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RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE INCLUSION OF PERSONS FROM MARGINALISED GROUPS IN THE LABOUR MARKET IN KOSOVO

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Recommendations for the inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Labour Market of Kosovo

According to findings from the study with persons from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, also from surveys and focus group discussions conducted with businesses, UBO Consulting has drafted some recommendations with the intention of higher inclusion of these communities in the labour market.

1. Considering that the majority of respondents from these communities have only finished primary school (35%) or have dropped out of school (34%), different professional trainings are an important factor for their inclusion in the labour market.
 - a. The Employment Agency can create educational programmes for persons who have not finished primary school, in order for them to gain knowledge, skills and certificates at the end of the programme. Another option is to cooperate with high schools, to get more information for persons who drop out of school and offer them professional trainings for employment qualifications.

2. The majority of respondents from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities have not received any trainings (68%) that would advance their profile with required skills in the labour market. The Employment Agency plays an important part in terms of preparing persons from these communities for the labour market by equipping them with soft skills, skills on different professions, knowledge of the labour market and by mediating their employment.
 - a. A thorough research on the identification of persons from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and their needs and interests for employment, is necessary for creating strategies and action plans. This research would enable the creation of a database with different profiles of these members as job-seekers, in order to include them in the labour market. This database should contain specific information for each unemployed person, like the level of education, trainings, work experience, skills and potential professions in which they could be engaged. This database should be updated and shared

with businesses from different profiles in Kosovo¹. This way, this database would serve as a means of communication between businesses and the Employment Agency, and at the same time, would remind businesses where to turn when they need to employ interested candidates.

- b. The first step is to identify job-seekers from these communities, by cooperating with non-governmental organisations who represent and work with different communities. The Employment Agency should list all organisations that work with persons from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, and contact them in order to add to the list persons over 18 who are seeking jobs and create their respective profiles. At the same time, these lists can be used for contacting and informing these persons about different employment programmes.
 - c. The Employment Agency should increase its cooperation with professional schools in Kosovo, in order to add to the list of candidates from these communities, with different professional profiles, for mediating their employment. Furthermore, the Employment Agency, through this cooperation with professional schools, can offer programmes that offer extra trainings and certificates for specific professions.
3. The majority of unemployed respondents from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities were not registered in the Employment Office, because they have never heard of the EO and their services.
- a. The Employment Agency should promote the Employment Office and their services, by informing the members from these communities and increase the number of registered job-seekers. This can be done through promotional activities, through different online media, by targeting these communities and promoting employment success stories of persons from the Agency's programmes. Success stories can also be shared through campaigns organized in social media. Considering that social media are the most frequently used media by different age groups in Kosovo, an informative campaign with

¹ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

photos, success stories and a well-targeted group, would be a successful way to inform persons on services offered by the Employment Agency.

- b. The Employment Agency should encourage members from these communities to register in the EO, by offering services that interest them, after having identified their needs.
 - c. The Employment Agency should create suitable trainings for these communities, considering their level of education and their existing skills. Trainings and tailored programmes for members from these communities enable a higher number of interested persons for these trainings and their equipment with required skills in the labour market.
4. Some of the biggest employment challenges for members of these communities are the lack of employment opportunities in the labour market. The majority are disappointed from job-seeking and employment in their profession.
- a. The Employment Agency should have detailed information on labour market requirements, not only for the professions and skills, but also for the needs of businesses to employ persons from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Other than researching the needs of these communities, as recommended above, it is necessary to conduct a research on the labour market needs.
 - b. The Employment Agency should cooperate with job portals, in order to be updated with the market's requirements in relation to different professions, so that they can propose potential candidates and cooperate with job-seeking businesses.
 - c. The Employment Agency should increase cooperation with businesses and non-governmental organisations, in order to create programmes and inclusive trainings for all groups, by equipping them with the required labour market skills.

- d. The Employment Agency should increase cooperation with businesses and career centres for the employment of members from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, by offering trainings on the most required professions in the labour market.
5. Businesses in Kosovo employ a very small number of members from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities for reasons such; not accepting many job applications, believing that members from these communities are not suitable for their business or because of prejudice related to their level of education and work experience.
 - a. The Employment Agency should organize an awareness campaign with businesses that respect quotas in accordance to the legislation and create employment opportunities for members of different communities, by setting criteria that can be fulfilled by these members; also, complementary trainings to equip them with professional skills.
 - b. The Employment Agency should cooperate with businesses to identify their employment needs, by offering recommendations for persons from different communities in Kosovo, who are equipped with needed trainings and certificates from the EO. This can be done through the Agency's officials, who contact businesses and inform them on potential candidates from these communities, according to their profile and professional skills suitable to the workplace.
 - c. The Employment Agency should inform businesses on inclusive recruitment programmes that offer equal opportunities for all interested candidates.
6. The Employment Agency should create attractive programmes for businesses, so that they hire persons from different communities. This can be achieved through wage subsidies or different incentives aimed to increase the interest of businesses to achieve these objectives. In addition, it is necessary to promote these services, in order for more businesses to be informed and included in the process. Together

with these programmes, the level of monitoring should be increased for the implementation of these programmes.

