

Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2 – ESAP 2

WB6 Network and alignment with the EU acquis in the Chapters 2 and 19 and preparation for future use of European Social Fund

Regional online meeting

21st June 2021, 10 00- 11 00

Introduction

The Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2 (ESAP 2) is a regional project, funded by the EU and jointly implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), over a three-year period, 2019-2022. The objective of ESAP 2 is to assist the six Western Balkan economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) with labour market and social policy reforms in order to improve employment opportunities and working conditions of citizens in the region.

As part of the ESAP 2 Project, its Component 3: *Western Balkans engagement in EU employment and social policies*, is focusing on activities to provide peer learning opportunities to enhance Western Balkan alignment with the EU acquis in relevant fields (Chapters 2 and 19), European Pillar of Social Rights and preparation for the future use of European Social Fund.

One of the objectives of ESAP 2 project Component 3 is to support Western Balkan government partners in their EU accession path ***through establishment of Regional Network of EU Chapter 19 and Chapter 2 (WB6 Network) negotiators and civil servants dealing with topics related to these chapters in WB economies where negotiation structure still does not exist.*** This WB Network is **an informal network**, and among other goals, is expected to provide peer learning and capacity building activities on topics that will be proposed by the Network and relevant to the EU accession process (employment and social policies), including on the European Social Fund.

* 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

Objectives

The first meeting of **the WB6 Network** will bring together representatives of Western Balkan Ministries and/or other government bodies responsible for the EU accession process (thematic focus labour and social policies) to meet and discuss on regional cooperation objectives within the **WB6 Network** in the framework of ESAP 2 project.

Further, a draft Road Map for the WB6 Network and an indicative, draft Action Plan will be presented and comments of the representatives of WB6 economies will be sought and taken into consideration, reflecting the status of each WB economy in the EU accession process.

Agenda

Monday, 21st June 2021

10.00 – 10.15 **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

10.15 – 10.30 **WB6 Network and engagement in EU employment and social policies**

Presentation of the draft Roadmap for the WB6 Network and draft Indicative Action Plan

Questions and Answers

10.30 – 10.50 **Individual contributions from the representatives of WB government partners, as regards to the status of each WB economy in the EU accession process**

This session will focus on the status and preparation of relevant documents and needs of Western Balkan economies (thematic focus labour and social policies), so that the draft Road Map and draft Action Plan can be adapted and tailored to needs

10.50 – 11.00 **Conclusions and Next Steps**