

Support of the preparation of a national action plan for employment and human resources development in Montenegro

Final task report

December 2018

Based on the contract for the provision of consulting services between the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the consultant, Nikica Mojsoska Blazevski, for support of the preparation of a national action plan for employment and human resources development in Montenegro, the consultant was tasked to provide three services. Below a brief explanation is provided on how those services were performed:

I. Task 1: Overview of the strategic framework and main documents in the area of employment

The desk-work within the project started with a review by the expert of the main strategic and operational documents of the government, as well as the assessment of the national progress by the European Commission. The following documents were reviewed at this stage:

- Strategy for Employment and Human Resources 2015-2020,
- Economic Reform Programme (ERP) 2018-2020,
- European Commission' progress report on Montenegro 2018,
- Action plans for employment and human resources development for 2017 and 2018, as well as information about their realisation;
- Methodology for preparation of strategic documents in Montenegro,
- Development goals of the Montenegro 2018-2021, prepared by the Ministry of Finance, etc.

In addition, an online search of the activities of various ministries, government institutions, but also donors' work in Montenegro was conducted in order to get a better and wider picture of the activities undertaken in the economy in the area of employment and human resources, legislative environment, etc. The Background study of the RCC on undeclared economy in Montenegro and the respective Action plan for Tackling Undeclared Work were studied. The EC' Progress reports helped to identify the areas where Montenegro has to improve in the future in terms of employment policy such as the employment of women and youth.

II. Task 2: Propose key actions and measures that the Ministry should consider, including the Action Plan for Employment and Human Resources Development for 2019.

Based on the desk-work and an input received from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, a draft Action Plan for Employment and Human Resources Development for



2019, was prepared. In this way, the past actions and measures have been taken into account, but special attention has been paid to three elements:

- supporting the employment of women (especially after the government revoked the previous policy/right of financial assistance to mothers of three and four children);
- focusing on young people, and especially on NEET (youth neither in employment nor in education or training);
- measures for tackling undeclared work.

A draft Action Plan was sent to the Ministry, which then shared the document with the working group' members. Then, a visit to Montenegro was planned for discussing the Action Plan with all involved institutions. It should be emphasised that at this stage it was impossible to precisely plan the costing of the Strategy, as well as the number of participants in the actions and measures as the 2019 Budget was not yet approved.

III. Task 3: Attend one meeting of the working group which will include participants from different institutions and organisations and make a presentation of the draft report.

A visit to Montenegro was held on 3 December, 2018. During the visit, an internal meeting and consultation with the Ministry were held first, followed by a separate meeting with the Employment Agency and then a meeting with the working group. The discussion was about every measure, available funds, participants, and great attention was paid to the outcomes (i.e. setting better indicators and targets). Key measures and actions have been agreed. However, given the announced cut in the available funds for the employment policy (in the draft budget), as well as the short time until the beginning of 2019, it was necessary to cut some of the proposed measures (hoping that the Ministry can plan them for the next year).

Finally, as the 2019 Budget was approved by the Montenegrin Parliament, a notification was received that the funds for active measures had been cut from EUR 6 million in 2018 to EUR 3 million in 2019, so some measures and targets had to be adjusted downwards. The final draft of the Action Plan is now sent by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to the Government for approval.