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Shaping Future-Ready Youth: Latvia's AI Career Guidance for High Schoolers

Across Europe, young people aged 15–29, which are classified as NEETs - not in employment, education, or training - contribute to nearly €1.6 trillion in lost productivity over a decade. In Latvia alone, roughly 27,000 young people fall into this category annually, costing the economy over €320 million per year. One major driver of this disengagement is the gap between what young people aspire to and the realities of the job market. Many students lack the tools to connect their interests with viable career paths or to understand how their skills align with labor market needs.

"Nākotnes darbs" (Future Work) is Latvia's first AI-powered career guidance platform designed specifically for high school students. Launched under the auspices of the World Economic Forum's Education Accelerator, the platform combines psychometric testing (Holland Code-based personality profiling) with real-time analysis of over 30,000 job ads across Latvia. It provides users with tailored job recommendations, localized salary insights, and skill requirements - all mapped to the European ESCO classification framework.

In just the first six months of 2025, the platform engaged over 5,000 students and 140+ career consultants. The platform not only empowers students to make informed decisions about their futures but also supports educators and policymakers. Career consultants gain access to tools for data-driven counseling, while policy makers can monitor youth interest trends and identify gaps between supply and demand in the labor market.

The presentation will explore how AI can personalize and democratize access to career guidance, share early impact data and testimonials, and discuss how this initiative contributes to Latvia's broader ambitions around national AI strategy in education and employment. It is a scalable, evidence-based model for any country seeking to improve youth engagement and workforce alignment in the age of automation.