



MIMI MEMIAJ

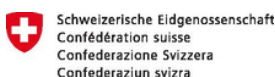
From Idea to Success with Albania Craftsman Education (ACE)

Mimi, a girl born and raised in Tirana, completed her postgraduate studies in Economics and Finance after 1995. During 2004-2007, she studied at the Milano Fashion Campus Academy in Italy for Fashion and Art Design, and holds a Master's degree in Business Planning for Success from RMT University. Mimi needed serious support to develop her ideas for establishing a school, which today is known as Albania Craftsman Education, ACE.

Risi Albania has been working closely with Mimi since the school's founding in 2020 and beyond. The focus of this school and the support provided by RisiAlbania are related to: inclusion of marginalized groups (women, returnees, young people with low educational attainment and the unemployed) outside the capital and provision of employment and self-employment opportunities for women and young people living in remote areas; keeping tradition alive, valuing family heritage and culture in a professional and innovative way, and mobilizing disadvantaged women and young people through online and face-to-face training courses.



A project by Swiss Agency
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"I am cooperating closely with RisiAlbania in order to deliver and fulfill the increasingly innovative tasks set by RisiAlbania and this cooperative relationship will continue to work for years supporting every initiative and innovation that they will be part of their projects", says Mimi.

According to her, thanks to these partnerships, hundreds of success stories emerged in the country.

"For sure their success is a bonus to identify ACE as a success story for RisiAlbania. They trusted and collaborated closely with us to enable progress and accomplish the mission that ACE undertook from day one. Figures so far have only showed growth and responsibility towards every idea and objective of theirs over the years."

Albania Craftsman Education (ACE) is a Strategic Innovation Center, where vocational education, traditional crafts and trades, contemporary and digital arts are combined in online and offline short-term courses. The school is a comprehensive youth auditorium, where its participants are interested not only in vocational courses and branches, but also in major artistic, cultural and social projects.

ACE was created with aspiring professionals in the fields of design, communication and arts, who come from the fields of Albanian craftsmanship, members of academia for the programs taught within the center; national and international experience; a new image and marketing for the young people who will attend courses at ACE, towards creating their own business. Collaboration with Risi Albania started immediately after the establishment of Albania Craftsman Education ACE. For the new Blended Learning system that ACE brought as an innovation in Albania immediately after the Covid-19 pandemic, it had to train its instructors on new teaching methods and, together with RisiAlbania, a project was undertaken to train trainers on online and face-to-face teaching, thus blending practical and theoretical lessons. In its second year, the project continued with the creation of a physical and digital professional book by developing an online platform to download the book and attend online courses.

Also, with the support of RisiAlbania, a new initiative was undertaken to create practical tutorials and online courses for students to download directly from the platform. www.craftsman.al

"This is the fifth year of cooperation with RisiAlbania and these 5 years have been quite fruitful, not only in terms of financial benefits, but also in terms of better employment opportunities generated for marginalized households and communities," says Mimi.

Aiming to create a new generation of professional instructors for online courses, ACE trained 25 new instructors in several different fields, who joined the team for the delivery of vocational courses, bringing practical professional techniques and tutorials to their subject and enabling access to hundreds of people interested in as beginners or advancing techniques in established e-commerce or physical businesses.

Such projects brought about the development and improvement of teaching with the best contemporary and fast systems. ACE accompanies each completed vocational course with a business, investment and marketing plan to bring about the establishment of secure and successful start-ups.

"Today we can mention dozens of success stories, which are being promoted by various media and institutions that have disseminated them as being among the best models of investment and development in the country. In 2023 alone, there were over 120 business companies created by students who were trained at ACE during 2021-2023."

ACE is every day looking to fulfill its mission, to bring new innovations and expand its geographical reach with high participation throughout the country and abroad. Currently, ACE is listed in various European Union projects focused on youth exchange, sharing of experience and of the latest digital learning trends, the green economy and the cultural educational exchange of their lecturers.

