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INVEST Pilots report and Recommendations

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CONTENT

1. ABOUT INVEST

The economies of the Western Balkans are facing significant challenges in terms of employment and skills development. Despite the fundamental importance of skills for economic well-being, social cohesion and general well-being, there is still a marked gap between the educational provision of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the Western Balkans and the needs of the labour market, especially concerning digital skills and those related to environmental sustainability.

The INVEST project aims to enhance the capacity of institutions in Vocational Training to provide skills adequately aligned with the needs of the ecological and digital transition in the Western Balkans region. Through the harmonization of digital literacy and sustainability-oriented skills with European and international standards, INVEST aims to strengthen the role of VET institutions in contributing to the acquisition of professional skills, promoting them as Continuing Professional Training centres for secondary VET schools in Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2. INTRODUCTION

The **Pilots Report and Recommendations** aims to analyse the outcomes of the INVEST Local Pilots implemented in VET schools across Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Montenegro (T4.3). Within these pilots, the INVEST Training Programme - developed under work package 3 (WP3) and translated in the Western Balkans participating countries languages—**was delivered and completed by 77 VET teachers and experts**, building on the active participation of trainers previously engaged in the WP3 Training of Trainers (T3.5). The analysis of local and national results guides the present document to the development of **nationally targeted recommendations** on how to better integrate green and digital skills into national VET curricula. These recommendations address not only what skills should be embedded – drawing from the project analysis driving to the definition of the *INVEST Framework for Green and Digital Skills for Sustainable Lifestyles*, but also how training can be delivered to ensure maximum impact - **enhancing the transfer of new skills and competences to both trainers and students**. They also highlight opportunities to strengthen cooperation with sustainable businesses and real market contexts, thereby reducing the skills gap.

Building on these national insights and practical experiences, the INVEST partnership shapes **regionally oriented recommendations** that promote the effective inclusion of green and digital skills in VET study programmes, as well as in Initial and Continuous Professional Development for VET secondary school trainers. The goal is to foster a stronger alignment with the **INVEST Framework for Green and Digital Skills for Sustainable Lifestyles**, which defines the knowledge, competences, values, and mindset that VET learners need to successfully transition into—and thrive within—the sustainable green and digital labour market.

The Local pilots are conceived in the framework of the project WP4- *VET Schools Networking System in Western Balkans*- with the main objective to consolidate the role of formal and non-formal VET providers as Continuous Professional Development hubs for transferring green and digital skills aligning with the sustainable and transitioning labour market. The activity has been supported by the organisation of Local Info Sessions to disseminate about the opportunity and engage participants.

3. INVEST CAPACITY BUILDING: LOCAL PILOTS

3.1 Albania

3.1.1 PREPARATION

The Local NVEST Pilot in Albania aimed to test and adapt the INVEST methodology within two VET institutions, ensuring that green and digital skills are effectively transferred to teachers and students. The preparatory phase focused on mobilizing stakeholders, building institutional capacity, and establishing robust coordination mechanisms to guarantee a successful implementation. To ensure wide participation, the project combined online and offline channels:

- Digital promotion: Targeted posts on LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook.
- Direct communication: Email campaigns to VET schools nationwide, supported by phone follow-ups.
- Institutional partnership: Early engagement with the National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES) to secure endorsement and outreach to VET providers.

Following an initial information meeting with NAES, in-person sessions were held at Nazmi Rushiti Vocational School (Peshkopi) and Thoma Papapano Vocational School (Gjirokastër) to brief teachers and staff on the objectives and implementation process of the pilot trainings.

A dedicated Coordination Unit was created to oversee the planning and implementation of the pilot. This unit comprises teacher-trainers and school directors from both partner institutions and acts as the central mechanism for strategic planning and monitoring of activities, decision-making on pilot procedures and ensuring alignment with project objectives and EU quality standards.

Weekly coordination meetings are held to review progress, address operational challenges, and adjust implementation plans as needed, thereby ensuring timely and effective delivery of activities. Capacity building activities were organized to strengthen the skills of participating trainers and school managers. These included the preparation of subject-specific teaching materials, the development and maintenance of required documentation and the guidance on management, communication, and promotion of pilot activities.

An **open Call for Expressions of Interest** was launched and widely distributed through social media and direct emails, providing clear guidance on objectives, eligibility, and the application process. Project representatives also contacted schools individually by phone and email to offer tailored information and encourage participation. Trainers acted as multipliers within their institutions, sharing information and motivating colleagues to apply. In total **37 applications were collected.**

3.1.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The Local Pilot in Albania was implemented between **May and July 2025** through a blended learning approach combining face-to-face sessions, online delivery, and self-directed study on the INVEST platform. This design ensured flexibility and wide participation, while maintaining high-quality learning outcomes. A total of **37 vocational school teachers from across Albania registered via the online application** link shared by Albanian Skills. Participants represented a diverse cross-section of Albanian VET professionals: (a) **vocational school teachers** specializing in technical subjects (mechanics, IT, hospitality, construction); (b) t**rainers** experienced in curriculum development and teacher training; (c) s**chool staff and coordinators** responsible for quality assurance and project implementation. This mix ensured that knowledge gained during the pilot could be effectively disseminated across classrooms, workshops, and institutional management structures.

To ensure targeted learning and effective delivery, participants were divided into **three separate training groups**, each adapted to institutional needs and geography:

- **Group 1 – Nazmi Rushiti Vocational School, Peshkopi | Participants:** 6 teachers; **Trainers:** 3 trainers; **Format:** 30 hours of intensive in-person and online sessions (19 May – 26 June 2025) + 20 hours of self-directed work on the INVEST platform; **Focus:** *Applying green and digital skills in rural and regional contexts*.
- **Group 2 – Thoma Papapano Vocational School, Gjirokastër | Participants:** 6 teachers; **Trainers:** 3 trainers; **Format:** 30 hours of in-person and online sessions (24 May – 14 June 2025) + 20 hours of self-directed work on the INVEST platform; **Focus:** *Integrating sustainable practices and digital tools into VET programmes*.
- **Group 3 – Mixed Group (Various Schools) | Participants:** 8 teachers from multiple vocational schools across Albania; **Trainers:** 2 trainers; **Format:** 30 hours of fully online training (24 June – 8 July 2025) + 20 hours of self-directed learning on the INVEST platform. **Focus:** *National reach and cross-institutional exchange of best practices*.

Across all three groups, the training was based on the **eight INVEST modules**, fully translated into Albanian to ensure accessibility. The modules covered key aspects of **green and digital skills development**, namely sustainable resource management in vocational training, digitalization of teaching and assessment methods and inclusive and future-oriented pedagogy for VET. This structure allowed participants to **apply concepts directly in their teaching contexts**, ensuring practical relevance and long-term impact.

By the end of the implementation period, **20 VET professionals** completed substantial training in green and digital skills. Moreover, participants reported **improved confidence** in applying the INVEST

modules within their teaching practice and trainers developed **competences to cascade training** to colleagues and students, multiplying the pilot's impact.

3.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina

3.2.1 PREPARATION

The call for applications was launched at the end of April 2025 and widely disseminated through CETEOR's communication channels: Website, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram.

