Building a culture of social dialogue in the Western Balkans

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The context

A challenging environment:

• Ongoing political instability
• Deficit of effective social dialogue
• Low profile of social dialogue institutions
• Culture of social dialogue and compromise at an early stage
• Low participation of the social partners in LM governance
Key findings of the Economic and Social Councils peer review (ESAP project)

• Broad mandate of ESCs – but often perceived as the exclusive responsibility of the MoL and not the government.

• Limited influence on national policy and law-making processes – lack of institutional practice.

• Approx. 50% of bills falling under the ESCs have been discussed by ESCs.

• Lack of trust between tri-partite partners.

• Social partners lack technical capacity to deliver contributions.

• Lack of institutionalised mechanisms for monitoring the ESC’s recommendations.
Albania - Selected recommendations

- Agree on a set of objective, easy-to-check representation criteria to be set out in a regulation (e.g., a special law) and harmonize the level of representativeness in the

- Adopt a “tracking” system to assess the degree which NLC recommendations are acted upon at the Council of Ministers.
Montenegro - Selected recommendations

- Reduce the number of representatives of each party to maximum eight.

- **Change the composition** of the group of government representatives so that it includes officials from key Ministries covering the fields of economic development and entrepreneurship.
Serbia - Selected recommendations

- Ensure bills are accompanied by the **ESC’s recommendations** and opinions when submitted to Parliament

- Adopt procedure providing for **shorter time limits for feedback** once the ESC’s recommendations and opinions are submitted to the Government

- Encourage better recognition by the Government of the ESC as the national tripartite advisory body and **increase its budget** to achieve this goal
Macedonia - Selected recommendations

- Wider **technical expertise** made available to the ESC through enhanced cooperation with research institutions, civil society organizations and academia.

- Enact and **implement procedures** to ensure that important draft laws and strategic documents are sent and commented upon by the ESC.
Conditions for success

• full commitment and ownership of national tripartite constituents
• all actors willingness to:
  - work on building mutual trust
  - focus on analysis and arguments
  - seek constructive compromise to bridge divergent interests
ILO support

• Legal and technical advice on the establishment of legal and institutional frameworks
• Provide national and sub-regional platforms for knowledge and practice sharing
• Facilitate networking and creation of communities of practice
• Exposure to international expertise and practice
• Develop knowledge base and provide wide access to potential beneficiaries
Thank you

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