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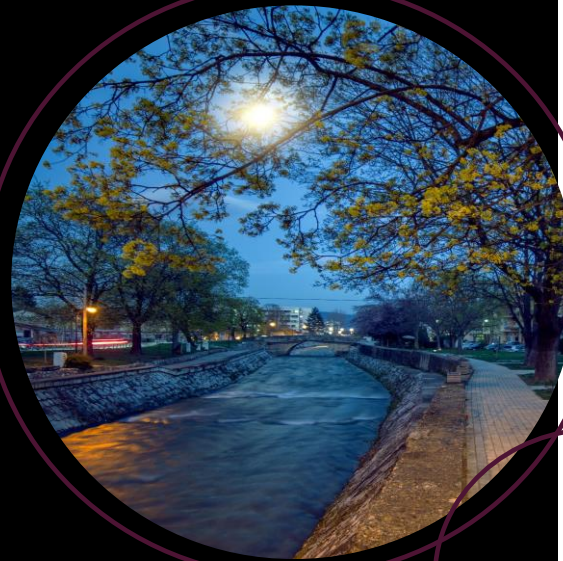
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# Integrated Action Plan



## Municipality of Tetovo

December 2025

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## INTRODUCTION

The **Integrated Action Plan (IAP)** of the Municipality of Tetovo is developed within the framework of the URBACT “NextGen YouthWork” network, designed to strengthen the connection between youth, institutions and the community in the digital era - moving towards a more inclusive and innovative “Digital Youth City.” Grounded in a local assessment and informed by European exchanges of good practices, the plan was co-created through the active involvement of the URBACT Local Group (ULG), which brought together young people, the Local Youth Council, municipal representatives, municipal secondary schools and NGOs. This collaboration has been essential in identifying the main challenges facing young people in Tetovo - particularly in relation to digital literacy, employability and civic engagement - and in developing coordinated actions that address these issues sustainably.

The IAP outlines a medium-term strategy organized around three interrelated domains:

1. Enhancing communication and participation of youth in local decision-making,
2. Strengthening digital and entrepreneurial skills among young people and youth workers and
3. Establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms based on data and participation.

Throughout the document, objectives, indicators and review mechanisms are clearly defined to ensure that the plan remains adaptive, transparent and accountable. The IAP aligns with existing national and municipal youth policies, builds upon initiatives previously undertaken by the Local Youth Council and promotes equal opportunities, digital inclusion and collaboration between municipal departments and external partners - positioning young people at the heart of public action and innovation in Tetovo.

## 1. CITY CONTEXT AND DEFINITION OF THE INITIAL PROBLEM / POLICY CHALLENGE

**The municipality of Tetovo** is located in the northwestern part of the Republic of Northern Macedonia, stretching from the shore of Shar Mountain and Baltepe (Honey Fortress), to the banks of the Pena River on Shar Mountain, in the central part of the “Poloska Kotlina”. Today, the municipality of Tetovo occupies a space of 261.89 km<sup>2</sup> and together with the newly created municipalities derived from it and which to this day gravitate towards it, that area is 1,080 km<sup>2</sup>, with an altitude of 460 – 2747 m. Tetovo's geostrategic position is also characterized by the fact that it is located at the intersection of international busy corridors, such as corridor 8 (passing through Tetovo) and corridor 10 (40 km, far from Tetovo).

The municipality of Tetovo has 20 settlements, one city and 19 villages.



Figure 1. Map of the Municipality of Tetovo

Tetovo is also one of the five largest municipalities by population in the Republic of North Macedonia. According to the population census conducted by the State Statistical Office in 2021, the total number of resident population in the municipality of Tetovo is 84,770 inhabitants.









MUNICIPALITY HEADQUARTERS		Tetovo
	Address	Dervish Cara Street, no. 68, 1200 Tetovo
	Location	42°00'N 20°58'E
	Website	www.tetova.gov.mk
	Altitude	460-2747m
	Surface	261.89 km <sup>2</sup>
	Number of inhabitants	84.770
	Number of resident and non-resident inhabitants	104.504
	Municipality Day	3 March

Table 1. General data of the Municipality of Tetovo.

### Statistics about Municipality of Tetovo

Based on the data listed in Table below, we note that the highest percentage of the population is between the ages of 25 and 44, which amounts to 7.9% of the total number of residents, while the lowest is between the ages of 74 and 84, from 1.2% to 2% and those over 85 are only 0.6%.

Age group	Total	Male	Female	Age group	Total	Male	Female
0-4	5222	2690	2532	45-49	5695	2618	3077
5-9	5740	3011	2729	50-54	5623	2703	2920
10-14	5459	2853	2606	55-59	5705	2742	2963
15-19	5337	2768	2569	60-64	4930	2356	2574
20-24	5629	2867	2762	65-69	4135	1927	2208
25-29	6521	3220	3301	70-74	2904	1314	1590
30-34	6290	3143	3147	75-79	1766	778	988
35-39	6167	3035	3132	80-84	1062	411	651
40-44	6024	3010	3014	85+	561	217	344

Table 2. Number of inhabitants by age group in the municipality of Tetovo  
Source: State Statistical Office.

### Education

In the municipality of Tetovo there are primary and secondary schools, as well as universities. There are 12 primary schools in total and the teaching takes place in Albanian, Macedonian and Turkish from the first to the ninth grade due to the different ethnicities of the students. Based on the data of Department for Public Affairs, in the 2023/2024 school year, 9603 students were registered in primary schools, while in the 2024/2025 school year we have a number of 9372 students.

There are a total of 7 secondary schools in the municipality, of which 2 are state schools and 5 are under the jurisdiction of the municipality and the teaching takes place in Albanian, Macedonian and Turkish languages.

In the municipality of Tetovo there are 5 (five) municipal high schools. These high schools address students not only from the municipality of Tetovo, but also from the 5 surrounding rural municipalities.

School year	2022/2023	2023/2024
Total	9713	9372

Table 3. Number of students in secondary schools in the municipality of Tetovo

The Municipality of Tetovo hosts two higher education institutions where students can continue their studies:

- The State University of Tetova (SUT) - structured into 11 faculties, offering 35 study programs, 93 areas of study and hosting 3 scientific research institutes.
- The South East European University (SEEU) - a public - private university offering studies across all three academic cycles. It provides 20 undergraduate and 25 postgraduate programs within 5 faculties.

The number of enrolled students in these universities over the past three academic years is as follows:

Academic Year		2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
University of Tetova	of	7918	7785	7851
SEEU		2088	2252	2587

Table 4. Enrolled students in univerisites  
Source: State statistical office



Photo: The State University of Tetova



Photo: The South East European University

- **Unemployment and employment statistics**

According to data from the State Statistical Office from the 2023 Labor Force Survey, the active population in the Republic of North Macedonia is 790,440 people, of whom 687,459 are employed and 102,980 are unemployed. These data represent an overview of the development of the labor market and are disaggregated by age group and gender.

