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Press office: +389 (0)2 310 2314

Cell phone: +389 (0)70 367 547

Email: bvelickovska@usaid.gov

PRESS RELEASE

Launch of new USAID Project: Youth Employability Skills Network

Today in Bitola, USAID launched its new five-year project, the Youth Employability Skills (YES) Network, to help young people gain the necessary skills to participate in a modern and rapidly changing economy.

The YES Network will link Employment Service Agencies, Vocational Education and Training schools, and youth-focused non-governmental organizations, to provide students with career coaching, soft skills training and work-based experience such as internships, practical and summer work. The project will build the capacity of network members to better connect students and unemployed youth with job opportunities.

The YES Network will also set up councils, led by local governments, that will bring together employers, educators, and employment trainers, with the goal of better matching the skills required in the local labor market with those being developed in youth by the educational system.

Bitola is the first of three municipalities where the YES Network will be initiated, to be followed by Strumica and Tetovo during the first year. Ultimately, the project will work with ten municipalities across Macedonia.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The USAID YES Network will be implemented by the Education Development Center, a global nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing learning and promoting health.

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption, and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.