



EDUCATION FOR A MODERN SOCIETY

APRIL 2006



Students present a "virtual bank" at a school business fair.

EDUCATION IN MACEDONIA

- 235,000 elementary students
- Enrolment rate 96%
- 95,000 secondary school students
- Transition rate from elementary school 83%
- 45,000 university students
- On-time graduation rate 20%
- Education accounts for 3.6% of GDP and 14% of the state budget

For more information visit:
<http://macedonia.usaid.gov>

PROGRAMS

E-SCHOOLS PROJECT

Through the E-Schools Project, USAID has installed new computer labs in each of the 100 secondary schools in Macedonia, using 2,000 computers donated by the People's Republic of China. By 2005, E-Schools completed installation of another 3,300 computers into new wireless labs in 360 primary schools throughout the country. After computer installation, E-Schools focuses on helping schools learn to maintain the computer labs, training school teachers how to use the new technology and integrate it into the curriculum, as well as establishing an online resource portal for teachers.

BASIC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SKILLS TRAINING

Although USAID is installing new computer labs in primary and secondary schools, many teachers still lack the basic IT skills necessary to help students take advantage of these new resources. This is especially true in primary schools throughout Macedonia where "informatics" is not taught until seventh grade. To support the use of new computer labs in primary schools, and to help teachers integrate IT into their classes as quickly as possible, USAID provided basic IT skills training for 6,000 primary and secondary school teachers prior to the 2005-2006 school year.

MACEDONIA CONNECTS

Macedonia's development also requires improved Internet access, particularly broadband, at prices accessible to businesses, schools and local government. Yet, with less than 8% Internet penetration, Macedonia lags behind other countries in Eastern Europe. Through the Macedonia Connects Project, USAID is supporting the expansion of affordable, accessible broadband internet to the entire country. As of September 2005, around 550 primary and secondary schools, university departments, and educational-support organizations across Macedonia have access to high-speed internet because of USAID. As a result of this project, Macedonia is also being recognized as the first "wireless" country in the world.

SECONDARY EDUCATION ACTIVITY (SEA)

SEA focuses on improving the quality of education in Macedonia's 50 vocational schools and preparing more than 15,000 students for employment. Emphasis is on helping students learn more about the workplace and apply theoretical knowledge to practical tasks. Students link theory to practice and gain practical knowledge of running a company through their participation in student businesses established in 44 technical schools and by creating simulated firms in seven economic schools. The student businesses also generate income for the vocational schools. School-based career centers in all 50 schools help students learn interview and resume-writing skills, access information about employment opportunities, and make connections with real



Children at a Roma center in Skopje.

businesses through interviews and internships. Finally, SEA is supporting improvements in school administration through the implementation of a School Director Certification Program for 500 present and potential primary and secondary school directors.

ROMA EDUCATION PROJECT (REP)

USAID, the Foundation Open Society Institute Macedonia, the Swiss Pestalozzi Foundation, and the Organization for Stability and Cooperation in Europe are jointly funding a project to prepare pre-school children to enter school and to provide them with mentoring and support to increase retention rates of Roma youth as they pass from elementary to secondary school and finally to university. In 2004, 269 Roma secondary school and 31 Roma university students received scholarships to help them stay in school and be successful. Through the project, Roma Educational Centers in Skopje, Kumanovo, and Prilep actively provide out-of-school support and other creative activities for children, their parents, and the entire community. Roma Education supports the "Decade of Roma Inclusion", a project among eight South-East European nations that aims to close the gap in welfare and living conditions between the Roma and the non-Roma.

CREATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROJECT (CTL)

Since 2002, USAID's CTL Project has worked in 18 secondary and 45 primary schools throughout Macedonia to introduce critical thinking teaching methods, establish 63 media labs with new computers and Internet connectivity, introduce new theories of school improvement and extra-curricular activities such as debate and student government, and facilitate a network of teachers interested in creative teaching and learning. As of 2005, the CTL Project has expanded to include teacher training institutes in order to insure that future teachers start their jobs prepared with student-centered teaching methods and strong IT skills.

SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

The first private higher education institution in Macedonia, South East European University (SEEU), was established in November 2001 in Tetovo. As SEEU's largest donor, USAID has helped SEEU become a top notch, multi-ethnic university where more than 5,000 students now receive instruction in Albanian, Macedonian, and English. SEEU's modern facilities are comparable to those in any western country, its fully-outfitted computer center uses state-of-the-art technology, and its well stocked library has 15,000 recent-edition texts and reference books. In partnership with Indiana University, through the HELP Project, USAID is now focused on increasing the teaching capacity in the business administration and computer science and technology faculties.

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