Among the unemployed, slightly more than half are women (53%), reflecting a continuing gender imbalance in the labor market. Looking at age groups, young people aged 15 to 29 make up around 20% of the unemployed, highlighting the challenges that youth face in entering the workforce. The largest share of unemployed individuals, 43%, falls within the 30 - 49 age range, while those aged 50 and above represent about 37%. These figures paint a picture of a labor market where both gender and age differences play a significant role in employment opportunities, emphasizing the need for targeted policies to support young women, young people and older workers alike.

Source: Business informer of the Municipality of Tetovo, December 2024.

- **Industrial / employment composition**

The Municipality of Tetovo has significant potential for economic development, with opportunities for investment and entrepreneurship across multiple sectors. The local economy is characterized by a mix of small and medium-sized enterprises, trade, services, agriculture and a growing interest in tourism and cultural industries. The proximity to regional markets and a strong tradition of family businesses further enhance its economic resilience.

Source: Business informer of the Municipality of Tetovo, December 2024

However, employment opportunities for young people remain limited, with high levels of informality, skills mismatches and a lack of innovative industries. Many young people either migrate abroad or remain underemployed, highlighting the need for targeted policies that promote inclusive growth, attract sustainable investments and create quality jobs, particularly for youth and young women. In general, the unemployment rate is an indicator of the challenges that need to be addressed to increase employment opportunities and ensure a more sustainable development of the labor market in the country.

- **Entrepreneurship**

Tetovo's strategic location near Skopje and its young, dynamic population offer strong potential for development. However, infrastructure gaps, complex administrative procedures and limited technological innovation constrain business competitiveness.

Youth entrepreneurship in Tetovo remains limited, with few structured programs supporting start-ups, mentoring, or access to funding. Strengthening entrepreneurial education and digital skills would enhance youth employability and local economic resilience. The municipality, in cooperation with local, regional and national institutions, actively supports private sector growth, investment and key economic sectors.

The Employment Agency of RNM (2024) supports youth entrepreneurship for young people under 29, long-term unemployed and beneficiaries of minimum assistance, offering training in digital skills, advanced IT and employability development, implemented in partnership with relevant institutions.



- **Access to inclusive Infrastructure**

While Tetovo offers some public and educational spaces for youth, accessibility and inclusiveness remain uneven, particularly for young women and youth from rural areas, underscoring the need for more inclusive infrastructure and safe youth spaces.

- **Digital competences**

Technology and digitalization transform society and have a significant impact on the lives of young people. Almost 99% of young people use the Internet every day or almost every day and they see the most benefits in the possibility for social interaction and communication, education, information and leisure. Despite high internet connectivity, the level of digital competences among young people in Tetovo varies significantly, with limited opportunities for advanced ICT training and digital entrepreneurship support. Strengthening these skills is key for both employability and social inclusion.

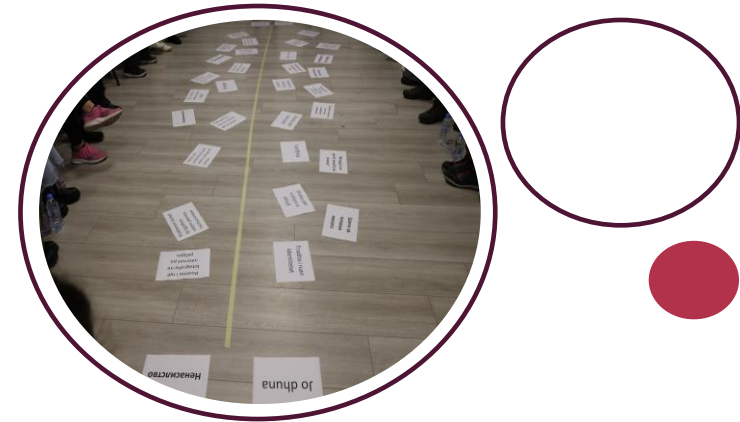
Source : National youth strategy 2023-2027

### **Current state in Municipality of Tetovo**

The Municipality of Tetovo has established the Local youth council, which operates independently from both the council.

In Tetovo, as in many other cities, young people have faced serious challenges in recent years, particularly due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Online schooling, social isolation, limited opportunities for sports, cultural and social activities and health concerns have all taken their toll.

This situation has led to greater self-isolation and increased dependence on phones and screens. Influenced by social media, young people now spend less time outdoors and in community spaces, while cases of cyberbullying remain high.



### **The role of the Local youth council is:**

- networking and cooperation among youth in culture, arts, sports, science and politics;
- dynamic exchange of information and experiences;
- lobbying and advocacy initiatives;
- trainings, seminars and conferences tailored to members' needs;
- organization of debates and public forums;
- coordination of joint artistic, cultural, sports, scientific and political activities.

Beyond these activities, the Council coordinates joint projects that support youth protection and empowerment, ensuring programs that enhance well-being, personal growth and informal learning.

It encourages volunteerism and civic engagement, finances and develops safe youth spaces and infrastructure and works closely with institutions to collect, analyze and report on the situation of young people's rights. Additionally, it establishes administrative structures to address youth issues and allocates budget resources to progressively advance youth rights, supporting the creation and implementation of meaningful projects, programs and initiatives.

Through the Local youth council (LYC), young people receive guaranteed participation in order to have their voice heard and contribute to the local community.

Drafting and creation of a Local Action is intended to provide youth with opportunities for solving problems, needs and ideas and the youths to be directly involved in issues such as education, different activities in sport, cultural and social activities and volunteerism for the community. Youth can prove that spending time in front of screens on the internet can bring useful activities for communities.



Photo: Youth council meeting

The Municipality of Tetovo, together with local youth, has carried out meaningful projects to strengthen citizen participation in community life.

One of the first was the Strengthening of Municipal Councils project, supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in North Macedonia. Through this initiative, public forums were held on issues such as youth, education and local governance. The process even led to a change in the Statute of Self-Governing Units, officially recognizing forums as a tool for citizen engagement.

Within this framework, the Youth Council of Tetovo launched its first project: the restoration of its own premises. With the project elected in forums of the the project Strengthening of Municipal Councils supported by SDC, implemented by UNDP and municipal co-financing, an unusable space was transformed into a vibrant hub where young people, NGOs and artists now meet, debate, exhibit and create. The space continues to host activities ranging from youth and mental health discussions to cultural events and poetry readings - helping young people connect, express themselves and shape their community.

We aim to activate the youth for every topic related to governance, education, sport and healthy life, where today they have their space for such activities.

