




JANUARY — DECEMBER 2024

A large, abstract graphic on the left side of the cover consists of numerous thin, overlapping lines in a light blue color. These lines form a series of concentric, wavy shapes that resemble a stylized wave or a series of overlapping loops, creating a sense of movement and depth.

Annual Report

CENTER FOR COUNSELING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND RESEARCH

SIT

Prepared by:
Kadri Gashi
Njomza Berisha
Agon Osaj

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, the Center for Counseling, Social Services, and Research (SIT) made significant strides in promoting inclusivity, equality, and youth empowerment through impactful initiatives and strong partnerships.

SIT's key projects included Counseling for Prevention 4.0, which addressed Domestic Violence (DV) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) by working with perpetrators, and Poke the Bubble and DouActism, which fostered cross-border and regional collaboration. The Empowering Kosovo's Youth for Intra-Community Cohesion and Youth INC. projects engaged youth from diverse backgrounds, promoting diversity, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence. A groundbreaking study, Gender-Based Violence Through the Lenses of Gen Z, provided valuable insights to combat GBV.

Through campaigns like the Fathers' Festival and the 16 Days of Activism, SIT amplified awareness on issues like gender equality, parenting, and youth inclusion, reaching thousands of individuals. These efforts underline SIT's commitment to fostering equitable communities and empowering youth.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Mission

SIT is dedicated to fostering an inclusive society that upholds equal rights for all. Our mission involves addressing pressing human rights concerns that hinder the realization of equality, peace, and development, such as Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence. To achieve this goal, we actively engage individuals from diverse backgrounds, irrespective of their gender, sexual orientation, or any other identity categories. Furthermore, we are committed to empowering young people by incorporating art for activism through the Artivism methodology and the methodology of Doughnut Economics, to drive positive changes in society.

Vision

We envision a society that fosters inclusivity, ensuring everyone feels safe, equal, and empowered, while also empowering individuals from diverse backgrounds to reach their full potential, irrespective of their social identities.

Main accomplishments of SIT during 2024:

- Won the Earth DanceBeat competition, organized by MasterPeace Global Foundation;
- Secured SIT's largest project to date—a multi-country capacity-building KA2 project supported by Erasmus+ — which SIT will lead from the end of 2024 through 2026;
- Partnership and cooperation in the common journey - Kosovo Correctional Service, Ministry of Justice in Kosovo

YEAR-END FINANCIAL STATUS 2024 - FINANCE OVERVIEW

Main Funding Sources

The financial success of 2024 was bolstered by contributions from several key funders, including:

- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- European Commission
- Erasmus +
- United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
- Coalition for Health (K10)

Financial Highlights:

