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des	Beschäftigungsausschusses
für den	Ausschuss der Ständigen Vertreter (1. Teil) / Rat (Beschäftigung, Sozialpolitik, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz)
Betr.:	Arbeitsmarktbericht – Billigung des Berichts des Beschäftigungsausschusses

Die Delegationen erhalten anbei für die Tagung des Rates (Beschäftigung, Sozialpolitik, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz) am 19. Juni 2014 den vom Beschäftigungsausschuss übermittelten Arbeitsmarktbericht.

ARBEITSMARKTBERICHT DES BESCHÄFTIGUNGS-AUSSCHUSSES:

Bestandsaufnahme der während der Krise durchgeführten Strukturreformen

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Abschnitt 1 - Einleitung

Auf der Grundlage von Artikel 148 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union (AEUV) bietet die Europäische Beschäftigungsstrategie (EBS) den EU-Mitgliedstaaten (durch die „offene Koordinierungsmethode“) einen Rahmen für den Informationsaustausch sowie die Erörterung und Koordinierung ihrer Beschäftigungspolitik, um EU-weit die Voraussetzungen für mehr und bessere Arbeitsplätze zu schaffen. Zielsetzungen der EBS sind die Herbeiführung eines Konsenses über die gemeinsamen Herausforderungen, eine strenge Überwachung der Fortschritte der Länder bei der Umsetzung der Empfehlungen, ein zunehmender Konformitätsdruck und eine tatsächliche multilaterale Analyse der im Rat vereinbarten thematischen Prioritäten. Damit ermöglicht sie es seit mittlerweile 16 Jahren, Erfahrungen bei der Koordinierung der Beschäftigungspolitik in der gesamten EU zu sammeln.

Im Jahr 2010 wurde mit der Strategie Europa 2020 ein umfassendes Konzept für ein intelligentes, nachhaltiges und integratives Wachstum erarbeitet. **In diesem Zusammenhang wurden mehrere Zielsetzungen festgelegt, darunter die Anhebung der Erwerbstätigenquote von Männern und Frauen auf 75 %, die Senkung der Zahl der von Armut und sozialer Ausgrenzung betroffenen oder bedrohten Menschen um mindestens 20 Millionen und die Bekämpfung der Problematik des Schulabbruchs (durch die Verringerung der Quote vorzeitiger Schulabgänger auf 10 %) sowie die Steigerung des Anteils der Bevölkerung mit abgeschlossener Hochschulbildung auf mindestens 40 %.**

Seit 2010 ist die Europäische Beschäftigungsstrategie zu einem integralen Bestandteil des Europäischen Semesters für die politische Koordinierung¹ geworden und hat zu einer Stärkung der Integration der Wirtschafts-, Beschäftigungs- und Sozialpolitik beigetragen. Weiter gestärkt wurde dieses System der wirtschaftspolitischen Steuerung durch die Umsetzung der sogenannten Sixpack- und Twopack-Verordnungen², auf die sich die Europäische Union bei der Bewältigung der gegenwärtigen Krise und der Realisierung von Fortschritten im Hinblick auf die Europa-2020-Ziele stützen kann.

Der Beschäftigungsausschuss spielt im Rahmen der Europäischen Beschäftigungsstrategie in vielerlei Hinsicht eine zentrale Rolle, insbesondere im Zusammenhang mit dem jährlichen Gemeinsamen Beschäftigungsbericht, den beschäftigungspolitischen Leitlinien und des Monitoring der Beschäftigungspolitik der Mitgliedstaaten. Letztere wurde in den vergangenen Jahren durch eine Reihe konsequenter Maßnahmen zur multilateralen Überwachung der von den Mitgliedstaaten bei der Umsetzung der länderspezifischen Empfehlungen des Rates und der von den im Rahmen einer Vereinbarung tätigen Mitgliedstaaten eingegangenen arbeitsmarktspezifischen Verpflichtungen erzielten Fortschritte **massiv verstärkt**. Dieser Bericht basiert im Wesentlichen auf Daten, die im Laufe von drei Jahren, in denen solche Überprüfungen vorgenommen wurden, zusammengetragen wurden. **In diesem Zusammenhang hat der Beschäftigungsausschuss auch seine Zusammenarbeit mit anderen Gruppen und Einrichtungen beispielsweise aus dem Bereich der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung verstärkt. Zudem wird in diesem Bericht eine Bestandsaufnahme der wichtigsten seit dem Jahr 2010 durchgeführten Reformen vorgenommen, um einen Beitrag zu der anstehenden Halbzeitüberprüfung der Strategie Europa 2020 zu leisten,**

¹ Siehe Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1175/2011 des Rates vom 16. November 2011 zur Änderung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1466/97 des Rates über den Ausbau der haushaltspolitischen Überwachung und der Überwachung und Koordinierung der Wirtschaftspolitiken.

² ABl. L 306 vom 23. November 2011; ABl. L 140 vom 27. Mai 2013.

in deren Rahmen auch die beschäftigungspolitischen Leitlinien der EBS einer Prüfung unterzogen werden.

Seit der Einrichtung des Europäischen Semesters haben sich an den europäischen Arbeitsmärkten fundamentale Veränderungen vollzogen; **nach dem anfänglichen Beschäftigungswachstum in den ersten zehn Jahren der EBS hatte die Wirtschaftskrise tief greifende Auswirkungen auf die Struktur des Arbeitsmarktes.**

Dieser Bericht soll veranschaulichen, dass weitreichende Arbeitsmarktreformen durchgeführt wurden, die möglicherweise über jedes bislang in der EU gesehene Maß hinausgehen. Die Mitgliedstaaten bemühen sich um eine Verbesserung der Leistungsfähigkeit der Systeme der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung, um Arbeitsmarktprobleme aufgrund von Qualifikationsdefiziten oder einer Schieflage zwischen Qualifikationsangebot und -nachfrage zu verhindern oder abzuwenden. Des Weiteren liegt es insbesondere bei Reformen dieser Art auf der Hand, dass ihre Vorteile in den meisten Fällen erst mittel- bis langfristig in vollem Umfang zutage treten werden. Daher kann in diesem Bericht lediglich eine Bestandsaufnahme der erzielten Fortschritte vorgenommen werden. Anschließend wird der Beschäftigungsausschuss im Zusammenhang mit der Halbzeitüberprüfung der Strategie Europa 2020 weitere Ausführungen vorlegen. Nach drei Zyklen der politischen Koordinierung im Rahmen des Europäischen Semesters scheint jedoch eine vorläufige Analyse angebracht, um Richtung, Reichweite und Ausmaß der Reformen zu untersuchen. Dies gilt insbesondere mit Blick auf die im Jahr 2014 anstehende Halbzeitüberprüfung der Strategie Europa 2020.

