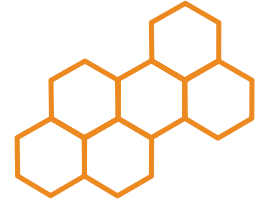




10
July
2023

beeEFB Buzz



Dear members of beeEFB community,

As we dive into the new edition of beeEFB Buzz we would like to share news and activities within our network from the past few months, interviews with alumni, successful stories, and interesting experiences. The last months were buzzing with two national meet-ups in Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, calls for applications for beeEffect Programme, National Coordinators (NC), and Joint Initiatives. We want to thank you for your active participation and support in making a difference in our community.

News from the EFB

At the recent policy event in Tirana and the public presentation of the latest BiEPAG publication on regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, BiEPAG's Members Richard Grieveson (Deputy Director, Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies) and Jovana Marović (Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of European Affairs in Government of Montenegro) had a meeting with the members of the beeEFB Alumni Network coming from the public and the private sector in Albania.



They engaged in an open discussion on different cross-cutting aspects of regional cooperation concerning the stalemate of the EU Integration process, the repercussions of the war in Ukraine, and the Open Balkan and Berlin Process initiatives platforms for high-level cooperation between high official representatives of the Western Balkan Six (WB6).

Check the BiEPAG policy brief which is available in English, Albanian, and Serbian at the following links:



Meet our new Alumni!

Marjola Çeku



What does it mean to you to become a part of the EFB Alumni Network?

EFB Alumni Network is like a Bee hive where I can connect with a community of like-minded individuals and although we have diverse backgrounds and experiences, we share common interests. EFB Alumni are always united and active in informing, exchanging views, and collaborating on ongoing projects.



I am grateful to be part of the programme team for the 2nd cohort of the BeeEffect Programme in the capacity of Communication Officer.

What is your favorite memory/moment from the past year with beeEFB Network?

I would like to single out the evening talks in Zoom with my group for our **"Level up"** project. We not only put too much effort into this project but we learned a lot from each other. Our meetings were like therapy, sharing our happiness, concerns, and insecurities and trying to consult and motivate each other. Even though we were living in different countries, we were more than close and what was most important/ was that we enjoyed our teamwork.

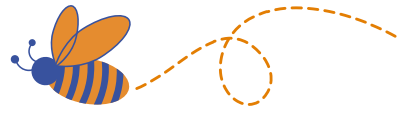
How has being a part of our Alumni Network impacted you professionally?

Seeing how EFB does its best to keep the Alumni Network alive is great. Engaging actively, attending events, and meeting new people not only from Albania but throughout the region; this for sure will have an impact on my professional life. I would like to highlight the opportunity to get in touch with experts in the field of technology, IT, and AI, and learn more about special programs and tools that I can use in digital diplomacy and tackling cyber diplomacy issues.



National Meet-ups

Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina



A full house in Tirana:

Presentation and discussion on Western Balkan's current affairs with Jovana Marović and Richard Grievenson from BiEPAG! Discussing the main areas of engagement within the EFB Alumni Network in smaller groups allowed us to identify opportunities for involvement. Our responsibility in keeping the network active, and the benefits that we can have personally and professionally from working together, can positively impact our communities. The willingness of new Alumni members to share their stories, accomplishment, and ideas will be instrumental in shaping our Alumni in the future.



Good mood in Sarajevo:

Although planned as a bigger dinner, it ended up almost as a family gathering. Board member Armin Sepić presented current beeEFB activities, open calls, and plans for the second half of the year. Tihana Lolić and Nejra Hiroš gave updates on previous EFB-supported activity and the sustainability of the Green Mobility project. Lejla Bajramović presented ideas for Joint Initiatives, provoking valuable discussion among the Alumni. It has been heartwarming to reconnect with familiar faces and to welcome new voices into our Alumni network.



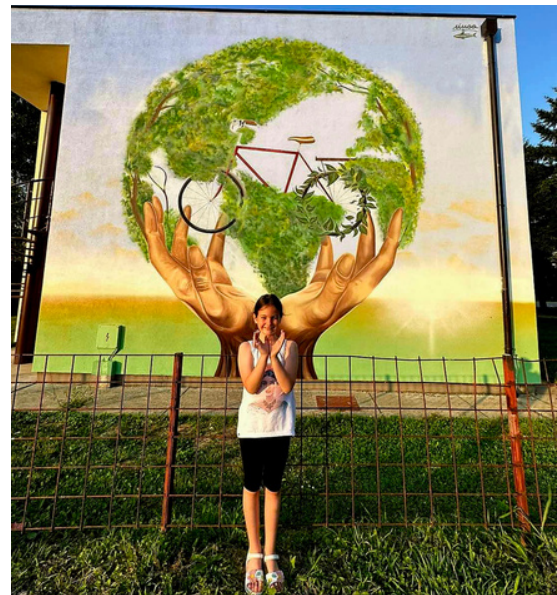
Green Mobility Project, Volume 2

Remember the project idea financed through the beeEFB Alumni Joint Initiatives last year? A project team member, Tihana Lolić, shares how the project idea received institutional support from the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology of the Republic of Srpska, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, and the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund of the RS, to continue finance project activities. This collaboration has resulted in coordination between the Ministry, the Fund, and the Green Mobility group members regarding further actions. In June 2023, a new mural based on the drawing of a 3rd-grade student was created (third place in a previous competition).



Recognizing the significance of raising awareness about environmental protection and green urban mobility, the above institutions will provide funding and support for similar actions in other cities of the RS. This collaboration will enable the implementation of projects that promote environmental consciousness and sustainable transportation in various urban areas.

We encourage other network members to get involved and take actions that can lead to improvements in their communities.



This initiative is a clear example of how a small project can have a significant impact and how Alumni from the region can successfully collaborate in addressing challenges. BeeEFB Alumni have the power to act together and bring about positive changes to create a better and more prosperous society.



FLASH News



National Coordinators

We recently opened a call for National Coordinators and we are delighted to announce we now have **seven (7) National Coordinators** within our Network.

A National Coordinator (NC) is an EFB Alumni who builds and maintains beneficial relationships, facilitates communication and coordinates activities among the country Alumni.

NCs will act as coordinators for the Alumni of the country they represent. They will be the contact point to build relationships with the EFB Alumni at the national level, facilitate cooperation among the host person of the national meet-up and countries for the regional meet-up, and increase Alumni engagement within the network.

National Coordinators will also be responsible for identifying collaboration options with their fellow NCs from the region, such as identifying potential for regional collaboration. Taken together, NCs will additionally revive the network and foster active engagement alongside the current Board and other interested stakeholders.

BeeEffect Programme

We are happy that we can share with you that the selection process of the 2nd cohort of the beeEffect programme was completed by the end of June and **13 participants** from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Turkiye were selected.



beeEFB alumni community is excited to share their knowledge, skills, and experiences with the newcomers while the new beeEffect participants and excited to start their journey.

More at: <https://balkanfund.org/about-the-beeffect-programme>

Stay tuned for more updates!

For your ideas, questions, comments - email us at efbalumni@gmail.com.

May the hive Bee with you!