

## ALBANIA

# HANDOVER CEREMONY FOR THE PROJECT FOR COUNTERING THE INFECTIOUS DISEASES INCLUDING COVID 19 HELD AT INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH OF ALBANIA

On November 18, a handover Ceremony for JICA Technical Cooperation “Project for Countering the Infectious Diseases including Covid 19” was held at the Institute of Public Health of Albania.

The Minister of Health and Social Protection, Mrs. Ogerta MANASTIRLIU, the Ambassador of Japan in Albania, Mr. TAKADA

Mitsuyuki, the Chief Representative of the JICA Balkan Office, Mr. UEKI Masahiro as well as the General Director of the Institute of Public Health, Eugena TOMINI, attended the Handover Ceremony, where 12 different vehicles and other equipment worth 600,000 EUR, were provided by JICA to the Institute of Public Health.

In addition to the acquired equipment, this project contributed to increasing the knowledge of human resources where more than 30 specialists of public health were trained online in the prevention and control of infectious diseases.



Checking the donated vehicles at IPH



## SERBIA

# 4<sup>th</sup> LECTURE OF JICA CHAIR HELD IN DECEMBER

On December 14, Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade hosted 4th lecture of JICA Chair Program on Modernization of Japan titled “Intellectual and Social Aspects of Modernization in Japan”. The lecture focused on the character of political thought and its social background at the early stage of modernization of Japan by presenting a picture of continuity and change from the Tokugawa Shogunate period to the twentieth century. Participants were mostly the students of the Faculty of Philology, but attendees from other

faculties also joined the lecture online.

Professor MATSUDA Koichiro currently teaches at Graduate School of Law and Politics and College of Law and Politics, Department of Politics at Rikkyo University, Japan.

DVD material on “Seven Chapters of Japanese Modernization” with Serbian subtitles were handed over to the Faculty of Philology and DVD sets will be also provided to the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory and Belgrade University library to be utilized by the students and researches of Japanese studies.



Professor MATSUDA Koichiro



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# ALBANIA MID-TERM SEMINAR FOR DIVJAKE KARAVASTA NATIONAL PARK PROJECT

On November 9, National Seminar for presenting the progress of the JICA Project “On Capacity Building for the Improvement of Ecosystem-Based Management in the Divjakë Karavasta National Park” was held in Tirana. The aim of the National Seminar was to present the progress of the project so far, as well as to discuss further steps for the full application of the Ecosystem-Based Management approach in protected natural areas.

During the seminar, the Japanese experts and the Albanian counterparts from the Regional Agency of Protected Areas of the Fier District for the Divjakë-Karavasta National Park, presented the achievements of the activities for all the components of the project so far, such as the monitoring of biodiversity, the examination of sustainable fishing, the development of environmental education, the examination of eco-tourism,



*At the seminar*

the study of the dynamics of the coast and the issue of sediments, the promotion of sustainable agriculture as well as for the monitoring of habitats and the identification of plant species.

The seminar was attended by the repre-

sentatives of JICA Balkan Office and virtually from the JICA Headquarters in Tokyo. The seminar was opened by the Ambassador of Japan in Albania H.E., TAKADA Mitsuyuki and Chief Representative of the JICA Balkan Office Mr. UEKI Masahiro.

## KOSOVO

# HAND-OVER FOR DRAGASH LANDFILL AND BROD VILLAGE

On 17 November, the official ceremony for the equipment handover for “The Project for Enhancement of Capacity for Waste Management toward Sound Material-Cycle Society Phase 2” was held in Dragash. JICA Balkan Office Chief Representative Mr. UEKI Masahiro attended the ceremony with other distinguished guests such as Chargé d’Affaires ad interim of the Embassy of Japan in Kosovo Mr. YAMANAKA Keisuke, Dragash Mayor and the representatives from the Municipality.

The equipment donated for Dragash landfill includes a truck scale and heavy works for the rehabilitation of the landfill, such as removal of waste with bulldozers, compaction of waste with bulldozers, over 6000 cubic meters of soil coverage and soil compaction with cylinder.

