

Workshop Through common solutions to the results in the chapter 19 – Social policy and employment

November 29 and 30, 2021

The workshop, which was held on November 29 and 30, 2021 at the Mediteran Hotel in Becici, was organized by the Ministry of Economic Development and the General Secretariat of the Government of Montenegro, within the EU-funded ME4EU project.



The workshop was attended by the working group for the chapter 19 – Social policy and employment. Apart from Djina Jankovic, who as a representative of the Safety at Work Association of Montenegro (SWAM), is a member of the working group for Chapter 19, the workshop was also attended by the Vice President of the SWAM - Branislav Sebek.



Workshop participants discussed the implementation and supervision of the implementation of the Labour Law and the Law on Occupational Safety and Health (LOSH). Opinions were exchanged regarding the application of the law so far and improving the rights of employees in accordance with EU legal principles.

The participants reminded that the Labour Law was passed at the end of 2019 and was harmonized with 14 European Unions Directives, but it was also pointed out that due to the corona virus pandemic which causes certain restrictions in the application of individual institutes of the Labour Law, not all conditions were in place to see its comprehensive application in the field.



Since the implementation of the Labour Law is one of the conditions for closing Chapter 19, it was confirmed that it is the common responsibility of all to make efforts to achieve the desired goal through the creation of regulations and further implementation of the law.



When it came to the Law on Occupational Safety and Health (LOSH), which was amended in mid-2018 and harmonized with 2 relevant EU directives, the opportunity was used to draw attention to the fact that the implementation of this law is one of the conditions for closing chapter 19. Testing the readiness and flexibility of employees and workers in the previous period reminded how important the field of safety and health at work is, and how necessary it is to work on its implementation in order to ensure safety and health of the largest and most important resource of every company-its employees.

This workshop was used as a great opportunity to promote the two-year EU-OSHA campaign in Montenegro – “Healthy Workplaces – Lighten the Load“. Appropriately, a presentation on this topic was given by Michele Dinelli from EU-OSHA, Project Manager for Pre-Accession Countries. He spoke about a three-year EU-OSHA project aimed at exploring work-related musculoskeletal disorders and related policies, improving understanding of the subject and identifying effective ways to prevent work-related musculoskeletal disorders.





The aim of this workshop was, among other things, to consider how it is possible to work more effectively on the preparation and implementation of legal solutions in order to exercise the rights and protect employees in Montenegro. As this chapter covers the most important policy segments that are a prerequisite for knowledge-based economic development, high levels of employment and social cohesion, it is essential that the national normative framework clearly reflects the needs of our society and the country striving for European values; which will only make progress in the negotiation process.

The negotiation process was presented with reference to the EU objectives in the field of social policy and employment, coordination of European affairs in Montenegro, as well as the role and activities of the working group for Chapter 19. Areas and issues important for fulfilling the obligations from the negotiation process were pointed out, through the prism of the final criteria and recommendations of the European Commission in the last Report on Montenegro.

It was concluded that the goals of a state that cares about its citizens are: fair access to social services, advanced social protection system, educated staff, high employment rate and incentive

measures for those who are less present in the labor market. It was also emphasized that the final criteria are challenging and that we are facing a period of intensifying the dynamics of the entire negotiation process, and that only by constructive work and commitment of all relevant representatives of the area covered by this chapter, we can prove that we are a credible partner in this process.



Podgorica,
December 1, 2021

Prepared by
Djina Jankovic