



Project:

DIGITALIZATION PATH



The project “**DIGITALIZATION PATH**” is funded by the USAID Economic Development, Governance and Enterprise Growth Project and implemented by a consortium comprised of MASIT (North Macedonia) in partnership with STIKK (Kosovo) and ICT Net (Serbia). The main goal of this project is to support SMEs from the targeted value chains (fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, apparel and textiles, wood processing and understand and get familiar with the benefits of the digital transformation; (2) analyze their current level of digital transformation and create Digital Transformation Strategies identifying and prioritizing needed IT solutions; and (3) financially support them in the process of purchasing and implementing IT solutions in order to improve their business activities. To achieve the above-mentioned goals, the main activities that were taken as part of the project during the three months period are described below:

Helping SMEs by creating personalized Digitalization Strategies



The “**DIGITALIZATION PATH**” project aims to create personalized Digital Transformation Strategies for 60 SMEs in Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia, operating in the sector of agriculture and food processing, light manufacturing (apparel and textiles, wood processing) and tourism (eco-tourism, rural tourism, and adventure tourism).

In this regard, the project has opened a call for consultant on Digital Transformation Strategies in order to develop the strategies. In addition, one of the consultants will be responsible for the creation of a methodology that will be used in each country by all of the consultants. The Methodology will map all of the activities that need to be undertaken from the first contact with selected beneficiary companies till the delivery of the final Strategy, including templates of the Strategy, meeting/interview schedules, questionnaires that should be used during the interviews, etc.

The goal of each strategy will be to effectively identify and prioritize IT solutions that would potentially have the highest return on improving the business operations of each SME. Moreover, the goal will be to analyze the current business processes and understand the company's needs, problems and challenges, based on which detailed recommendations for implementation of IT solutions will be elaborated and recommended, tailored to specific needs of the companies, in order to improve their business operations and sophistication. Within the project,

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2 cycles of the creation of digital transformation strategies are planned, the first during **October and November 2020** and the second during **April and May 2021**. The call for creating digital transformation strategies, that is already announced, you can find on the following [link](#).

Growing the network for supporting digital transformation of SMEs through signing Memorandum of Understandings with related parties



With the aim of strengthening the collaboration, in order to better reach SMEs of different sectors and to support industry priorities, implementing partners of this project have signed MOUs with the related organizations, members of which are going to be the beneficiaries of the project. Implementing partners of the project have developed a solid base from which they will continue to develop further activities and initiatives with the related parties.

Up to now, MASIT from North Macedonia has signed MOU with Macedonian Association for processors, STIKK has signed a MOU with Association of Wood Processors of Kosovo and ICT Net in Serbia has signed MOU with Association for promotion of Serbian food.

Through these MOUs, the cooperation between the parties is boosted by exchanging information in all areas of mutual interest.

Supporting SMEs in implementing needed digital solutions



As part of the project, an open call was published to offer financial support for purchasing web sites and e-commerce solutions in all of the beneficiary countries. This activity is in response to the current COVID-19 crisis that companies are facing, which is influencing the significant reduction of physical sales and requires digital solutions to be introduced or improved regarding their online sales. The implementation of the IT solution is planned for **October and November 2020**. The call for financial support for purchasing web sites and e-commerce solutions, that is already announced, you can find on the following [link](#).

Organizing online information sessions/events for the development of the project with SMEs from different sectors

On 30 September 2020, MASIT – ICT chamber of commerce, in North Macedonia has organized an online information session/event for all the SMEs of the sectors: agriculture and processing, apparel and textiles, wood processing and tourism. The aim of this event was to give an overview of the project to the SMEs which are planned to be part of the project, to share the announcements about the open calls for creating digital transformation strategies and financial support for web sites and e-commerce solutions, and to share an information about the next activities and possibilities for the companies that are already predicted in the frame of the project. 30 participants were part of this online event.



ICT NETWORK

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