In parallel, CETEOR directly contacted the Secondary School Centre Hadžići, which expressed strong interest in participating. A partnership was therefore established with this institution for the implementation of the Local Pilot training. Six trainers from the school were engaged, and after completing their preparatory sessions, they **delivered training to 13 of their colleagues**. The participants were self-selected internally within the school, while no external applications were received through the public call.

As part of the dissemination and engagement activities, a local event was organized – **INVEST Info Session: Opportunities for VET Trainers**. The event took place on 20 March 2025 at 10:00 in Hadžići, **gathering 43 participants**. The session aimed to provide valuable insights into how the INVEST project supports the development of green and digital skills within Vocational Education and Training (VET).

During the session, participants were introduced to the project's objectives, expected outcomes, and professional development opportunities, including the Training of Trainers (ToT) program and certification. Key topics included the project's relevance for VET, its alignment with national and international strategies, and the benefits of Local Pilots in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The event also served as an excellent platform for networking and exchange among educators, policymakers, and industry representatives, encouraging dialogue on how to integrate innovative methodologies into vocational training.

3.2.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The Local Pilot training in Bosnia and Herzegovina was carried out **between 19 June and 26 August 2025** in the premises of the **Secondary School Centre Hadžići**. This institution was identified as a suitable partner due to its strong interest in strengthening the capacities of its teaching staff in line with the objectives of the INVEST project.

The training was delivered by six trainers, who had previously participated in preparatory activities and were equipped with the necessary methodology and tools. They worked with a **group of 16 VET teachers from the Secondary School Centre Hadžići**. **Out of these,**

13 participants successfully completed the program and passed the final online test on the INVEST platform, thereby receiving their certificates of completion.

The pilot followed the standardized structure of 50 training hours, divided into:

- **39 hours of synchronous sessions** (conducted in real time – either live, hybrid, or online), and
- **11 hours of asynchronous work** (self-study, videos, assignments, and use of online tools).

All synchronous sessions were delivered in real time, apart from six hours in Module 5 and Module 8, which were organized online to provide participants with additional flexibility. The synchronous delivery allowed for dynamic interaction between trainers and participants, while the asynchronous component encouraged self-directed learning and familiarization with digital resources.

In line with the project requirements, **all participants created personal profiles on the INVEST platform**, where they accessed training materials, engaged with digital tools, **and completed the final assessment**. The platform was a crucial component of the pilot, ensuring structured access to content and transparent monitoring of participants' progress.

The six engaged trainers were previously selected from within the Secondary School Centre Hadžići. They represent experienced educators with backgrounds in technical and vocational education, each responsible for guiding their colleagues through the learning process. The participants – all VET teachers – brought diverse subject backgrounds but shared the common goal of upgrading their green and digital skills to better integrate sustainable and innovative practices into their teaching.

The Local Pilot training was promoted and made visible through several channels. Both CETEOR and the participants shared updates on social media, ensuring compliance with the INVEST visibility requirements and raising awareness of the importance of the project in advancing VET education. Posts were made across Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram, highlighting both the progress of training and its significance for the local education community.

Category	Details
Location	Secondary School Centre Hadžići
Duration	19 June – 26 August 2025
Trainers engaged	6 (all from the school)
Participants enrolled	16 VET teachers
Successfully certified	13 participants
Training hours delivered	50 total (39 synchronous + 11 asynchronous)

Category	Details
Platform use	All participants created profiles and completed the final test on the INVEST platform
Visibility	Training activities promoted on social media (CETEOR & participants' channels)

3.3 Kosovo

3.3.1 PREPARATION

The details and calls to engage with the local pilots were shared on all the communication channels of the KCC, including Linkedin, Facebook, Instagram, and the website of KCC. Together with **the info session** that occurred in accordance with the INVEST project was held on the premises of KCC on the 20th of March 2025, **in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation with over 60 participants from professional schools and businesses**. The participants and potentially interested parties from all social networks, and education professionals informed directly from the Department of Professional Education of the KCC were briefed and detailed about the project and the upcoming **local pilot which was held in August 2025**. The application to apply for the training was open to education professional from various professional schools, and education institutions, a public call for applications was held on the KCC's social media, together with private calls communicating directly with professional schools and the Ministry of Education.

3.3.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The training was held **from August 1st to August 8th 2025**, **for a total of 35 hours of synchronous training and 15 of asynchronous work**. The training was held **online** with participants joining from all over the territory of Kosovo. The training had 2 trainers, and over 71 professionals enrolled, and **34 VET professionals and teachers finalised the course.** The applications were from educators in Kosovo, mostly in vocational and technical fields. Predominantly from cities like Ferizaj, Prishtinë, and Prizren, the participants are affiliated with key institutions such as QK Shtjefën Gjeçovi in Prishtinë and IAAP Zenel Hajdini in Ferizaj, etc. Teaching experience averages around 14 years across all educators, ranging from 1 to 36 years, with most holding master's degrees in areas like mechanical engineering, economics, computer science, and fashion design. Common subjects include TIK/informatics, mathematics, Albanian language and

literature, economics, and professional vocational topics like machine details, technical drawing, and textile design, reflecting a focus on practical skills in vocational education.

3.4 Montenegro

3.4.1 PREPARATION

The Chamber of Economy of Montenegro (CEM) organized an Info Day for the INVEST project on 26 March 2025, bringing together a total of 63 participants from private companies, public institutions, and VET (Vocational Education and Training) providers.

The first session took place at the Chamber's premises from 10:00 to 11:10 and gathered 43 representatives from the private and public sectors. The session presented key benefits of the INVEST project for companies, including workforce development, support for sustainable and socially responsible practices, and upcoming pilot activities. Participants expressed strong interest, especially in how the project could address the shortage of skilled workers and strengthen connections between education and business.

The second session was held online from 12:00 to 13:30 and attended by 20 representatives of VET institutions. It focused on how INVEST can support schools through teacher training, improved alignment with labour market needs, the development of entrepreneurial skills, and implementation of digital and green education practices. This session also generated high interest in pilot activities and future collaboration.

Key questions from both sessions included:

- Certification of participants (confirmed as available),
- Participation limits (no restriction),
- Notification process (via email),
- Eligibility (priority to VET institutions, but private sector welcome).

Following the event, participants were invited to complete an online evaluation survey. Sixteen responses were received by the end of March. Key findings include:

- 70% were very satisfied with the Info Day,
- 94.11% found the INVEST project relevant or highly relevant to their work,
- 76.5% expressed interest in further involvement.

Participant feedback highlighted enthusiasm for cooperation and suggestions for integrating new knowledge into existing curricula. The gender breakdown of survey respondents was 70% female and 30% male.

The Info Day served as an important step in raising awareness of the INVEST project and fostering initial connections between stakeholders for future collaboration.

The CEM team worked throughout June 2025 on translating and adapting teaching materials, as well as setting up online trainings. Invitations for the online pilot trainings were sent on June 16, 2025, followed by reminders on June 27 and July 16, 2025.The online registration system was set in order to reach more participants all over Montenegro.

