

Presentation of the study

# ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE WESTERN BALKANS SIX

14 April 2021 (webinar)



As part of its Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) agenda, under the joint RCC-UNDP WEE initiative and drawing on the Common Regional Market Action Plan 2021-2024, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat commissioned a study on the **“Economic benefits of gender equality and women empowerment in the Western Balkans 6 (WB6)”** aiming to shed light on the labour market in the WB6 from a gender perspective and assess the economic benefits of empowering women through the labour market indicators.

While female labour force participation has increased in the WB6 economies, participation remains relatively low, averaging 52% of the working-age population over the period 2010-19. Women in the WB6 are less likely than women in the EU to be employees and more likely to be unpaid family members.

Employment rates of Q1 2019 versus Q1 2020 suggested some improvement in the gender gap. However, the COVID-19 pandemics negatively impacted gender equality in the Western Balkans once more, with more women losing jobs, quitting their businesses, suffering increasing pressure due to home caring for children and elderly, not to mention significant increase in domestic violence. Women are becoming increasingly vulnerable. Therefore, this study lays the groundwork for a stronger engagement on issues related to economic empowerment of women in the region and presents both challenges and opportunities for increasing women’s participation in the labour market.

The study will reveal a comprehensive analysis of the current situation of gender equality and women empowerment in the WB; measure the economic benefits of gender equality policies; and present the Women Empowerment Index as a measure of women economic empowerment. The study also contains stocktaking and assessment of key policy areas and measures to reduce gender inequality in WB6 and promote economic empowerment of women.

In this webinar, Cambridge Econometrics, Economix and the RCC Secretariat will detail their findings for the WB6, providing evidence based upon which policy can be formulated successfully. A panel discussion will round up this webinar.

The audience anticipated in this webinar is policymakers and public sector actors, including key decision-makers from gender equality promoting bodies, from the WB6 economies, as well as representatives of international organisations, civil society and private sector.

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## AGENDA

# Women Economic Empowerment

April 14, 2021  
10.00 – 12.00  
(Webinar)

Time	Contents
10.00 - 10.15	Welcome and introductory remarks <b>Ms. Majlinda Bregu, Secretary General, RCC</b> <b>Ms. Narine Sahakyan, UNDP Resident Representative in North Macedonia</b> <b>Moderator: Ms. Bojana Zorić, Senior Policy Analyst, RCC</b>
10.15 - 10.45	<b>Presentation of the study: Economic benefits of gender equality and women empowerment in the Western Balkans 6 (WB6)</b> The current situation of women empowerment in the WB6 Future prospects of women empowerment and Women Empowerment Index Policy recommendations <b>Presented by Ms. Anja Heimann, Cambridge Econometrics</b> <b>Ms. Cornelia Suta, Cambridge Econometrics</b> <b>Ms. Nicola Duell, Economix</b>
10.45 – 10.55	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
10.55 – 11.50	<b>Panel discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>with policymakers, civil society, academia and private sector representatives, to reflect on the current situation of women empowerment and to discuss ways forward.</li></ul> Prof. Dr. Ermira Qosja, Professor, European University of Tirana Ms. Lejla Gačanica - Legal Expert and Researcher Ms. Iliriana Jaka Gashi, Director, Kosova*-Women 4 Women Ms. Sanja Popović Pantić, Chairwoman of EEN sector group on Women Entrepreneurship, EEN WB Ms. Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska, Secretary General, WB6 Chamber Investment Forum (WB6CIF) Ms. Zorana Dimitrijević, National Junior Consultant for Gender Equality, Coordination Body for Gender Equality of the Republic of Serbia <b>Moderated by Ms. Bojana Zorić, Senior Policy Analyst, RCC and Ms. Nicola Duell, Economix</b>
11.50 – 12.00	Concluding remarks and wrap-up <b>Ms. Tanja Miščević, Deputy Secretary General, RCC</b>

The Event will be held in English.

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