



## **Regional Cooperation on Activation and Employment Support Policies and Programmes in the Western Balkans**

17 September 2019  
Budva, Montenegro

### **Introduction**

The Employment and Social Affairs Regional Platform (ESAP), funded by the EU and implemented by RCC and ILO since 2016, works to strengthen regional cooperation and institutional capacities of national administrations in the Western Balkans, enabling them to develop and effectively implement labour market and social policy reforms in their EU enlargement process. ESAP has implemented, for the first time in the Western Balkan region, a series of peer reviews on selected employment policies and programmes, modelled in line with the EU mutual learning programme. Additionally, ESAP has supported performance benchmarking among PES offices in the Western Balkans and their enhanced dialogue through the implementation of a “benchlearning exercise”, following the experience of the EU PES Network. Through a combined self- and external assessment approach, a comprehensive and in-depth picture of 21 performance areas of PES work has been developed, with a focus on strengths, weaknesses, good practices and recommendations for further action to each PES on how to enhance their performance.

These activities have taken place in the context of a renewed emphasis on enhanced engagement of the European Union with the Western Balkans and a call for a reinforced social dimension and increased focus on employment and social reforms in the Western Balkans. The first annual EU – Western Balkans Ministerial meeting on employment and social affairs, which took place on 12 June 2019, emphasized the need for promoting inclusive labour markets and skills development.

### **Objectives**

The workshop will serve to discuss recent developments and trends in Western Balkans economies’ active labour market policies, and key challenges and priority actions, building on the main results of the mutual learning activities and the benchlearning initiative. Participants will also discuss future cooperation on employment and social policies among Western Balkan Ministries of Labour and Public Employment Services.



## Draft Agenda

**Monday, 16 September 2019**

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*Arrival of Participants*

**Tuesday, 17 October 2019**

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*Venue: Tre Canne Hotel, Budva*

### 09.00 – 9.30 **Opening Remarks**

- Nand Shani, ESAP Team Leader, RCC
- Christiane Westphal, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, European Commission

### 9.30 – 11.00 **Active Labour Market Measures in the Western Balkans**

- Introduction and key results of the mutual learning activities on employment measures, Mr. Nand Shani, ESAP Team Leader, RCC ('20 mins)
- Presentation on active labour market policies, developments, trends and priorities, Representatives of Ministries of Labour and PES in the Western Balkans ('10 mins per delegation)

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break

### 11.30 – 13.00 **Enhancing the Performance of PES in the Western Balkans through Benchlearning**

- Introduction by RCC expert ('5 min)
- Impact of the regional PES benchlearning on the national domain, Representatives of Western Balkan PES ('30 mins)
- Follow up analytics to the benchlearning initiative, presentations by RCC experts on management by objectives, local employment plans and EURES compatibility analysis ('30 mins)
- A view from the EU: Ms Kristina Fleischer, Job Mediation Department, Croatian Employment Service, member of the EU PES Network ('15 mins)

Questions and Answers

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch



**14.00 – 16.00 The Future of Labour Market Activation Measures in the Western Balkans:  
Priorities and Policy Options**

Participants will discuss future intentions and needs of labour market institutions as well as the direction for future regional cooperation in the framework of ESAP 2

**16.00 – 16.30 Conclusions and Next Steps**

19.30 Dinner (hosted by RCC)

**Wednesday, 18 September 2019**

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*Departure of Participants*