



AREVADZOR - “Enhancing SME competitiveness through promotion and wider use of sustainable innovative technologies” project – (PRDP)

Brief Description: The project aims to foster employment by improving competitiveness of Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) in tourism sector in the central part of the Vayots Dzor Marz. This will be achieved through the promotion of environmentally friendly tourism (eco-tourism) in the area, the development of communication tools for single businesses and local institutions to attract tourists, the organisation of touristic routes in the nature of the area, the coordination of the different public and private actors' investments.

Also the adoption of renewable energy sources and efficient energy practices in the touristic sector will be fostered. A solar photovoltaic power plant will produce clean energy for the needs of the region. Solar thermal panels will be granted to Bed&Breakfasts (B&Bs) and family businesses to produce hot water. Energy checks on touristic businesses will lower energy consumption and help offering better accommodations to tourists. Training courses and individual mentoring will support households, family businesses and local authorities to learn simple practices for the development of tourism.

Actions in Brief

The project will reach its targets through several actions:

- 1) Construction of a 1 megawatt solar photovoltaic power plant. The plant will be managed by a Public Private Partnership made of local authorities and private B&Bs. It will produce clean energy all year round. The revenues coming from selling the energy will be re-invested in the region to create new jobs in tourism sector, new touristic routes, info points. It will conduct advertising, provide tourism-related services, and many other investments to improve the quality of life of local communities. 7 new quality jobs will be created.
- 2) Installation of at least 25 solar thermal panels in B&Bs and households through micro-grants, that will lower the demand of energy of eco-touristic businesses; and will introduce eco-friendly approach as a marketing tool for promoting eco-tourism in the area, supporting the creation of new jobs in the sector.
- 3) Training and mentoring activities will enhance the competencies and capacities of local touristic businesses in management, activities, routines and tools, with the aim to raise safety and quality of services. Local public authorities will also benefit from training sessions to learn how to increase public awareness about sustainable energy practices, to introduce practical measures to support the development of local SMEs and family business, to define strategies and implementation plans, to work together with private sector for the growth of the local touristic attractiveness. 25 new jobs will be created in the sector.

Duration:	15/12/2016 – 15/09/2019 (34 months)
Total Project Budget:	EUR 2,084,951.71
EU Contribution:	EUR 1,500,000.00
Location:	Vayots Dzor Marz (region) of Armenia
Implementing Partners:	PIN Srl - Educational and scientific services for the University of Florence, Italy (Lead partner); Tourism Regional Center, Yeghegnadzor, Armenia; Municipality of Gladzor; Municipality of Yeghegnadzor; Jermuk Community; Yeghegis Community.