3.4.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The Local Pilot Training in Montenegro was conducted throughout **July 2025**. The entire program was delivered online, allowing a larger number of VET school teachers from across the country to participate without incurring additional travel expenses to Podgorica. The training was facilitated by **seven trainers** who had previously taken part in preparatory activities and were equipped with the necessary knowledge, methodology, and tools. They worked with a group of **28 VET teachers** from various schools. Out of these, **10 participants successfully completed the program** and passed the final online test on the INVEST platform, thereby receiving certificates of completion.

The teachers who completed the pilot activities are employed at six VET schools—most of them located in Podgorica, the capital city, while the remaining two are based in Nikšić and Rožaje. This outcome validated the CEM team's decision to deliver the Local Pilot Training online. Among the teachers who successfully completed the program, 40% teach specialized subjects related to their fields, such as finance, tourism, and design; 30% are English language teachers, while the remaining 30% teaches mathematics and physics.

The pilot followed the standardized structure of **50 training hours**, divided into:

- 31 hours of synchronous sessions (conducted in real time online), and
- 19 hours of asynchronous work (evaluation of the pilot activity, self-study, videos, assignments, and use of online tools).

During the local pilot activities, trainers prepared additional materials to help participants gain a deeper understanding of the topics. These included:

- Module 1- delivered on 31st of July 2025 by Ivana Vujačić
  - Legal framework on consumer protection in Montenegro
  - Unfair terms in consumer contracts, with examples

- Institutions in Montenegro responsible for addressing consumer protection violations
- Case study on how a consumer can file a relevant complaint

- Module 2- delivered on 1st of July by Marija Tripunović
  - The impact of the fashion industry on water overconsumption during the production process
  - Presentation of the *Cradle to Cradle* concept and discussion on its relevance
  - Overview of policies supporting the implementation of the circular economy in Montenegro
  - Two interactive games on circular economy, designed for classroom use with students
  - Current recycling activities in Podgorica
- Module 3 – delivered on 25th of July by Ivana Vojinović
  - Historical perspective on climate change and its relation to natural disasters occurring in recent years
  - Interconnection between climate change, security, and migration
  - Case study on how to measure the carbon footprint in schools
  - Presentation of a climate dictionary in the local language, explaining key scientific terms
- Module 4 – delivered on 10th of July by Ilija Mugoša
  - Presented findings of their research on the topic of financial literacy among adults.
  - Explained terms with practical examples, such as inflation, purchasing power, credit rate and annuity, the difference between gross and net income, risk and return, and key investment concepts.
  - Conducted an exercise on calculating different credit rates.
  - Explained the importance of investment diversification and ways to invest money.
  - Facilitated a discussion among participants on the topic of independence, financial dependence, and the importance of financial planning.
- Module 5- delivered on 21st of July by Ivan Bošković
  - Through a practical exercise, participants developed simple algorithms and gained a clearer understanding of how these processes influence decision-making, problem-solving, and routine activities.
  - After covering the topics of regulation and customer protection in e-commerce, he presented the ecommerce4all.eu platform, which gathers relevant e-commerce data and resources. The platform includes basic e-commerce statistics, interactive graphs, data on CEFTA e-commerce market development.
- Module 6 – delivered on 3rd of Jully by Jasna Pejović
  - The trainer facilitated a group activity where participants learned to recognize fake news and disinformation and practiced by creating their own examples. This helped them better understand how misinformation is produced and how to critically evaluate online content.
  - On the topic of gender equality, each participant researched one company to identify its management team. The activity revealed the imbalance between genders in leadership roles and encouraged reflection on gender representation in society.
  - An additional interactive exercise was organized in which each participant prepared two fake news items and one real news item, challenging others to identify the true

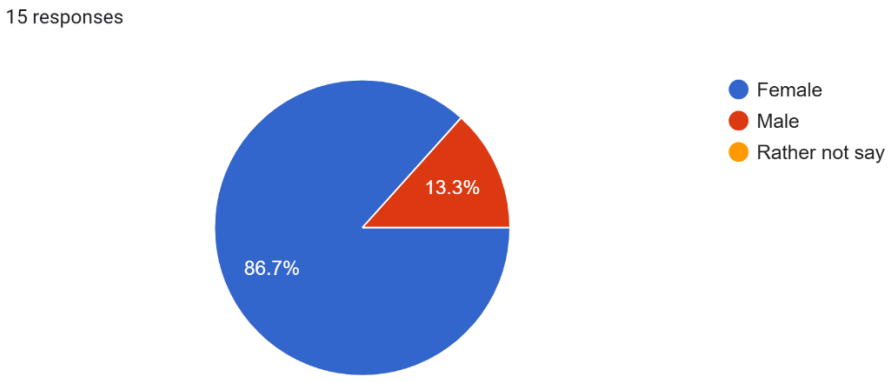
story. Through this activity, participants strengthened their critical thinking skills and improved their ability to distinguish reliable from misleading information.

- Module 7 – delivered on 4th of Jully by Jasna Pejović
  - The trainer led group exercises on CapCut, Kahoot, Canva, and WordPress, emphasizing the importance of tailoring content to specific target audiences. Participants asked about free platforms for creating web pages, as they are working on exercises to develop their own virtual companies.
- Module 8 – delivered on 23rd July by Ramo Šendelj
  - The trainer presented the newly launched CSupMNE project, aimed at introducing sustainable systemic improvements and modernizing Montenegro's higher education system. The project focuses on assessing, protecting, and managing growing digital risks to HEIs, ensuring greater security for staff, students, and partners.

4. INVEST LOCAL PILOTS: RESULTS

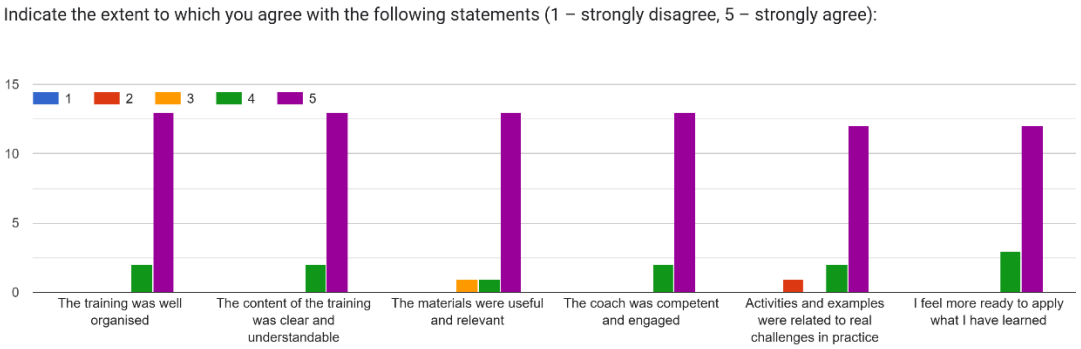
4.1 Albania

The impact of the Local Pilot in Albania was assessed through an online feedback survey completed by participants and ongoing qualitative insights collected during implementation. **The evaluation is conducted on two levels**: after each module and at the conclusion of the program. The survey evaluated participants' knowledge and competences in green and digital skills, their confidence in transferring these competences to students and colleagues, and their overall satisfaction with the pilot's design and delivery. 15 participants out of 20 participated in the final evaluation, 13 women and 2 men.