In diesem Bericht werden sieben thematische Politikbereiche behandelt:

- 1. Beschäftigungsschutzvorschriften**
- 2. Aktive Arbeitsmarktpolitik und öffentliche Arbeitsverwaltungen**
- 3. Systeme der sozialen Sicherheit**
- 4. Vereinbarkeit von Berufs- und Privatleben und Gleichstellung der Geschlechter**
- 5. Systeme der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung im Kontext der Arbeitsmarktpolitik**
- 6. Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit**
- 7. Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungsmechanismen**

Um ein möglichst vollständiges Bild zu vermitteln, stützt sich dieser Bericht auf Anregungen aus einer ganzen Reihe von Dokumenten. Hierzu zählen insbesondere der Anzeiger für die Leistungen im Beschäftigungsbereich,³ d. h. der gemeinsame Halbjahresbericht der Kommission und des Beschäftigungsausschusses, in dem die zentralen EU-weiten und einzelstaatlichen arbeitsmarktrelevanten Herausforderungen – die „vorrangigen Herausforderungen im Beschäftigungsbereich“ – überblicksartig vorgestellt werden, die länderspezifischen Empfehlungen selbst, die Vereinbarungen der im Rahmen einer solchen Vereinbarung tätigen Länder, die Arbeiten der Europäischen Beobachtungsstelle für Beschäftigungspolitik (Sachverständige der EEPO, vormals SYSDM)⁴ und die im Rahmen des Programms für gegenseitiges Lernen⁵ gewonnenen Erkenntnisse und Erfahrungen. Die wichtigste Informationsquelle bilden jedoch die vom Beschäftigungsausschuss in diesem Zeitraum durchgeführten Arbeiten zur multilateralen Überwachung der Umsetzung der an die Mitgliedstaaten gerichteten Empfehlungen.⁶

³ EPM 2012, 16061/12; EPM 2013, 10373/1/13.

⁴ EEPO, Review Core Team Synthesis: Labour Market reforms 2011-2013.

⁵ Siehe Anhang.

⁶ EMCO/10/06062012/EN, EMCO/29/300513_Rev2/EN; im Einklang mit den Arbeitsverfahren des Beschäftigungsausschusses werden in diesem Bericht nicht nur Mitgliedstaaten berücksichtigt, an die länderspezifische Empfehlungen gerichtet wurden, sondern auch im

Abschnitt 2 – Herausforderungen und politische Reformen 2011 bis 2013

2.1 Auswirkungen der Krise

Nach der Einleitung der EBS entwickelten sich die europäischen Arbeitsmärkte bis zum Ausbruch der Finanzkrise Ende 2007 relativ gut. Dank der ungebrochen starken Wirtschaftsentwicklung erlebten die Arbeitsmärkte eine anhaltende Wachstumsphase. Bis 2007 war die Erwerbstätigenquote auf etwa 65 % der Erwerbsbevölkerung (Altersgruppe der 15- bis 64-Jährigen) gestiegen. Damit war das (damals gültige) in Lissabon festgelegte Ziel von 70 % zwar noch nicht ganz, aber immerhin annähernd erreicht. In den vorangegangenen Jahren war die Beschäftigung stark gestiegen, insbesondere unter Frauen und älteren Arbeitnehmern. Die Arbeitslosenquote war trotz des erheblichen Wachstums der Erwerbsbevölkerung auf etwa 7 % gesunken.

Seit Beginn der Krise haben die Arbeitsmärkte mit deren Folgen zu kämpfen und sehen sich der schwersten Rezession seit der Weltwirtschaftskrise gegenüber. Die Krise hatte tief greifende Auswirkungen auf die Arbeitsmärkte Europas und führte zu einer plötzlichen Trendumkehr bei der Beschäftigung, durch welche die vor 2008 erzielten Zugewinne zunichtegemacht wurden. Bis Ende 2012 ging die Zahl der Erwerbstätigen in der EU um 4,4 Millionen zurück, die Erwerbstätigenquote sank auf 68,4 % und die Arbeitslosigkeit nahm drastisch zu. Ein besonders starker Rückgang der Beschäftigung war im Baugewerbe (-4,5 %), in der Landwirtschaft (-1,5 %) und im verarbeitenden Gewerbe (-1,2 %) zu verzeichnen.

Zwischen 2008 und 2012 stieg die Arbeitslosenquote in den 27 EU-Mitgliedstaaten von 7,1 % auf einen Höchstwert von 11 %⁷, im Euro-Währungsgebiet erreichte der entsprechende Wert sogar 12,1 %.⁸ In allen Mitgliedstaaten mit Ausnahme von DE, AT und MT waren die Arbeitslosenquoten im Jahr 2012 höher als vor der Krise. In BG, CY, EL, IT, ES und PT stieg die Arbeitslosigkeit stärker als im EU-Durchschnitt. Dies führte unter anderem zu einer erheblichen Ausweitung der Bandbreite der Arbeitslosenquoten in der EU und insbesondere im Euro-Währungsgebiet (siehe Anhang).

Auf Mikroebene führte die Krise zu einer Verschärfung der Benachteiligung auf dem Arbeitsmarkt. Von der Ausgrenzung aus dem Arbeitsmarkt bedrohte Bevölkerungsgruppen, wie beispielsweise Geringqualifizierte, wurden von der Krise hart getroffen. Großes politisches Augenmerk wurde auf junge Menschen gelegt, da sich deren Stellung im Arbeitsmarkt verschlechterte. Ihre Arbeitslosenquoten stiegen auf ein inakzeptabel hohes Niveau, und auch der Anteil der jungen Menschen, die weder eine Arbeit haben noch eine schulische oder berufliche Ausbildung absolvieren, nahm drastisch zu und erreichte Ende 2012 einen Wert von 13,2 %. Die stärksten Zunahmen waren diesbezüglich in EL (+8,6 Prozentpunkte), HR (+6,6 Prozentpunkte), CY (+6,3 Prozentpunkte) und RO (+5,2 Prozentpunkte) zu verzeichnen.

In diesem Abschnitt werden die Herausforderungen im Beschäftigungsbereich anhand von sieben Politikbereichen untersucht:

Rahmen von Vereinbarungen tätige Mitgliedstaaten sowie Kroatien, das der Europäischen Union im Juli 2013 beigetreten ist. Siehe hierzu den Überblick der Länderpapiere im Anhang.

⁷ Als prozentualer Anteil an den Erwerbspersonen, siehe EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review, Oktober 2013.

⁸ Siehe EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review, Oktober 2013.

2.2 Vereinfachung der Beschäftigungsschutzvorschriften und Bekämpfung der Segmentierung

Durch die Krise wurden die Herausforderungen im Beschäftigungsbereich im Hinblick auf bestimmte Bevölkerungsgruppen EU-weit verschärft.

Die Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit ist in der EU zwischen 2008 und 2012 nahezu auf das Doppelte gestiegen (von 2,6 % auf 4,7 % der Erwerbspersonen) und hat sich in einigen Mitgliedstaaten zu einem strukturellen Problem entwickelt. Zugleich hatten die Reaktionen der Unternehmen auf die wirtschaftliche Unsicherheit spürbare Auswirkungen auf Zeitarbeitnehmer, vor allem auf junge Menschen und Geringqualifizierte. Während in einigen Mitgliedstaaten der Anteil der Zeitarbeitnehmer an allen Erwerbstätigen ausgehend von einem sehr hohen Niveau drastisch gefallen ist, war in anderen eine deutliche Zunahme von befristeten Verträgen und Teilzeitverträgen zu beobachten.

Infolgedessen wurden die Beschäftigungsschutzvorschriften modernisiert und vereinfacht, um die Widerstandsfähigkeit des Arbeitsmarktes zu verbessern.

