Skills for IT!

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Strategic priorities for skills development to support the growth of the IT industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The IT industry is one of the fastest growing industries in BiH with a high potential for the creation of decent jobs. However, the lack of skilled workers hinders growth and expansion. To support policy makers and the companies in the IT sector to address this challenge, the International Labour Organization Office for Central and Eastern Europe and Bit Alliance developed a diagnostic background and conducted a skills foresight workshop on November 18th, based on the ILO Rapid STED Methodology.

The background study identifies quantitative and qualitative skills deficits of IT companies in both IT and non-IT occupations and analyzes the existing offer for education and training. It was presented and discussed at the "Skills Foresight Workshop" on October 18th with the participation of IT companies, representatives of TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) and higher education institutions.

The background study reveals that the IT the sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina offers an increasing number of employment opportunities, which are particularly attractive to new employees due to rapid wage growth. According to the study by 2030 Bosnia and Herzegovina will need more than 25 000 developers, 6000 test specialists and 3000 DevOps experts. Although the supply of qualifications in the IT sector is growing, it is not evolving fast enough to meet the needs of the companies in the long run.

The foresight workshop was conducted in a participatory manner, allowing participants to express their opinions and to prioritise actions. The three most important recommendations are:

1. Encouragement amendments to legal and administrative frameworks, to allow for curricula updates in response to technological change
2. Encouragement Interdisciplinary programs between Economics and of Electrical Engineering faculties, to train non-IT specialists in the IT industry (e.g. on Business Information Systems, HR, Digital Marketing, Project Managers, Product Owners, Scrum Masters, etc.)
3. Establishing secondary vocational schools for IT to complement secondary IT education in Schools of Electrical Engineering, grammar and high schools with IT streams.

Based on this, the International Labour Organization and Bit Alliance will develop a strategic skills development plan for the IT sector. The validated plan and the background research will be published in late 2021 and be freely accessible online.

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