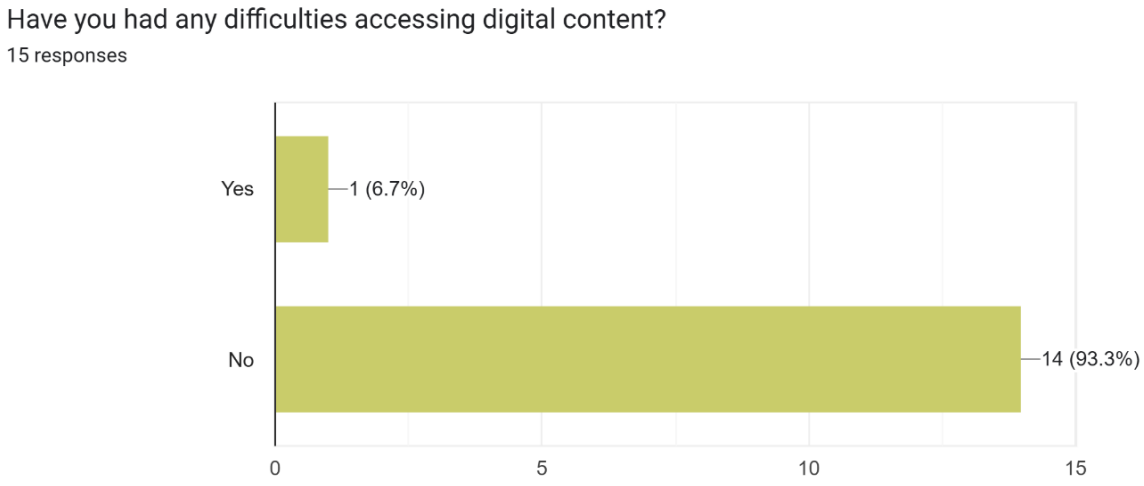


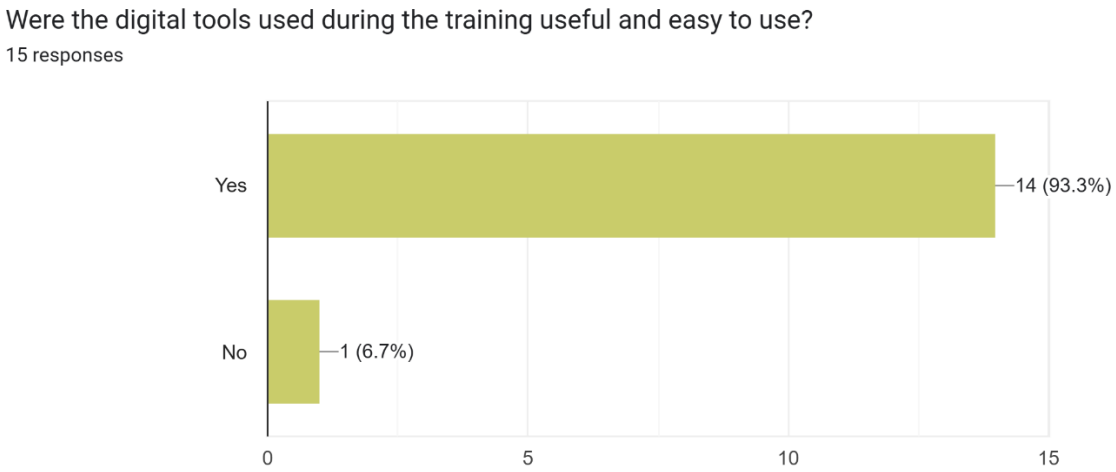
Participants expressed a **very high level of satisfaction** with the training. Out of 15 respondents, 13 rated the organization, clarity of content, and trainer's competence with the highest score (5), while 2 gave a 4. Materials were also well received, with 12 giving a 5,

2 a 4, and 1 a 3. Activities were seen as practical and relevant, with 12 rating them a 5, 2 a 4, and 1 a 2. Importantly, 13 participants strongly agreed, and 2 agreed, that they felt ready to apply what they had learned.



Digital tools proved effective and accessible: 14 reported no difficulties in accessing content, and only one had minor issues. Most found the tools user-friendly and supportive of learning.





Participants highlighted several **key topics learned** throughout the course. These included the ethical and responsible use of technology, the environmental impact of digital devices and the importance of repair and reuse, financial and digital literacy, consumer rights, and sustainable spending. Media literacy was also emphasized, with new skills in detecting disinformation and creating ethical digital content. Many valued the integration of green skills into all areas of teaching, rather than treating sustainability as a separate subject.

Application of the training was concrete: participants planned to promote responsible digital behavior, integrate environmental awareness into subjects like maths, biology, and chemistry, and design collaborative activities around real-world challenges. Others emphasized fostering awareness of digital safety, ethical technology use, and sustainability among students, colleagues, and the wider community.

Suggestions for improvement included adding real-life classroom examples, video tutorials, printable lesson templates, and opportunities for peer exchange. At the same time, participants found the materials comprehensive and inspiring.

In their closing reflections, **participants described the training as relevant, timely, and thought-provoking.** They valued the focus on sustainability, ethics, and media literacy, and expressed gratitude to the trainers for their professionalism and passion. Many felt

empowered with skills and ideas that will shape both their teaching and their students' digital awareness. The final feedback from participants could be summarised as follows

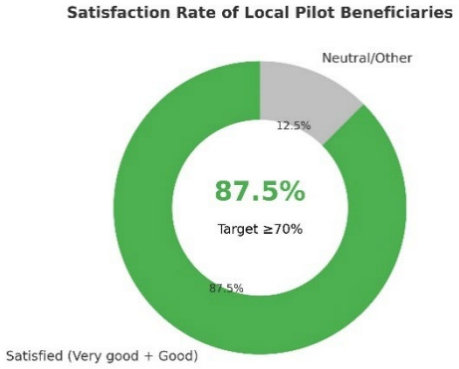
1. **High appreciation for staff and training methods**
    - Participants consistently praised the staff as knowledgeable, collaborative, and dedicated.
    - The interactive, conversational training style was particularly valued for clarity, engagement, and practical relevance.
2. **Training content is highly relevant and timely**
    - Topics such as sustainability, digital transformation, financial literacy, online safety, and responsible consumption resonated strongly.
    - Participants reported gaining practical tools and insights to apply in daily life, highlighting the effectiveness of linking theory to real-world challenges.
3. **Participants see strong value in expanding training**
    - Feedback suggests a need for extending training to younger students (lower and higher secondary schools) and across diverse geographical locations, including rural areas.
    - There is interest in more collaborations and structured evaluations to monitor impact.
4. **Limited additional suggestions**
    - Many participants wrote "nothing" or "no" as additional comments, indicating overall satisfaction and perhaps a perception that the program already met their needs.

