1st Vienna Conference on Western Balkan Labor Markets

April 4 and 5, 2017
World Bank Office, Praterstrasse 31, 17th Floor, Vienna, Austria

Agenda

April 4 (afternoon)
13.30-14.00 Arrival & registration

14.00-14.15 Welcome
Harald Waiglein (Austrian Ministry of Finance)
Ellen Goldstein (World Bank)
Robert Stehrer (wiiw)

14.15-15.30 1st Western Balkan Labor Market Report presentation
Hermine Vidovic (wiiw)
Johannes Koettl (World Bank)

15.30-16.00 Coffee break

16.00-17.30 The challenges of employment and labor market data in the Western Balkan
Chair: Christiane Westphal (European Commission)

Objective: A presentation of a newly available data website for regional labor market data, followed by a panel discussion with regional policy makers, academics, and statistical offices on the needs for labor market data, the quality and availability of data, and the challenges ahead.

Presentation: SEE Jobs Gateway website and database (Fatbardha Ajeti, World Bank/Monika Schwarzhappel, wiiw)

Panelists:
Marius Wilk (Austrian Public Employment Service)
Mihail Arandarenko (University of Belgrade)
Edin Šabanović (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

18.00 Dinner/Reception
April 5 (morning)
9.00-10.30  The challenges of labor market institutions and policies
Chair: Johannes Koettl (World Bank)

Objective: Various presentations, followed by a panel discussion on monitoring and evaluating the success of labor market institutions, like public employment services, and policies, like active labor market programs, in the Western Balkan, and how to learn from findings and improve performance.

Presentation 1: Serbia National Employment Service efficiency analysis (Sara Johansson, World Bank)
Presentation 2: Performance management of public employment services in Austria (Marius Wilk, Austrian Public Employment Service)

Discussant: Vanja Ivosevic (Regional Cooperation Council)

10.30-11.00  Coffee break

11.00-12.30  The challenges of inactivity
Chair: Hermine Vidovic (wiiw)

Objective: Various presentations, followed by a panel discussion on the extent of inactivity among the working age population in the Western Balkan, and policies how to open up labor market opportunities for the inactive (especially vulnerable groups) with both demand and supply side interventions.

Presentation 1: Activation of social assistance beneficiaries: What works? (Mirey Ovadiya, World Bank)
Presentation 2: The role of labor income for poverty reduction and gender (Monica Robayo, World Bank)
Presentation 3: Migration, remittances and inactivity (Marjan Petreski, University American College Skopje)

Discussants: Vladimir Gligorov (wiiw)

12.30-13.30  Lunch
April 5 (afternoon)
13.30-15.00  The challenges of better employment
Chair: Mario Holzner (wiiw)

Objective: Various presentations, followed by a panel discussion on the characteristics of the currently employed, with a focus on how to increase formal private sector employment by addressing informal employment, investigating the role of public employment and low-wage and precarious employment.

Presentation 1: The role of informal employment (Ardiana Gashi, University of Pristina)
Presentation 2: The role of public employment (Vojin Golubović, University of Donja Gorica)
Presentation 3: Low-wage and precarious employment (Mihail Arandarenko, University of Belgrade)

Discussants: Will Bartlett (London School of Economics)

15.00-15.30  Coffee break

15.30-17.00  The challenges of productivity
Chair: Josefina Posadas (World Bank)

Objective: Various presentations, followed by a panel discussion on the issue of productivity both from a demand and a supply side angle, with a focus on skills development, firms and labor demand, and competitiveness.

Presentation 1: Strengthening Work-Based Learning in VET: Challenges and Approaches (Margo Hoftijzer, World Bank)
Presentation 2: The role of labor demand (Nikica Mojsoska Blazevski, University American College Skopje)
Presentation 3: Competitiveness (Mario Holzner, wiiw)

Discussants: Xavier Matheu (ETF)

17.00-17.30  Closing session
Rapporteur: Alvaro Gonzalez (World Bank)