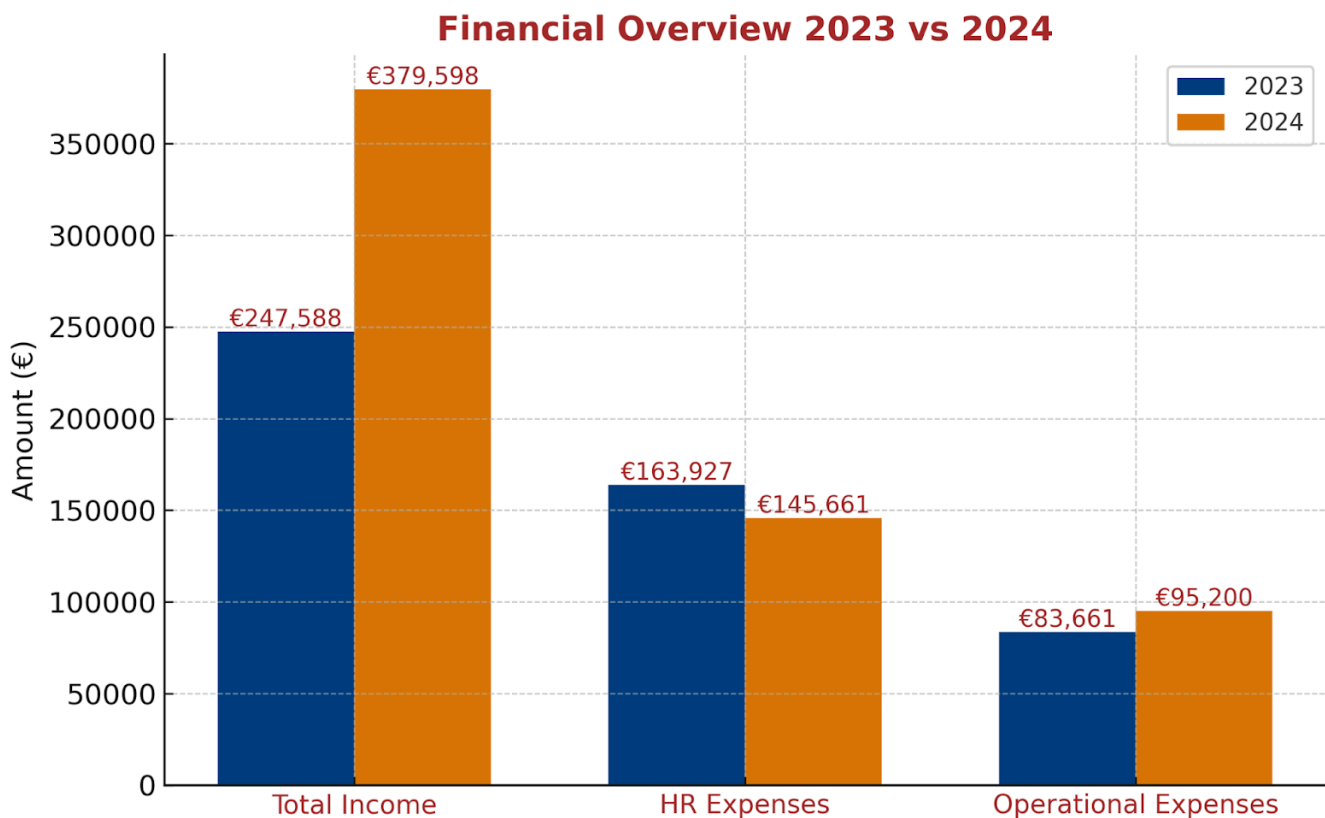
Income Growth: Our total income witnessed a remarkable increase of around 53.32%, growing from €247,588 in 2023 to €379,598.29 in 2024. This substantial rise is a testament to our effective fundraising strategies and the expansion of our funding base, reflecting our organization's enhanced financial stability and capability to secure diverse funding sources.

Human Resources Expenses: Expenditure on staff saw a decrease of around 11.14%, from €163,927.18 in 2023 to around €145,660.87. This decrease is primarily attributed to a reduction in residential trainings, youth camps, leading to lower engagement of trainers and supporting staff.

Operational Expenses: Operational expenses increased by around 13.80% from €83,661 in 2023 to around €95,208 in 2024. This increase is primarily attributed to higher costs for essential services, inflation-driven price adjustments, increased program activities, or investments in new equipment and technology. Additionally, changes in supplier contracts or expanded operational requirements may have contributed to the rise in expenses.

Figure 1. Financial Comparison 2023 vs 2024

In summary, the financial overview for 2024 reflects significant growth and strategic resource allocation. Our total income increased by an impressive 53.32%, rising from €247,588 in 2023 to €379,598.29 in 2024, highlighting our successful fundraising efforts and strengthened financial stability. While human resources expenses decreased by 11.14% due to cost optimization, operational expenses rose by 13.80% to support our expanding activities. These financial adjustments demonstrate our commitment to sustainable growth and efficient management. Moving forward, we remain focused on maintaining this momentum, ensuring long-term financial health, and maximizing our organizational impact.



CENTER FOR COUNSELING DEPARTMENT PROJECTS:

Counseling for Prevention 4.0 (January - December 2024)

The Counseling for Prevention 4.0 project tackled Domestic Violence (DV) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) by focusing on a complementary and transformative approach—working with perpetrators to uproot the cycle of violence. The project aimed to improve attitudes and behaviors among male perpetrators of DV/GBV through counseling services, coupled with research, advocacy, and community awareness activities.