The donation for improvement of the waste collection system in Brod village included construction of waste collection point, provision of 16 metal containers for waste and provision of 1.5 tons dumper with wheels and container with unloading bucket.

Training for distribution, compression and coverage for proper landfill management was also conducted in three phases.



*1st Workshop in Tirana on 28th January 2022*



SERBIA

# INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR FOR BELGRADE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

On November 24, the Project for Modernization of Public Transportation in the City of Belgrade organized a one-day seminar “Development trends in public transport”. This year, the topic of the seminar was “Contractual relations and public-private partnership between the City and the carrier”.

The seminar was divided into two parts. In the first part, the guest speakers and hosts (Secretariat for Public Transport and JICA) introduced the audience to the organization of public transport, models and the method of awarding contracts in their cities. Panel discussion was led by Dr. Predrag Živanović, professor at the Faculty of Transportation in Belgrade, while the representatives of the International Association for Public Transport (Union Internationale des Transports Publics - UITP), Bucharest, Madrid and Hamburg and Professor Dr. Vuk Bogdanović - Faculty of Engineering, University of Novi Sad took part in the panel discussion.

One of the activities of PROMOD is the improvement of work monitoring (contractual

relations) of operators. This topic is currently discussed all over the world, especially after the changes in public transport under

the influence of the pandemic caused by the spread of the COVID-19 virus.



Panelist of the PROMOD seminar

SERBIA

## TRAINING COURSE FOR THE PROJECT FOR MODERNIZATION OF PUBLIC URBAN TRANSPORT IN THE CITY OF BELGRADE HELD IN JAPAN

From January 16 to 26, seven representatives of Secretariat for Public Transport in the city of Belgrade (SfPT) attended the Training for Modernization of Public Urban Transport in Japan.

Public urban transportation system in Belgrade is facing challenges at operational level in terms of planning and monitoring as well as with limited budget resources for its improvement.

This Project aims to increase public management capacity of SfPT, improve the ticketing system and the service level of the operators. This training was a great opportunity for the representatives of the Secretariat of Public Transport to be acquainted with all modes of transport in Japan (railway traffic, public and local bus lines, river traffic, as well as rope transport). In their future work, the participants of the training course will try to transfer gained knowledge from Japan and to implement it in the development of modernization of public transport in Belgrade.



Group photo of the training participants and lecturers

# INTRODUCTION WORKSHOP FOR NINJA PROJECT

On October 12, mission members of the JICA's survey on the Start-up ecosystem in Serbia participated in the SPLET Tech Conference, held at MTS Hall of Belgrade.

At the event, there was a series of panels related to new technologies and startups in the West Balkan region. During the event, the JICA mission members and its partner in Serbia, Serbia Digital Initiative, jointly organized a seminar introducing JICA's NINJA (Next Innovation with Japan) project in Serbia.



Mr. Fukuda, Senior Representative of JICA Balkan Office, giving opening speech at the workshop

## “HOW TO MAKE IT IN ASIA FROM SERBIA” PANEL DISCUSSION HELD IN BELGRADE

On 28 January, the NINJA project team in Serbia (Digital Serbia Initiative and JICA team) hosted an event entitled “How to make it in Asia from Serbia”. The event brought together representatives from business, startups, media, diplomacy and the

state, including H.E. Jelena Begović, Minister of Science, Technological Development and Innovation, to present the opportunities that the Asian market offers to Serbian startups and companies.

This unique event was attended by more

than 50 participants in person, and speakers and panelists shared essential tips for starting a business in Asia based on their experience in the market.



Representatives of the Embassy of Japan, JICA and panelists with the Minister of Science, Technological Development and Innovation Ms. Jelena Begovic



# DEMO DAY FOR THE NINJA PROJECT HELD IN BELGRADE

On February 3, NINJA (Next Innovation with Japan) Demo day was held in Belgrade. In cooperation with partners from Asia and the Western Balkans, seven selected Serbian-based start-ups have received mentoring and advice from experts in various fields. To showcase the results, seven start-ups participated in a pitch event and sought investment. Each of the start-ups presented their clear and attractive proposal for further funding. H.E. Japanese Ambassador

Katsumata, H.E. Serbian Ambassador Kovač, Mr. PAUNOVIĆ, Director, IT and Entrepreneurship Team in the Office of the Prime Minister of Serbia, many Venture Capitals from both Western Balkans and Japan and companies attended the event both in-person and online. About 40 people attended the event in person and 60 people online.

