

## **TRANSCRIPT - Beautiful Kosovo**

**[ANDRIJANA ZIVANOVIC]**

Well, this is our place

**[NARRATOR]**

We are in the Cultural center of Zubin Potok, with its director, Andrijana. She is showing us their cinema hall which was renovated with funds from the European Union.

**[ANDRIJANA ZIVANOVIC]**

The floor and the stage were renovated; They did all of this, they improved the ceiling, painted the walls. Here, they also changed the floor.

**[NARRATOR]**

With this renovation, the cultural center looks more inviting than before. But it also provides an improved service for the community of Zubin Potok. The renovation of the center is a part of the EU-Beautiful Kosovo project. Funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Organization for Migration or IOM -, this 5 million euro project aims to beautify Kosovo, renovate public buildings, and protect cultural heritage, while creating job opportunities. Lendita Gashi, from the European Union, works with the EU-Beautiful Kosovo project:

**[LENDITA GASHI]**

The program includes a call for proposals for all municipalities. We invite them to propose projects that are focused on some areas of intervention. These areas have to do with public buildings renovation: it can be cultural heritage; it can be sports facilities for youth, green areas, river bank rehabilitation and so on. Then we do a selection of projects. In phase 1, we implemented 46 projects, in different municipalities in Kosovo. And part of these 46 projects were some renovation of schools, garden for example, school yards, creating sports facilities for kids, then we did many green areas, parks, the walking path to Novo Brdo castle, because this relates to tourism but also cultural heritage. And again all these projects have a key component which was to employ long-term unemployed people. We had to select those projects that we thought had a bigger impact on improving the living conditions of the citizens of those municipalities, but at the same time, addressing the component of employment.

**[NARRATOR]**

According to the UN data, Kosovo's unemployment rate is high at 35% with even higher rates for women and youth. Alessia Schiavon is the IOM project manager for EU-Beautiful Kosovo:

**[ALESSIA SCHIAVON]**

The long term unemployment level in Kosovo is a very big challenge, and it's also one of the main push factors for the Kosovo population to migrate abroad in particular also through irregular channels. So the program is targeting long-term unemployed persons registered at the local employment centers as job seekers. A specific focus is on those heads of family that are currently unemployed and not providing for their families with children. And also, a major focus is on vulnerable categories, meaning youth, persons with disabilities, women, returnees and persons from minority groups. Through the implementation of these infrastructure

projects, 1905 new jobs were created. Out of them, 78 were women, 76 were persons with disabilities, 336 were minorities and 290 youth.

**[NARRATOR]**

The EU-Beautiful Kosovo project required that the contracted companies, which carried out the work, had to employ job seekers from employment centers. And some of the projects have also led to long-term employment, even after the initial construction or renovation was completed. That was the case in the town of Klokot, where a new kindergarten was built, but also in Zubin Potok. Aleksandar Ratkovic managed the renovation of its cultural center:

**[ALEKSANDAR RATKOVIC]**

Some people who worked on the Cultural Centre are still working today with us on some other projects. Those who demonstrated that they know what they are doing. For sure 5 to six young men continued to work with us on other projects.

**[NARRATOR]**

Encouraged by its initial success, the EU has decided to launch the second phase, which will last until 2016. 1300 new jobs are expected to be created, and Kosovo will become even more beautiful.