Key achievements included the launch of a groundbreaking case study, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Through the Lenses of Gen Z: Young Men’s Attitudes Towards GBV, Domestic Violence, and Femicide in Kosovo, published on the International Day Against Violence, with 70 participants engaging in the discussion. Counseling services were provided through 55 individual sessions and 108 group therapy sessions, with referrals from families, the Correctional Service, and prisons, marking significant strides in rehabilitation efforts.

The project organized 20 advocacy meetings and conferences, engaging diverse stakeholders to emphasize the importance of addressing perpetrator behavior and establishing collaborations within the DV/GBV intervention system. Public awareness campaigns and innovative methodologies, like Artivism—a blend of art and activism—were used to engage communities. Highlights included the SIT & Talk: Promoting Gender Equality and Inclusion through Artivism in South Mitrovica event and two impactful panel discussions during the 16 Days of Activism. These discussions, attended by 43 participants (20 women and 23 men), brought together municipal, civil society, youth, and legal stakeholders to explore actionable solutions to violence against women.

Through its multifaceted approach, Counseling for Prevention 4.0 contributed significantly to reducing the incidence of domestic violence and raising awareness about the role of men in promoting gender equality and preventing violence.



SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT PROJECTS:

Poke the Bubble (May 2023- Aug 2026)

The Poke the Gender Bubble project strengthened the capacities of youth-focused CSOs in Serbia and Kosovo to act as accountability agents, fostering good neighborly relations and promoting gender equality. By creating a cross-border network of CSOs and introducing innovative methods of youth work, the project targeted gender stereotypes and norms while empowering young people from underserved urban and rural areas to address gender-related and broader community issues.

A key deliverable was the Gender Mobile Youth Club Methodology manual, co-developed by SIT (Kosovo) and CZOR (Serbia). This comprehensive resource integrated youth activism, life skills, and gender equality into a unified program. To support its implementation, two four-day trainings—held in Serbia and Kosovo—equipped 20 representatives from 10 grassroots CSOs with the tools to apply the methodology. Subsequently, four subgrantee organizations in Kosovo independently activated local youth through workshops, public actions, and social media campaigns, engaging over 200 young people from vulnerable groups and reaching more than 5,000 peers through online platforms.

The project's impact extended beyond its immediate goals, fostering a cross-border network of influencers and establishing sustainable collaboration between Kosovan and Serbian youth organizations. By addressing reconciliation, empowering underrepresented voices, and advancing gender equality, Poke the Gender Bubble delivered meaningful and lasting regional change.



DouActism (Jan 2023 - Dec 2024)

The DouActism project, led by MasterPeace Global Network and funded by Erasmus+, unites youth-focused CSOs from the Balkans, Middle East, and Western EU, including SIT (Kosovo), LDN (Lebanon), MasterPeace Morocco, MasterPeace Netherlands, and Lumen (Croatia). The project addresses social exclusion, environmental challenges, and job-related issues faced by young people, with a particular focus on empowering young women in rural areas.

A key milestone was establishing SIT as the Center of Excellence in Doughnut Economics for the Balkans, furthering innovative non-formal education (NFE) initiatives. This included the development of multilingual NFE handbooks and online courses in six languages, alongside a transnational Social Entrepreneurship Challenge, stakeholder meetings, and an EU survey on CSO needs. In 2024, SIT oversaw 25 youth-led pilot projects across five countries, engaging approximately 200 young participants. These projects showcased the transformative power of art and social entrepreneurship, empowering young people to address local challenges and drive meaningful social change while enhancing CSO capacities across regions.

Key activities included participation in the SE Online Challenge, and fostering sustainable and innovative solutions for pressing community issues. Additionally, the project featured two Transnational Partner Meetings (TPMs): one hosted by Lumen in Croatia (May 2024) and the other organized by SIT in Kosovo (October 2024). These gatherings aligned strategies, shared experiences, and strengthened international collaboration.

The project culminated with the Great Minds Meeting (GMM) Final Manifesta in Agadir, Morocco, where experts and practitioners convened under the theme "Collaboration for Social Impact." Through panel discussions, workshops, and interactive sessions, participants explored impactful partnership strategies, showcased success stories, and aligned resources to maximize community benefits. This event highlighted the project's commitment to fostering sustainable development and advancing youth activism through collaboration and innovation.



