

**Employment and Social Affairs Platform**  
**Meeting of Ministries of Labour and Public Employment Services of the Western Balkan Economies**  
28 February - 1 March 2017  
Vienna, Austria

### **Introduction and Objectives**

This event is organized in the framework of the Employment and Social Affairs Platform (ESAP) regional project, which aims to strengthen regional cooperation and institutional capacities of national administrations in the areas of labour market and social policy reform.

Participants in the event will be representatives of ministries in charge of labour and employment, responsible for their institution's contribution in the development, implementation and monitoring of employment and social policy measures, and representatives of Public Employment Services. Additionally, representatives of RCC and ILO, as implementing partners of the project, will participate. An invitation will be extended to representatives of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission, the European PES network as well as to other partner international organizations.

The aim of the meeting will be to have an in-depth discussion of the peer review processes in the context of the mutual learning programme in the EU and agree on the modalities and next steps for the peer reviews among Ministries of Labour on selected employment policies and among Public Employment Services on qualitative bench-learning, and present and discuss with participants the programme of work for the second year of the implementation of ESAP.

### **Background**

The regional project 'Employment and Social Affairs Platform', which began its implementation in March 2016 and will last for 3 years, is a regional project financed by the European Commission and jointly implemented by RCC and ILO in the Western Balkan economies. The project aims to strengthen regional cooperation and institutional capacities of national administrations, employers' and workers' organizations, enabling them to develop and effectively implement labour market and social policy reforms in their EU accession process.

In the framework of the ESAP project, two studies have been conducted. The first one is a regional comprehensive review of national employment and social measures and their implementation to date, with a focus on identifying challenges, constraints, and good practices in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the proposed measures. Based on the findings and recommendation of the review, representatives of Ministries of Labour will discuss and agree on the

relevant measures that will serve as the topic of peer reviews, with the overall goal of enhancing policy making and implementation processes in the area of employment and social affairs.

The second study relates to the analysis of existing performance management and measurement practices and tools in the Western Balkan Public Employment Service offices, and proposes a methodological guide for benchlearning. This entails the quantitative benchmarking and the qualitative benchmarking through the collection of information on performance enablers by combined self-assessment – external assessment exercise.

Participants will agree on the concrete steps for launching the employment policy peer review and benchlearning processes.

### Draft Agenda

#### Monday, 27 February 2017

Arrival of participants

#### Tuesday, 28 February 2017

Venue: Fleming's Deluxe Hotel

#### 08.30 – 09.00 Registration of Participants

#### 09.00 – 09.15 Welcome and Introductory Remarks

*Ms. Vanja Ivosevic, Senior Expert on Smart Growth, RCC*

*Mr. Kiril Kiryakov, International Policy Officer, DG EMPL*

*Mr. Roland Hanak, Head of Staff Position, Bilateral Cooperation in Labour Market Policy, Ministry of Labour, Social and Consumer Protection, Austria*

#### 09.15 – 10.30 Overview of key ESAP achievements and proposed plan for the second year of activities

During this session, participants will be informed about the ESAP project activities and achievements during the first year of operation and will be presented with the proposed activities during the second year.

*Mr. Nand Shani, ESAP Team Leader, RCC*

Discussion

#### 10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break

#### 11.00 – 13.00 EU experience with mutual learning activities in the area of employment

*A presentation of the mutual learning programme under the European Employment Strategy with a focus on peer reviews: process and achievements*

*Mr. Emilio Castrillejo, Policy Officer, DG EMPL*



This project is funded by the EU

A presentation of the EU PES Network benchlearning initiative: achievements and lessons

Ms. Elisabet Arp, PES Network Secretariat, DG EMPL

Experience of the Austrian Ministry of *Labour, Social and Consumer Protection* on the mutual learning programme under the European Employment Strategy

Mr. Gottfried Wetzels, Deputy Head of Unit, International Labour Marketing Policies, *Ministry of Labour, Social and Consumer Protection, Austria*

Austrian PES experience in the EU PES Network benchlearning process

Ms. Gudrun Nachtschatt, International Cooperation and Benchlearning, Austrian Employment Service

Questions and Answers

13.00 – 14.30 Lunch

**14.30 – 16.30 Breakout sessions**

Facilitated by EU experts on peer reviews and benchlearning and RCC

Group 1: Ministries of Labour will discuss the findings and recommendations of the regional analysis on employment measures prepared by the ESAP consultants and have a preliminary agreement on the topics for peer reviews, and a timetable for their implementation

Group 2: Public Employment Services will present and discuss key indicators for quantitative benchmarking and agree on the concrete steps for the process of qualitative benchmarking

19.00 Dinner

*Venue: Restaurant Fromme Helene  
Josefstädter Strasse 15/Lange Gasse 33*

**Wednesday, 1 March 2017**

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**8.30 – 13.30 Field visit**

*Venue: Währinger Str. 59, Vienna*

Participants will visit WUK (Werkstätten- und Kulturhaus), with a focus on the jobcoaching and spacelab project. Since 1982, the WUK Education and Counselling department initiates and conducts projects in the field of innovative labour market policy for disadvantaged youth and young adults. The educational and counselling facilities – now with numerous locations in Vienna – assist around 2000 women and men in the age from 14 to 25 per year. The main targets in this context are the acquisition of vocational skills and job placement (in cooperation with the employment service and other relevant institutions)

13.30 – 14.30 Lunch

*Venue: Venue: Fleming's Deluxe Hotel*



**14.30 – 16.30 ESAP mutual learning actions – Reports from working groups and planned activities for the second year of the project**

An open discussion on the concrete activities planned for the second year of the project as proposed by the project team and based on the deliberations of the first day

*Facilitation:* Vanja Ivosevic, Senior Expert on Smart Growth, RCC  
Nand Shani, ESAP Team Leader, RCC

*Roundtable discussion*

**16.30 – 17.00 Conclusions and Next Steps**

*Departure of Participants*