



ENTERPRISING FAIR FOR THE FUTURE...



NIKA SHOWCASING HER ARTISANAL JEWELRY

....DIVING INTO "THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ABOVE CHALLENGES PROGRAMME" (PONI):

The main goal of the PONI programme (co-funded by the ERDF of Cohesion Policy) is to support the establishment of start ups funded by young entrepreneurs with a 4-months **entrepreneurial training**. In order to encourage entrepreneurial activity and the successful development of business ideas, substantive support and counseling is required in the first phase, which is available to participants from internal **mentors**, and external **experts and entrepreneurs**.

Participants are provided with employment and a supportive business environment for a period of 4 months, in which they can successfully **develop and realise their own business ideas**. The training program takes participants through everything from the development of a business model and business plan through the marketing phase. In addition, the project enables the use of physical infrastructure according to the principle of co-working.



During the YOUTHopia fair, held on 19 May 2023 at the business incubator Kovačnica, participants of the PONI programme interactively presented their business ideas and successful entrepreneurial stories, supported by the training.



Fueling Local Prosperity: The Vital Role of Cohesion Policy in Supporting Small Business Start-ups and Retaining Talents





In challenging times, **THE ENTREPRENEURS ABOVE CHALLENGES PROGRAMME**, supported by the European Regional Development Fund, facilitates the success of many small businesses, like LENA'S work with ecological fabrics





The programme implementers are regional development agencies throughout West Slovenia. Participants come from three regions:

- Central Slovenian region: 78 participants
- Gorenjska region: 80 participants
- Coastal-karst region: 62 participants

The majority are women (159 of them), with an average age of 33.5 years.





THE EXPECTED RESULT OF THE PROJECT in the cohesion region of Western Slovenia is the inclusion of **220 potential entrepreneurs** who will create 220 business plans and present 220 minimally acceptable products on the market. The goal is to realize a minimum of **30% of successful exits** to entrepreneurship.





The "ENTERPRISING FAIR FOR THE FUTURE" was an event organised by the **Development Council of Cohesion Region West Slovenia** under the framework of the **YOUTHopia Project**, a pan European campaign led by the **Assembly of European Regions** to shed lights on the benefits of Cohesion Policy for young people in Europe's Regions.



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Young entrepreneurs were also **involved** with their services in the **implementation of the fair** (as moderators, photographers, event designers, promotional give aways, as catering and providers of freshly brewed beer...)



The whole fair took place in the spirit of "**cohesion, becoming a reality for the Next Generation**", which is also the slogan of the YOUTHopia project.



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YOUTHopia



Co-funded by the
European Union