During the ULG meeting, participants worked on understanding the problem and analyzing the problem tree (as shown in above picture), where participants as core problem identified two challenges as: Mental health that are caused from family problems, social network influences, bullying (physical & cyber), peer pressure / egoism, economic status / financial stress which have these consequences: anxiety and depression, aggression and behavioral issues, loss of self-confidence, risk of self-harm.



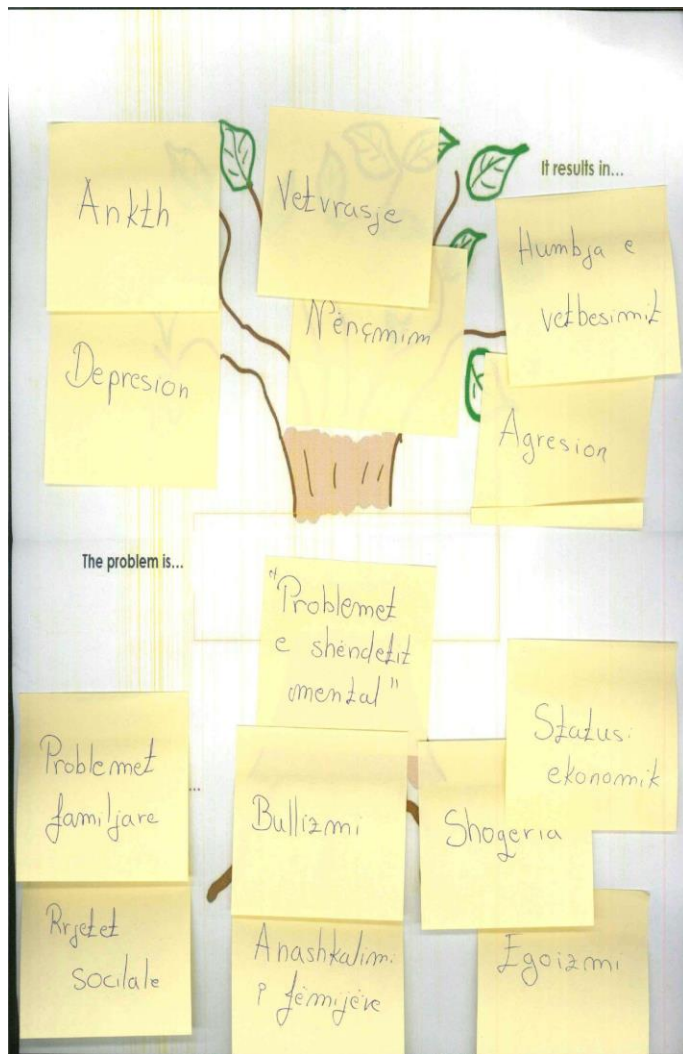


Figure 2. Problem tree

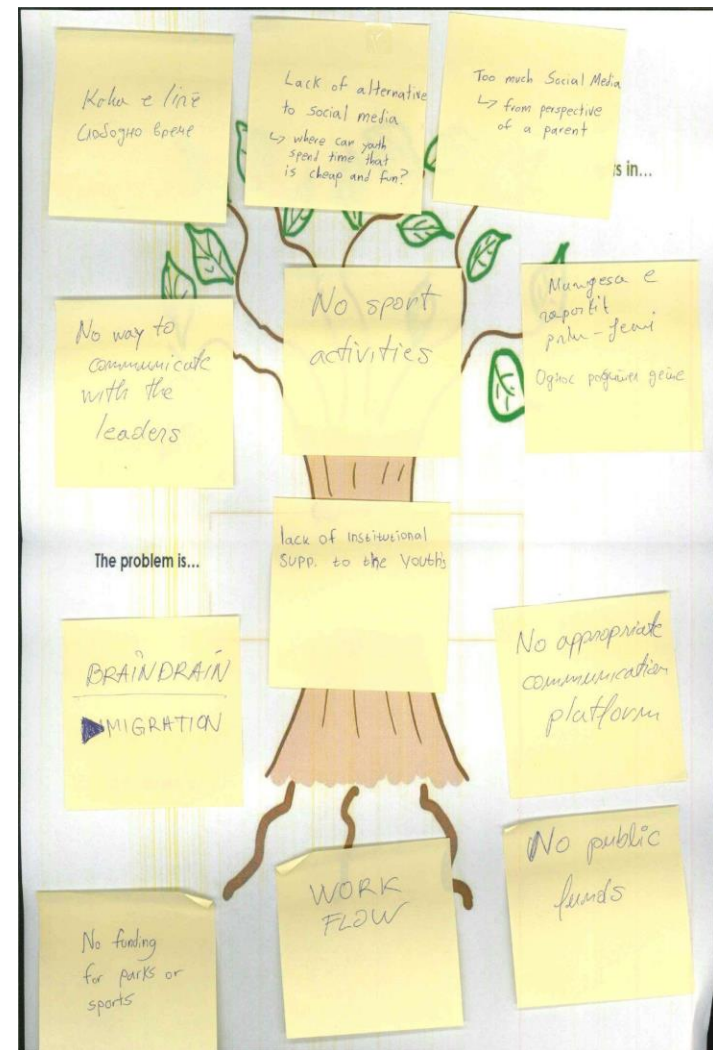


Figure 3. Problem tree

**The lack of institutional support for youth** stems from missing communication platforms, absence of public funds and no investment in parks or sports. Weak parent - child communication and overreliance on social media further worsen the situation. As a result, young people have no channels to reach leaders, limited opportunities for recreation, spend excessive time online and increasingly migrate in search of better prospects.

By tackling both causes and consequences, the municipality of Tetovo can create a supportive environment where young people can thrive.



#### **Summary of institutional and existing strategies and policies**

The Agency for Youth and Sports as an independent body of state administration was established in 2000 as the sole government body responsible for all aspects of the life of young people in North Macedonia.

**The National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2023 - 2027** was adopted by the Government.

its priorities covers eight priority areas as follows:

1. Youth participation
2. Digital youth information ecosystem
3. Youth work
4. Education
5. Culture
6. Health
7. Entrepreneurship and pre-employment support
8. Security (violence)

- **Alignment:**

- **National:** Fully aligned strategic priorities with Northern Macedonia's youth legislation and broader social and economic policies, particularly in the areas of inclusion, education, capacity building, innovation, decision - making and quotas for youth and women at various levels of institutional participation, including city council and parliamentary candidates.
- **Regional:** Closely aligned with Western Balkans regional youth cooperation frameworks, focusing on digitalization of the services, creation of innovation-hubs, youth capacity building, social inclusion and increased participation in decision-making bodies throughout the system.
- **EU:** Strong alignment with the **EU Youth Strategy 2019 - 2027**, the European Youth Goals, the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and the EU integration process, with a focus on inclusion, education, innovation, decision-making and greater representation of youth and young women in institutions.

