



The banner features the logos of the International Labour Organization, Regional Cooperation Council, and the European Union at the top. Below the logos, the letters 'ESAP' are displayed in a large, stylized font. Each letter contains a different image: 'E' shows a doctor examining an X-ray; 'S' shows an elderly man in a blue apron working; 'A' shows a man in a wheelchair; 'P' shows a woman in a red hairnet working in a factory. At the bottom of the banner, the text 'Employment and Social Affairs Platform 3 | #ESAP' is written in white.

**Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and International
Labour Organisation (ILO)**

**Employment and Social Affairs Platform 3 Project
#ESAP**

Introductory remarks

In the fast-changing labour and social environments, policy makers look for the best solutions leading to improved labour market outcomes and enhanced social policy, guaranteeing decent working and living and smooth integration into the EU to the citizens of the Western Balkans. Taking into account transformations of our societies and requirements of the Western Balkan economies on their EU-accession journey, the Employment and Social Affairs Platform (ESAP) 3 project is committed to continuing supporting its stakeholders to establish fairer and well-functioning labour markets in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights and international labour standards. To this end, ESAP 3 is organising a regional kick-off conference with the main labour market and social policy actors to discuss challenges, exchange ideas and explore strategic solutions.

This conference will gather representatives from the Western Balkans ministries in charge of labour and social issues, labour inspectorates, tax administrations, public employment services, and social partners. It will also host representatives of the European Union, partner international organisations and thematic experts. The topics to be discussed will include but not be limited to tackling undeclared work, social dialogue, occupational safety and health, alignment of the Western Balkan economies with the European Pillar of Social Rights, EU Acquis Chapter 2 and Chapter 19, and cooperation of the Western Balkans Public Employment Services (PES) with the EU PES Network, as per the agenda below.

ESAP 3 project has officially started on 1 March 2024, building upon the solid foundations laid by its predecessors, ESAP 1 and ESAP 2. The project is funded by the European Union (EU) and jointly implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and International Labour Organization (ILO) and it will continue operating in the Western Balkan region over the next five years.

Balanced Labour Markets in the Western Balkans: Innovative Solutions for a Sustainable Workforce

22 – 23 October 2024

Budva, Montenegro

Hybrid meeting: Hotel Avala and online via Zoom

Join us online

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85217191512?pwd=baFq5OWSg18lQHbMQSQ0Z48GsTg3sv.1>

Time: Oct 22, 2024 09:30 AM (zoom link is for both days, in accordance with the Agenda)

Meeting ID: 852 1719 1512

Passcode: 141442

Note: working language is English, with simultaneous translation into languages of the Western Balkans

AGENDA

DAY I

Tuesday, 22 October 2024

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| 09:30 – 10:00 | Registration and welcome coffee |
| 10:00 – 10:05 | Opening remarks |
| 10:05 – 10:45 | Keynote speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Laura Corrado, Head of Unit International Affairs, European Training Foundation, European Commission, DG EMPL➤ Holger Schroeder, Head of Unit Regional Programmes, European Commission, DG NEAR➤ Lejo Sibbel, Senior Social Dialogue, Labour Law, and International Labour Standards Specialist, ILO➤ Pranvera Kastrati, Head of Programme Department, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) <p><i>(The keynote speakers will tackle employment and social policy issues in the Western Balkans and the EU as well as enlargement requirements, focusing on the state of play in the Western Balkans and a way forward.)</i></p> |
| 10:45 – 11:00 | Presentation of ESAP 3 Action and evaluation of previous project cycles <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Ada Huibregtse, ILO ESAP 3 Chief Technical Advisor➤ Ratka Babic, RCC ESAP 3 Team Leader |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Employment and social outlook in the Western Balkans panel <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Irene Mandl, Head of Unit Information and EURES, European Labour Authority (ELA)➤ Filippo Del Ninno, Human Capital Development Expert, European Training Foundation (ETF)➤ Dimitar Nikoloski, Professor in Labour economics and Econometrics at the University St. Kliment Ohridski, Bitola, North Macedonia➤ Uros Bulatovic, President of Union of Young Entrepreneurs of Montenegro |
| 11:30 – 12:00 | The role of social dialogue and collective bargaining in promoting economic development and social progress <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Lejo Sibbel, Senior Social Dialogue, Labour Law, and International Labour Standards Specialist, ILO Building trust in labour market institutions: the role of social dialogue <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Konstantinos Papadakis, Social Dialogue, Labour Relations and Governance, ILO |

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| 12:00 – 12:30 | Adapting to occupational and health hazards through ILS and EU acquis <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Luiz Carlos Lumbreras Rocha, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Specialist, ILO➤ Michele Dinelli, IPA Project Manager, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, (EU-OSHA) |
| 12:30 – 13:00 | Reflection and Q&A |
| 13:00 – 14:30 | Lunch |
| 14:30 – 16:00 | Western Balkans PES in the EU PES infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Greta Metka Barbo Skerbinc, Director General of the Employment Service of Slovenia on behalf of the EU PES Network➤ Elodie Fazi, Team leader, EU PES Network Secretariat <p><i>(This session will gather representatives of the Public Employment Services (PES) from the Western Balkans and the EU to discuss closer cooperation in the future. Besides the format and modalities of future cooperation, the PES peers will discuss common themes that could represent a base for cooperation: labour migration, brain drain, digitalisation, vulnerable labour market categories, data mining and analysis, employer outreach, etc.).</i></p> |
| 16:00 – 18:00 | Workshop and presentation of the Union of Young Entrepreneurs of Montenegro |
| 19:00 | Official dinner & end of day 1 |

AGENDA

DAY II

Wednesday, 23 October 2024

***NOTE:** The morning of Day 2 will include thematic breakout sessions covering the topics of tackling undeclared work, alignment with the EU Acquis Chapter 2 and Chapter 19, occupational safety and health, and social dialogue.*

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| 09:00 – 10:30 | <p>First plenary meeting of the Western Balkans Network for Tackling Undeclared Work within ESAP 3 framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Ioana Alexandra Horodnic, RCC EASP 3 Senior Expert on Undeclared Work <p><i>(This technical session will gather representatives from Ministries in charge of Labour, Labour Inspectorates and Tax Authorities to prepare for the development of a 3-year work plan.)</i></p> |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | Coffee break |
| 10:45 – 12:15 | <p>Ownership of social dialogue, collective bargaining and occupational safety and health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Lejo Sibbel, Senior Specialist of Labour Law and Social Dialogue, ILO➤ Luiz Carlos Lumbreras Rocha, Occupational Safety and Health Specialist, ILO <p><i>(This session, including relevant representatives of Ministries, Labour Inspectorates and Social Partners, will discuss potential avenues for implementation of the social dialogue and OSH components of the project.)</i></p> |
| 10:45 – 12:15 | <p>Meeting of the Western Balkans Network for alignment with the EU Acquis Chapters 2 and 19</p> <p><i>(This technical group meeting will gather representatives of Western Balkan economies in charge of negotiations process. The group will discuss developments in the region, report on the progress made in the past year in each economy and brief about the plans for future activities, including dynamics of the Network meetings.)</i></p> |
| 12:15 – 13:00 | Networking and peer exchange |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | Lunch |

Note: Departure of participants subject to their travel arrangements