In diesem Zusammenhang hat sich die Gewährleistung ausgewogener Beschäftigungsschutzvorschriften zu einer Priorität der Reformagenda entwickelt. Die Beseitigung starrer institutioneller Strukturen wurde notwendig, um die Stabilität der Arbeitsmärkte zu verbessern, für eine breitere Erwerbsbeteiligung zu sorgen und die Mobilität der Arbeitskräfte zugunsten dynamischerer Sektoren und Arbeitsplätze zu fördern. Infolge der Krise wurde zudem deutlich, dass die nicht angemeldete Erwerbstätigkeit eine weitere relevante Fehlfunktion darstellt, die abgestellt werden muss. Der Beschäftigungsausschuss unterstreicht, dass in zehn Ländern die Segmentierung des Arbeitsmarktes eine besonders bedeutsame Herausforderung darstellt, da hier überdurchschnittlich hohe Zeitarbeitsquoten vorherrschen und nur ein geringer Anteil der Zeitarbeitsverträge letztendlich in unbefristete Verträge umgewandelt wird.

Seit Beginn der Krise wurden in elf Mitgliedstaaten weitreichende Strukturreformen verabschiedet.

Die vom Beschäftigungsausschuss durchgeführten Überprüfungen machten deutlich, dass die Rechtsvorschriften in diesen Ländern umfassend überarbeitet wurden, um Kosten zu senken und die Verfahren für Einzel- und Massenentlassungen zu vereinfachen. In einigen Fällen wurden zudem die Probezeiten verlängert. Während in einigen Fällen die Beschränkungen für den Abschluss von Zeitverträgen gelockert wurden, bemühten sich jene Mitgliedstaaten, die mit einer Segmentierung ihrer Arbeitsmärkte konfrontiert waren, das Niveau des Beschäftigungsschutzes von Zeitarbeitnehmern dem von Arbeitnehmern mit unbefristeten Verträgen anzugleichen und den Missbrauch atypischer Beschäftigungsverhältnisse einzudämmen, indem sie beispielsweise höhere Sozialabgaben für befristete Verträge einführten und die Vorschriften über bestimmte Formen atypischer Beschäftigung, wie beispielsweise Scheinselbstständigkeit, verbesserten. In mehreren anderen Ländern wurden einzelne Merkmale des Beschäftigungsschutzes korrigiert, zum Teil im Zuge der Umsetzung der arbeitsrechtlichen Richtlinien der Europäischen Gemeinschaft, insbesondere der Richtlinie über Leiharbeit.

In diesem Zusammenhang förderte eine deutliche Mehrheit der Mitgliedstaaten Instrumente zur Verbesserung der innerbetrieblichen Flexibilität.

Die Förderung der innerbetrieblichen Flexibilität hat dazu beigetragen, dass es Unternehmen möglich ist, in Zeiten eines geringeren Arbeitskräftebedarfs wertvolle Mitarbeiter zu halten, statt sie entlassen zu müssen. Dies wurde ganz besonders in der Anfangsphase der Krise deutlich, als in den Jahren 2009 und 2010 Kurzarbeitsregelungen eingeführt oder vorübergehend verlängert wurden. In den letzten Jahren stellte eine Reihe von Ländern weitere finanzielle Unterstützung für Kurzarbeitsregelungen bereit oder verabschiedete dauerhafte Gesetzesänderungen.

2.3 Verbesserung der Widerstandsfähigkeit des Arbeitsmarktes und Abstimmung von Qualifikationsangebot und -nachfrage

Die Krise sorgte für einen Stillstand des Wachstums der Gesamtbeschäftigung, der Rückgang der Beschäftigung betraf jedoch insbesondere Geringqualifizierte und junge Menschen. Zwischen 2008 und 2012 sank die Erwerbstätigenquote unter Geringqualifizierten von 56,5 % auf 52,1 % und unter jungen Menschen von 65,6 % auf 60,1 %. Angesichts dieser Entwicklung wurden im Anzeiger für die Leistungen im Beschäftigungsbereich als vorrangige Herausforderungen für 17 Mitgliedstaaten angemessene und wirksame aktive arbeitsmarktpolitische Maßnahmen beschrieben, darunter Investitionen in besser funktionierende öffentliche Arbeitsverwaltungen, um eine zügige Eingliederung bzw. Wiedereingliederung der am stärksten benachteiligten Gruppen in den Arbeitsmarkt zu ermöglichen.

Die aktive Arbeitsmarktpolitik wird gegenwärtig umgestaltet.

Viele der Konzepte für eine aktive Arbeitsmarktpolitik werden neu ausgerichtet, um sie insbesondere durch ein wirksames Profiling besser auf die individuellen Bedürfnisse der Betroffenen zuzuschneiden. Dabei wurde ein verstärktes Augenmerk auf benachteiligte Gruppen wie junge Arbeitslose, ältere Arbeitnehmer, Menschen mit Behinderungen, Migranten und Langzeitarbeitslose gelegt. Die diesbezüglichen Maßnahmen decken ein breites Themenspektrum ab, darunter Verbesserungen in der Ausbildung durch eine bessere Verknüpfung der Ausbildungsprogramme mit der Arbeitswelt, spezifische Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit (insbesondere die Schaffung einer Jugendgarantie), steuerliche und beschäftigungsrelevante Anreize mittels einer Senkung der Sozialversicherungsbeiträge oder durch Subventionen zur Senkung der Beschäftigungskosten bei der Einstellung von Mitarbeitern aus den Zielgruppen, Anreize im Zusammenhang mit der innerbetrieblichen Flexibilität mit dem Ziel der Einführung von Kurzarbeitsregelungen zur Verhinderung von Entlassungen, Jobrotations- und Jobsharing-Regelungen sowie die unmittelbare Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen für benachteiligte Gruppen.

In diesem Zusammenhang wird eine Jugendgarantie zur Unterstützung junger Menschen eingeführt.

Im Rahmen seiner multilateralen Überwachung der Umsetzung der länderspezifischen Empfehlungen für die Bekämpfung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit machte der Beschäftigungsausschuss zum einen die große Bedeutung einer zeitnahen Einführung der Jugendgarantie und zum anderen die starke politische Sichtbarkeit dieses Themas deutlich. Die Überprüfung ergab, dass es wichtig ist, umfassende und koordinierte Konzepte zu erarbeiten, die ein breites Spektrum von auf nationaler, regionaler und lokaler Ebene tätigen Akteuren einbinden. Hierfür ist ein ausgewogenes Verhältnis zwischen kurzfristigen Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung junger Menschen und längerfristigen Strukturreformen erforderlich. Die Mitgliedstaaten machen Fortschritte bei der Einführung einer Jugendgarantie und bei der Bewältigung der erheblichen Herausforderungen, die mit der Einführung eines solchen Konzepts verbunden sind, wenn es darum geht, alle jungen Menschen, die weder eine Arbeit haben noch eine schulische oder berufliche Ausbildung absolvieren, zu erreichen und Kapazitätsengpässen auf allen Ebenen zu begegnen.

Wirksame öffentliche Arbeitsverwaltungen (ÖAV) sind für die Durchführung effektiver aktiver arbeitsmarktpolitischer Maßnahmen von entscheidender Bedeutung.

