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



Federal state – partner country

North Rhine-Westphalia – North Macedonia

Title

Professional Qualification for Future Specialists
and Managers for North Macedonia

In cooperation with the GIZ programme

Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe –
Modernisation of Municipal Services

Financing arrangements

BMZ contribution	€ 473,146.83
North Rhine-Westphalia contribution	€ 310,554.25

Duration

01.06.2021 – 31.12.2022

Responsible ministry

State Chancellery of the State
of North Rhine-Westphalia

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



GIZ scholarship holders visiting a wind farm during their internship

Developing the Skills Needed to Support Transformation Processes in North Macedonia

Local situation

One significant challenge North Macedonia is currently facing is its high youth unemployment. Yet companies in the municipal sector in particular complain of a shortage of qualified staff and are urgently searching for skilled workers with practical expertise and international experience to help them prepare for the challenges created by the planned association with the European Union (EU).

The project of the German Government and Federal States Programme (German: Bund-Länder-Programm; BLP) addresses these two problems – youth unemployment and the shortage of skilled workers – through a vocational training programme in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Young people from North Macedonia can improve their career prospects by attending a seminar and completing a vocational internship in Germany. The North Macedonian economy benefits from their international experience and the contribution they make to transformation processes.

“I am very grateful for this experience. This type of programme offers young people in my generation a huge opportunity and gives them valuable practical knowledge. This programme can change lives!”

Dmytro Shapoval,
former GIZ scholarship holder



Former scholarship holder Dmytro Shapoval on a tour of the company during his internship in Germany

Cooperation arrangements

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) operates several projects in South-East European countries in support of reforms that are intended to improve their prospects of accession to the EU. The BLP project cooperates with the BMZ project Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe – Modernisation of Municipal Services, which is designed as a transformation initiative, bringing together skills from technology and service providers, municipalities and universities. It is being implemented in consultation with German business associations and companies. In February 2021, the German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia and North Macedonia signed a declaration of intent on intensifying their cooperation.

This partnership and its associated projects enable actors from NRW to contribute their expertise in reform processes covering important topics such as circular economy, energy, and digitalisation. The BLP project supplements the partners’ activities by adding another component to support transformation processes in North Macedonia.

What we are doing – and how

The central measure is a training programme for future skilled workers and managers from North Macedonia.

This programme is divided into three components:

- 1) a German language course at the Goethe Institut in Skopje
- 2) a seminar in North Rhine-Westphalia (one month)
- 3) company internships (three to six months) in Germany.

This combination of theoretical knowledge and practical work experience improves the participants’ chances of finding work on the North Macedonian labour market.

To ensure that the measures have a lasting impact, those participants who complete the programme receive further online training to help them apply for jobs and advice on how to develop a transfer project in their country of origin.

This programme is complemented by other measures to promote dialogue between North Macedonia and North Rhine-Westphalia on transformation processes. At the end of the project, a networking event will be held in North Macedonia involving representatives of municipal and private companies and researchers.

Useful links

- Partnership between North Rhine-Westphalia and North Macedonia (in German):
<https://www.mbei.nrw.de/nordmazedonien>
- Technical cooperation programme Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe – Modernisation of Municipal Services:
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/31760.html>
- More information on the programme:
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/91262.html>
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/34949.html>
<https://bund-laender-programm.de/en>

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Registered offices:
Bonn and Eschborn | Germany
German Government and Federal States Programme (BLP):
An der Alster 62 | 20099 Hamburg | Germany
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