- **Policies covered:** Employment, education, participation, health, culture, environment and inclusion.

## Strategic Plan for Local Economic Development of Tetovo 2023 - 2027

- **Alignment:**

- **Local:** Tailored to Tetovo's socio-economic context, addressing strategic priorities such as employment, infrastructure, education, inclusion, opportunities for youth empowerment and community engagement and participation in decision-making processes.
- **National:** Aligned with North Macedonia's national strategies, focusing on local economic development, employment, rural and urban development, youth inclusion, gender balance, the "leave no one behind" principle and participation in decision-making processes.
- **Regional:** Coordinates with **Polog regional development priorities** and cross-border cooperation initiatives.
- **EU:** Reflects **EU Green Deal, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, gender equality, social inclusion and good governance standards.

- **Policies covered:** Urban planning, infrastructure, environmental protection, tourism, agriculture, education, culture, sports and social inclusion.

Youth work has received increased recognition in recent years in North Macedonia, but youth workers need more support. With the adoption of the Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies in 2020, youth work in Republic of North Macedonia was for the first time defined in a legal act and youth work is formally recognized as an occupation through the adopted standard of occupation for Youth Worker from 2018.

Youth work is mainly carried out by youth organizations and organizations for young people, as well as by the small number of youth centers at the local level that have been established so far in only 6 municipalities.

Therefore, youth work is not widely available and sufficiently sustainable and most of the institutions, young people and other stakeholders and groups in society are still not familiar with the meaning and importance of youth work.

There is also a lack of broad social promotion, as well as inter-institutional and inter-sectoral cooperation in the field of development and recognition of youth work. Based on article 16 of Law on Youth participation and youth policies, municipalities in their statutes foresee establishment of Local Youth Council.

In the municipality of Tetovo, a Local Youth Council was established with 9 members of different ethnicities, organizations, political parties and 2 members are from high schools.

The organization of the departments in the framework of the municipality of Tetovo, with relevance to youth is provided by the Department of Public Affairs, which is organized in 3 units:

- the unit for education and youth,
- unit for sport and culture and
- unit for social, medical and child protectio

## 2. SETTING OF FOCUS AND OBJECTIVES

The municipality of Tetovo has committed itself to fostering an environment where youth are empowered, engaged and equipped with the tools they need to succeed.

The **Integrated Action Plan (IAP)** of Tetovo serves as a strategic roadmap for meaningful, measurable change. It reflects our dedication to ensuring that young people are not only heard but also actively involved in shaping the decisions that affect their future. By 2030, Tetovo aims to:

- **Improve digital literacy** among youth by at least 50% until 2030, ensuring access to training in digital skills, innovation technologies and online entrepreneurship. Although a high percentage of the population in the Republic of North Macedonia is connected to the internet, comparative data show that the level of digital skills remains relatively low. Specifically, Eurostat data indicate that in 2021, only 35% of the population had basic or above-basic digital skills, compared to 54% in the European Union (latest available data). This reveals a significant digital gap, which particularly affects older and vulnerable population groups.

Source: ICT Development Strategy: SMART/MK 2030

- **Create sustainable youth and young women involvement in policymaking**, ensuring inclusion in decision-making process in local government, municipal elections and possibly influencing

the same regulation in parliamentary elections, requiring at least 40% of candidates for councils to be youth (15–29) and at least 40% to be women, promoting both youth empowerment and gender equality in policymaking."

- **Enhance access to youth - friendly physical and digital spaces**, providing safe, inclusive environments for socialization, innovation and personal development.

This plan is not just for the youth of today - it is an investment in the leaders, innovators and changemakers of tomorrow. We invite all stakeholders to join us in this journey, as we work together to build a future where every young person in Tetovo has the opportunity to thrive.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Five key areas of intervention have been defined as the strategic framework for implementing the Integrated Action Plan (IAP). These areas guide the development of specific actions, help prioritize resources and ensure a coordinated response to the needs of young people. They are fully aligned with the National Youth Strategy 2023 - 2027 and the Strategic Plan for Local Economic Development of Tetovo 2023–2027 and EU Youth Strategy 2019 - 2027 providing a structured approach to youth empowerment, participation, employability, entrepreneurship and access to inclusive infrastructure.



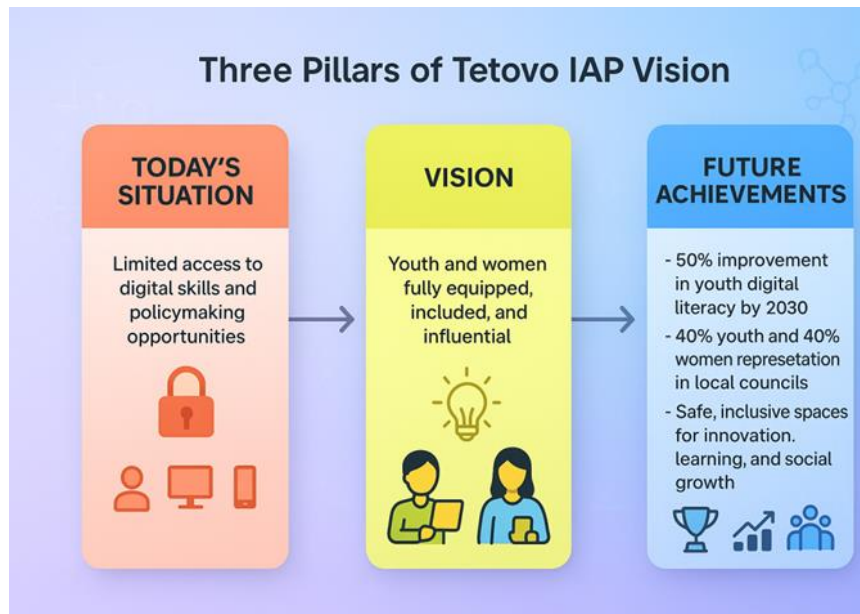


Figure 4. Three pillars of Tetovo IAP vision

“EMPOWER, INNOVATE, THRIVE.” — ALIGNS WITH THE ATTRIBUTES OF YOUTH POTENTIAL IN TETOVO.

**SO1: Youth Participation** is at the core of the IAP, ensuring that young people are involved in decision - making processes at the local level. Through the establishment of youth councils, forums and structured engagement mechanisms, the municipality aims to foster an environment where youth voices are heard and their ideas influence policies and community initiatives. Strengthening collaboration between youth organizations and local authorities will further promote active citizenship and leadership among young people.

**SO2: Digital youth information ecosystem** plays a crucial role in enhancing access to opportunities, education and services. The IAP envisions the creation of a structured digital youth information ecosystem, including digital platforms and physical youth centers, where young people can easily access information on education programs, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship support and civic engagement activities. Strengthening communication channels will ensure that youth are well-informed and can make strategic decisions for their future.