In mindestens 18 Ländern wurden im Zeitraum zwischen 2011 und 2013 Reformen der öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen durchgeführt. Darunter waren Maßnahmen zur Intensivierung der Kontakte zu den Zielgruppen durch die Verbesserung der vor Ort erbrachten Leistungen, zur verstärkten Einbindung langzeitarbeitsloser und marginalisierter Jugendlicher und zur Optimierung der Vermittlungsverfahren durch eine sorgfältigere Personalisierung der

Leistungen und statistisches Profiling. Die Maßnahmen zielten ferner auf eine Steigerung der Ressourcen ab, um die Effizienz und Wirksamkeit der öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen im Hinblick auf ihren Personalschlüssel, die Aus- und Weiterbildung des Personals und die Verknüpfung der Leistungen/Entlohnung mit der Wirksamkeit der öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen zu verbessern. Es wurden spezifische Maßnahmen ergriffen, um die Zugänglichkeit der Dienstleistungen zu modernisieren und zu verbessern, beispielsweise durch die Einführung elektronischer Registrierungs- und Antragsverfahren sowie durch die Intensivierung der ämterübergreifenden Zusammenarbeit mit dem Ziel der Schaffung eines wirksamen Systems zur Unterstützung der Vermittlung Arbeitsloser in den Arbeitsmarkt. Die Mitwirkung privater Agenturen bei den Vermittlungsmaßnahmen sowie die verstärkte Einbindung der Sozialpartner stellen in einer Reihe von Ländern wichtige Entwicklungen dar. Auf europäischer Ebene sollte der Beschluss des Rates und des Europäischen Parlaments über die verstärkte Zusammenarbeit zwischen den öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen die Zusammenarbeit und die Verbreitung bewährter Verfahren weiter befördern.

Allerdings werden diese Reformen der aktiven Arbeitsmarktpolitik und der öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen naturgemäß nur schrittweise vollzogen.

Angesichts des Ausmaßes der verbleibenden Herausforderungen im Hinblick auf die Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit, die Schiefelage auf dem Arbeitsmarkt und die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit müssen auch weiterhin Anstrengungen unternommen werden. Dabei ist insbesondere ein stärkeres Augenmerk auf die von den lokalen Bedingungen abhängigen Erfordernisse des Marktes sowie auf geeignetes und ausgebildetes Personal zu legen, das in der Lage ist, ein hochwertiges Profiling vorzunehmen, eine ausgezeichnete individuelle Beratung bei der Arbeitssuche anzubieten und eine Zusammenarbeit mit privaten Arbeitsvermittlungen aufzubauen.

2.4 Modernisierung der Systeme der sozialen Sicherheit

Die sozialen Folgen dieser Krise stellen besondere Anforderungen an die Systeme der sozialen Sicherheit.

Die Mitgliedstaaten sind mit der doppelten Herausforderung konfrontiert, zum einen für eine angemessene Höhe und eine hinreichende Reichweite von Unterstützungsleistungen für jene Menschen zu sorgen, die ihren Arbeitsplatz verlieren, um zu verhindern, dass die Betroffenen in Armut abgleiten, und zum anderen der Notwendigkeit Rechnung zu tragen, die sozialen Leistungssysteme zu überprüfen, um Anreize für eine Teilhabe am Arbeitsmarkt zu schaffen und Arbeitslosigkeitsfällen vorzubeugen.

In neun Mitgliedstaaten wurden die Leistungen bei Arbeitslosigkeit reformiert.

Die Reformen der Leistungen bei Arbeitslosigkeit konzentrieren sich in der Regel auf die Verschärfung der Voraussetzungen für den Bezug von Unterstützung, die Absenkung der Höhe der Leistungen und die Einführung von Bedürftigkeitsprüfungen und Auflagen im Zusammenhang mit einer aktiven Arbeitsplatzsuche sowie von Leistungen, die von der Dauer der Arbeitslosigkeit abhängig sind. In mehreren Ländern wurde das Sozialleistungssystem vereinfacht, darunter auch in jenen Ländern, in denen es eine stabilisierende Funktion hatte. Der Schwerpunkt liegt in diesem Zusammenhang auf Geldleistungssystemen, um der Abhängigkeit von Sozialleistungen und Sozialhilfebetrug vorzubeugen. In einigen Mitgliedstaaten sind Reformen in diesem Bereich für das Jahr 2014 geplant.

Einige Reformen zielten auch auf eine Stärkung des Sozialschutzes für atypische Beschäftigungsformen ab.

Um die unternehmerische Tätigkeit zu fördern, haben mehrere Länder Pflicht- und Sonderfonds insbesondere für Selbstständige aufgelegt, aus denen Leistungen bei Elternurlaub und

langwierigen Erkrankungen sowie bestimmte Sozialleistungen gezahlt werden. Zudem haben mehrere Länder Regelungen für Kleinunternehmer eingeführt, die eine zinsfreie Stundung von Sozialversicherungsbeiträgen ermöglichen, und den der Arbeitslosenversicherungspflicht unterliegenden Personenkreis erweitert. Um Arbeitslosen Anreize für die Aufnahme einer selbstständigen Tätigkeit zu bieten, gestattet eine Reihe von Mitgliedstaaten den Bezug von Leistungen während der Anlaufphase.

Rentenreformen tragen dazu bei, dass ältere Arbeitnehmer länger im Arbeitsmarkt verbleiben oder erneut eine Beschäftigung aufnehmen, und gewährleisten nachhaltige Rentensysteme.

Der Schwerpunkt dieser Reformen lag häufig auf dem Abbau des Fehlanreizes der Frühverrentung, der Anhebung des Rentenalters und der verstärkten Schaffung von Anreizen für eine Fortsetzung der Berufstätigkeit nach dem Erreichen des Rentenalters. Großes Augenmerk lag auch auf Konzepten für ein aktives Altern. In diesem Zusammenhang wurde auch versucht, Arbeitnehmer nach dem Erreichen des Rentenalters in Beschäftigung und Beruf zu halten, indem unter anderem ihr Beschäftigungsschutz gelockert wurde, wobei mögliche Verdrängungseffekte angemessen berücksichtigt wurden. In mehreren Mitgliedstaaten wurden Reformen der Berufsunfähigkeitsrentensysteme durchgeführt, um arbeitsfähige Menschen in den Arbeitsmarkt zurückzuführen und damit die zunehmende Inanspruchnahme von Berufsunfähigkeitsleistungen einzudämmen. In diesem Zusammenhang bemüht man sich auch um eine verstärkte Aktivierung der Betroffenen durch Rehabilitationsprogramme.

Mehrere Länder haben zudem weitreichende Reformen zur Modernisierung der Systeme der sozialen Sicherheit durchgeführt.

Eine zentrale Zielsetzung der Reformen war die Stärkung der Aktivierungskomponente der Systeme der sozialen Sicherheit, indem man einerseits ihre Reichweite vergrößerte und andererseits der Abhängigkeit von Sozialleistungen entgegenwirkte. Während die Mitgliedstaaten für die Durchführung und Überwachung der verabschiedeten Reformen Sorge tragen, müssen sie ihre Bemühungen um eine verbesserte Ausrichtung der vorhandenen Sozialhilfesysteme fortsetzen, um deren Wirksamkeit und Reichweite zu erhöhen und sie zugleich durch sorgfältig abgestimmte Aktivierungsmaßnahmen zu ergänzen.

2.5 Stärkung der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter und Verbesserung der Vereinbarkeit von Berufs- und Privatleben

Die Krise hat sich auf die Stellung von Frauen und Männern auf dem Arbeitsmarkt unterschiedlich ausgewirkt.⁹

Die Kluft zwischen den Arbeitslosenquoten von Männern und Frauen hat sich seit Beginn der Krise weitgehend geschlossen (die EU-weiten Arbeitslosenquoten unter Männern und Frauen beliefen sich im Jahr 2007 auf 6,6 % bzw. 7,5 %, gegenüber 10,4 % bzw. 10,5 % im Jahr 2012¹⁰). Dieser Rückgang einzelner geschlechterspezifischer Unterschiede ist jedoch zu einem Großteil nicht auf eine Verbesserung der Lage der Frauen zurückzuführen, sondern darauf, dass sich die Arbeitsmarktsituation für Männer drastischer verschlechtert hat als für Frauen.¹¹ Darüber hinaus haben der anhaltende Prozess der Konsolidierung der Staatshaushalte und seine Auswirkungen insbesondere auf den öffentlichen Sektor nachhaltige Folgen für die Erwerbsbeteiligung von Frauen.