Recommendations for the inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Labour Market in Kosovo

According to findings from surveys with persons with disabilities, also from surveys and focus group discussions conducted with businesses, UBO Consulting has drafted some recommendations that intend to increase the capacities of persons with disabilities and widely include them in the labour market.

1. From 404 interviewed persons, 15% reported to be employed, in comparison to 85 % of those who are unemployed. From the percentage of those who are employed, only 11 % have found a job through cooperation with the Employment Office.
 - a. Considering the low level of education of this part of the community in Kosovo, the Employment Agency can help increase the level of employment of persons with disabilities, by compensating the lack of education with professional trainings. Trainings and special programmes for persons with disabilities enable a higher number of interested persons in trainings and their equipment with required labour skills.
 - b. The Employment Agency should hold informative campaigns with businesses, to promote inclusiveness. This campaign, in cooperation with the non-governmental organisations, should include data and facts that prove that persons with disabilities are skilled and interested in working.
 - c. The Employment Agency can be engaged in identifying persons with disabilities, who should be a part of the labour market, and through cooperation with businesses, they can provide support for them by offering trainings and certificates on different professions. This identification can be done through cooperation with non-governmental organisations, who have information regarding the number of persons with disabilities in Kosovo and

their profiles.

2. The main reason why 62 % of interviewed businesses throughout Kosovo do not employ persons with disabilities, is because they have not accepted applications from persons from this category.
 - a. The Employment Agency, in coordination with state institutions, respectively the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and NGO-s, should hold stimulating campaigns to encourage persons with disabilities to apply for jobs. These campaigns should include success stories of persons with disabilities, also the existing opportunities of trainings that give them advantage in the labour market.
 - b. The Employment Agency should cooperate with medium and large businesses, who are legally required to employ one person with disability for every 50 employees, through informative sessions and campaigns to respect the law. Furthermore, Agency's officials can target these businesses by offering recommendations for persons with disabilities, who are registered in the EO and are certified for different professions or have undergone relevant trainings suitable to their workplace.
 - c. In the meantime, businesses should be encouraged to employ persons with disabilities. According to the results, only one percent of businesses that have employed persons with disabilities, have received benefits from state institutions. If these benefits would apply to all businesses and would be promoted by the state, they would be encouraged to employ more persons with disabilities in their businesses. The creation of business subsidy programmes for businesses who employ persons with disabilities full-time, is a part of recommendations as well. Each year, the Employment Agency, in cooperation with central institutions, can create a target of persons with disabilities, which aims to employ them; and then begin with business subsidies or other motives that would increase the number of employed persons with disabilities. The stimulation of businesses could be linked directly

to the creation of physical conditions within companies, for them to employ persons with disabilities.

3. The inability to accommodate persons with disabilities is the reason why 32 % of businesses do not employ persons with disabilities.
 - a. The Employment Agency should hold informative sessions, in order for businesses to know how to offer resources and needed infrastructure to accommodate persons with disabilities. This includes the altering of the physical environment, for it to be accessible by persons with disabilities. Infrastructural changes directly in favor of persons with disabilities, give a welcoming feeling from businesses, which would increase the number of applications from this group of the community.
 - b. Apart from infrastructural changes, the Employment Agency should inform businesses on the opportunities to create conditions within the workplace, for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. This includes the opportunity to work with a flexible schedule, equal opportunities of promotion and assistive technology that enables normal working conditions for persons with disabilities.
4. Only 24 % of respondents with disabilities who are job-seekers, are registered in the Employment Office; the other 76% have not heard of the EO or their services.
 - a. The Employment Agency should advertise the Employment Office and their services, by informing job-seeking persons with disabilities, through different promotional campaigns.
 - b. The Employment Agency should encourage members of these communities to register in the EO, by offering specific services according to their needs and interests.
5. The lack of inclusive employment programmes offered by businesses, remains the main challenge for the employment of persons with disabilities.

- a. The Employment Agency could increase cooperation with businesses for employing persons with disabilities, by offering trainings for professions and soft skills required by businesses.
- b. The Employment Agency can create a self-employment programme for persons with disabilities, with the intention of including them in the labour market. The Employment Agency can be engaged in identifying persons with disabilities and offer them support through cooperation with local and central institutions and businesses. For this programme to succeed, many trainings should be held, in order to teach persons with disabilities how to access the business world and innovation.
- c. Apart from training, competitions can be organized within the programme, specifically for persons with disabilities. In these competitions, they can present their business ideas and the most promising idea will be rewarded with funds to implement it. This winning idea will then be monitored for a few years, in order to evaluate the success of such programmes, when it comes to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market.