

Chapter 3

Improving the Conditions for Business Startups in the Republic of Serbia: Human Resources Management Competencies

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the chapter is to establish a mechanism for recognizing the various actors of the startup ecosystem for the rapid and successful growth of startups in Serbia, with an emphasis on improving business conditions. The strategy for the development of the startup ecosystem of the Republic of Serbia (2021-2025) contains five specific goals, but the authors focused on the fourth special goal of the strategy, which is related to the improvement of conditions for startup businesses. The subject of the work will be the implementation of necessary measures and GovTech programs in Serbia, management, as well as on raising the competencies of employees in the public administration in Serbia for successful leadership in the startup ecosystem.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-0527-0.ch003

INTRODUCTION

The startup ecosystem is the environment in which startups, as innovative business entities, develop. The environment is composed of individuals, teams, and startups in different stages of development, as well as different types of organizations and institutions, which interact as a system. The entrepreneurial environment is entirely determined by economic and systemic business conditions, which, as an external factor, has a key role not only in the choice to launch a new business project but also in the later stages of the entrepreneurial process (Lekovic and Maric, 2016). Establishing a public policy for the development of startups affects their number and quality, but also the quality of the entire ecosystem that is created around them. By creating innovations that contribute to the transformation of the economy and the creation of new jobs, startups increase the export of products with high-added value and contribute to the economic growth of a country (The Conversation, 2021). At the end of 2021, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy for the Development of the Startup Ecosystem in the Republic of Serbia, intending to bring Serbia as a country closer to other countries that respect the path of sustainable development, socially responsible business and the development of an innovative - green economy (Official Gazette of the RS). The Green economy as a term appeared relatively recently, as a necessary way of achieving economic profit, but through respect for the principles of sustainable development and social justice. Sustainable development as a concept harmonizes three dimensions - economy, ecology, and social dimension. According to Ilic, the adjective “green” is associated with it, which is widely used with all modern activities undertaken by modern society (Ilic, 2022). In addition to the concept of sustainability and responsible business, newer business entities have appeared in the sense of innovative business entities. They also require a certain environment to develop and contribute to the progress of society - the state and the economy - and they also contribute to the development of green human resources management (Ilic et al., 2023a). The strategy for the development of the startup ecosystem of the Republic of Serbia had the basic goal of encouraging the development of innovative start-up companies, to form as many of these entities as possible in the country. In Serbia, it was planned to develop between eight hundred and twelve hundred active startups that would attract quality personnel and investors both from the country and from around the world, thereby encouraging the development of new innovative ideas. The working group that prepared this document included a large number of members of the Serbian startup ecosystem, as well as representatives of state authorities, to achieve inclusiveness and to support the comprehensive development of the startup community in the best way. The startup ecosystem development strategy, among other things, should also support the improvement of startup entrepreneurial capacities through educational programs (Boldureanu et al., 2020).

The introduction of content on startup entrepreneurship is planned at all levels of education in the Republic of Serbia (D Incubator, 2018). The strategy envisages the improvement of infrastructure and program support for startups, especially support in the early stages of development, as well as the improvement of financing mechanisms, primarily encouraging the development of the entrepreneurial capital market. The main - general goals of the document are, in addition to improving the conditions for doing business improving the tax framework of startups, and raising the competencies of employees, i.e. management competencies of human resources in public administration. On the other hand, the Strategy would also enable the creation of green jobs, and the development of green skills in human resources, which, according to Jureta, is part of the Sustainable Development policy (Jureta, 2020). The strategy should enable the popularization of startup culture and the improvement of the international recognition of the Serbian startup ecosystem. The Strategy for the Development of the Startup Ecosystem of

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