⁹ Europäische Kommission (2012), The impact of the economic crisis on the situation of women and men and on gender equality policies.

¹⁰ Eurostat, Altersgruppe der 20- bis 64-Jährigen.

¹¹ Europäische Kommission (2014), Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2013.

Zugleich wird die Kluft zwischen den Erwerbstätigenquoten von Männern und Frauen mit zunehmendem Alter größer.

Im Jahr 2012 bewegte sich die Erwerbstätigenquote älterer Menschen in der EU zwischen 31,9 % und 73 %, wobei der Durchschnitt der 27 EU-Mitgliedstaaten bei 48,9 % lag.¹² Mit zunehmendem Alter wird die Kluft zwischen den Erwerbstätigenquoten von Männern und Frauen größer: Während sie in der unteren Altersgruppe (20- bis 29-Jährige) etwa 8,3 Prozentpunkte und in der mittleren Altersgruppe (30- bis 54-Jährige) 12,4 Prozentpunkte beträgt, erreicht sie in der ältesten Altersgruppe (55- bis 64-Jährige) einen Wert von 14,5 Prozentpunkten.

Geschlechterspezifische Arbeitsmarktprobleme stellen EU-weit nach wie vor eine enorme Herausforderung dar.

Die nach wie vor bestehenden Probleme im Zusammenhang mit der Erwerbsbeteiligung von Frauen stellten in zahlreichen Mitgliedstaaten im Zeitraum zwischen 2011 und 2013 eine vorrangige Herausforderung dar. Angesichts dessen wurde eine Reihe von Empfehlungen an die Mitgliedstaaten gerichtet, welche die Beschäftigung von Frauen zum Gegenstand hatten und vier wesentliche Bereiche betrafen: 1) Schaffung von mehr bezahlbaren Betreuungsangeboten für Kinder und/oder Pflegeangeboten für ältere Menschen oder Angebot von mehr Sozialdienstleistungen¹³, 2) Abschaffung der steuerlichen Hemmnisse für Zweitverdiener (zumeist Frauen), 3) Verringerung des Verdienstgefälles zwischen Männern und Frauen, 4) Abbau der geschlechterspezifischen Unterschiede hinsichtlich der Höhe der Ruhegehälter und Angleichung des gesetzlichen Rentenalters von Männern und Frauen.

Die Mitgliedstaaten werden jedoch in unterschiedlichem Maße tätig.

Die von den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten zur Bewältigung dieser Herausforderungen ergriffenen Maßnahmen unterscheiden sich EU-weit hinsichtlich Ausmaß und Ausgestaltung und hatten unterschiedliche Fortschritte zur Folge. Relativ weit verbreitet sind Bemühungen um eine Steigerung der Zahl der Kinderbetreuungsplätze, um die Erwerbsbeteiligung von Frauen zu verbessern. Mehrere Mitgliedstaaten führten Änderungen betreffend Mutterschafts-, Vaterschafts- oder Elternurlaub ein. In einigen Fällen richteten sich die Anstrengungen auch auf die Verbesserung der Vereinbarkeit von Berufs- und Privatleben durch die Entwicklung flexibler Arbeitszeitregelungen. Aus mehreren Ländern wurde über Maßnahmen zur Verringerung des geschlechterspezifischen Verdienstgefälles berichtet. Diese reichten von freiwilligen Initiativen (wie beispielsweise Instrumenten zur Ermittlung des geschlechterspezifischen Verdienstgefälles in Unternehmen) bis hin zu Rechtsvorschriften und verbindlichen Tarifvereinbarungen über Gleichstellungsfragen. Angesichts des Ausmaßes der Herausforderungen in den Bereichen Gleichstellung und Vereinbarkeit von Berufs- und Privatleben, die auch mit der demografischen Entwicklung in Zusammenhang stehen, müssen die Mitgliedstaaten ihre Bemühungen um die Steigerung der Erwerbsbeteiligung von Frauen intensivieren.¹⁴

2.6 Geeignete Ausbildungsangebote für die europäischen Bürger und Bereitstellung von Bildungssystemen, die den Erfordernissen des Arbeitsmarktes Rechnung tragen

Qualifikationsdefizite und Schieflage zwischen Qualifikationsangebot und -nachfrage: eine anhaltende EU-weite Herausforderung.

¹² **Europäische Kommission, 2013.**

¹³ In einem Mitgliedstaat wird in diesem Zusammenhang auch auf das Angebot flexibler Arbeitszeitregelungen verwiesen.

¹⁴ **Siehe in diesem Zusammenhang auch die Schlussfolgerungen des Rates (Beschäftigung, Sozialpolitik, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz), 7477/14.**

Die herrschende Schieflage zwischen dem Qualifikationsangebot und den Anforderungen des Arbeitsmarktes stellten bereits lange vor der Krise eine dauerhafte Herausforderung dar. Die Krise hatte jedoch eine Beschleunigung der Umstrukturierung zur Folge und hat die vorhandenen Qualifikationsdefizite und die Schieflage zwischen Qualifikationsangebot und -nachfrage weiter verschärft. Geringqualifizierte leiden ganz besonders unter den Auswirkungen der Umstrukturierung. Hier wird die Notwendigkeit des lebenslangen Lernens womöglich deutlicher denn je. An die meisten Mitgliedstaaten wurden im Zeitraum zwischen 2011 und 2013 länderspezifische Empfehlungen gerichtet, die den Bereich der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung zum Gegenstand hatten.

Die Mitgliedstaaten bemühen sich um die Bewältigung dieser Herausforderung.

Im Zuge der Strategie Europa 2020 wurde ein breites Spektrum von Maßnahmen zur Reformierung der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung sowie des lebenslangen Lernens ergriffen, die insbesondere den Übergang aus der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung in das Arbeitsleben zum Gegenstand hatten. In zahlreichen Mitgliedstaaten stand die berufliche Aus- und Weiterbildung im Zentrum der Reformen, die zumeist auf die Schaffung einer engeren Verknüpfung zwischen Bildungsergebnissen und -angeboten einerseits und den Erfordernissen des Arbeitsmarktes andererseits abzielten. Einige Maßnahmen haben auch die Verzahnung der Bildung mit dem Arbeitsmarkt im Rahmen eines dualen Systems zum Gegenstand. In einigen Fällen wurden Mechanismen zur Verbesserung der Prognosen über den künftigen Qualifikationsbedarf geschaffen.

Seit der Einführung des Europäischen Semesters werden beträchtliche Anstrengungen unternommen, um den Übergang aus der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung in den Arbeitsmarkt zu erleichtern.

In einigen Ländern waren jedoch (zum Zeitpunkt der Fertigstellung des Berichts) bei der Durchführung/Verabschiedung politischer Reformen im Bereich der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung Verzögerungen zu beobachten. Die Mitgliedstaaten werden ihre Bemühungen im Hinblick auf Aufgaben wie die Verbesserung der Verzahnung von Bildung und Arbeitsmarkt sowie der Teilhabe durch die Ausweitung des Zugangs benachteiligter Zielgruppen zur allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung fortsetzen müssen.