**SO3: Employment Support** is a key pillar of the plan, focusing on bridging the gap between education and the labor market. Initiatives such as vocational training, career counseling, internship programs and partnerships with the private sector will help young people gain relevant skills and improve their employability. By fostering collaboration with local businesses and industries, the municipality aims to create more job opportunities tailored to the evolving needs of the market.

The Integrated Action Plan is a long-term commitment to youth empowerment, aiming to create an inclusive, dynamic and opportunity-rich environment where young people in Tetovo can thrive. Through continuous collaboration with stakeholders, the municipality is dedicated to ensuring that youth have the resources, support and motivation to shape their own futures and contribute to the sustainable development of the community.

**SO4: Integrated Infrastructure** is essential in providing young people with spaces for socialization, innovation and creativity. The municipality plans to invest in modern youth-friendly spaces, including cultural centers, co-working hubs and sports facilities, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for all. These spaces will serve as platforms for skill-building, networking and personal development.

**SO5: Inclusive Entrepreneurship** will be encouraged by offering young people the necessary tools, mentorship and financial

support to start their own businesses. The IAP aims to establish incubators, training programs and access to micro - financing, enabling young entrepreneurs to develop their ideas and contribute to the local economy. Special attention will be given to marginalized and disadvantaged youth to ensure equal opportunities in business development.

The Municipality of Tetovo recognizes the vital role that young people and youth worker play in shaping the social, economic, and cultural future of the community. Young people represent a key driving force for innovation, civic engagement, and local development. In response to the challenges they face - such as limited access to employment opportunities, skills development, and decision-making processes. The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is designed to strengthen this role by creating a coordinated framework that supports youth through capacity building, inclusive programs, and stronger cooperation between the municipality, youth organizations, schools, and local stakeholders. By investing in youth and youth workers and the ecosystems they operate in, the IAP aims to improve outreach, increase youth engagement, and ensure that young people - especially those facing fewer opportunities are empowered to actively participate in community life and local decision-making processes.”

“ IAP DESIGNED TO SUPPORT YOUTHS AND GENDER  
EQUALITY POTENTIAL FOR BRIGHTER FUTURE ”



The table below presents a comparative overview between the **National Youth Strategy (2023 - 2027)** and the **Integrated Action Plan (IAP) of the Municipality of Tetovo**. Its aim is to show how national policy priorities are translated, adapted and implemented at the local level. The comparison highlights areas where Tetovo's IAP aligns with national objectives, as well as those where it sets more ambitious or context-specific targets particularly regarding youth participation, digital engagement and inclusion. This overview serves to illustrate the municipality's commitment to advancing youth policy goals in a way that reflects local needs and capacities.

Policy Area	National Youth Strategy (2023–2027)	Integrated Action Plan (IAP) – Tetovo	Notes / Comparison
Local Youth Councils (LYC)	Target: 60 municipalities to establish functional LYCs by 2027	LYC already established and functional; focuses on youth involvement, inclusion, education, culture, innovation and structural participation of youths and young women in decision-making	Tetovo has already met and surpassed the national target, with an active council enhancing participation and inclusion.
Use of Internet for communication with public authorities	Target: 47.5% of youth to use the Internet for communication by 2027	Target: 50% by 2030; also includes qualitative improvements in digital skills, innovation technologies and online entrepreneurship	Tetovo aims for slightly higher usage and adds qualitative goals (digital skills and entrepreneurship), showing a broader, more developmental approach.
Youth participation in decision-making bodies	Target: 32% by 2027	Target: 40% (adjusted for municipal population structure and demographics)	Tetovo sets a higher target (40%) reflecting local population dynamics, indicating more ambitious local youth engagement.
Strategic priorities	Eight priority areas: 1. Youth participation, 2. Digital youth information ecosystem, 3. Youth work, 4. Education, 5. Culture, 6. Health, 7. Entrepreneurship and pre-employment support, 8. Security (violence)	IAP focuses on local adaptation: participation, information, inclusion, youth work, education, culture, digital skills and entrepreneurship, tailored to municipal needs.	Tetovo adapts and prioritizes national strategies to local context, emphasizing areas most relevant to its youth, such as digital skills and inclusion.

Table 5. comparative overview between the National Youth Strategy (2023–2027) and the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) of the Municipality of Tetovo.

### 3. ACTIONS AND SCHEDULE

Action table					
	Specific objective: Youth Participation				
Action	Intended results	Resources /Assets	Lead institutions	Key partners	Timescale
<b>1.1. Organize workshops with local self-government councils</b> on youth issues, policies and participation	<b>3 workshops</b> conducted <b>60 local officials</b> sensitized	Trainers, venues, presentation materials	Municipality of Tetovo (MoT)	Local Youth Council, Schools	2027
<b>1.2. Political participation campaign for youth, focusing on higher representation of youth, young women and girls</b> at all levels of local government including city councilors and MPs.	<b>3 major campaigns held</b>  <b>A quota of 40%</b> dedicated to youths.  <b>A quota of 40%</b> is dedicated specifically to female youth candidates.	Media channels, advocacy teams	MoT	Local Youth Council, NGOs,	2029
<b>1.3. Trainings for teaching staff and school management</b> on youth engagement, gender equality & non-discrimination	<b>6 trainings</b> delivered <b>120+ educators</b> trained	Facilitators, schools, materials	MoT	Ministry of Education and Science, School Directors	2028
<b>1.4. Environmental volunteerism campaigns</b> involving youth	<b>3 campaigns</b> conducted <b>100+ youth</b> involved in clean-up & eco-projects	Promo materials, schools, volunteers	MoT	Ministry of Environment, Youth Council, Schools	2026

<b>1.5.Digital competency</b> training for youth officers	<b>50 youth officers</b> trained <b>80%+ improvement</b> in digital literacy test scores	Laptops, trainers, software licenses	MoT	University of Tetovo, SEEU, NGOs	2030
<b>1.6.Mental health awareness campaigns</b> for youth	<b>3 public campaigns</b> run <b>100+ youth</b> reached via online/offline materials	Psychologists, media content	Local Youth Council	NGOs, health professionals	2027

Table 6. Specific objective: Youth Participation

Action table					
<b>Specific objective:</b> Digital youth information ecosystem					
Action	Intended results	Resources/Assets	Lead institutions	Key partners	Timescale
<b>2.1.Develop and promote an international e-brochure</b> on good practices for media literacy	<b>1 e-brochure</b> created <b>Translated into 3 languages</b> <b>Distributed to 1,000+</b> youth via digital platforms	Design tools, content writers, digital platforms	Municipality of Tetovo (MoT)	Media experts, NGOs	2027
<b>2.2.Establish partnerships with youth info platforms</b> to share relevant content (education, employment, mental health, etc.)	<b>5 cooperation agreements</b> signed with national/international youth platforms  <b>Monthly updates</b> shared on MoT channels	Communication team, platform access	MoT	Local Youth Council, NGOs	2030

