

SMART

Project Name: SMART Innovation Centers for the Development of Innovative and Entrepreneurial Thinking to Facilitate the Development of Sustainable Smart Solutions in the Western Balkans

Project acronym: SMART

Project type: Erasmus+, Capacity Building in Higher Education.

Project Reference Number: 101082938 – SMART – ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE

Project Leader: DOBA Business School, Maribor, Slovenia

Project Partners: 14 organisations (higher education institutions, chambers of commerce and local development agencies) from Slovenia, Italy, Germany, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

Project Duration: 01. 12. 2022. – 30. 11. 2025.

Project Value: 884.461 EUR

The SMART project addresses the problem of low innovation capacity in the field of smart specialization in the Western Balkans, specifically in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. The project is designed to systematically support partner universities to transcend their role as knowledge providers and become active designers of the regional innovation ecosystem, where different stakeholders meet according to the Quintuple Helix Innovation Model: universities as knowledge providers, companies, government and public organizations, civil society and environmental organizations.

The project aims at targeting the existing gap between HE outcomes and labor market demands by:

- Addressing the challenges of HEIs in the field of smart specialization and the related innovation & entrepreneurship competence development with the introduction of new smart specialization-related learning modules and innovative teaching approaches into HEIs' curricula, including online teaching, cross-curricular learning, and virtual mobility.
- Supporting the professional development of HEIs academic staff in the field of innovation & entrepreneurship competence development for the requirements of smart specialization along with hybrid & online teaching practices.
- Setting up 7 SMART Innovation Centers at HEIs and integrating them into the existing HEI structure.
- Facilitating sustainable cooperation between HEIs and the business sector through the SMART Knowledge Exchange Network.
- Encouraging student and staff work placements and (virtual) mobility.

Key project activities and project results:

- Comparative analysis of smart specialization efforts within the quintuple innovation helix framework in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and the EU
- Developed a training program in selected areas of smart specialization, within which 300+ higher education teachers and other stakeholders will be trained,
- Technical and operational setup of SMART Innovation Centers at seven partner higher education institutions,
- Trained staff (higher education teachers and students) for the management and further development of innovation centers and
- Established SMART Knowledge Exchange Network in the field of smart and innovative solutions in the Western Balkans.

Project Partners:

- DOBA Business School, Maribor, Slovenia
- Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italia
- Fondazione Politecnico di Milano, Milano, Italia
- Technical University of Dresden, Dresden, Germany
- University „Ismail Qemali“, Vlora, Albania
- University „Fan S. Noli“, Korca, Albania
- University „Luigj Gurakuqi“, Shkoder, Albania
- Local Development Agency AULEDA, Vlora, Albania
- University of Banja Luka, Banja Luka, B&H
- University of East Sarajevo, East Sarajevo, B&H
- Republika Srpska Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Banja Luka, B&H
- University of Donja Gorica, Podgorica, Montenegro
- University of Montenegro, Podgorica, Montenegro
- The Chamber of Economy of Montenegro, Podgorica, Montenegro.