

Official Visit of the Albanian Public Employment Service delegation to Prishtina and meetings with key counterparts

12 -13 July 2018

Prishtina, Kosovo*

Report

The study visit was organized by the ESAP project upon the request of the Public Employment Service (PES) of Albania. Based on the results of the benchlearning process, in which the 6 Western Balkan Public Employment Offices have engaged in a self-reflection on key strengths and weaknesses, as well as the assessment visits that have been conducted by external assessment teams, senior managers and experts of the Public Employment Office of Albania participated in a working meeting with the Public Employment Service of Kosovo* with the aim of an in depth exchange on key areas of PES work in which they could learn more from their counterparts as well as to present some of the areas in which the Albanian PES has achieved important results. On behalf of RCC, Nand Shani, ESAP team leader, participated.

The meeting was opened by the respective directors of the PES offices of Kosovo* and Albania, who emphasized the importance of exchanging experiences based on the assessment and findings of the benchlearning exercise.

The topics presented and discussed included:

- The Kosovo* PES Employment Management Information System (EMIS). The system enables continuous follow-up of the performance of each employment office, which makes possible to measure the degree of achievement of targets set, at any point of time. The EMIS is a well-developed system, which among others supports electronic management of performance. This is performed through the inclusion of performance indicators for each Employment Office with the possibility to tailor them for each employment counsellor (planned to be undertaken in the future). To ensure adequacy in data entry in each field, EMIS provides clear instructions on questions and information to be collected from unemployed and employers. Albania recognized the need to enhance its own IT system and also plans to develop a unit for labour market information.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence



- The communication strategy of the Kosovo* PES has enabled the agency to reach out to major target groups in order to ensure that its programmes are known and utilized. The strategy involves informing the general public about new service features, improve service accessibility for the target groups and increase the user pool, improve the recognisability of the work and role played by PES and improve the image of PES among beneficiaries and the general public.
- The reform of the vocational training centers. provision of vocational training; assessment and certification of candidates; recognition of prior learning; monitoring of other training providers that develop trainings in agreement with the agency, assessment and certification of candidates; and preparation of individual training plan for the candidate who carry out practice at workplace (as part of the training program, offered jointly with VTCs and enterprises) in companies as well as monitoring, evaluation and certification.
- The development of a unit for monitoring active labour markets measures. Currently, there is no system or methodology in place for assessing the impact and sustainability of ALMPs. This was a challenge recognized by both offices, and they will aim to prioritize concrete actions in this field, by also ensuring that they will share their experiences in this process.

Meeting with UBO consulting

UBO consulting has been selected to conduct an analysis of the impact of Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) on employment in Kosovo*, as part of the technical assistance that ESAP gives to the Employment Agency. In order to contribute to a better understanding of the high unemployment rates and the role of VTCs in addressing this challenge, the survey that UBO will implement will aim to identify the share of employment as a result of these trainings and how it has benefited trainees.

UBO Consulting will conduct surveys with trainees to gain information about the skills that were enhanced through such trainings as well as the level of employment generated. In addition, another survey will be conducted with businesses which employed trainees to understand if the skills they were equipped with during trainings, were in line with the skills demanded in the job market. It was agreed that 870 beneficiaries and 130 businesses will be interviewed. The list of beneficiaries will be provided by PES, random sample will be selected and during interviews, relevant businesses will be identified.

UBO Consulting will be delivering an inception report that includes sampling design (based on the methodology that UBO will specify) and questionnaire design, train the enumerators, pilot the questionnaire and create a technical report, and deliver an excel file of the completed interviews and an analytical report of the main findings.



Meeting with representative of Ministry of Labour

The ESAP team leader met with Mr. Lulzim Karaxha, Director of the Department for European Integration and Policy Coordination and Mr. Ylber Aliu, Head of Division for Employment Policy and vocational education at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. The meeting discussed the deliverables of the ESAP technical assistance to develop a monitoring framework for the youth employment action plan, in line with the recommendation of the most recent Joint Conclusions of the Economic and Financial Dialogue between the EU and the Western Balkans and Turkey. The representatives of the Ministry expressed their satisfaction with the product of the consultancy, and asked about the availability of monitoring expert to provide some ad-hoc support to the development of the monitoring report. The representatives of the Ministry informed that they are in the process of developing a 3 year employment policy plan for the Employment Agency of Kosovo*. Additionally, they expressed their overall satisfaction with the ESAP project and confirmed their interest to actively participate in the forthcoming regional activities.

Follow up:

- Based on the experience of Kosovo* PES, the Albanian PES will request ESAP assistance to develop a communication strategy.
- Inspired by the experience of Kosovo*, the Albanian PES is aiming to set up a unit that will collect information and intelligence on the labour market and will make a plan for upgrading their IT system accordingly.
- Participants proposed to conduct a study visit of the Kosovo* delegation to Albania. It was agreed that the Kosovo* delegation should include officials from the Kosovo* PES who are in charge of IT system, communications and vocational training centers, who would then engage directly with the Albanian counterparts and their line of work.