<b>2.3.Organize coordination meetings</b> with youth at local and national levels to improve information flow and trust	<b>8 coordination meetings</b> organized (quarterly) <b>100+ youth participants</b> involved <b>Actionable feedback</b> collected after each meeting	Meeting spaces, facilitation tools	MoT	Ministry of social policy demography and youth, Universities	2027
<b>2.4.Unify and modernize websites of state administration bodies</b> to enhance youth accessibility and usability	<b>5 government websites</b> modernized with youth-friendly interface <b>100% mobile-friendly access</b> <b>Average user session time increased by 50%</b>	Web developers, accessibility experts	MoT	Ministry of social policy demography and youth, Universities	2029

Table 7. Specific objective: Digital youth information ecosystem

Action table					
Specific objective: Employment Support					
Action	Intended results	Resources/Assets	Lead institutions	Key partners	Timescale
<b>3.1.Conduct workshops in secondary schools to stimulate entrepreneurial spirit</b> among youth	<b>10 workshops</b> conducted in schools <b>500+ students</b> participating <b>80% satisfaction rate</b> from feedback surveys	Municipal budget  Number of organized workshops	Municipality of Tetovo (MoT), Ministry of Education and Science	Schools, Local Business Associations	2027
<b>3.2.Establishing a national career counseling program of young people</b> , especially young people who are not employees and who are not involved in the process of education or training	<b>100+ youth</b> counseled  <b>50+ individual career plans</b> developed	Municipal budget  Career counselors, digital systems, outreach tools	MoT, Employment Service Agency	Universities, NGOs, Youth Centers	2028

<b>3.3.Organization of an annual fair of career opportunities</b>	<b>2 career fairs</b> organized <b>50+ companies 200+ youth participants</b> total	Venue, booths, logistics, marketing	MoT	Universities, Business Sector	2027
<b>3.4.Create a digital platform</b> connecting youth and professionals for mentoring and knowledge sharing	<b>1 platform</b> launched <b>500+ active users</b> (within first year) <b>100+ mentorship sessions</b> facilitated	Web developers, digital tools, community outreach	MoT	Ministry of Social Policy, Local Youth Council, NGOs	2030

Table 8. Specific objective: Employment Support

Action table					
Specific objective: Integrated Infrastructure					
Action	Intended results	Resources/Assets	Lead institutions	Key partners	Timescale
<b>4.1.Renovation of Youth Center</b>	1 fully renovated youth center serving at least 1,000 youth annually	MoT funding, donor contributions, existing infrastructure	MoT	Donors, Local Municipality, Construction Firms	2030
<b>4.2.Providing programs and services that focus on the academic and professional development of youth, access to vocational training, internships, career guidance and higher education opportunities.</b>	500 youth annually enrolled in vocational training, 200 youth placed in internships, 300 receive career guidance	Government funding, expert trainers, educational materials	Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth	Local Youth Council, NGOs, Business Sector, Educational Institutions	2029

<b>4.3. Providing psychological support, counseling and resources to help young people manage stress, mental health issues and other challenges they may face.</b>	300 youth annually receive mental health support or counseling; 10 trained counselors engaged	Trained counselors, mental health facilities, international program support	Local youth council	NGOs, International Organizations (e.g., UNICEF, WHO), Ministry of Health	2026
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Table 9. Specific objective: Integrated Infrastructure

	<b>Action table</b>				
	<b>Specific objective: Inclusive Entrepreneurship</b>				
<b>Action</b>	Intended results	Resources/Assets	Lead institutions	Key partners	Timescale
<b>5.1. Workshops on Entrepreneurship for young people</b>	50 workshops organized over 3 years, reaching 1,000+ young people	MoT, Employment Service Agency, Ministry of Social Policy, trainers, venues	Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth	Employment Service Agency, NGOs, Business Sector	2027
<b>5.2. Startup Incubator Program</b>	30 young entrepreneurs supported, 3 office spaces provided	MoT, Ministry of Social Policy, incubator facilities, mentors, seed funding	Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth	NGOs, Local Universities, Private Sector Mentors	2028
<b>5.3. Regular networking events for young entrepreneurs</b>	3 networking events held annually, 100+ attendees per year	MoT, Ministry of Social Policy, event venues, guest speakers, business networks	Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth	Business Sector, Chambers of Commerce, Startup Communities	2029

Table 10. Specific objective: Inclusive Entrepreneurship





Table 11. Ghant chart of IAP - Action table

## 4. MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Specific objective	Result indicator	Baseline value	Target	Source	Responsibility	Monitoring frequency
<b>SO1: Youth Participation</b>	Number of initiatives Number of stakeholders Youth representation quota Number of young people in civic, environmental and wellbeing actions.	0	15 initiatives 230+ stakeholders 27-32% 200+	Youth council reports	Municipality of Tetovo Youth Council	Annual until 2030
<b>SO2: Digital youth information ecosystem</b>	Number of youth reached via digital campaigns and tools- Number of formal partnerships with youth info platforms- Number of youth coordination meetings held- Number of government websites updated for youth accessibility- Increase in average user engagement on youth-related websites	Limited access to structured, youth-targeted information- Few digital youth partnerships- Outdated, inaccessible government websites- Low youth engagement with institutional sources	- 1,000+ youth reached via e-brochure- 5 partnerships signed- 8 coordination meetings- 5 government websites modernized- 50% increase in youth website engagement	- Analytics from digital platforms- Partnership MoUs- Meeting reports and feedback forms- Website usage statistics	Municipality of Tetovo (MoT)- Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth- Local Youth Council- Universities- NGOs	Bi-annual monitoring (every 6 months)
<b>SO3: Employment Support</b>	Number of workshops conducted Number of students and youth participants Satisfaction rate from feedback Number of youth counseled and career plans developed	0	10 workshops 500+ 80% satisfaction rate 100+ 50+ 2	Workshop event and reports	Municipality of Tetovo (MoT) Ministry of Education and Science Employment Service Agency Universities, NGOs, Youth	Annual until 2030

