

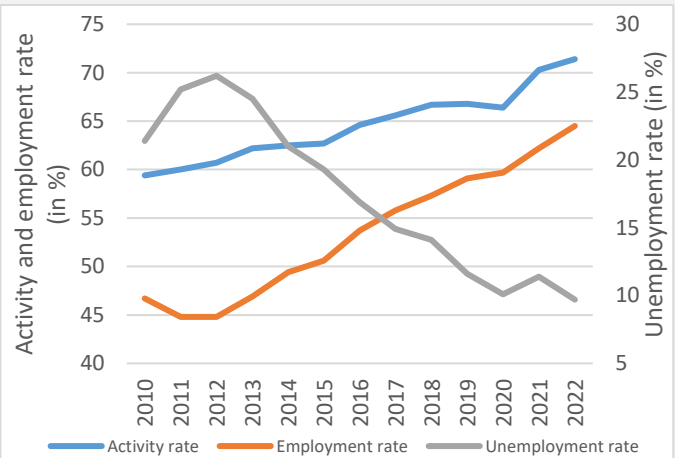
Social Dialogue in Defence of Vulnerable Groups in Post-COVID-19 Labour Markets (VS/2021/0196)



Serbia

COVID-19 labour market developments

- The recovery of the Serbian labour market that started in 2012 was only slightly interrupted in 2020 due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus pandemic
- Although there was an improvement in the labour market according to all basic indicators in the previous decade, the quality of employment has remained an issue
- Despite the negative consequences of the crisis, the year-on-year employment decreased by only 9,000 (0.3%) in 2020
- Extremely slight decline in employment coupled with a strong depopulation trend has even led to an increase in the employment rate
- Both unemployment and unemployment rate decreased in 2020, increased briefly in 2021 and then returned to the pre-Covid-19 trend a year later



COVID-19 and vulnerable groups

- Informal workers
- Workers on atypical and fixed-term contracts
- Youth
- Women and parents with young children
- Self-employed
- Healthcare and workers in essential services

Social dialogue in defence of vulnerable groups

- Protection of all permanent employees with flat rate subsidies of net minimum wage – government-led
- Self-employed got multiple payments of net minimum wages – government-led
- Registered unemployed got one-off financial assistance
- Companies in the most affected sectors (hospitality, travel agencies, bus carriers) got additional financial assistance – initiated by social partners
- Health and safety measures for essential services – initiated by social partners

Policy relevance

- Government led initial and most consequential response to the Covid-19 pandemic, comprising of job retention scheme and universal unconditional financial assistance for all adults
- Social dialogue actors were involved at later stages and played more important role in lobbying for additional assistance to most affected sectors and groups
- Socio-economic council had a consultative role at best, the role of employers or unions was more pronounced at sectoral level and in addressing specific issues such as health and safety
- Overall, the Government played a dominant role in social dialogue and the involvement of social partners was mainly at a consultative level or less than that

Further information

Project details: <https://www.helsinki.fi/en/projects/social-dialogue-defence-vulnerable-groups/about>, contact: EKOF (dekanat@ekof.bg.ac.rs)