

Soft powers for hard outcomes:

Using the convening power of local authorities to support employment

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6 October 2021



14.00-15.00 CEST / 15.00-16.00 IDT



Zoom



Interpretation in English/Hebrew

As a result of COVID-19, governments at all levels are facing increasing pressures to address unemployment and ensure that local workers are well prepared for other accelerated labour market transitions, such as automation and digitalisation. This requires efforts to better connect jobseekers and employers; to reskill and upskill workers in declining sectors; and to provide wrap around services to the most disadvantaged job seekers who may now find themselves at the end of the hiring line.

Across the OECD, local authorities have very different tools and powers at their disposal to address these challenges. In some countries, such as Denmark, local authorities are directly responsible for implementing active labour market policies, while in others, these responsibilities lie with regional and local branches of national governments or agencies. Responsibilities for skills policies tend to be even more diffuse, with various ministries and levels of governments playing different roles for vocational training for young people, the unemployed and migrants, for training linked to supports for SMEs, etc. At the local level, this can create a complex landscape for individuals and firms to navigate, and make it difficult to link up programmes to further more strategic local development strategies.

Regardless of how competences are divided across levels of government, there is one power that almost all local authorities share: the power to convene and broker. At the political level, this can mean bringing public, private and third sector stakeholders to a common table to define shared objectives and identify how different policies and programmes can work in tandem to achieve them. At the operational level, this can mean being the first point of contact for individuals and businesses, and then orientating them to appropriate services, or even creating one-stop shops or shared delivery portals to bring the various programmes and policies under a shared roof.

The potential of better leveraging this type of “soft” power should not be overlooked. This webinar considers how local authorities are using this convening and brokering power in different national and institutional contexts, from how to leverage local labour market data to identify challenges and develop a shared vision for community's future, to how to coordinate services for the most disadvantaged job seekers.

Moderator: Karen Maguire, Head, Local Employment, Skills and Social Innovation Division / LEED Programme, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

Scene setting: Local employment challenges and actions across the OECD

Drawing on the latest OECD research, the opening will provide an overview of the key challenges facing local actors in promoting employment in light of COVID-19 and longer-term megatrends, and international best practices in building more resilient and inclusive local labour markets.

- **Anna Rubin**, Manager of the Local Development Forum, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

Panel discussion: deep dives on local experiences

In this session, local policymakers and practitioners will discuss how cities and regions are promoting employment, with a focus on how to better coordinate instruments and policies across levels of government.

- **Stephen Overell**, Principal Strategy, Skill and Employment, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, UK
- **Juan Carlos Hernández Navas**, Director for City Projects, Fuenlabrada, Spain
- **Tiziano Barone**, Director, Veneto Lavoro, Italy
- **Tor Hatlevoll**, Labour Market Economist, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, Sweden

Reactions and Q&A

*Kick off comments on bridging national and local levels of government: **Paolo Reboani**, Head, Planning and Coordination of European and National Funds, Umbria Region*

Zoom connection details:

Please register for the first part of this webinar by completing [this form](#). Once submitted, you will receive an automated registration confirmation message containing a personalized link to join the meeting. Please save this link carefully, and check to ensure that it has not been sent to your junk mail folder. Please note that Part I of this webinar will be recorded and made accessible online after completion.

About CFE

The **OECD's Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE)** provides comparative statistics, analysis and capacity building for local and national actors to work together to unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises, promote inclusive and sustainable regions and cities, boost local job creation, and support sound tourism policies.

The mission of the **Local Employment and Economic Development programme (LEED)** is to build vibrant communities with more and better quality jobs for all. Since 1982, the Programme has been supporting national and local governments through tailored reviews and capacity building activities, as well as research and good practice reports on innovative approaches to local development.

This event is part of the **OECD Local Development Forum** is a network of thousands of individuals worldwide, united by their shared commitment to making their communities more resilient, inclusive and sustainable. It counts members from over 70 countries, representing city, regional and national governments, employment and training agencies, chambers of commerce, social innovators, start-ups, businesses and NGOs. The Local Development Forum is a place for peer learning and dissemination of local innovations and best practices at the global level.

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