Empowering Kosovo's Youth for Intra-community Cohesion (Oct 2023 - Dec 2025)

The Empowering Kosovo's Youth for Intra-Community Cohesion project aims to enhance the skills of young people, including minority groups, to foster peaceful and inclusive societies in Kosovo. By equipping youth with vital competencies such as social entrepreneurship, project management, and budget planning, the initiative empowers them to challenge stereotypes, combat ethnic-based prejudices, and promote community resilience. The project, implemented by SIT with support from the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Sida, focuses on youth from Prishtina/Pristina and Mitrovica/ë regions, aiming to create a foundation for intra-community cohesion and harmonious coexistence.

In 2024, the project directly engaged 80 young participants from diverse ethnic backgrounds through various impactful activities. Two four-day youth camps held in Prevallë introduced participants to key topics such as Doughnut Economics, Artivism, and community project development, culminating in innovative pilot project ideas. Six community-based initiatives were implemented, including collaborations with local authorities to improve community safety and aesthetics, such as the installation of security cameras and the creation of community murals. The project also finalized plans for four Walls of Connection murals, symbolizing unity and harmony across municipalities.

To strengthen its impact, the project established two community connection hubs in Fushe Kosova/Kosovo Polje and North Mitrovicë/a as safe spaces for storytelling, activism, and peacebuilding activities, with plans to expand hubs to Prishtina and South Mitrovicë/a. Social media campaigns under the "CooLeaders Kosovo" brand amplified the project's reach and visibility, engaging audiences across platforms to promote inclusivity and the project's goals. Additionally, four youth-led pilot projects, including initiatives like "Tech Classrooms" and "New Year's Gift," addressed community-specific challenges while fostering skill development and collaboration.



Enhancing Youth Voice for Diversity and Inclusion (Youth INC.) (Dec 2023 - Nov 2025)

The Enhancing Youth Voice for Diversity and Inclusion (Youth INC.) project, launched in December 2023, brings together partners from Kosovo, Hungary, Romania, Germany, Albania, and Israel to enhance the quality, perception, and capacity of youth workers and young people in promoting diversity and inclusion. In its first year, the project achieved significant milestones, implementing a variety of activities that supported youth workers and fostered inclusion across multiple regions.

A key event was the training held in Kosovo on June 5-6, 2024, which involved 20 youth workers. The training, focused on methodologies such as "The Way of Council," "Interfaith Encounter," and "Philosophy for Children," adopted a train-the-trainer approach to ensure sustainable knowledge transfer. Each participant committed to training at least 10 others, amplifying the project's reach and impact. Building on this foundation, two cascade trainings were organized in Prishtina and Kamenica, engaging 40 young people who gained practical knowledge on fostering dialogue and collaboration within their communities.

The project also made notable strides in developing resources, including a comprehensive handbook for youth workers and the creation of a Project-Based Learning (PBL) module titled Invisible Heroines and Heroes. This module, consisting of six workshops, engages young people in activities that promote inclusion. Additionally, SIT organized a roundtable with school representatives, youth, and decision-makers to discuss the importance of youth inclusion in decision-making, strengthening collaboration, and empowering young voices.

Throughout the year, the project hosted three international webinars on topics such as storytelling, self-reflection, YouthPass Adaptation, and an introduction to the Doughnut Economy. A national webinar, The Compound Effect, was also held for youth workers and young people in Kosovo, focusing on the impact of small, consistent actions on personal growth.

The project's success was supported by strong coordination among partners, including a kick-off meeting in Stuttgart and regular monthly coordination sessions. The YouthPass certification adaptation progressed, with a draft version now completed and pending further testing and translation. Overall, the Youth INC. project is laying a strong foundation for lasting change, enhancing youth inclusion, and empowering young people across the participating countries.



RESEARCH DEPARTMENT:

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) THROUGH THE LENSES OF GEN Z

The Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Through the Lenses of Gen Z research aimed to explore the attitudes of young men in Kosovo toward gender norms, gender-based violence (GBV), domestic violence (DV), and femicide. This study investigates the relationship between gender stereotypes and various forms of GBV, identifies potential attitudes of tolerance or rationalization of violence, and examines how the ongoing social transition in Kosovo influences young men's views on gender equality. The findings aim to inform and improve intervention methods for mitigating and eradicating GBV.

