

Transforming Education Summit September 19, 2022

Statement of North Macedonia

/short version/

The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia gives the greatest importance and priority to the Quality and Affordable Education in the country. Ongoing reforms are oriented to make inclusive education for all with the special emphasis on gender-responsive and inclusive learning environments. Multicultural character of the Society is reflected in all levels of Education in North Macedonia. Main goals are to raise learning outcomes, enable their socio-emotional development and empower the students with skills for the future. The Government of North Macedonia develops an integrated educational system that aims to provide greater societal integration in ethnical, regional, social and cultural sense and to encourage critical thinking of younger generations.

North Macedonia provides a full support to the teaching staff and defends autonomy of the teachers' profession. Fully motivated teachers are prerequisite for successful educational changes, as well as for rationalization of curricula and more effective results of the students in the primary and secondary education.

The national Bureau for Development of Education is restructured. The idea is to build a state educational "think-tank" in the framework of which several sectors work and continuously design research in the area of education with the goal to improve the quality of educational system.

During the Pandemic, North Macedonia in close cooperation with the UN agencies present in the country has introduced new policies that helped in overcoming the longest school closures due to the Covid-19 and initiated the new education reform to make the education system resilient to challenges of the modern era.

The practical steps of the new Concept for Primary Education came to fruition in the new curricula for grades 1-4 and capacity development of all teachers in these particular grades to enable them to apply new pedagogical approaches in implementing the new Curricula and digital skills learning, i.e. through so called Eduino learning platform.

With support of the World Bank, the Government has introduced a new, per-student-based funding formula that resulted in optimization of primary and secondary education by increasing the budgetary allocations by 8 million USD for primary and 1, 5 million USD for secondary education in the 2022 national budget.

Special attention is given in developing a new Law on Adult Education based of the Concept for regional VET centers, regulating the Inclusive Education in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities.

Provisions of quality in the higher education are of the highest national priority. Fully observing the autonomy of the Universities in the tertiary education, the Government supports approaches which are empowering the skills of students for transition to the labor market, especially women. In addition, North Macedonia's educational system has placed new platforms to further enhancement in area of Humanities and Social Sciences education.

In a partnership with the academic community, the system of university accreditation and evaluation is reviewed, according to the European standards. The Government enabled legal and operational independence of the Board for Accreditation and Evaluation, as basic preconditions for fulfillment of the criteria for attaining the status of full member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) and EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education).

It is important to underscore that the unique project was developed by Universities of North Macedonia and other states in the Balkans, including universities from Italy and Greece under ERAZMUS strategic Partnership for the post graduate students under the title: “Geo-Philosophy of the Balkans”. This is the first time in the history that such a Regional cooperation is performed. This remarkable project aims in thriving towards models of cohabitating cultures and communities. Learning the methods and providing experiences is another important goal of this project that helps students to acquire knowledge for the concept of sharing the common history , how identities are creating , reconciliation and offering models of negotiation and resolving the identity conflicts.

All of these efforts and policies, amongst the others, are with aim to provide citizens of North Macedonia to have universal access to rights-based quality social services by 2025, in particular the education system that aims to build a society resilient to emergencies and the newly emerged challenges.