



Labour Migration in Bosnia and Herzegovina

How to make the most of it?

Agenda¹

14 September 2022

10:00-12:30

Startup Studio
Maršala Tita 54/II,
71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Hybrid meeting - Zoom registration: bit.ly/3z8oDCA



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The [OECD](#) is a unique forum where governments work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. The Organisation provides a setting where governments can compare policy experience, seek answers to common problems, identify good practices and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

Since 2000, the [OECD South East Europe Regional Programme](#) has been closely collaborating with economies of the region to foster growth, investment and employment through reforms that support competitiveness and private sector development. The programme addresses regional and national needs, capacities and reform priorities while translating OECD standards and best practices into actionable advice for South East European (SEE) economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo* Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania and Serbia).

■ WHAT IS THE MEETING ABOUT?

The Western Balkan Six (WB6) economies all have a long history of emigration. In 2020, more than one in five citizens born in the region lived abroad, mainly in a handful of OECD countries. This trend is set to continue, as more than one-third of WB6 citizens surveyed in 2021 considered emigrating.

High levels of labour emigration can pose a severe development challenge for the Western Balkans. However, the region's large and growing diaspora also provides opportunities, which remain largely untapped.

The [High-Level Conference on South East Europe: Human Capital Flight – Shaping The Future Together](#) was organised on 17 May 2022 at the OECD in Paris and brought together more than 250 participants, including high-level representatives of SEE economies. It provided the occasion to discuss how the SEE governments can manage labour migration and offer better prospects for their citizens and businesses. The high-level stakeholders reflected on current challenges and shared insights and best practices on reversing the human capital flight and overcoming technological challenges in SEE through talent transformation.

The new OECD report [Labour Migration in The Western Balkans: Mapping Patterns, Addressing Challenges and Reaping Benefits](#), prepared between spring 2021 and January 2022, was launched at the High-Level Conference. The report provides analytical insights on WB6 economies' labour migration, with economy-specific policy recommendations to address its root causes and reap benefits of migration and the diaspora. This report, conducted under the auspices of the OECD SEE Regional Programme, was prepared in co-operation with the OECD International Migration Division and co-funded by the Austria (ADA) and Switzerland (SDC).

A series of meetings in the Western Balkan Six economies will open up the chance for deepening the discussions that took place during the High-Level Conference and explore ways to continue and strengthen the work on labour migration and skills. In particular, this meeting will provide the opportunity to discuss key findings of the report and pathways to support Bosnia and Herzegovina in better capitalising on its diasporas for its own development.

■ WHO WILL BE THERE?

The meeting will bring together policy-makers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, OECD and international experts, representatives from Austria, Switzerland, and the European Union, as well as representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Diaspora Associations and other non-governmental and international organisations present in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on Kosovo's declaration of independence

14 September 2022

Startup Studio, Sarajevo, and on Zoom

09:30-10:00 **REGISTRATION AND WELCOME COFFEE**

10:00-10:20 **OPENING REMARKS**

- **Mr Daniel Hunn**, Ambassador, Embassy of Switzerland in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Ms Ulrike Hartmann**, Ambassador, Embassy of Austria in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Mr Samir Zuko**, Deputy Director, Labour and Employment Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Mr Andreas Schaal**, Director, OECD Global Relations and Cooperation

10:20-10:40 **PRESENTATION OF THE OECD REPORT**

Labour Migration in the Western Balkans: Mapping Patterns, Addressing Challenges and Reaping Benefits

This session will present the report's main findings for Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will also explore policy approaches for maximising the benefits from migration while mitigating its negative consequences.

- **Mr Martin Kohtze**, Policy Analyst/Project Manager, OECD South East Europe Division
- **Ms Lisa Andersson**, Labour Market Economist/Policy Analyst, OECD International Migration Division

Questions and answers

10:40-12:00 **PANEL DISCUSSION – Maximising the benefits from migration for Bosnia and Herzegovina**

This panel will discuss how Bosnia and Herzegovina can improve its policies to reduce the strength of potential push factors behind labour emigration and maximise the development benefits from migration and the diaspora.

MODERATOR:

- **Ms Estelle Vuichard**, Diplomatic Officer, Embassy of Switzerland in Bosnia and Herzegovina

PANELISTS:

- **Mr Enes Ališković**, Director, Bosnia and Herzegovina Export Promotion Agency (BHEPA), Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Mr Nikola Burić**, CEO, i-Dijaspora/ i-platform
- **Mr Armin Alijagić**, President, Naša Perspektiva Group
- **Ms Lilijan Sulejmanović**, Entrepreneur and Founding Director of the British Bosnian and Herzegovinian Chamber of Commerce

12:00-12:30

NETWORKING COFFEE

Contacts

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