




World Bank Group Announces Winners of Youth Essay Competition on jobs for Bosnia and Herzegovina

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The World Bank Group today announced the winners of its essay competition addressing the issue of unemployment among youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The goal of the competition is to capture, feature, and learn from the voices of youth on how to best meet the challenge of the jobs crisis in their country. High unemployment remains the key challenge in BiH. It is even more pronounced among young people where nearly 40 percent of youth in the country are neither working nor studying. The essay competition, "Tackling Youth Unemployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina: My Generations View, attracted interest and submissions from 150 participants between the ages of 18 and 30 across the country. The five winners are: First prize - KM 5.000, Ajka Barucic, Tuzla Second prize - KM 3.000, Enes Tinjic, Tuzla Third prize - KM 1.000 each: Damir Kurtagic, Sarajevo Marina Andrijevic, Sarajevo Nera Hercegljic, Sarajevo As I reviewed the essays, I found that youth understand that not only do we need to address the problem of unemployment, but we need to also eliminate the key barriers to creating new jobs, stressed Asja Cengic, Executive Director of Centre for Policy and Governance and member of the evaluation committee. "Education system reform and its link to the labor market, corruption, financial crisis, and nepotism, are the most common issues raised in the essays. We need to invest more in finding innovative ways to solving these issues in order to ensure better - and, most importantly, relevant - education and quality jobs to successfully employ the youth of BiH. The panel of judges consisted of members of the World Bank Group and recognized experts from the private sector and civil society from BiH. The main criteria for selection included innovation and originality; relevance to priorities, such as removing barriers to job creation and increasing job opportunities; and, specifically, actionable recommendations to resolving this issue. To ensure fairness and impartiality, names and residence information were replaced by numerical codes for all essay submissions. "I would like to congratulate all participants in this competition, and the winners, in particular, for their innovative ideas on how to tackle the challenge of boosting jobs for young people in this country, emphasized Anabela Abreu, World Bank Country Manager in Bosnia and Herzegovina. "The jobs challenge in BiH is pressing. Continuing the process of reforms is needed to create more and better jobs for all, including youth. The World Bank Group is committed to supporting BiH in promoting the reforms. This competition was supported by Lets Work, a global partnership comprised of the private sector, international finance institutions, donors, and other partners to create more and better jobs. Lets Work is coordinated by the IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, and aims to strengthen the areas that create a large number of jobs and improve their quality as well. Lets Work is part of the World Bank Groups focus on jobs as one of the main ways to achieve its goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Roland Michelitsch, Global Head of Lets Work, coordinated by the IFC, said, "This youth essay competition is a great way to directly engage, hear from, and empower youth of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the critical issue impacting them on a personal level. Through competitions such as these, we hope to provide a platform for the countrys future leaders and change-makers, and to learn from those most affected by the jobs crisis. The essay competition was made possible by the generous support of the governments of The Netherlands and Switzerland (SECO).
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