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GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND FEDERAL STATES PROGRAMME
BUND-LÄNDER-PROGRAMM (BLP)



Federal state - partner country

North Rhine-Westphalia - North Macedonia,
Kosovo

Title

Supporting reform processes in North Macedonia and
Kosovo through training of future professionals

In cooperation with the GIZ programme

Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe - Moderni-
sation of Municipal Services

Financing arrangements

BMZ contribution 300.000 EUR
North Rhine-Westphalia contribution 400.000 EUR

Duration

01.07.2023 - 31.12.2024

Responsible ministry

State Chancellery of the State of North Rhine-West-
phalia

This project helps to achieve the following
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



Participants of the programme on a workshop in Struga (North Macedonia)

Young Professionals for societal trans- formation

Local situation

Kosovo and North Macedonia are both candidates for membership in the European Union. For a realistic perspective, sustainable reform processes are needed in both countries. However, the necessary expertise for such reforms is often lacking, as there is high youth unemployment and few prospects for young graduates in future-oriented fields.

There are many reasons for this lack of prospects, for example, highly theoretical study programmes combined with a lack of vocational preparation in the universities. Another problem is the large percentage of informal employment in both countries, which affect women in particular and worsen the chances of integration into the formal labour market. Nevertheless, in both countries, there is a high demand for well-educated workers with corresponding international and practical work experience. With these initial conditions, it must be ensured that a project does not lead to a brain drain of well-educated workers towards EU member states.

Cooperation arrangements

The project builds on experiences and cooperation structures from a previous project with an extension to include Kosovo as a partner country. This involves close cooperation with the programme "Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe - Modernisation of Municipal

“I was part of the GIZ programme for young professionals from North Macedonia and got the opportunity to do an internship in one of the biggest IT companies, SAP, in Germany. Also, I can proudly say that my group won second place at the final event for our business plan for an app for children with dyslexia.”

Ana Atanasova
IT Engineer, Participant of the programme



© GIZ/Alexandra Tofiloska

Aleksandra Tofiloska, participant of the programme, during her internship at FUCHS Europoles

Services”, which is implemented by GIZ on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Implementation partners in North Macedonia are various universities, the Chamber of Commerce Abroad in Skopje and the Center for Research and Policy Making. In Kosovo, the University of Prishtina Hasan Prishtina and the German-Kosovar Business Association are involved. On the German side, various institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia, such as the Wuppertal Institute or the Bergische Abfallwirtschaftsverband (Bergisch Waste Management Association), are contributing their many years of cooperation experience with the region to the project.

What we are doing - and how

The core of the project consists of professional training for 30 selected participants from North Macedonia and Kosovo. They initially participate in a two-month language course, a two-week seminar programme and a three- to six-month professional internship. Within this framework, they work in private and municipal companies in NRW and beyond, on future-oriented topics that are particularly relevant to the upcoming reform processes in the region. Additionally, there is a continuous exchange between the participants and the

alumni from the previous project. Three innovative alumni transfer projects in the areas of health care, education and waste recycling are being supported. Furthermore, a networking event will be held with interested companies in North Macedonia and Kosovo in order to put businesses in contact with each other and to find possible jobs for the participants and alumni. An integral part of all measures is the promotion of regional networking between North Macedonia and Kosovo in order to contribute to the stabilisation of the region.

Useful links

- Further information on the BLP:
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/132983.html>
<https://bund-laender-programm.de/en>
- Further information on the Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe :
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/31760.html>
- Partnership between North Rhine-Westphalia and North Macedonia (in German):
<https://www.mbei.nrw.de/nordmazedonien>

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Bund-Länder-Programm
An der Alster 62 | 20099 Hamburg
blp@giz.de | www.bund-laender-programm.de/en
Editors Dieter Anders (legally responsible for content),
Jelena Jorczik, Julius Nebel, Berthold Volberg
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On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Division G43 Federal states and municipalities
Address of the BMZ offices
BMZ Bonn
Dahlmannstr. 4
53113 Bonn | Germany
T +49 (0)228 99 535 0
poststelle@bmz.bund.de | www.bmz.de/en
BMZ Berlin | Im Europahaus
Stresemannstr. 94
10963 Berlin | Germany
T +49 (0)30 18 535 0

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