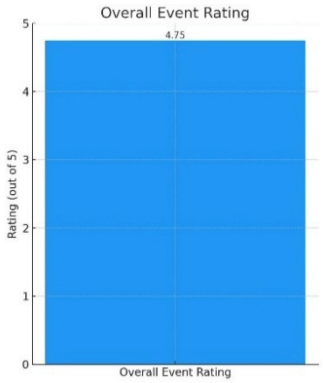
4.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina

Drawing from the feedback survey submitted to participants and insights collected during the implementation, the local pilot training significantly contributed to enhancing VET trainers' and professionals' knowledge and competences in green and digital skills. Participants reported that the content was highly relevant, practical, and directly applicable to their professional activities. Importantly, the training strengthened their capacity to transfer these skills to students and future professionals, fostering the development of a new generation of learners equipped for the dual green and digital transition.

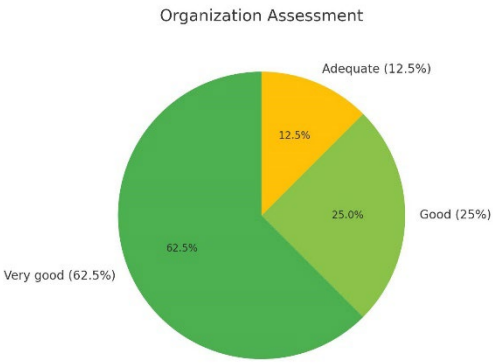
A total of 16 evaluation forms (2M and 14F) were collected, although **13 participants successfully completed the training and received certification**. Feedback from all 16 respondents was analysed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences, including those who did not finalize the program.

Satisfaction among participants was strong, with 87.5% of respondents rating the training as either 'very good' or 'good', clearly surpassing the ≥70% KPI target. Participants highlighted the relevance of the content, the clarity of lectures, and the overall organization of the event. Only a minimal number of participants provided neutral or lower ratings, indicating that most beneficiaries were satisfied with the training. Participants provided a very positive evaluation of the training. **The overall event rating was 4.75/5**, and the majority (10 out of 16, or 62.5%) rated the organization as very good, with an additional 4 participants (25%) rating it as good. Only 2 participants (12.5%) considered it merely adequate. These results confirm that the implementation of the Local Pilots was of high quality, justifying a positive assessment above the 4/5 benchmark.





Organizational Aspects: For each statement, participants rated the overall organization of the event. Most participants (10 out of 16, or 62.5%) rated the event as very good, 4 participants (25%) rated it as good, and only 2 participants (12.5%) considered it sufficient/adequate. These results demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with logistics, coordination, and event delivery. The few lower ratings suggest minor improvements could be considered, such as adjustments in scheduling or practical arrangements.



Additional comments and suggestions: Most comments were positive, emphasizing overall satisfaction ("All praise", "Super", "Very useful project"). Participants highlighted the clarity of lectures and the quality of organization. Several participants expressed interest in deeper exploration of the topics, and one suggested including concrete examples of practical applications to further enhance the training's usefulness. Overall, feedback confirms that participants valued the training and found it highly relevant, with minimal critical remarks.

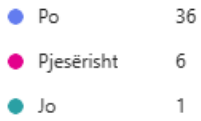
Interest in continued engagement: When asked if they would like to be part of the investment community and receive invitations or materials, 10 participants (62%) expressed interest in further communication and potential participation in future activities, while 6 participants (38%) indicated that they were satisfied with the current level of engagement and did not wish to receive additional information.

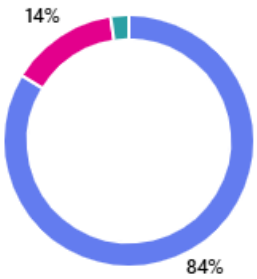
The feedback confirms that the **Local Pilot training in Bosnia and Herzegovina successfully achieved the WP4 KPIs: participants positively assessed the implementation (4/5) and the satisfaction rate exceeded 70%.** The training effectively increased knowledge and competences in green and digital skills, while also equipping participants with the capacity to transfer these skills to their students and peers. This demonstrates the Local Pilot's contribution to strengthening the regional VET ecosystem and supporting the long-term objectives of the INVEST project.

4.3 Kosovo

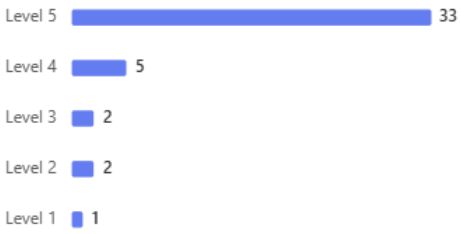
The local pilot **significantly enhanced the knowledge and competences of VET trainers and professionals in green and digital skills**, as evidenced by the feedback survey submitted by the participants. Key insights from the survey and implementation observations indicate that participants gained valuable understanding in areas such as circular economy practices (e.g., reuse, recycling, and waste reduction), climate change impacts and carbon footprint reduction, ethical consumption, digital security, disinformation identification, and content creation tools. Many respondents emphasized the **practical relevance of these topics**, noting how they align with real-world challenges in education and professional settings. For instance, trainers reported feeling more equipped to **promote sustainable behaviours and digital literacy, with specific mentions of integrating concepts like consumer rights and online safety into their daily work**. This has bolstered their capacity to transfer these skills to students and future professionals through classroom integration, awareness campaigns, workshops, and curriculum enhancements. Participants expressed intentions to apply learned skills by incorporating them into lesson plans, organizing student activities, sharing with colleagues, and fostering ethical decision-making among youth, ultimately contributing to a more

informed and responsible generation. The evaluation survey provides comprehensive data supporting these outcomes, including high ratings on **readiness to apply knowledge (average 4.32/5)** and **minimal difficulties with digital content access (90.32%** reported none).





Additionally, the WP4 qualitative KPIs were successfully achieved. **The positive assessment of the implementation reached an overall average rating of 4.42 out of 5**, exceeding the goal of 4 out of 5. This reflects strong approval across key aspects such as organization, content clarity, material usefulness, trainer competence, activity relevance, and readiness to apply skills, with individual category averages ranging from 4.26 to 4.61.



Similarly, the satisfaction rate among beneficiaries stood at 83.87%, well above the ≥70% target. These results highlight the **pilot's success and participant engagement**, with the significant majority experiencing no difficulties accessing digital content and finding the digital tools fully useful and easy to use.

4.4 Montenegro

Following each training session, participants were invited to complete an **online survey** evaluating the quality of the organisation, relevance of the content and materials, effectiveness of the speaker, and suitability of the implemented activities.

For Module 1, participants awarded the highest scores across all categories and provided the following comments:

- The law must be thoroughly studied and consistently applied in order to ensure customer rights.
- Participation should be expanded to include the private sector, so they are better informed about this topic.
- Participants shared the intent to share knowledge gained on these topics with colleagues, family, and friends.

For Module 2, participants awarded average 4,5 points across all categories and provided the following comments:

- A comparative overview of CE policy in Montenegro and the EU; learning through play is always welcome in any topic, including this one (interesting) and a good suggestion for integrating this subject into teaching activities; information about greenwashing (the realization that the implementation of green goals is monitored, and not just left as a strategy without oversight)
- Participants emphasized the value of showcasing green practices through visual materials and examples from businesses and schools, noting the importance of learning from others' experiences.
- Some teachers plan to incorporate they learned into teaching by engaging students in open discussions about sustainability, jointly identifying lasting and smart choices in everyday life, and developing their ability to recognize false "green" messages in advertisements.

