

Newsletter

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Women Leading the Way in Kosovo Beekeeping

In Kosovo's Peja region, women farmers are advancing beekeeping as a sustainable business. By planting rapeseed and chestnut trees, they are improving pasture quality, supporting healthier bees, and creating new economic opportunities.

Through a partnership between CNVP's SUNREED project and "Ekomjalta", led by Ardita Kastrati, an initiative was launched to support women and youth-led beekeeping businesses. It focuses on improving pastures, producing bee bread (pollen patties) to enhance bee health, and strengthening honey quality. The bee feed produced is used locally and shared across a network of women beekeepers.



Farmer Ardita Kastrati preparing carefully packaged bee bread patties to nourish and strengthen her bee colony.

Across Peja, Deçan, and Istog, eight women farmers planted seven hectares of crops—two hectares of chestnut trees and five hectares of rapeseed—supported by drip irrigation systems to ensure long-term growth. Modern equipment has also been introduced, enabling women to produce high-quality bee feed independently.



Ardita together with her network of members of the Women and Youth Producer Group (WYPG), during a training.

Furthermore, training sessions in beekeeping, honey production, environmental care, and entrepreneurship have helped participants strengthen their skills and grow their businesses.



Xhastina Kastrati, daughter of Ardita, working alongside colleagues on bee feed production and packaging.

"This support has helped us grown together as a network. With better technology, knowledge, and pastures improvement through cultivation of flower plants (rapeseeds) and chestnut seedlings women now have more confidence, higher-quality products, and stronger access to the market." said Ardita Kastrati, founder of "Ekomjalta".

The initiative has already increased honey production from 1,000 kg in 2024 to 1,500 kg in 2025, created one full-time job, and indirectly supported 20–30 more women. Beyond economic benefits, it has also contributed to biodiversity and strengthened women's roles in the honey value chain.

This initiative is part of the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources for Environment Economic Development (SUNREED) project, implemented by CNVP Kosovo and supported by the Embassy of Sweden in Prishtina (Sida).

From Five Hives to a Modern Production Line

In Komoran, Drenas, a family that began working with just five beehives has grown into a business helping shape Kosovo's beekeeping sector. Genc Cakaj, 32-year old founder of BeePro, turned his early family experience as a beekeeper into a mission to solve one of the industry's biggest challenges - reliable access to quality equipment.

With up to 250,000 beehives across Kosovo, demand for beehives and frames is constant. Yet most frames have been imported, increasing costs and causing delays. Genc experienced these challenges firsthand and decided to act.

After starting beehive production in 2017, a key breakthrough came with support from the SUNREED project, which enabled the modernization of his production facility. With new line machinery, "BeePro" can now produce standardized, durable, and affordable beehive frames locally.

Before the SUNREED-supported upgrade, Genc produced 10,000 beehive frames per year - but with the new facility and equipment, he plans to produce 200,000 frames this year. On his own, Genc is reducing dependence on imports and ensuring timely supply for Kosovo's beekeepers.

"I've found my niche, and it's one that creates real value locally," Genc says with a smile. "Today, we're producing what we once had to import. We are producing at higher quality, lower costs, and a reliable supply our beekeepers can truly depend on - especially when timing matters most."



Genc Cakaj, founder of BeePro.

The results are already here. Local beekeepers benefit from lower costs, reliable access to equipment, and products tailored to their needs. At the same time, the business strengthens local value chains by sourcing wood domestically and creating new economic opportunities for forest owners and rural communities.



Faster, more efficient production of beehive frames with new equipment,

Genc's vision goes further. By promoting the use of wood for production rather than firewood and collaborating with private forest owners, BeePro supports more efficient and sustainable resource use. Plans to plant fast-growing black locust trees will also provide future raw materials while benefiting bees, soil quality, and biodiversity.

The company's growth is creating jobs, having expanded from just 4 employees to 9 full-time workers, most of whom are women from the local community - a deliberate choice by Genc, who values their strong work ethic and integrity. At the same time, it is helping small-scale beekeepers expand their activities through access to affordable, locally made equipment.



The number of workers has increased from 4 to 9 full-time employees, who produce high-quality beehive frames.

From a small family effort to a modern production facility, Genc Cakaj's journey shows how hard work, innovation, and the right support can transform any challenge into lasting impact - for beekeepers, communities, and the environment.

How CNVP is Turning Kosovo's Biomass Potential into Regional Leadership

Kosovo is stepping confidently onto the European bioenergy stage, with CNVP Kosovo leading the charge at one of the sector's most influential global gatherings.

In January 2026, CNVP Kosovo led a high-profile delegation to the 8th Central European Biomass Conference (CEBC2026) in Graz, Austria, joining over 1,400 participants from 50+ countries.



Bringing together the central level (Ministry of Economy) mayors, energy experts, private companies, and international partners, CNVP showcased Kosovo's progress in wood biomass and its potential as a key driver of the country's energy transition.



The Kosovo delegation at CEBC2026.

A highlight of the visit was a session dedicated to the work of CNVP Kosovo in the biomass sector, called "Advancing the Biomass Sector in Kosovo", featuring discussions on biomass district heating, investment opportunities, and public-private partnerships.



CNVP Kosovo and partners during the dedicated session of showcasing Kosovo's leadership in advancing the biomass sector

With presentations from CNVP Kosovo, Agrar Plus, Aste Energy, and the Austrian Development Agency, the session positioned Kosovo as ready to implement sustainable biomass solutions and attract regional and international collaboration.

"Through the SUNREED project, feasibility studies, and the Wood Biomass Roadmap, we are connecting municipalities, private companies, and investors to turn that potential into bioenergy solutions for our communities. The CEBC2026 conference gave us the perfect platform to share our progress and explore partnerships that will scale up sustainable biomass use across Kosovo," said Xhevat Lushi, CNVP Kosovo Country Director, during the conference.



Xhevat Lushi, CNVP Kosovo's Country Director, presenting Kosovo's vision for sustainable biomass.

Beyond the session, CNVP formed networks /connections with European partners, showcasing the results of the SUNREED project so far and demonstrating Kosovo's leadership in sustainable, locally sourced energy. By bridging policy, municipalities, and the private sector, CNVP Kosovo is setting an example - strengthening local economies, driving the green transition, and positioning Kosovo as a regional leader in biomass energy.

For more information on the work of CNVP Kosovo and its impact, visit

<http://www.cnvp-eu.org/eng/index.php>