The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In the first stage, a quantitative survey was conducted with 300 young men to gather data on their attitudes and perceptions. The second stage involved qualitative focus group discussions with secondary school students (two groups), providing deeper insights into youth perspectives. Additionally, five semi-structured interviews were conducted with subject matter experts (SMEs), social workers, and institutional representatives who directly handle GBV cases.

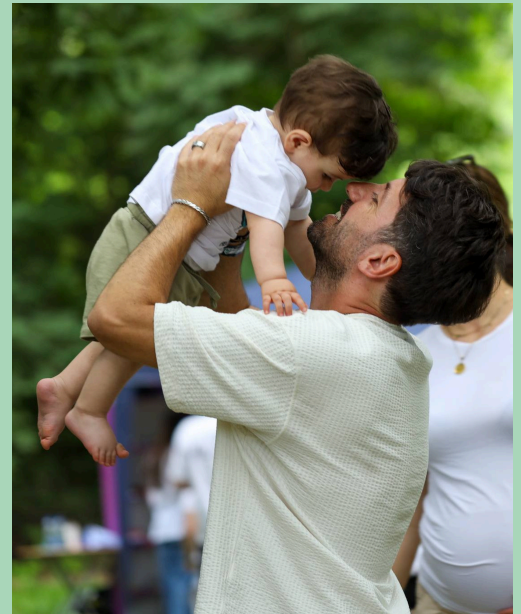
This comprehensive methodology ensures a nuanced understanding of young men's attitudes, contributing to evidence-based strategies for addressing GBV and fostering gender equality in Kosovo. The research provides valuable insights for stakeholders and practitioners working to combat GBV and promote societal change.



CAMPAIGNS OVERVIEW

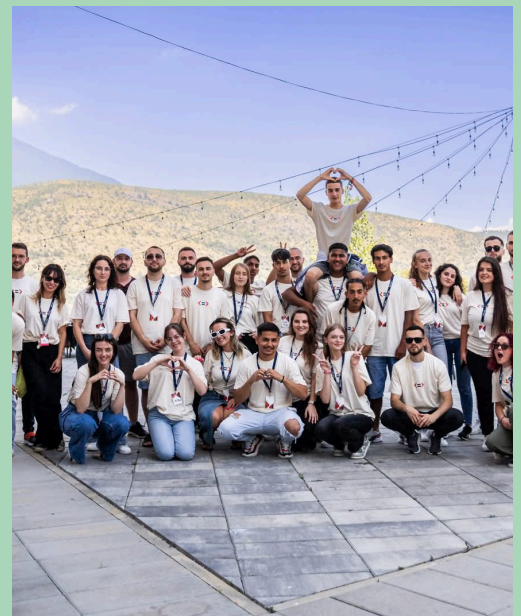
Father's Festival - 5th Edition

The Fathers' Festival, a pioneering event in Kosovo, promoted the important role of fathers in child-rearing and advocated for shared parental responsibilities and family-friendly policies. The 2024 edition featured interactive activities such as parenting challenges, collaborative cooking, storytelling, and arts and crafts, alongside an exhibition on family planning and parenting laws. With participation from approximately 80 parents and 50 children and an online reach of 50,000, the festival fostered community engagement while advocating for systemic change in parenting norms.



International Day of Youth

Under the theme "From Clicks to Progress: Digital Youth Paths for Sustainable Development", the International Day of Youth 2024 celebrated digitalization's impact on fostering sustainable development. Activities included a competition showcasing cultural monuments, a podcast discussing digital opportunities and challenges, and a giveaway for creative submissions. Social media engagement reached over 3,000 interactions, amplifying youth voices and promoting digital literacy.