For Module 3, participants awarded the highest scores across all categories and provided the following comment:

- Some of the materials will be used during the school year for Physics in order to make students think about their activities on carbon footprint.

For Module 4, participants awarded the highest scores across all categories and provided the following comments:

- During the training, participants learned the importance of managing money wisely through budget planning, understanding interest, and making informed decisions about saving and investing. They also learned how to develop students' financial literacy, foster a critical approach to digital consumption, and integrate digital and financial literacy into teaching.
- Through practical examples, workshops, and group tasks, participants plan to integrate these concepts into their teaching, focusing on developing students' practical life skills to help them become thoughtful consumers in today's digital society. They also aim to collaborate with colleagues to jointly promote financial and digital education.

For Module 5, participants awarded the highest scores across all categories and provided the following comments:

- Participants highlighted the most valuable aspects of the training as learning to use technology safely, recognize fake websites, understand digital literacy, identify online scams, and become aware of hidden advertising and the “dark side” of digital content.
- Participants plan to apply the knowledge and skills gained through classroom workshops, quizzes, and practical exercises with students. They aim to integrate digital literacy concepts into lessons and research activities, adapting exercises to best suit their students.

For Module 6, participants awarded average 4,5 points across all categories and provided the following comments:

- Participants found the training very useful for recognizing false news, including evaluating images, AI-generated content, and other media. The extent of fake news was particularly interesting to them.
- They intend to guide students in identifying and analysing false news, addressing cognitive biases, and applying strategies to counter disinformation through quizzes and scenario-based exercises.

For Module 7, participants awarded average 4,3 points across all categories and provided the following comments:

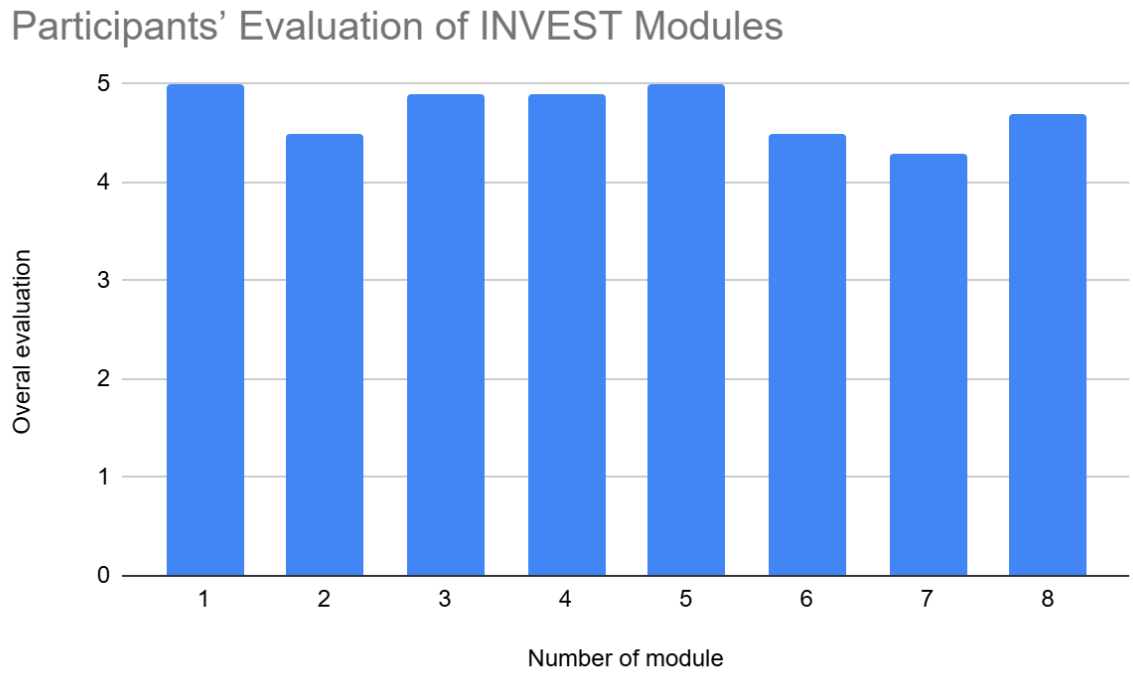
- Participants plan to apply the knowledge and skills gained during regular lessons and open-class sessions for introducing, presenting, or consolidating material. They intend to use quizzes, create web pages and digital promotional materials, and integrate digital tools into English language lessons.
- Several participants highlighted tailoring the use of tools according to students’ age and profile to form teams that can identify the most effective resources for classroom activities.

For Module 8, participants awarded average 4,7 points across all categories and provided the following comments:

- Participants identified several key takeaways from the training, including protecting payment cards, understanding phishing methods, and recognizing cybersecurity vulnerabilities, threats, and risks. They also valued learning how to identify attacks, respond to suspicious contacts, and implement security measures for devices such as ATMs. Overall, the practical guidance provided by the trainer was considered highly valuable.
- Participants plan to apply the knowledge and skills gained in both teaching and daily life. This includes integrating cybersecurity topics into classroom lessons, sharing insights with students and colleagues, and enhancing personal and professional digital safety by carefully evaluating email senders, social media interactions, and other online activities.

Drawing from all received feedback surveys submitted by participants and insights collected during the implementation, the **local pilot activities significantly enhanced VET trainers' and professionals' knowledge and competencies in green and digital skills**. Participants reported gaining practical skills in areas such as digital literacy, cybersecurity, sustainable practices, and content creation using various digital tools. Importantly, they also demonstrated a strong capacity to transfer these skills to students and future professionals, through classroom workshops, practical exercises, and interactive activities designed to foster critical thinking and responsible digital and environmental behaviour.

The evaluation surveys indicate that the **local pilots were positively received**. Trainers highlighted the **applicability of the skills** gained and their **intention to integrate them into teaching practices**. The average rating across all trainings was **4.75 out of 5**, reflecting a high level of satisfaction and engagement. Additionally, participants expressed that the content was relevant, practical, and well-suited for enhancing both their professional practice and the learning experiences of their students.



5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

5.1 National recommendations

5.1.1 ALBANIA

The pilot implementation of the green and digital skills training program in Albanian VET institutions has demonstrated high participant satisfaction and strong appreciation for the relevance, interactivity, and practical nature of the training. Feedback highlights the importance of these skills in addressing real-life challenges, such as sustainability, digital transformation, financial literacy, and online safety. Participants emphasized **the need to expand coverage, localize materials, strengthen collaboration, and integrate these skills formally into the curricula to maximize the program's impact**.

Drawing from the feedback surveys and the insights collected during the Local Pilot activities in Albania, specific and context-oriented recommendations emerged on different areas. To expand the **accessibility of training**, it is important to introduce green and digital skills programs across a wider range of schools, reaching both lower and higher secondary levels. Special attention should be given to schools in rural areas and underrepresented communities to reduce regional disparities and ensure that all students have equal opportunities to benefit from these skills.

The training itself should continue to prioritize **practical and interactive approaches**. Conversational and engaging methods can make complex topics more accessible, while hands-on exercises related to digital tools, sustainable practices, and financial management will help students apply what they learn in real contexts.