In den letzten Jahren lag dabei der Schwerpunkt verstärkt auf Ausbildungsplätzen und der beruflichen Aus- und Weiterbildung.

Zudem bemühte man sich um die Steigerung von Qualität und Zahl der Ausbildungsplätze, die Stärkung der Akzeptanz und Attraktivität der beruflichen Aus- und Weiterbildung und die Verbesserung der Arbeitsbedingungen von Auszubildenden. In anderen Mitgliedstaaten waren neue Aus- und Weiterbildungsangebote für Arbeitslose und benachteiligte Zielgruppen wie beispielsweise junge Menschen festzustellen, während in wieder anderen ein besonderer Schwerpunkt auf Aus- und Weiterbildungsmaßnahmen für Berufstätige, darunter auch für Geringqualifizierte, lag.

Ein weiterer Schwerpunkt lag auf der Senkung der Zahl der Schulabbrecher.

In mehreren Ländern wurden in den letzten Jahren politische Maßnahmen zur Eindämmung des frühzeitigen Schulabgangs ergriffen. Da die Arbeitslosenquote unter Schulabbrechern bei 40 % liegt, sollten diese Reformen nachhaltige Auswirkungen auf die Arbeitsmarktentwicklung haben. Es waren Reformen sowohl im Primar- als auch im Sekundarbereich auszumachen. Schwache schulische Leistungen stellen nach wie vor ein Problem dar: Ein vorrangiges Ziel besteht auch weiterhin darin, den Anteil der Schüler mit sehr schlechten Leistungen in den Grundfertigkeiten zu verringern, da sich dieses Defizit gravierend auf ihre Beschäftigungsfähigkeit auswirkt, wenn sie versuchen, im Arbeitsmarkt Fuß zu fassen.

Der hohe Anteil der Erwachsenen mit schwachen Grundfertigkeiten gibt Anlass zu großer Besorgnis.

Neuere Daten belegen, dass insbesondere Geringqualifizierte nicht an Aktivitäten des

lebenslangen Lernens teilnehmen und damit Gefahr laufen, in die „Falle der Geringqualifizierung“ zu geraten.¹⁵ Es hat sich gezeigt, dass ein erheblicher Anteil der EU-Bevölkerung im erwerbsfähigen Alter über unzureichende Lese-/Schreib- oder Rechenkenntnisse (20 % bzw. 24 %) verfügt und die Erwerbstätigenquoten in diesen Bevölkerungsgruppen niedrig sind (55 % bzw. 52 %).

Die Mitgliedstaaten müssen daher ihre Bemühungen im Bereich der Umschulung und Höherqualifizierung von Erwachsenen, insbesondere der am geringsten Qualifizierten, fortsetzen und dafür sorgen, dass tatsächlich ein lebenslanges Lernen stattfindet.

Hochschulreformen sind langfristige Vorhaben, bei denen eine nachhaltige Finanzierung nicht immer gewährleistet ist.

Hochschulreformen konzentrieren sich häufig auf die Verbesserung der Arbeitsmarktrelevanz von Hochschulqualifikationen, um zur Verringerung der Schieflage zwischen Qualifikationsangebot und -nachfrage beizutragen. Hierfür ist eine enge Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Akteuren des Bildungswesens, der Wirtschaft und des Arbeitsmarktes, wie beispielsweise den Sozialpartnern, vonnöten. Die Überprüfung des Hochschulwesens durch den Beschäftigungsausschuss hat deutlich gemacht, dass diese Ziele nur erreicht werden können, wenn eine nachhaltige Finanzierung gewährleistet ist. Die in mehreren Mitgliedstaaten aus den Bemühungen um eine Verbesserung des Zugangs benachteiligter Gruppen zur Hochschulbildung gewonnenen Erkenntnisse lassen den Schluss zu, dass diesbezüglich ein präventiver Ansatz am wirksamsten ist, bei dem das Problem bereits frühzeitig vor der Hochschulbildung in Angriff genommen wird.

2.7 Begrenzung der Arbeitskosten durch die Senkung der Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit

Es besteht Spielraum für eine Senkung der Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit.

Der Rückgang der Erwerbstätigenquote Geringqualifizierter in der EU von 56,5 % im Jahr 2008 auf 52,1 % im Jahr 2012 hat die bemerkenswerten Zugewinne zunichtegemacht, die in den Jahren vor der Krise erzielt worden waren. Die hohe Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit, insbesondere im Hinblick auf Niedriglohnempfänger, dämpft die Nachfrage nach Arbeitskräften und hat negative Auswirkungen auf die Beschäftigungschancen von Geringqualifizierten und Zweitverdienern. Probleme wurden in jenen Ländern festgestellt, in denen die Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung von Niedriglohnempfängern deutlich über 40 % liegt. Die Senkung der Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit und die Beseitigung von Verzerrungen im Abgabensystem sind für die Mitgliedstaaten von entscheidender Bedeutung, um die Nachfrage nach Arbeitskräften zu stimulieren, die Erwerbsbeteiligung zu steigern und die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit europäischer Unternehmen zu stärken.

Eine ganze Palette politischer Maßnahmen hat die Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit zum Gegenstand.

Zahlreiche Länder unternahmen einige Schritte zur Reduzierung der Sozialabgaben durch strukturelle, wenn auch begrenzte Senkungen der Sozialversicherungsbeiträge für die Renten-, Kranken- und Arbeitslosenversicherung sowie durch entsprechende Maßnahmen in Form von Körperschaftsteuergutschriften auf die Bruttolohnsumme der Unternehmen. Andere Mitgliedstaaten entschieden sich zum einen für gezielte steuerliche Anreize für die Einstellung von bestimmten benachteiligten Gruppen, wie beispielsweise jungen, geringqualifizierten oder älteren Arbeitnehmern sowie von Langzeitarbeitslosen und Niedriglohnempfängern. Zum anderen versuchten sie, Kleinstunternehmen durch eine Steuerbefreiung der produktivitätsabhängigen Lohn- und Gehaltskomponente zur Einstellung von Mitarbeitern

¹⁵ OECD (2013), Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC).

motivieren, wobei zugleich eine pauschale Einkommenssteuer und Steuerfreibeträge für Familien eingeführt wurden. In anderen Ländern wurden durch die Anhebung des steuerfreien Grundfreibetrags und die Senkung der Einkommensteuersätze Anreize geschaffen. Dies wurde vorwiegend durch höhere Verbrauchssteuern, aber auch durch innovativere Ansätze wie die Besteuerung umweltschädlicher Tatbestände ausgeglichen. Schließlich versuchte eine Gruppe von Mitgliedstaaten, Verzerrungen innerhalb der bestehenden Abgabensysteme zu beseitigen, unter anderem durch die Aufhebung von Ausnahmeregelungen für bestimmte Segmente und die Verringerung der Kluft zwischen der Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung von selbstständiger und nichtselbstständiger Arbeit und Tätigkeiten im Rahmen von Standardverträgen.

Jedoch ist die gesamte Tragweite der Auswirkungen unklar.