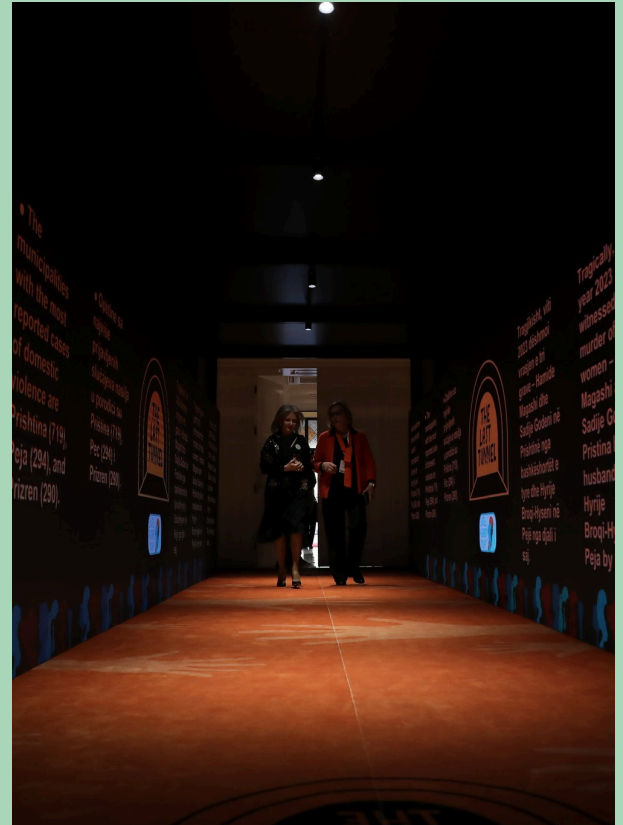


16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

SIT's 16 Days of Activism campaign emphasized gender equality and combatting GBV through a series of impactful initiatives:

- The Y+ Program concluded with activities fostering respect and empathy among at-risk youth and promoting gender equality.
- The SIT & Talk on Activism event in South Mitrovica engaged stakeholders to design creative projects addressing gender stereotypes.
- A Femicide Awareness Campaign honored victims, raised public consciousness, and called for collective action to combat GBV.

A Panel Discussion brought together policymakers, youth, and civil society to address GBV policy gaps, promote youth engagement, and highlight men's role as allies in prevention efforts.



International Day of Peace

On the occasion of the International Day of Peace, our organization hosted a panel discussion titled "Peace Education and Youth Activism," featuring university professors and civil society representatives. The discussion focused on the role of peace education in both formal and informal settings, highlighting its impact on youth empowerment, conflict resolution, and breaking cycles of violence.

Panelists emphasized the essential role of educators at all levels, from preschool to university, as well as the contribution of parents in fostering peace values. Topics such as gender equality, intercultural communication, and critical thinking were identified as key components in shaping a more peaceful society. During this event, there officially launched the CSO Network "Education for Peace and Youth", bringing together organizations committed to promoting peace through education and youth engagement. This initiative aims to strengthen collaboration among stakeholders and enhance efforts in fostering a culture of peace.



NETWORKS SIT IS A MEMBER:

- 01 MasterPeace Global Foundation (MP);
- 02 Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU);
- 03 MenEngage;
- 04 European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence;
- 05 Coalition for Health (K10);
- 06 Non-formal Peace Education and Youth Activism Network in Kosovo
- 07 Act NOW;
- 08 Security and Gender Group members;
- 09 European Network of Youth Centres;
- 10 International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network (IPPF);
- 11 MenCare/Fatherhood;

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

In 2024, our digital platforms continued to demonstrate impressive growth and engagement, reflecting the effectiveness of our content strategies and outreach efforts. Across key social media channels, we saw meaningful increases in our follower base, underscoring the growing interest and trust in our brand. Collectively, our efforts reached a total of 180,629 individuals across all social media platforms, a testament to the expanding reach and influence of our digital presence.

X: At the beginning of 2024, our X account had 212 followers. By year-end, this number increased to 214, marking a steady growth of 0.94%. This subtle yet consistent increase highlights ongoing engagement with our content and audience.

LinkedIn: Our LinkedIn presence experienced notable growth, rising from 269 followers at the start of 2024 to 308 by the end of the year. This represents a 14.5% increase, reflecting a broader professional network and heightened interest in our updates within the business community.

Facebook: Our Facebook page saw a solid increase, growing from 6,999 followers at the beginning of the year to 7,096 by year-end, a growth of 1.39%. This steady rise illustrates the continued relevance of our content and its strong connection with our community.

Instagram: On Instagram, our following grew from 1,301 to 1,356 over the course of 2024, an increase of 4.23%. This growth was driven by visually compelling content, engaging stories, and a consistent focus on strengthening our presence in the social media landscape.

