



DIGITALIZATION IS KEY FOR A COUNTRY TO BECOME A GLOBAL LEADER

Summit 2021 in numbers

8 Panel sessions

30 Speakers

130 in-person participants

22 B2B Meetings

18 NOVEMBER 2021

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Digitization as a key segment for accelerated economic development was the focus of the tenth Macedonia2025 Summit. The latest trends in digitization and digital skills, the circular economy and current economic topics were discussed within the Summit panels. In addition, success stories of technologically advanced companies from the SEE region were also presented.

"Let us hurry forward!" The vision of Macedonia 2025 is for the country to become a leading economy in the region, by promoting sustainable economic growth that will improve opportunities for citizens, companies and foreign investors, said the CEO of the organization, Nikica Mojsoska Blazhevski, with the view that in this way the standard of living will improve and the brain drain will be prevented.

During its existence, Macedonia2025 has awarded 720 scholarships for education and leadership and helped more than 600 companies in order to encourage development.

According to the current situation, the country lags behind European countries in the digitalization process. Only 32% of Macedonian citizens possess at least a basic level of digital skills, which is far below the EU average of 56%.

"However inappropriate it may seem to talk about digitization at a time when the country is facing a serious energy crisis and price shocks, we must not allow the current challenges to prevent us from planning this necessary step in development" - said the President of the Republic of North Macedonia, Stevo Pendarovski. According to him, in addition to the reduction of unemployment and the growth of the economy, digitalization enables the transparency necessary to minimize perhaps the biggest disease for any country - corruption.

The government says that digitization will be the focus of the capital investments projected in the budget, and the benefits will still be felt. According to the Vice Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, Fatmir Bytyqi, the country will be a pioneer in introducing artificial intelligence assistants.

"Macedonia 2025 has very ambitious goals, most of them will be achieved" - assures the President of the Board of Directors, Michael Cklamovski. He says that in a clear and transparent way funds are allocated for scholarships to young talents and undergraduates, in 2021 a total of 200 scholarship holders are funded.

Marcelo Claure - Chief Executive Officer of SoftBank Group International and Mike Zafirovski, one of the co-founders of Macedonia2025, raised the question of whether digitization is an opportunity or a necessity. They say the world is thirsty for good entrepreneurs, good ideas are necessary, we must be ready for changes because in the next five years the way of life will completely change, in shopping, education, treatment, etc.



Speakers at the Summit were H.E. Rachel Galloway, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to North Macedonia; Isabella Wang, Author and Social Entrepreneur for Digital Transformation, Ville Korpela, Futurist and Fellow of the Dubai Future Academy, Vassilis Monastiriotis, Associate Professor of Political Economy at the European Institute and LSE Research Director for South East Europe, and many others.

The 2021 Summit was organized in a hybrid format with an audience of 130 guests, as well as a large number of viewers online. Proposals and possible solutions were offered for greater digitalization and advancement of digital skills, as well as for improving the environment and improving the quality of life.

This year, the tenth edition of the Macedonia2025 Summit was held. In this period, 520 speakers from 80 countries participated in the Summit, including top managers and business owners, reformers, representatives of think-tank organizations, international organizations, the academic community and diplomatic representatives. In these ten years, over 3500 visitors from different sectors participated in the Macedonia 2025 Summit.