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#EU4Youth

## **EU4Youth – over 1,700 young people in Armenia, supported in youth skills development, employment, and a sustainable future**

In order to successfully integrate into the labor market, meet contemporary demands, and acquire in-demand skills, initiatives and programs that educate, empower, and support young people with new professional and economic capabilities play a crucial role. [EU4Youth programme](#) is one such initiative that has made a meaningful impact in Armenia – empowering hundreds of young people to enhance their skills, unlock economic potential, and turn their social ideas into tangible action.

On June 23, a national event took place in Yerevan, Armenia, to mark the handover of the National Steering Group's mandate and the closing of the grant projects under the programme. The event aimed to promote the exchange of results achieved within the different components of the EU4Youth programme and to discuss paths for future collaboration and support.

**Davit Avagyan, representative of the EU Delegation to Armenia:** *“Youth-focused initiatives are among the European Union’s strategic priorities. This particular initiative exemplifies the EU’s continued commitment to supporting youth, with a strong emphasis on fostering their economic development and promoting social inclusion.”*

The National Steering Group structure aims to foster dialogue to improve youth employability in Armenia and serve as a recipient of the project's outcomes and tools. The presidency of the Group was assumed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the vice-presidency by the Youth Organizations Union, and the permanent Secretariat role by the Unified Social Service, collectively forming the Managing Board.

**Austėja Vilkelytė, representative of the Central Project Management Agency (CPVA), Lithuania, noted:** *“Our goal through EU4Youth was to equip young people with tangible tools to shape their future. Social entrepreneurship enables them to transform care for their communities into real, visible actions. This project demonstrates that Armenian youth have the energy, ideas, and courage needed to drive change. We are here to support them on their journey – from classroom ideas to initiatives that can inspire the entire region.”*

In the last 2 years, three regional grant projects were implemented in Armenia, engaging over **1,708 young people** in opportunities to improve their capacities, develop professional and digital skills, take part in training courses, receive mentorship, and obtain financial support to realize their ideas.

- Of all participants, **68%** were women and **62%** came from vulnerable groups, reflecting the programme's inclusive approach and commitment to ensuring equal opportunities.

As part of skills development, **65%** of participants received digital training, while the rest joined sessions on social entrepreneurship and active citizenship.

- Career counseling was provided to **100 young people with disabilities**, and **29 specialists were trained as career counselors**.
- **10 youth NGOs received grants** to support youth career development.
- **16 young entrepreneurs received funding** to implement their business ideas, and 54 others received technical assistance.
- **10 young people** had the opportunity to complete internships in social enterprises, gaining hands-on experience.
- **24 non-formal and 2 formal educational tools were developed and applied**, contributing to participants' academic and professional growth.

**Suren Mkhitarian, Director of CODE-SE Hub**, noted that EU4Youth was not only about financial assistance; it also brought years of experience, increased trust among stakeholders in their initiative, and opened new opportunities for partnerships with various organizations.

*“Our core aim was to promote the model of student-led social enterprises in Armenia, where students work with schools to implement business projects that not only generate income but also solve pressing social issues in their schools or communities. Through the programme, hundreds of students and dozens of teachers and trainers were trained, an online platform and guidebook were created, and as a result of comprehensive educational and professional support, the first seven exemplary student-led social enterprises were launched in Armenia. Projects like this are truly important, as they allow young people to begin entrepreneurial activities at an early age, build experience, believe in their abilities, strengthen teamwork, earn income, and address community or school-related challenges. Such experiences can have a lasting, positive impact on their future lives”,* noted the grant recipient.

During the event, stakeholders also discussed key topics including: an overview of the technical assistance provided to Armenia's Public Employment Services; policy recommendations, action plans, and strategies for improving youth employability; and the future direction of the National Steering Group on Youth, as well as the role of its members in ensuring the sustainability of grant results.

**The EU4Youth Phase III Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship programme**, funded by the European Union and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, is being executed by the Central Project Management Agency (CPVA) in Eastern Partnership countries. These include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The programme will run until the middle of 2025 and aims to provide technical assistance to governmental and non-governmental organisations to tackle youth unemployment and improve employability.