Stronger collaboration and evaluation mechanisms are also essential. Partnering with local businesses, NGOs, and educational institutions can increase the reach and relevance of the programs, while systematic evaluation will help measure their impact on students' knowledge, behaviors, and adoption of green and digital skills.

Complementary materials and resources will further reinforce learning. This could include practical examples from Albania, interactive exercises, quizzes, and guides, as well as supplementary resources that teachers can integrate into their regular lessons.

Beyond the classroom, the focus should be on building a **long-term culture of sustainability and responsibility**. Embedding financial literacy, ethical consumption, and sustainable practices into school life will nurture lasting habits. Community engagement activities can also provide opportunities for students to practice their skills in real-life situations, reinforcing both learning and behavior change.

Finally, **continuity is key**. Training programs should be designed as a series rather than as one-off events, allowing students to **gradually build their skills**. Mentorship and peer-learning opportunities can strengthen this process by encouraging students to support one another as they put new skills into practice.

The pilot program demonstrates strong potential for scaling green and digital skills training in Albania. By expanding coverage, localizing resources, maintaining interactive approaches, fostering collaboration, and integrating skills into formal curricula, VET institutions can equip young people with the competencies necessary to thrive in a digital, sustainable, and responsible economy.

5.1.2 BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Drawing from the feedback survey of participants and the insights collected during the Local Pilot training, several recommendations and next steps can be identified to improve the uptake of green and digital skills in VET. One key observation was the participants' interest in more concrete examples and practical exercises during the training. To address this, future sessions should **incorporate case studies, real-life projects, and hands-on workshops that allow trainers to apply green and digital skills directly in their teaching or professional context**. Interactive tools, simulations, or digital labs could also provide valuable opportunities for experimentation with renewable energy solutions, energy efficiency practices, or digital technologies, strengthening the practical impact of the training.

Another important aspect highlighted by participants is the need for guidance on effectively transferring the acquired skills to students. While the training successfully increased knowledge and competences, participants suggested additional support for embedding these skills into curricula and teaching practices. **Providing structured toolkits with lesson plans, teaching materials, and exercises aligned with green and digital competences** would facilitate this transfer. Additionally, follow-up mentoring or peer-learning sessions could enable trainers to exchange experiences, share best practices, and reinforce their capacity to educate students in these critical areas.

Participants also expressed a strong interest in continued engagement with the INVEST community, demonstrating the value of networking opportunities, access to learning materials, and updates on relevant topics. **Maintaining this engagement is essential for sustaining motivation and reinforcing the knowledge gained during the pilot**. Future initiatives could establish online platforms or forums for trainers to share resources and collaborate on projects, complemented by periodic webinars, workshops, or micro-learning sessions to strengthen learning and professional development over time.

While the organizational aspects of the training were generally rated highly, minor improvements were suggested in scheduling and practical arrangements. Future training should consider **more flexible scheduling options and modular formats to accommodate trainers' professional commitments.** Enhancing the digital accessibility of materials, such as providing session recordings and downloadable guides, would further improve

participation and usability, ensuring that all trainers can benefit fully from the program regardless of their availability.

Continuous evaluation also emerged as a crucial element for improving the effectiveness of VET training. The pilot demonstrated the value of systematic feedback in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. **Integrating post-training surveys and follow-up assessments at regular intervals** would provide data on knowledge retention and the practical application of skills, allowing training content, methodology, and delivery modes to be iteratively refined based on evidence and participant experience.

Finally, **linking the training to real-world applications and employer needs** enhances its relevance and long-term impact. Strengthening collaboration with industry, local authorities, and green or digital innovation hubs can enrich the content of training programs. Guest lectures, field visits, and internship opportunities would provide practical exposure for VET trainers and students, while co-creating modules with industry experts would ensure alignment with current technological trends and labor market demands.

In conclusion, the Local Pilot training successfully enhanced participants' green and digital competences and provided a strong foundation for transferring these skills to students. Implementing these recommendations—**focusing on practical application, structured support for knowledge transfer, sustained engagement, improved accessibility, continuous evaluation, and industry collaboration**—will increase the effectiveness of future VET initiatives and expand the uptake of green and digital skills across the educational ecosystem, contributing to a more resilient and future-ready workforce.

5.1.3 KOSOVO

Based on the feedback survey of the local pilot and insights gathered during implementation, several actionable recommendations emerge to enhance the integration and uptake of green and digital skills in Vocational Education and Training (VET). The pilot demonstrated strong potential, with participants reporting high readiness to apply skills (average rating 4.32/5) and intentions to transfer knowledge through curriculum integration and student activities. However, opportunities for refinement were identified to **address practical gaps, increase engagement, and ensure broader impact**. These recommendations focus on content enhancement, delivery methods, and sustainability, drawing from survey suggestions like more interactive elements and local relevance, as well as observed challenges in digital accessibility and time constraints during the pilot.

Enhance practical and interactive components. Survey respondents frequently highlighted the need for more **hands-on activities to bridge theory and practice**, with 45% suggesting additional simulations, group work, role-plays, and real-world case studies. Insights from implementation showed that while theoretical modules on circular economy, carbon footprints, and digital security were well-received, participants felt more empowered when linking these to everyday VET scenarios, such as reducing waste in workshops or identifying online scams in business classes.

Strengthen digital accessibility and support. While some users had difficulties accessing the site at first, citing database issues or loss of connection to the site, all of the users signed up for the training. On the other hand, pilot observations revealed varying digital literacy levels among trainers, sometimes hindering full engagement with online platforms.

Extend training duration and flexibility. Time constraints were a common theme, with 25% of respondents requesting longer sessions for discussions, deeper pedagogy focus, or evening timings to accommodate work schedules. Implementation insights indicated that the 8-day format was intensive but occasionally rushed, limiting reflection on transferring skills to diverse VET contexts like mechanics or economics.

Participants expressed plans to apply skills through student workshops and colleague sharing, aligning with pilot goals of cascading knowledge.

5.1.4 MONTENEGRO

Based on participants feedback and insights from the pilot implementation, the following recommendations aim to strengthen the uptake of green and digital skills in VET in Montenegro.

Organize more trainings to increase the frequency of practical, hands-on sessions to reinforce learning and build confidence in applying green and digital skills. **Expand participation** and **i**nclude additional VET trainers, school staff, and private sector representatives to promote wider knowledge sharing and integration across institutions. **Facilitate knowledge transfer** encouraging participants to share insights and best practices with colleagues and students, supported by lesson plans, exercises, and practical tools. **Provide follow-up support**, by establishing online communities, refresher workshops, or mentoring sessions to sustain engagement and application of skills over time.

Implementing these measures will enhance the integration of green and digital competencies in VET, supporting continuous learning and preparing trainers, students, and future professionals for a sustainable and digitalized environment.

5.2 Regional recommendations

The countries of the Western Balkans are facing a double challenge: adapting to the green transition while keeping pace with the rapid spread of digital technologies. Vocational education and training (VET) is a central lever in this transformation, as it prepares young people and adult learners with the competences demanded by society and a more sustainable economy. Across the four Western Balkans countries participating in the INVEST project, participants expressed both optimism and concern. There is a growing awareness of the importance of **sustainability and digitalisation, but many barriers remain**. Outdated curricula, limited training for teachers, fragile synergies and gaps in equipment and infrastructure slow down change.

