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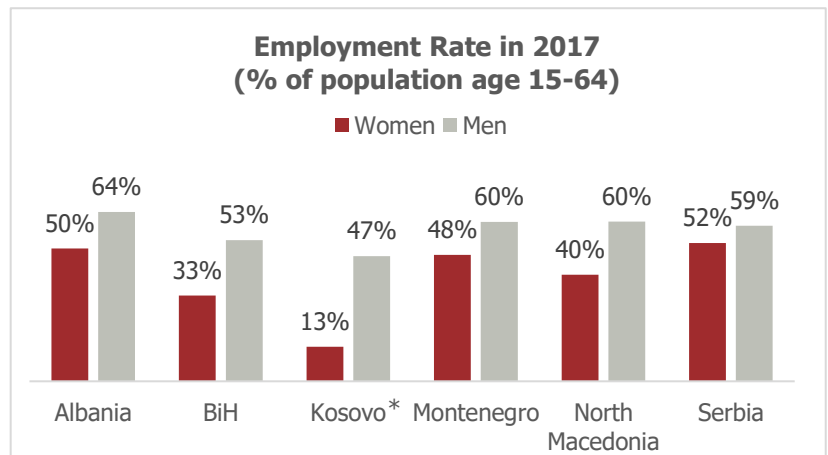
Sweden
Sverige

Combating Discrimination, Furthering Women's Labour Rights

Background

Gender equality, equal opportunities, equal treatment and equal pay for equal work are fundamental values of the European Union (EU). In signing stabilisation and association agreements with the EU, commitments have been made in the Western Balkans (WB) to approximating legislation with the EU *acquis*. Meanwhile, the EU Accession process provides a unique opportunity for the EU to encourage and support the WB in taking steps to ensure "access to decent work for all women of all ages", among other objectives in the EU Gender Action Plan II.

Women's labour force participation rates in the WB are very low. Recent research has shown that gender-based discrimination likely impacts negatively on women's employment rates and labour rights. Yet, few people in the WB know where and how to report such discrimination when it occurs. Moreover, many people fear reporting discrimination, concerned that they may lose their jobs. Due in part to underreporting, relevant institutions have minimal experience in treating such discrimination.



Source: World Bank, 2017

From March 2018 to January 2022, this Action, supported by the EU and co-funded by Swedish International Development Cooperation, seeks to address these challenges.

Objectives

The Action's overall aim is to empower diverse civil society organizations (CSOs) in the WB to effectively hold relevant institutions accountable for implementing anti-discrimination legislation related to women's labour rights. Anticipated outcomes include:

- Improved impact of CSOs, through enhanced capacities;
- A strengthened CSO coalition through knowledge and experience sharing and capacity building; and
- An environment more conducive to CSOs holding relevant institutions accountable.

The Action involves informing people about relevant institutions to which they can report labour-related gender-based discrimination; empowering women to report such discrimination; supporting legal aid and strategic litigation; monitoring court cases; networking among CSOs and other relevant stakeholders to address discrimination; and tailored capacity development support for CSOs, including through grants.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Implemented by:



Gender Alliance for Development Center
Qendra Aleancës Gjimore për Zhvillim



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WOMEN'S RIGHTS CENTER
CENTAR ZA ŽENSKA PRAVA



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Key Results to Date

- Approximately 104 meetings were held with stakeholders to raise their awareness about labour-related gender-based discrimination.
- Six evidence-based reports were researched and published, including one specific to each country in the WB and an overall report for the region. These contribute to knowledge and understanding regarding the current extent of such gender-based discrimination and how institutions have treated it.
- Legal aid was provided for seven gender-based discrimination cases involving mobbing work and illegal termination of contracts.
- Sixteen diverse CSOs participated in advocacy initiatives, decision-making processes and reforms related to women's labour rights.
- Seven joint advocacy initiatives were undertaken involving CSOs and other stakeholders.
- Partners put forth four legislative and policy amendments related to the EU gender equality *acquis*.
- Media have covered issues relating to discrimination against women at work more than 55 times.



"March, don't celebrate!": Partners utilized and promoted research findings during marches organized in the region on 8 March 2019, International Women's Day, during which demonstrators called for equal opportunities at work, equal pay, an end to occupational stereotypes and freedom from sexual harassment.

Implementing Partners' Contact Information

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