



Increasing IT Literacy

Following the collapse of Eastern European socialism in 1989, a steady flow of migrants from war-torn and impoverished countries chose to start a new life in Greece. As with all migrant communities, the road to gaining employment and acceptance is long, and made even more difficult by individuals' lack of basic computing skills — a requirement for most jobs. In October 2005, Microsoft partnered with the city of Athens to convert a government building into a computer training centre for disadvantaged migrants. The centre has proven highly successful, and Microsoft has since expanded its relationship with the municipal government, sponsoring its 2006 Athens Career Forum.

Responding to Local Needs

The EMEA region comprises a highly diverse grouping of countries, spanning some of the most developed economies in the world and some of the least. Cultural and social differences can be immense, and governments' policy objectives reflect this diversity. Even in well-developed economies and "wired" societies, as in the Nordic region, there are endless opportunities to put technology to better use in business, in the public sector and in people's daily lives.

Microsoft recognises that doing business in EMEA requires different approaches and presents different opportunities to support local development. One "size" does not fit all. This is why the company has been steadily increasing its physical presence in EMEA over the past two decades, recently opening offices in Armenia and Azerbaijan, on the eastern flank of EMEA, and in Bosnia.

As part of Microsoft's commitment to the countries and communities where it operates, the company also helps bring technology access and opportunity to underserved populations through formal agreements with some of the world's most influential development organisations. Among them are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).