

## Peer review workshop on Employment of PWDs

19-20 April 2018

### Report

PR event on *Employment of PWDs (persons with disabilities)* was held in Belgrade on April 19 to April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The event was organized as a two-day workshop aiming at exchange of opinion and experiences in regard with employment policies created to foster employment of PWDs in the countries of the Western Balkans.

In accordance with the set agenda, presentation of the host economy Case Study (i.e. Employment policy toward PWDs in Serbia) served as the basis for discussion among the representatives of the responsible Ministries for employment and Public Employment Services in Albania, BiH, Kosovo\*, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia (Peer Countries). In her opening address, Mr. Bojana Stanić Assistant Minister for employment welcomed participants. She acknowledged the great value of organizing such an event particularly stressing the need for continuous cooperation among peer countries regarding this and other important issues in the field of employment. Mr Srdjan Kujundžić greeted participants on behalf of Regional Cooperation Center (RCC) under the auspices of which the event was organized.

Mrs. Jelena Vasić and Mrs. Vera Pešut, representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs presented the most important experiences and results achieved by implementation of existing employment policy and active labour market measures directed at PWDs in Serbia. This was followed by the analysis of success factors, lessons learned and recommendations presented by Mrs. Galjina Ognjanov, independent expert appointed by RCC.

Second part of the workshop was dedicated to presentation of analyzed employment policies directed at PWDs in the Western Balkans, which was prepared by Mrs. Galjina Ognjanov. The emphasis was put on observed similarities among the countries as well as specific practices which could be easily transferred in other countries as well. It was followed by discussion among peers, who reflected on the presented findings, provided additional details concerning created and implemented employment policy and active labour market measures directed at PWDs and asked for or offered their recommendations for further improvement.

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\* 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

An additional value to the workshop was joint organization with UNDP and ILO who contributed by arranging participation of representatives of employers and their associations as well as by inviting Mr. Henrik Moller, representative of the ILO Global Business and Disability Network to present relevant practices and experiences. Employers views on the implemented employment policy directed at PWDs in Serbia were shared among participants. Based on it, advantages and drawbacks of implemented quota schemes were discussed. Experiences of professional rehabilitation and employment of PWDs in Serbia were also presented from the point of view of enterprises established as a special form of employment in accordance with the Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment for PWDs.

Over the two-day workshop in Belgrade, representatives of the peer countries had a unique opportunity to learn from each other, while listening to the experiences regarding implemented employment policy directed at PWDs in Serbia and discussing the issue from various perspectives. Jointly they come to new ideas for the improvement of existing practices based on observed success factors in the host economy which might be implemented in future. All participants expressed their satisfaction with the event, stressing its importance and contribution to further development of relevant policies and enhancement of labour market position and participation of PWDs within the Region.