TikTok: TikTok saw the most significant growth, with followers increasing from 1,403 to 1,872 by the end of 2024, a remarkable 33.4% increase. This surge reflects our ability to create engaging, shareable content that resonates with a dynamic and expanding audience.

These metrics not only reflect the growth of our digital presence but also affirm the effectiveness of our strategies in fostering meaningful connections with our audience. As we look ahead, we remain committed to building on this success and continuing to strengthen our digital engagement across all platforms.

- 01 www.sit-ks.org
- 02 www.sitandbreaktheice.org
- 03 www.sitandtalk.org/
- 04 www.sitkosova.org
- 05 www.ks.masterpeace.org/
- 04 www.ks.masterpeace.org/

MOVING FORWARD TO 2025

SIT's Sustainability

SIT remains dedicated to fostering sustainable youth empowerment through innovative programs, strategic growth, and strengthened partnerships. In 2025, our focus continues to center on equipping young people with the necessary skills, knowledge, and support to actively engage in their communities and beyond.

A key milestone in our sustainability strategy is the successful acquisition of the ERASMUS+ project "Do You(th)," a transnational initiative aimed at empowering youth from Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and Serbia. This project strengthens the competencies, capacity, and recognition of civil society organizations (CSOs) by facilitating collective learning, evaluation, and implementation of innovative non-formal education (NFE) methodologies. Special attention is given to engaging young women and minority groups in remote areas, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility in all project activities.

Additionally, SIT is proud to continue its impactful work in perpetrator counseling services with the launch of "Counseling for Prevention 5.0" in January 2025. Now in its fifth consecutive year, this initiative aims to improve services for perpetrators, enhance institutional capacities, and refine knowledge and interventions to address gender-based violence and domestic violence more effectively. The project underscores our commitment to strengthening the response mechanisms of relevant institutions and ensuring a comprehensive approach to violence prevention.

To further enhance the quality and effectiveness of youth work, SIT has developed two new handbooks designed to support practitioners and educators. The "Methodical Handbook" provides an in-depth resource for fostering social inclusion through non-formal education activities, offering structured methodologies and curated activities for training. In parallel, our handbook on "Gender Mobile Youth Club Manual" aims to equip youth workers with the necessary tools to address gender-related issues, fostering a more equitable and inclusive approach to youth engagement.

Internally, SIT continues to strengthen its organizational structure to align with its evolving strategy and programmatic goals. Our dedicated core team remains engaged in securing new partnerships and funding opportunities, ensuring the sustainability of our initiatives through strategic networking and proposal development. The expansion of our team with key roles in administration, research, and training further enhances our capacity to implement impactful programs effectively.

As SIT moves forward into 2025, our sustainability strategy remains rooted in adaptability, innovation, and collaboration. By investing in meaningful projects, strengthening institutional capacities, and fostering inclusive youth engagement, we continue our mission to empower young people and create lasting social impact.

New Projects 2024:

1. DoYou(th)
2. Counseling 4 Prevention 5.0

Team 2025

1. Kadri Gashi - CEO/Founder
2. Liridona Berisha Shabani - Development and Programme Manager
3. Adnan Retkoceri - Finance Manager
4. Elma Berisha - Head of Research Department
5. Rron Rama - Programme Officer and Campaign Coordinator
6. Elsa Rexhepaj - Content Creator & Implementation Officer
7. Arditë Shkodra - Project & Operational Officer
8. Lorent Retkoceri - Youth Worker
9. Miodrag Denić - Community Facilitator
10. Kumrije Bulliqi - Logistics Assistant

SIT's Strategy 2024 - 2028

The new strategy for the five-year period will mainly be focused on youth, and the new projects will be designed based on this. Activism and Doughnut Economics will be the driving force behind our new ideas for working with young people and helping them embrace much-needed values when it comes to employment, soft skills, and art for activism. SIT has also developed four toolkits for youth which will be part of projects that are relevant (hate speech, youth work, bystander intervention, anti-hate, and bullying).

The Counseling department will be focused on providing counseling services for perpetrators of Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence, while also conducting relevant research and launching reports in the respective field/s. Opening one more center in the Peja region will be a priority of the department.



THANK YOU!