Insgesamt wurden in mehreren Mitgliedstaaten einige Schritte unternommen, um die Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit zu verringern, indem insbesondere verstärkt auf wachstumsfreundlichere Verbrauchs- und Umweltsteuern gesetzt wurde. Die tatsächlichen Auswirkungen der politischen Veränderungen auf die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen insgesamt, insbesondere für Niedriglohnempfänger und Zweitverdiener, sowie auf die Komplexität des Abgaben- und Sozialleistungssystems müssen weiterhin beobachtet werden. In einigen Fällen sind unter Umständen weitere politische Maßnahmen erforderlich. Die Notwendigkeit, zum Zwecke der Haushaltskonsolidierung die Steuerbemessungsgrundlage zu erweitern und die Einnahmen zu erhöhen, veranlasste jedoch andere Mitgliedstaaten dazu, zum einen die Einkommensteuersätze und Sozialabgaben für bestimmte Gruppen zu erhöhen, wengleich sie damit auch das Ziel verfolgten, den übermäßigen Einsatz von Zeitarbeitnehmern einzudämmen, und zum anderen die Steuerfreibeträge auch für Niedriglöhne zu senken. Infolgedessen ist in diesen Ländern eher eine steigende Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit zu verzeichnen.

2.8 Stärkung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit durch Anpassung der Lohn- und Gehaltsbildung an die Herausforderung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit

Lohnzurückhaltung und Reformen der Lohn- und Gehaltsbildung: ein wichtiger Hebel für die Wiederherstellung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit.

Das kumulierte produktivitätsunabhängige Wachstum der Löhne und Gehälter im Vorfeld der Krise sowie gewisse Trägheitsmomente in den ersten Krisenjahren führten insbesondere im Euro-Währungsgebiet zu einer Schwächung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit, die in Angriff genommen werden musste. In 14 Mitgliedstaaten stellten Lohnzurückhaltung oder Anpassungen der Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungsmechanismen einen zentralen Hebel für die Korrektur innerstaatlicher Ungleichgewichte und die Stärkung der internationalen Wettbewerbsfähigkeit dar. Diese Instrumente wurden herangezogen, um die flexible Anpassung von Löhnen und Gehältern an die Konjunkturerwicklung zu ermöglichen, die Arbeitsproduktivität zu befördern und Arbeitsplätze zu schaffen. Allerdings waren die Tarifparteien in verschiedenen einzelstaatlichen Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungssystemen mit der Herausforderung konfrontiert, diese Anliegen gegen die Tatsache abzuwägen, dass Löhne und Gehälter für die gesamtwirtschaftliche Nachfrage, die ausgeglichene Einkommensverteilung über die verschiedenen Wirtschaftszweige hinweg und die Verhinderung von Erwerbsarmut von zentraler Bedeutung sind.¹⁶

Länder mit starken Ungleichgewichten haben weitreichende Reformen ihrer Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungsmechanismen durchgeführt, um auf Unternehmensebene eine flexiblere Lohn- und Gehaltsanpassung zu ermöglichen. In einigen Fällen verzichtete man in diesem Zusammenhang auf die zuvor vorherrschenden zentralen Tarifverträge und räumte Lohn- und Gehaltsregelungen im Rahmen von Betriebsvereinbarungen Vorrang ein, in anderen lockerte man die Bedingungen für die Anwendung von Öffnungsklauseln, aufgrund derer Unternehmen aus wirtschaftlichen,

¹⁶ Beitrag des Beschäftigungsausschusses zum makroökonomischen Dialog, Herbst 2013.

technischen und organisatorischen Gründen von höherrangigen Verträgen abweichen können, kürzte die „Nachwirkung“ ausgelaufener Tarifverträge und überarbeitete die Voraussetzungen für die Repräsentativität der Gewerkschaften in Tarifverhandlungen. Die Anpassung automatischer Lohnindexierungsmechanismen, mit denen eine zügigere Anpassung der Löhne und Gehälter an Preis- und Produktivitätsentwicklungen erfolgte, war ein weiterer Hebel, um eine moderate Lohnentwicklung zu gewährleisten.

Die einschlägigen Maßnahmen betrafen auch die Löhne und Gehälter im öffentlichen Sektor.

Um die Anstrengungen zur Stärkung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zu unterstützen, ein Signal an den privaten Sektor zu senden und einen Beitrag zur Haushaltskonsolidierung zu leisten, wurden im öffentlichen Sektor spürbare Lohn- und Gehaltsanpassungen vorgenommen. In den meisten Mitgliedstaaten kam es zu Nullrunden, Lohn- und Gehaltssenkungen und zur Einschränkung der Sozialleistungen für die Mitarbeiter des öffentlichen Sektors. Es gab jedoch auch drastischere, einschneidendere Maßnahmen im Hinblick auf die Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungsmechanismen für den öffentlichen Sektor, wie die Kündigung eines Manteltarifvertrags für bestimmte Bereiche, Lohn- und Gehaltskürzungen sowie die Einführung von Leistungsprämien und Möglichkeiten für die Abweichung von Tarifverträgen im Rahmen von Öffnungsklauseln.

Zudem wurden in einigen Mitgliedstaaten die Mindestlöhne angepasst.

Um zum einen Erwerbsarmut zu verhindern und zum anderen die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen zu fördern, haben einige Mitgliedstaaten ihre Mindestlöhne angepasst oder planen die Einführung von Mindestlöhnen. Während in manchen Ländern die Stagnation der Mindestlöhne sowie Änderungen bei der Festlegung von Mindestlöhnen einen Rückgang der realen Mindestlöhne zur Folge hatten, haben andere Mitgliedstaaten kürzlich flächendeckend oder gezielt für bestimmte Gruppen – wie z. B. junge Arbeitnehmer – oder Niedriglohnbranchen den Mindestlohn erhöht oder den Lohnindex aktualisiert, um der wirtschaftlichen Situation der Mindestlohnempfänger besser Rechnung zu tragen.

Insgesamt haben die umfassenden Reformen der Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungssysteme zweifellos zu einer Korrektur von Ungleichgewichten beigetragen.

Dies lässt sich an der Entwicklung der Lohnstückkosten in den letzten drei Jahren ablesen. Zwar erfolgte die Korrektur von Ungleichgewichten oftmals im Wege von Kürzungen der Nominallohne der Arbeitnehmer, in einigen Mitgliedstaaten war jedoch die deutlich steigende Arbeitsproduktivität die treibende Kraft der Lohnentwicklung. Die Steigerung der Arbeitsproduktivität und die Knüpfung der Lohnentwicklung an die Produktivität stellen nach wie vor eine Herausforderung dar, zu deren Bewältigung Sozialpartner und Behörden im Rahmen ihrer jeweiligen Zuständigkeiten Maßnahmen ergreifen können. Allerdings sind weitere Fortschritte und eine sorgfältigere Beobachtung der Auswirkungen von Änderungen hinsichtlich der Mindestlöhne auf die Beschäftigung erforderlich.

Abschnitt 3 – Schlussfolgerungen und Anmerkungen zu den anstehenden Herausforderungen

In diesem Bericht wird versucht, eine Bestandsaufnahme der jüngsten Reformen vorzunehmen und zugleich die anstehenden Bemühungen im Auge zu behalten, um künftige Entwicklungen zu erkennen, insbesondere mit Blick auf die Halbzeitüberprüfung der Strategie Europa 2020. Angesichts der Komplexität und der Verflechtungen der im Zeitraum zwischen 2008 und 2013 durchgeführten Arbeitsmarktreformen ist es unmöglich, die Ausrichtung der Reformen und insbesondere deren Auswirkungen in vollem Umfang zu bewerten. Jedoch wird in diesem Bericht der Versuch unternommen, anhand der im Laufe von drei Jahren aus der multilateralen Überwachung des Beschäftigungsausschusses gewonnenen Erkenntnisse eine Vorstellung von den

in diesem Zeitraum durchgeführten Reformen der Arbeitsmärkte und der Systeme der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung sowie vom Stand der Umsetzung der im Rahmen der Strategie Europa 2020 ausgesprochenen länderspezifischen Empfehlungen zu vermitteln.

