

Summary of the Meeting of 6 November 2020

Establishing priorities for employment in BiH : learning from EU Member State case studies

Opening statements

- Gianluca Vannini (EU Delegation) and Hajrija Dautovic (Ministry of Civil Affairs) welcomed participants to the meeting.
- Both underlined a) the importance of BiH moving forward with employment developments in keeping with wider EU policies, and b) the opportunity of learning from good practice of EU member states.

EU employment policy and coordination mechanisms

- Anthony Gribben (ETF) provided an overview of comparative employment data underlining the considerable gaps between BiH and the EU.
- He presented a summary of employment policy and monitoring and reporting arrangements of both the EU member states and the European Commission (European Semester).
- He noted that the existing annual reporting process of the Economic Reform Programme by BiH and the Commission's responding report mirrored key the European Semester process.

Case Study 1: Spain (Elvira González Gago, Rsearch4Consulting, Barcelona)

Ms González provided an overview of the employment system in Spain defining a) the competences between state and autonomous regions and links with EU employment policy; b) financing arrangements and c) monitoring and reporting processes. Issues from discussion :

- indicators to measure success of employment strategy are mostly based on the performance of the Public Employment Services;
- Funding of active employment measures is linked to performance indicators;
- cooperation between the regions and the state, including exchange of good practices, allow for identification of better performers at regional level i.e Basque Country and Balearic Islands (until COVID crisis), Madrid and Catalunya. Weaker performers: Andalusia and Extremadura.
- In addressing EU country-specific targets, Spain engages with the European Commission to reconcile targets to reflect the actual situation of the labour market.
- evaluation of the effectiveness of the employment programmes in Spain in many instances lacks transparency with results never being published.
- Some Spanish region have difficulty in spending EU funds due to weak capacity to translate the the financing into concrete actions. There are also some cases of corruption and very few control mechanisms to counter the misuse of funds.
- Recommendations for BiH included: a) fullest cooperation of BiH entities in designing and building state-wide employment systems; b) establish common terminology (EU, state, entity levels); c) define

common objectives at state and entity levels with mutual M&E systems; d) exchange good practice within BiH as well as between BiH and EU public employment services.

Case Study 2: Poland (Łukasz Sienkiewicz, Institute of Labour Market Analyses, Warsaw)

In his presentation, Mr. Sienkiewicz focused on a) key stakeholders in employment strategy coordination in Poland ; b) key policy instruments, c) financing of active employment measures and d) monitoring and reporting arrangements. Issues from discussion

- Poland's performance overall on EU employment targets is strong with July 2020 data apparently defying COVID19 implications/prediction. However, Poland expects to adapt the indicators given by the European Commission e.g. women employment which is affected particularly by poor childcare provision requiring better synergy with domestic social and family support strategies and employment strategies
- There is no top-downism - Polish regions have autonomy in finding ways to implement EU employment policy recommendations.
- No complaints about EU targets, since they have been met. Poland expects nevertheless to adapt the indicators given by the EC, for ex. about complex situations like women employment. This issue is out of reach for PES alone, and it should be tackled in synergy with social and family support strategies (i.e. places in kindergartens are insufficient)
- Mobility of workers: migration of Polish workers is greater to the EU than between Polish regions.
- Flexibility exists in EU financed projects where the region, state and European Commission can revisit original plans and commitments and redefine based on changing socio-economic circumstances in the region
- Informal economy still plays a significant role, estimated as 3% of active population (ca. 1,000,000 people)
- The evaluation of the programme is done by independent bodies and this gives much more information on its effectiveness, if compared to the results of internal evaluation process.
- Role of Voluntary Labour Corps is assisting young people as an institutional support mechanism considered innovative. Mr. Sienkiewicz provided a [link](#) through chat line.
- Recommendations for BiH included: a) fullest cooperation of BiH entities in designing and building state-wide employment systems; b) establish common terminology (EU, state, entity levels); c) define common objectives at state and entity levels with mutual M&E systems; d) exchange good practice within BiH as well as between BiH and EU public employment services.
- Recommendations for BiH included: a) consider decentralization as opportunity for entities to address their specific labour market challenges; b) align state and entity level policies and plans with EU employment policies while retaining autonomy and flexibility at entity levels; c) establish common standards for delivery of employment services.

Conclusions

In her conclusions to the meeting, Hajrija Dautovic (MoCA) underlined the importance of BiH drawing on EU member state experience as it moves forward with next-phase employment developments. She recommended a follow-up to the meeting focusing particularly on roles and responsibilities of EU regions on the wider EU employment policy dynamic.