The INVEST partnership seeks to bridge the gap between what VET currently offers and the increasing demands from more sustainable economies and digital societies. Drawing from the project Analysis on Green and Digital Skills Needs in the Western Balkans (T2.2), the INVEST Competence Framework and the INVEST Training Programme implementation and survey analysis, a set of **actionable recommendations** have been designed to enhance the preparedness of institutions active in VET to confront the challenges of Western Balkan economies regarding employment and human capital development in a sustainable and twin transitioning societies. The following recommendations were jointly discussed, reviewed, and enriched in close cooperation with VET experts, trainers, and institutional partners during the **Project Final Conference** held in Montenegro in October 2025, and were endorsed as key actions for future collaborative actions.

Modernising curricula: new competences and skills at core

VET institutions have the potential to become drivers of innovation by developing forward-looking curricula that generate new occupational profiles and equip learners with the competences needed to thrive in the green and digital economy. By modernising their curricula, vocational schools can shape a new generation of professionals and move beyond knowledge transmission to focus on applied competences. The key principle is **integration**; indeed, sustainability and digitalisation should not appear as isolated subjects, but as tailored section of all vocational pathways. This approach requires flexibility. **Modular courses** and **micro-credentials** allow training to evolve rapidly and let learners stack competences over time. For young people, this can mean smoother transitions into work; for adults, it provides upskilling opportunities without requiring a full return to school. Modernising curricula with digital literacy also has the potential to enhance **cybersecurity awareness** and strengthen the overall safety of students in digital learning environments.

Finally, pedagogical approaches should adapt to evolving contexts and learning dynamics. **Project-based learning, experiential assignments, and real-world challenges** make competences tangible. When a class of electricians audits the energy use of a local public building and proposes improvements, they are not only learning technical content—they are practising sustainability thinking, teamwork, and digital problem-solving.

Teachers as agents of change

VET teachers and trainers are the critical enablers of change and should be guaranteed opportunities for professional development, particularly in emerging green and digital fields. Addressing this gap is essential. A regional strategy could include **Continuous Training-of-Trainers (TOT) programmes**, creating a pool of trainers who mentor peers and spread expertise within schools. Continuous professional development pathways should provide the space and the context for teachers to earn **micro-credentials** aligned with new sustainability, green and digital frameworks, building their skills progressively. Furthermore, **practical toolkits**, with lesson plans, assessment rubrics, and teaching materials could be developed at the local, national and regional levels, aiming at being immediately contextualised and applied in classrooms to diversify the educational approach.

In this framework, moving from isolated projects towards national and regional strategies promoting systematic integration of green and digital skills trainings for experts is crucial to harmonise the system, avoid repetition and ensure sustainability.

Building bridges: effective synergies

The twin transition within the VET system requires effective partnership with both the public and private sectors, in order to establish platforms for dialogue, co-design of curricula, and validation of competences. Education informs and adapts simultaneously to the society and labor market.
Strengthen collaboration among **VET institutes, business actors, civil society and educational public authorities** would provide clear national and regional **policy frameworks orientating collective and participated actions** for the integration of cross-cutting and tailored green and digital skills in the educational systems. Therefore, continuous and effective integration of curricula plays within the arena of **participated and multi-level governance dynamics**, shifting from a project-based approach to a program and long-term dynamic.
Thus, shared strategies between VET institutes and relevant public authorities would provide an effective platform where civil society and other actors could provide continuous support to the development of new competences and methodologies informing and harmonising national policies.

Similarly, Memoranda of Understanding between **schools and enterprises** can formalise the identification of green and digital skills gaps for more sustainable economies, adaptation of curricula and benefits for learners by bridging theory and practice in **dual systems**. Stronger relationships and dialogue with the private sector could strengthen field experience and links with the workplaces through the commitments to internships, guest lectures, equipment sharing, or joint supervision of student projects. For students, these partnerships make **learning concrete**. Working alongside professionals, they see how green and digital competences translate into real jobs and career paths. For employers, the benefit is a pipeline of graduates better prepared for modern workplaces. For VET institutes, the advantage is the ownership of actualised and attractive curricula.

Beyond the classroom, learners can act as **ambassadors of change** in community projects, allowing students to practise competences while delivering tangible benefits to their contexts. This approach strengthens both learning outcomes and the social role of VET institutions in implementing long-term culture of sustainability and responsibility.

Synergies among the large variety of stakeholders contributing to the Western Balkans twin transition is essential to shape a **shared and participated vision** around the effective transfer of green and digital competences in the VET institutes, as driving actors of a greener and more digitalised labor market.

Reaching remote areas

A persistent challenge in the several countries is the urban–rural divide. Connectivity gaps, lack of equipment, and lower access to training opportunities put learners and teachers from remote area at risk of exclusion. Solutions must combine innovation and pragmatism, including **blended learning**, mixing online modules with in-person sessions delivered via mobile training labs or rotating hubs; **offline resources**, such as print kits, USBs, or preloaded tablets, to reach schools with weak internet access; **partnerships with municipalities and NGOs**, which often have stronger local presence and can support logistics and learner engagement. By extending the reach of VET, countries can ensure that the benefits of the twin transition are felt across entire societies, not just in capital cities and guarantee **equal opportunities of access to education and practice.**

Infrastructure, equipment, and funding

Modern training requires modern tools. Yet many schools in the region struggle with outdated equipment, fragile digital accessibility and limited budgets. **Equipment-sharing networks** could allow schools to borrow or rotate key resources, m**icro-grants** for joint school–business projects can finance small but impactful initiatives and equipment, **low-cost, sustainable technologies** could be prioritised. Moreover, private-public partnership, as well as national and external funding from EU programmes or international donors, can provide crucial support—but schools and ministries must ensure investments are cost-efficient and sustainable in the long term.

Certifications and mobility

Training programmes for teachers and students should be establish within the frameworks of nationally and internationally recognised certification processes. Recognition and certifications can reward via career progression, certification, and public visibility, empowering and motivating both teachers and students.

Learners must leave VET systems with qualifications that are trusted by employers and recognised across borders. Aligning assessment criteria with EU competence descriptors and issuing **digital credentials** makes achievements visible and portable.

Moreover, at a regional level, harmonised recognition procedures would strengthen **mobility** and foster a shared labour market. Mobilities are the key to shape a **collective and aware space** for students locally, regionally and internationally. This would not only benefit learners but also employers, who could recruit with greater confidence across the Western Balkans.

Monitoring and evaluation

Reform must be measured and visible. A **regional monitoring dashboard** could track indicators such as the number of teachers trained, curricula updated, students certified, and companies engaged. Regular reporting would help ministries and partners adjust strategies and maintain accountability, while collecting continuous data for improvement and follow-up.

Annual **skills weeks or thematic campaigns** could celebrate achievements, showcase best practices, and ensure continuity. Successful pilots can then be scaled progressively—from local, to national, and eventually regional levels.