

Project Brief

Regional Tourism

About

Tourism is a dynamic driver of inclusive economic development across the Western Balkans. With diverse natural landscapes and rich cultural heritage, the region has significant potential to become a leading sustainable tourism destination.

Systemic barriers—fragmented branding, skills gaps, and limited cross-border collaboration—continue to limit its impact. RECONOMY addresses these constraints by fostering regional cooperation, supporting innovative product development, enhancing workforce skills, and amplifying global visibility.



Countries

Albania | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Kosovo
Montenegro | North Macedonia | Serbia



Target Group

- ▶ Youth (15–34)
- ▶ Women of all ages
- ▶ Disadvantaged populations

Intervention Areas

1 Limited Opportunities for Global Networking, Knowledge Exchange, and Best Practices

Tourism stakeholders face barriers to international exposure due to high costs and fragmented participation in global fairs and forums.

Interventions:

- ▶ Coordinate joint participation under a unified regional brand.
- ▶ Provide targeted grants or co-financing for SMEs and tour operators to attend global events.
- ▶ Encourage local and international tour operator participation in regional branding initiatives.
- ▶ Monitor partnerships and market exposure outcomes.
- ▶ Facilitate public-private partnerships to reduce costs and logistical burdens.

3 Limited Development of Integrated Regional Tourism Products

The limited availability of cross-border tourism products reduces long-stay and high-value visitation. Private sector actors require stronger support for innovation.

Interventions:

- ▶ Support development of innovative, green, and inclusive regional tourism products (heritage routes, culinary trails, adventure tours).
- ▶ Facilitate collaboration among tourism actors to scale multi-country travel experiences.

2 Skills Gaps and Inadequate Tourism & Hospitality Education

Workforce shortages and outdated curricula limit sector quality and growth. The industry is often perceived as low-wage, discouraging youth and women.

Interventions:

- ▶ Partner with training providers to develop and deliver demand-driven tourism and hospitality programs tailored for rural guesthouses
- ▶ Promote certifications and upskilling opportunities focusing on youth, women, and disadvantaged groups.
- ▶ Link training providers with private sector actors for internships and employment pathways.

4 Fragmented Branding and Promotion

The absence of a unified regional brand and coordinated marketing approach weakens global competitiveness.

Interventions:

- ▶ Promote the Western Balkans as a unified tourism brand with consistent messaging and visual identity.
- ▶ Deliver capacity-building on brand storytelling, digital marketing, and responsible tourism.