	Number of career fairs organized Number of companies involved Number of active platform users and mentorship sessions		50+ 200+ 100+		CentersLocal Youth Council, Business Sector	
<b>SO4: Integrated Infrastructure Action</b>	Operational, fully renovated Youth Center- Increased access to academic, vocational and psychological youth services	Outdated infrastructure- Limited structured youth services- Low access to mental health and vocational support	1 Youth Center fully renovated and functional- 1,000+ youth served annually- 500 youth enrolled in vocational training- 200 placed in internships- 300 receive career guidance- 300 access mental health support-	- - Renovation reports- Program enrollment records- Internship placement data- Counseling session logs- Service user feedback	Municipality of Tetovo (MoT)- Ministry of Social Policy and Youth- Educational institutions- NGOs- Mental health professionals	Quarterly (every 6 months)
<b>SO5: Inclusive Entrepreneurship</b>	Number of entrepreneurship workshops organized  Number of young people reached  Number of young entrepreneurs supported through the incubator  Number of office spaces provided  Number of networking events held annually  Number of attendees per year	0	50 workshops over 3 years reaching  1,000+ young people  30 young entrepreneurs   3 office spaces  3 networking events  100+ attendees per year	Program reports, attendance lists, incubator records, participant feedback, event documentation	Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and YouthMunicipality of Tetovo (MoT)Employment Service Agency	Annual until 2030

Table 12. Monitoring framework

## 4. FUNDING SCHEME

Funding instrument	Description
<b>National funds</b>	<p>Employment service agency - The Youth Guarantee measure allows young people up to the age of 29, who are not employed or involved in education or training (NEET), to receive a suitable job offer, to continue their education or to be involved in any of the active employment programs and measures, in a period of 4 months after their registration as unemployed persons in the Employment Service Agency.</p> <p>The Ministry of Sport develops programs for involving young people in sports, promoting healthy habits, sports education and social inclusion through sports.</p> <p>The municipality of Tetovo - plays a central role in helping create a supportive environment for young people, addressing their concerns and providing them with opportunities for personal and professional growth.</p> <p><b>Fund for Innovation and Technological Development</b> - is designed to support young people in developing innovative projects, start-ups, or solutions in the field of technology. Such funds aim to encourage youth entrepreneurship, creativity and problem-solving abilities, often with a focus on technological advancements.</p>
<b>URBACT Programme</b>	<p>North Macedonia joined the URBACT program for the first time in 2023. URBACT is a European exchange and learning program aimed at fostering sustainable urban development. It allows cities from across Europe to collaborate and share best practices to solve urban challenges.</p>
<b>Interreg Europe</b>	<p>Interreg Europe is an interregional cooperation programme, co-funded by the European Union. The European Union strives to reduce disparities in the levels of development, growth and quality of life in and across Europe's regions. For the first time, the Municipality of Tetovo is implementing two projects under the Interreg Europe Programme.</p>
<b>Interreg IPA-CBC</b>	<p>The Programme's overall objective is to enhance territorial cohesion by improving living standards and employment opportunities holding respect to the environment and by using the natural resources for upgrading of the tourism product.</p>

<b>Interreg IPA-Adrion</b>	The <b>IPA ADRION Programme</b> is a <b>European transnational cooperation programme</b> that invests in regional innovation systems, cultural and natural heritage protection, environmental resilience, sustainable transport and capacity building. By bringing together <b>10 Partner States</b> across the <b>Adriatic-Ionian region</b> , IPA ADRION fosters European integration and acts as policy driver for the benefit of <b>more than 70 million people</b> .
<b>Interreg Euro-Med</b>	Interreg Euro-MED supports projects, initiatives and policies related to climate change and the environment in line with the priorities and specific objectives set out by the European Commission for the Cohesion policy. The Programme decided to embed such objectives into missions for a more comprehensive approach.
<b>Western Balkan Funds</b>	WBF aims to promote cooperation and the common values between citizens, civil society and people to people contacts, by providing funding for small and medium projects, in the following key areas.
<b>Citizens, equality, rights and values programme -CERV</b>	This programme aims to protect and promote Union rights and values as enshrined in the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. It will contribute to sustain and further develop open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies based on the rule of law.
<b>International Visegrad Fund</b>	The International Visegrad Fund supports regional cooperation between civil society organizations to advance their relations, exchange and share ideas and promote mutual understanding. When promoting European values in Central Europe, we work together towards a better-connected future.
<b>Erasmus+</b>	Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe

Table 13.Funding scheme

## 5. FRAMEWORK FOR DELIVERY

Who will deliver actions - roles and responsibilities of stakeholders?

- Municipality of Tetovo
- Youth council of Tetovo
- Secondary schools

Indicators to be used to monitor progress

Participation and engagement indicators (number of stakeholders engaged, number of young people participating, number of ULGs conducted).

## 6. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS

### Presentation of the ULG?

The Municipality of Tetovo initiated this program by establishing a Local Group to address youth-related challenges. The first meeting brought together a diverse range of 25 participants. These included representatives from the Municipality of Tetovo, the Youth Council, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), secondary schools, the Employment Service Agency, the Delinquency Council and the Municipality Council. Their involvement was crucial in ensuring that the perspectives of different institutions, organizations and community actors were taken into consideration.

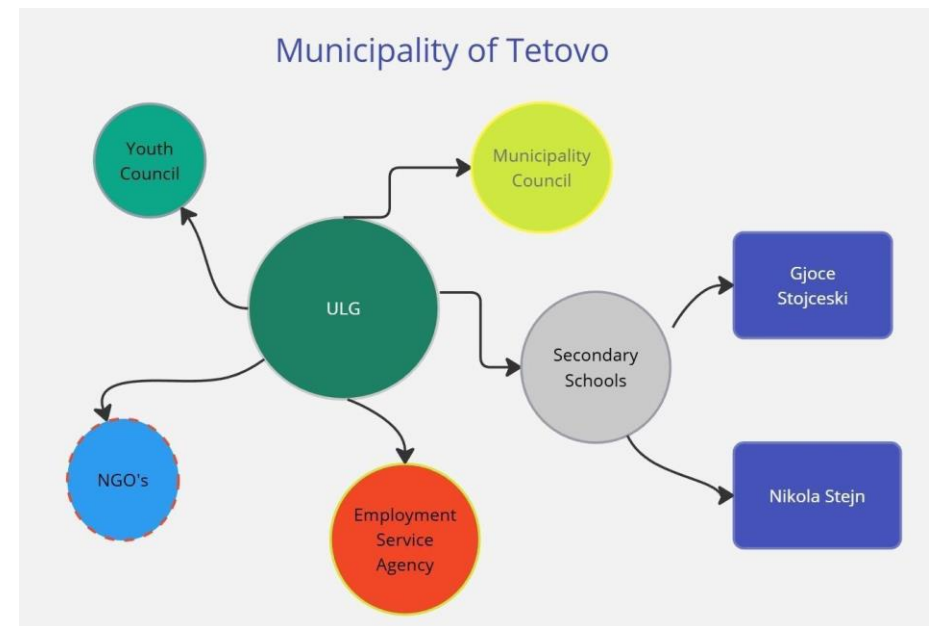


Figure 5. Composition of the ULG

Throughout the meetings, all participants actively contributed by sharing their opinions on the project and presenting concrete ideas on how to identify and address the key challenges faced by young people in our community. The Municipality of Tetovo, through its staff, played a coordinating role by mapping and inviting the relevant stakeholders to be part of the ULG group. This ensured that the group was representative and inclusive. Secondary schools also contributed significantly through their representatives, who highlighted the difficulties and issues that young people face in the school environment, such as limited extracurricular opportunities, peer pressure and challenges linked to social inclusion.





