



Interview – Suzana Dimitrieva youth educator

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1) What do you see as the biggest challenges young people face when entering the job market in North Macedonia, and how can these be addressed?

Many young people struggle to find stable employment due to a competitive job market. Strengthening job placement services, apprenticeships, and vocational training programs could bridge the gap between education and employment.

Educational curricula often do not align with labor market demands. Reforms in the education system that involve collaboration with industries to design courses based on market needs. Young people often lack connections to enter industries. Initiatives such as mentorship programs, career fairs, and professional development events can help young professionals connect with employers.

2) How effective are current government policies and initiatives in supporting youth entrepreneurship, and what improvements would you suggest?

Government initiatives, such as grants for startups, youth employment subsidies, and entrepreneurship programs, have made some progress. However, bureaucracy and inconsistent funding often hinder their success. Simplifying the application process for grants and startup funds. Increasing awareness and accessibility of entrepreneurship programs. Creating tax incentives for businesses that hire young workers or partner with educational institutions.

3) What role do businesses and private sector organizations play in enhancing youth employability, and how can collaboration with educational institutions be strengthened?

Companies can offer hands-on training to students. Businesses should collaborate with educational institutions to create industry-relevant courses. Private sector organizations can organize workshops and boot camps to upskill young professionals. Collaboration can be strengthened through public-private partnerships and co-designed educational initiatives.

4) What key skills do you believe young entrepreneurs need to succeed in North Macedonia, and how can they develop these skills effectively?

Understanding budgeting, investment, and financial management. Leveraging online platforms for business growth. Building relationships with stakeholders. Navigating market changes and challenges. Through workshops, mentorship programs, incubators, and online learning platforms.

5) Can you share a successful example of a youth entrepreneurship initiative or employability program that has had a significant impact?

The "Seavus Accelerator Program" is a notable example. It provides mentorship, funding, and business development support to young entrepreneurs in North Macedonia. The program has successfully nurtured several tech startups that have gained international recognition.

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