and materials focused on social entrepreneurship and intercultural understanding.

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Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs (RISE) project is implemented by Balkan Green Foundation, ARNO, NEŠTO VIŠE, SMart Kolektiv Inovaciono preduzetnički centar Tehnopolis ,Yunus Social Business Balkans. Risewb6 project is supported by Agence Française de Développement, European Union, Regional Youth Cooperation Office – RYCO, Franco-German Youth Office (OFAJ), PULSE Group (Groupe SOS) and SEEYN.

Top: Consortium of RISE during the study visit in Paris, France.

Bottom: RISE 3.0 winning teams of the ideation phase in Kosovo.



RISERS during the Regional Forum held in Skopje, North Macedonia



- Paris Study Visit: Incubators explored social enterprises.
- Ideation Phase: 7 teams underwent intensive 4-month training to develop their idea.
- RISE Winners: 2 teams were chosen to continue their journey prototyping their ideas.
- RISE Bootcamp: Gave the opportunity to all RISE winners from the region to network and transfer knowledge.
- Design Thinking Workshops: 3 sessions focused on identifying local problems and working with stakeholders to create effective solutions.



## Road Map of Social Enterprises

aims to create a supportive environment for social entrepreneurship by developing a digital map, website, and app for networking and sharing knowledge.

It focuses on helping young people tackle unemployment by fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and supporting new projects.

This digital tool is the first of its kind to specifically target social enterprises in Kosovo.

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Supported by Erasmus Plus Programme and implemented in partnership with Youth Alliance-Krushevo; IDEA Coalition for Solidarity Economy Development; Student Business Center; Enterprise Development Agency – EDA; Youth for Social Changes; and Active Youth of Florina.





Want to know more about the  
social enterprise map?

[socialenterprisesmap.org](https://socialenterprisesmap.org)

# Achieving Our Envisioned Goals

In pursuit of our vision and mission, BGF is dedicated to promoting sustainability and regional collaboration through various initiatives.





# KOSOVO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WEEK (KSDW)

BGF, in partnership with its implementing partners, organized the 6th edition of KSDW to raise public awareness and foster policy discussions on sustainable development and green economic growth. The event served as a platform to address various environmental and development issues.

During this edition, BGF moderated the session ‘Green Jobs in the Era of Digitalization,’ exploring the impact of green job promotion policies and digitization on the economy and social equality.



This edition of Kosovo Sustainable Development Week was jointly implemented with the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning, and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Regional Development, the European Union Special Representative in Kosovo, GIZ, and the Institute of Development Policy.

## GREEN TALK – 4TH EDITION

The main aim of the Green Talk platform was to continue stimulating discussions on environmental issues, including the challenges and opportunities in environmentalism in Kosovo.

The 4th edition showcased eco-friendly initiatives and highlighted recommendations on food waste, local policies for sustainable cities, the importance of energy auditing, and empowerment of women in the energy sector.

Minister of Economy, Artane Rizvanolli holding the first Green Talk speech on 'Government's Energy Efficiency Measures'



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The 4th edition of Green Talk was supported by Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung.

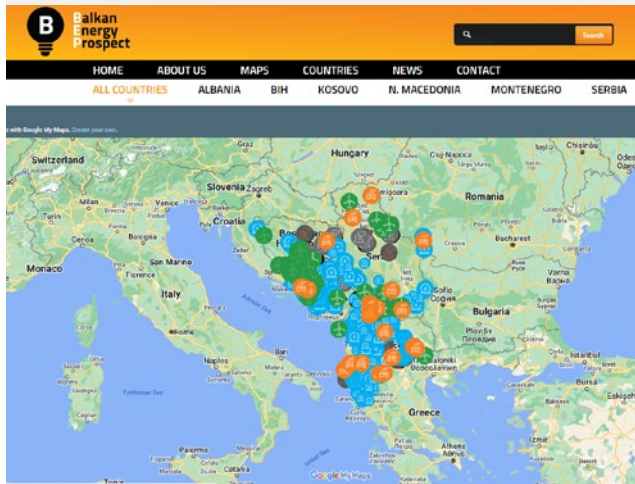


# Regional Insights Toolkit

## Balkan Energy Prospect

The BEP platform provides a concise overview of energy sector developments in the six Western Balkan countries. It visually represents data, showing that efficient electricity access and strategic connections within the region will enhance cooperation and advance their energy systems. This progress is guided by the shared commitments and targets of the Energy Community Treaty.

[www.wb6energyprospect.com](http://www.wb6energyprospect.com)



## Policy Evaluation Toolkit

The Policy Evaluation Toolkit, developed under the “Green Rural Deal” project funded by the European Climate Initiative (EUKI) of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, helps create inclusive green growth policies aligned with rural development goals. It combines various instruments into a coherent, sustainable policy package, organized around core principles like inclusiveness, social impact, transparency, and sustainability.

[www.tool2.balkangreenfoundation.org](http://www.tool2.balkangreenfoundation.org)

The screenshot shows the login page for the Policy Evaluation Toolkit. It features a green leaf logo on the left. On the right, there is a 'Sign In' section with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Below the icons, there are input fields for 'USERNAME' and 'PASSWORD', each with a 'Show/Hide' toggle. A green 'Sign In' button is positioned below the password field. A 'Sign up' link is located at the bottom of the login section. The main heading is 'POLICY EVALUATION TOOLKIT', followed by a paragraph of text describing the project's development and funding.





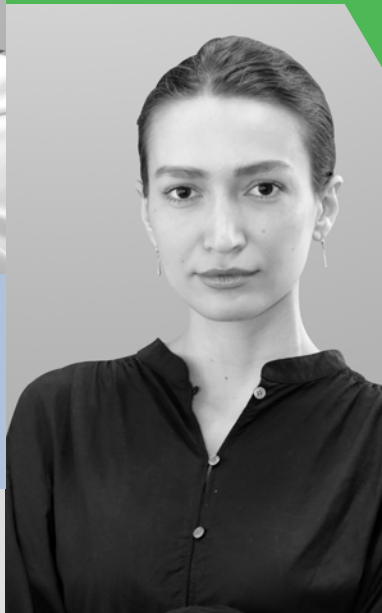
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# Donors



# Get Involved

There are different ways you could contribute and become part of our pursuit for sustainable development:

1 Be mindful of our everyday behaviors and eliminate habits that harm the environment!

2 Integrate elements of social entrepreneurship into your business model!





3

Become a volunteer!

4

Cooperate for joint movements for various sustainable development initiatives.



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[Balkan Green Foundation - BGF](https://www.youtube.com/Balkan%20Green%20Foundation)



[www.balkangreenfoundation.org](http://www.balkangreenfoundation.org)





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