JICA will continue to support the passion of entrepreneurs in Serbia who want to make a difference in society.



Presentation of the company "Smart Watering"

## REGION

# PROGRESS OF THE "PROJECT FOR STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING OF SME MENTORING SERVICES IN WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES"

Building upon the achievements over the past 10 years and promoting regional collaboration, JICA continued to support Western Balkan countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) in maintaining and strengthening mentoring service for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Mr. Slobodan Stijepovic, the applicant for this SFU project, participated in JICA KCCP "Adaptation to Climate Change" in JFY2016 and used this opportunity through Alumni association of Montenegro to implement his idea and contribute to the environment conservation in Montenegro. In November 2022, all counterparts from the region gathered at the Overall Coordination Meeting (OCM) in Belgrade to discuss regional cooperation and

share progress and achievements in each country together with and representatives from JICA Headquarters and JICA Balkan Office. OCM is one of the crucial mechanisms in strengthening a regional cooperation.

In order to improve quality of providing mentoring service and to promote networking, all mentors meeting was organized in North Macedonia, BiH (Republika Srpska), Montenegro and Serbia. Mentors had opportunity to exchange their experience and discuss about challenges. Additionally, best mentors were awarded in North Macedonia and Montenegro.

The classroom training material for new mentors were upgraded by a working group of trainers in Serbia, Development Agency of Serbia (RAS), and Japanese experts and

North Macedonia was the first to utilize new training curriculum.

KAIZEN as a basis for Japanese business philosophy, which means continuous improvement, became a favorite in all companies throughout the Balkan region. Presence of Japanese experts and their advice in continuing improvement in enterprises is very much appreciated and needed especially in countries where SME sector plays significant part in overall economy. A basic KAIZEN seminar has been provided in North Macedonia and Montenegro, while set of Advance KAIZEN training sessions will be organized in upcoming period in other countries as well.



Overall coordination meeting in Belgrade



Kaizen seminar in Podgorica

NORTH MACEDONIA

## ALUMNI NORTH MACEDONIA THEMATIC SEMINAR

On December 2, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering hosted a seminar together with the Project Eco-technologies and sustainable development, and in cooperation with JICA Alumni of North Macedonia- MAK JAMS on the topic "Eco-technologies and Product Lifecycle".

After the opening remarks by the Dean of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, prof. Darko Danev and the President of MAK-JAMS Alumni Association, prof. Tashko Rizov, professors Dane Dimitrovski, Elisaveta Doncheva and Jelena Dzokic held seminar of three lectures on waste management, eco-technologies and eco-innovations and latest developments in the area of eco-products and product lifestyle, respectively.

The second part of the seminar was in a form of a workshop held by prof. Nikola Avramov presenting the possibilities of



*Participants at the seminar*

OpenLCA software for product and process lifecycle assessment. Participants had the possibility to use the software and conduct analysis.

More than 30 participants attended the

seminar and were awarded with a certificate of participation. The event was a great opportunity for all to get more insight on theoretical as well as practical knowledge on Eco-technologies and Product Lifecycle.

MONTENEGRO

## 140 YEARS OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND MONTENEGRO

On December 23, Alumni Montenegro hosted a symposium to mark 140th anniversary of friendly relations between Montenegro and Japan. After the opening remarks of professor Jovan Mirkovic, Mr. Vukota Vukotic held a speech on the history

of relations between Japan and Montenegro. The topics at the event also included "Njegos and Japan" and "How we learn from each other in sport".

The symposium was closed after a musical performance of violinist Ana Rasovic, who

played set of Japanese, Montenegrin and classical compositions.