Given that Tetovo is a multi-ethnic city, it was important to make sure that the ULG reflected this diversity. Representatives from different ethnic backgrounds were included in the discussions, which enriched the dialogue and made the process more representative of the city's social fabric. This inclusiveness allowed us to gather a wide range of perspectives and to better understand the different realities that young people experience in Tetovo.

In addition to the regular discussions, we organized workshops and surveys with focused groups, especially targeting young people. These sessions gave youngsters the opportunity to express their views more openly and in detail. They identified the main problems they face in their everyday lives, such as limited job opportunities, lack of adequate spaces for recreation and culture, the need for better career guidance

and challenges related to social cohesion among youth from different backgrounds. Their direct input was highly valuable in shaping the direction of our ULG activities and ensuring that the voices of young people were at the center of the process.

Through this collaborative and participatory approach, the ULG meetings in Tetovo succeeded in creating a platform where institutions, schools, NGOs, councils and young people could work together. The process not only helped us to identify pressing issues but also encouraged the development of new ideas and potential solutions to improve the lives of young people in our city.

Since its establishment, the ULG has held several meetings. During the initial meetings, participants shared insights on the most pressing challenges for young people. Utilizing tools from the URBACT manual, the group identified two major topics of concern:

- **Mental health issues among youth**
- **Lack of institutional support for young people**
- **Small-Scale Actions**

Beyond discussions, the ULG engaged in small-scale actions to promote youth participation. Recognizing the need for interactive and engaging sessions, the fourth ULG meeting was held in the National Park.

Participants not only discussed and prioritized community improvement initiatives using the Impact Navigator tool but also participated in a hiking tour.

This outdoor gathering fostered stronger social connections among the youth and due to its success, a similar meeting was organized the following week.

## Testing Actions

In terms of Testing Actions, it was identified that acquiring small-scale equipment could help develop solutions to the challenges faced by the youth.

One critical issue is the difficulty young people encounter in securing jobs and performing well in job interviews. To address this, we propose investing in digital solutions such as Virtual Reality (VR) equipment. This technology could simulate job interview scenarios, allowing young people to practice and build confidence in managing their emotions during interviews. Such an initiative would provide significant benefits to youth employment prospects and overall development within the Municipality of Tetovo.

## Impact of transnational meeting

Within the action planning network, the Municipality of Tetovo's partner cities included Eindhoven (Netherlands), Aarhus (Denmark), Cartagena and Viladecans (Spain), Iași (Romania), Klaipėda (Lithuania), Oulu (Finland), Perugia (Italy) and Veszprém (Hungary). The project's transnational meeting and study visits provided participants with the opportunity to explore each city's good practices.

Those visits proved to be highly valuable for gaining new perspectives and learning from the experiences of other cities and partners within the network of the NextGen YouthWork. Inspired by the practices of partner cities the Municipality of Tetovo shared the practices with ULG about digital engagement, creative participation and hybrid youth work, the concept that promotes accessibility, inclusion and adaptability.

Through virtual interaction and digital tools such as VR, virtual youth workers could mentor and support young people who rarely attended physical centers, while also expanding youth workers' reach, digital skills and the overall impact of youth engagement activities.

Among this shared practice, one idea that resonated the Municipality of Tetovo, in close collaboration with the Local Youth Council, to decide to take concrete steps toward strengthening youth participation at the local level. As a result, in September 2025, the municipality officially opened the **Youth Center** in Tetovo that has 17 members.

The space now by the Municipality support has integrated digital components - VR equipment, laptop and printer to promote digital literacy, creative expression and civic engagement among youth by using social media profile of Youth space.

The **Youth Center** now serves as a dynamic hub for young people, offering both physical and digital environments for learning, creativity and collaboration. It is designed to host a variety of youth - led activities such as: Shark Tank Challenge, which encourages youth to present innovative and entrepreneurial ideas, youth debates, fostering critical thinking, dialogue and civic participation, art exhibition showcasing the creativity of local youth, youth forums focused on discussing priorities and future opportunities and workshops on art and recreational games.





Photo: Youth center

## *"Empowering youth and promoting mental well-being: A path to a brighter future"*

Additionally, the ULG has identified the need for enhanced career guidance and mentorship programs to bridge the gap between education and employment. Workshops and training sessions will be organized to equip young people with essential skills such as resume building, communication and entrepreneurship. These initiatives aim to empower youth by providing them with practical knowledge and resources for their future careers.

Another critical aspect is the promotion of mental health awareness. The ULG plans to collaborate with mental health professionals to conduct awareness campaigns, counseling sessions and stress management workshops. By creating a safe space for discussion and support, we aim to help young people navigate the challenges they face more effectively. Furthermore, efforts will be made to enhance youth engagement in decision-making processes.

Establishing youth councils and forums will provide a platform for young individuals to voice their opinions and actively contribute to policy development.

By involving them in governance, we ensure that their perspectives and needs are considered in municipal strategies.

By continuing these efforts, we aim to create a sustainable support system that empowers the youth and ensures their active participation in shaping a better future for our community.



Photo: ULG meeting



## 7. RISK ANALYSIS

### Type of risk, Categorization, Steps to be taken to mitigate probability and impact?

#### 1. Operational risks

Risk: Low stakeholder engagement

Category: Medium

Mitigation steps: Regular follow-ups and feedback mechanisms to maintain engagement; Encourage collaborative decision-making to align interests.

Risk: Logistical challenges in organizing meetings and activities (e.g., securing venues, attendance issues).

Category: Low

#### 2. Financial risks

Risk: Insufficient funding for planned activities and small-scale actions

Category: High

Mitigation steps: Using municipal funds; Not travelling to the meeting, instead taking part online

#### 3. Staffing risks

Risk: Human resources

Category: Low

#### 4. Technical risks

Risk: Challenges in implementing digital solutions (e.g., VR training, career platforms).

Category: Medium

Mitigation steps: Partner with IT and EdTech experts for guidance; Conduct pilot testing before full-scale implementation; Provide training for users and facilitators.

Risk: Internet access issues

Category: Low

#### 5. Behavioral risks

Risk: Low youth participation

Category: Low

Risk: Resistance to mental health discussions due to stigma.

Category: High

Mitigation steps: Integrate mental health discussions into broader skill-building activities; Engage trusted professionals and community leaders to reduce stigma; Use storytelling and personal testimonials to normalize discussions.

