




International Labour Organisation

 Austrian
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PRESS RELEASE

EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATION REPRESENTATIVES FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE DISCUSS STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE CRISIS

How Employers' Organisations can assist their members – especially small and medium enterprises – to take steps to mitigate the impacts of the current economic crisis will be one of the key topics at a meeting in Zagreb next week. Thirty high level representatives from Employers' Organisations from 18 countries* of Central and Eastern Europe will participate in a three day capacity-building workshop from 22 – 24 September 2009.

As well as focusing on practical steps to assist employers, the opportunity will be taken to share experiences of policy initiatives in other countries that - with the input of the Employers' Organisation of those countries - have been successful in ensuring enterprises remain viable and skilled workers are not lost to the economy.

To strengthen the capacity for Employers' Organisations to have input to wider discussion and dialogue on economic issues – important not only in times of crisis – the meeting will also focus on macroeconomic issues about which negotiators at all levels need to have a good understanding. For example: *What are the consequences for enterprises if the public deficit doubles? What are the threats and opportunities for enterprises if the currency devalues? What impact would deflation have on an enterprise?* These and other issues will be covered by presentations on topics such as national accounting and balance of payments, components of economic growth strategies and the role of the State in the economy.

Key note addresses will be given by a number of highly qualified presenters including Dr Zafiris Tzannatos who from 1992 – 2008 was a senior official with the World Bank; Mr Emmanuel Julien, Deputy Director of Social, European and International Affairs of the Employers' Organisation in France; Ms Deborah France-Massin, Deputy Director of the ILO's Bureau of Employers' Activities in Geneva; Dr Maruska Visek from the Department for Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy of the Institute of Economics in Zagreb; and Mr David Lamotte, the Director *a.i.* of the ILO's Job Creation and Enterprise Development Department in Geneva.

The Workshop is being organised by the ILO's Senior Specialist for Employers' Activities in Central and Eastern Europe in conjunction with the Croatian Employers' Association and Adriatic Regional Employers' Centre. Financial support to enable such wide participation is being provided by the ILO's Bureau of Employers' Activities, the Austrian Development Agency through its project *Consolidating the Legal and Institutional Foundations of Social Dialogue in the Countries of the Western Balkans and Moldova* and the ILO's Subregional Office for Central and Eastern Europe in Budapest.

The expected outcome is that Employer's Organisation representatives will be better able to participate in all forums where economic issues are under discussion – including being able to represent their members more effectively in developing policies to mitigate the economic crisis.

* Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, UNMIK Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, FYR Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Slovakia.

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