The first contact between Japan and Montenegro was in 1882 when Montenegrin Prince Nikola and one of Meiji Governors, Arisugawa no Miya officially encountered.



*At the symposium*



## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION TRADITIONALLY ORGANIZES ORIGAMI WORKSHOP AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

In December, four Origami workshops were organized in four elementary schools in Belgrade with an aim to promote Japanese culture and tradition, but also draw attention to the environment protection through the activities. During the workshop, pupils listened to a story from a picture book “Ekologijanka” and actively participated in its interpretation. The pupils then made origami butterflies from old newspapers and magazines and through this activity learned about recycling of waste paper.

Origami develops, not only fine motor skills in children, but also their patience. Through the story of proper handling of waste and sustainable development, children are encouraged to pass on knowledge to their parents and others in their environment. After the workshop, all participants received a copy of the picture book and each class received one plant, as a gift, to take a good care of.



*Ms. Aleksandra Vucinic, the lecturer with one of the participants*

### KOSOVO

## ALUMNI KOSOVO ORGANIZES AWARENESS SESSION FOR PUPILS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL “FAIK KONICA” IN PRISTINA

On December 23, JICA Alumni Association of Kosovo (JAAK) organized a visit to the “Tiki Mosaic” glass waste recycling factory in Mitrovica for students of the “Faik Konica” elementary school in Pristina.

The aim of this activity was to raise awareness of the students about environmental protection with a focus on learning how inappropriate waste management has negative effects on the environment and thus on society, as well as how this waste can be reused and recycled.

The activity included a lecture on waste management and the importance of recycling waste.

The “Tiki Mosaic” factory presented technological process how they produce tiles from recycled glass, which will be later used to make mosaic.



*Elementary school pupils visiting glass waste recycling factory*

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

# JICA ALUMNI BIH ORGANIZES WORKSHOP “SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT” IN BANJA LUKA

On December 27, JICA Alumni Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina together with the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Banja Luka, organized a workshop called “Sustainable development” intended for Banja Luka Gymnasium students.

Sustainable development is a concept promoted by the United Nations and concerns all areas of life. The idea of the workshop was to bring the model of sustainability closer to high school students, but through interesting, short lectures and interaction with the students. They had an opportunity to learn about various topics such as: “Concept of Sustainable Development”, “Skills of the Future and Expert Engagement in Teamwork”, “Waste - problem or opportunity?”, “Energy and Modern Society”, “Sustainable construction” and “Sustainability of tourism development in Japan”, presented by Faculty professors and JICA Alumni BiH members.

One of the most interesting part of the workshop was when the students showed through a quiz what knowledge they had acquired at the workshop. The T-shirts with the

logo of Sustainable Development and JICA Alumni BiH were awarded to the best young experts and future strategists of sustainable development.



Workshop for high school students in Banja Luka

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

## SMALL FOLLOW-UP BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

On December 16, a workshop as a part of the Small Follow-up Project (SFU) “Capacity development and technical assistance for education system in the field of raising awareness about natural disasters in Bosnia and Herzegovina” was organized at the Primary School (PS) “Alija Nametak” in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The purpose of the project is to raise awareness of the pupils about the climate change and natural disasters and teach the pupils and their teachers, in a fun and interactive way, about disaster risk reduction.

Mr. Bakir Krajinović, President of JICA Alumni Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has initiated this SFU Project in 2021 as a JICA ex-participant. The JICA Balkan Office (JICA) has recognized importance of this idea and supported project implementation.

In 2021, five primary schools (PSs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina received meteorological station, geographical wall maps and educational posters. In 2022, JICA Alumni Association



At teachers' workshop

in BiH together with JICA has been continuing with its activities, targeting two additional schools in BiH, PS “Soko” in Gracanica and PS “Alija Nametak” in Sarajevo.

In addition to the donation of the educational tools to PSs in BiH, the Project planned

educational component by organizing workshops for PSs' geography teachers. The purpose of the workshop was to increase the teachers' knowledge as well as students' about raising awareness about natural disasters in BiH.



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