Umfang und Tempo der Reformen haben seit 2008 zugenommen.

Die Mitgliedstaaten der EU haben im Zeitraum zwischen 2008 und 2013 eine Reihe grundlegender Reformen durchgeführt, um strukturelle Defizite zu beheben und die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit wiederherzustellen. In mehreren Ländern hatten diese Reformen langjährige strukturelle Probleme zum Gegenstand, die bereits vor der Krise bestanden oder durch die Krise selbst in einer Weise verschärft wurden, die eine Reform unverzichtbar machte. Tempo und Reichweite der Reformen haben daher sicherlich zugenommen, als die Wirtschaftskrise immer stärkere Auswirkungen auf die europäischen Arbeitsmärkte zeitigte. Im Zuge der im Rahmen des Europäischen Semesters vorgesehenen verstärkten Koordinierung waren Umfang und Tempo der Reformen beachtlich, wiesen jedoch je nach Thema und Mitgliedstaat auch deutliche Unterschiede auf.

Arbeitsmarkt- und Bildungsreformen zeitigen erst nach einer gewissen Zeit Ergebnisse.

Sowohl die Verabschiedung von Arbeitsmarktreformen als auch die vollumfängliche Ausschöpfung der mit ihnen einhergehenden Vorteile nehmen Zeit in Anspruch. Groß angelegte Bildungsreformen oder Änderungen der Arbeitsgesetzgebung schlagen erst mittelfristig auf den Arbeitsmarkt durch. Die Auswirkungen der recht umfassenden Reformen werden erst jetzt sichtbar. Erschwerend kommt hinzu, dass die Folgen der Krise zweifelsohne die wahrscheinliche positive Wirkung solcher Reformen oder umgekehrt auch die negativen Folgen versäumter Reformen verschleiern. In diesem Bericht, in dem drei Zyklen der politischen Koordinierung im Rahmen des Europäischen Semesters untersucht werden, kann somit nur eine Bestandsaufnahme jener Bereiche vorgenommen werden, in denen die größten Fortschritte im Hinblick auf die Behebung struktureller Probleme erzielt wurden. Eine weitere gründliche Folgenbewertung ist daher unverzichtbar.

Zeitliche Abstimmung und Koordinierung mit Produktmarktreformen

Ein nach wie vor bestehendes Hindernis für die uneingeschränkte Ausschöpfung der Reformvorteile ist die mangelnde Nachfrage nach Arbeitskräften. Arbeitsmarktreformen müssen durch entschlossene Maßnahmen zur Steigerung der Nachfrage nach Arbeitskräften ergänzt werden. Dies erfordert geeignete makroökonomische und haushaltspolitische Maßnahmen. Darüber hinaus hat der Beschäftigungsausschuss wiederholt darauf hingewiesen, dass es wichtig ist, Arbeitsmarktreformen durch flankierende Produktmarktreformen zu ergänzen. Produktmarktreformen können zu Preissenkungen aufgrund eines stärkeren Wettbewerbs führen und somit die negativen Auswirkungen von Arbeitsmarktreformen auf Reallöhne und Binnennachfrage abfedern, einen bestmöglichen Einsatz von Qualifikationen ermöglichen und – in Kombination mit der Durchführung von Reformen im Finanzsektor, um die Kreditvergabe an Unternehmen anzukurbeln – Chancen für Unternehmertum und Selbstständigkeit schaffen. Produktmarktreformen sind daher geeignet, die uneingeschränkte Entfaltung der positiven Wirkung der in den letzten Jahren in zahlreichen Mitgliedstaaten durchgeführten Arbeitsmarktreformen zu unterstützen.

Die Bedeutung der Eigenverantwortung

Bei der Einführung ihrer Reformen waren die Mitgliedstaaten mit einer Reihe wirtschaftlicher und institutioneller Zwänge konfrontiert, die in einigen Fällen den Umfang der Reformen einschränkten oder die unmittelbaren makroökonomischen Ergebnisse schmälerten. Mitunter wurde auch das Verhältnis zu den Sozialpartnern belastet. Die volle Eigenverantwortung für den Reformprozess auf nationaler Ebene sowie die Einbeziehung der Sozialpartner und anderer

Interessengruppen ist von zentraler Bedeutung für die Durchführung von Reformen.¹⁷

Seit Beginn der Krise werden zügige und umfangreiche Reformen der Beschäftigungsschutzvorschriften durchgeführt. **Viele Mitgliedstaaten haben schwierige Reformen durchgeführt, die wahrscheinlich die erwartete positive Wirkung zeitigen werden, indem sie eine zügigere Reallokation von Arbeitskräften, eine höhere Produktivität und eine Reduzierung der Segmentierung ermöglichen und so für ein besseres Funktionieren der Arbeitsmärkte sorgen. In zahlreichen Bereichen wurden die Reformen von den Mitgliedstaaten erst kürzlich durchgeführt und benötigen Zeit, um sich in vollem Umfang zu entfalten.**

Während die Systeme der sozialen Sicherheit im Laufe der Rezession der Jahre 2008 und 2009 in den meisten EU-Ländern eine wesentliche Rolle für die Erhaltung der Haushaltseinkommen spielten,¹⁸ war ab dem Jahr 2010 eine Abschwächung ihrer stabilisierenden Wirkung zu beobachten. Dies war offenbar zum einen auf das Auslaufen von Leistungsansprüchen oder die Einstellung bestimmter Leistungen sowie auf Haushaltskonsolidierungsmaßnahmen zurückzuführen, durch welche die Höhe und/oder Bezugsdauer von Leistungen eingeschränkt oder bestimmte Empfänger durch eine Verschärfung der Anspruchsbedingungen vom Bezug der Leistungen ausgeschlossen wurden.

Durch die Krise wurde die Notwendigkeit verschärft, gegen die Schieflage auf dem Arbeitsmarkt vorzugehen, die in den vergangenen drei Jahren zugenommen hat.¹⁹ **Die Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit stieg im Jahr 2012 (Q4) auf etwa 11,6 Millionen und wurde damit EU-weit zu einer strukturellen Herausforderung, die ein entschlossenes Vorgehen verlangt. Die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit steigt kontinuierlich weiter, vor allem in den Ländern, die besonders stark von der Krise betroffen sind (die Quote beträgt mittlerweile 23,5 % in der EU und 24,4 % im Euro-Währungsgebiet). Besonders hohe Arbeitslosenquoten sind unter Geringqualifizierten festzustellen.²⁰ Zugleich belegen Forschungsarbeiten, dass ältere Arbeitnehmer mit höherem Bildungsabschluss dazu neigen, später aus dem Arbeitsmarkt auszuschneiden.²¹**

Die vom Beschäftigungsausschuss vorgenommene Überprüfung der Umsetzung der länderspezifischen Empfehlungen zur Jugendarbeitslosigkeit ergab, **dass es wichtig ist, die Jugendgarantie zeitnah einzuführen und umfassende und koordinierte Konzepte zu erarbeiten, die ein breites Spektrum von auf nationaler, regionaler und lokaler Ebene tätigen Akteuren einbinden.**

Eine höhere Erwerbsbeteiligung von Frauen ist von wesentlicher Bedeutung für die Verbesserung des Wachstumspotenzials der Union und die Bewältigung der demografischen Herausforderungen. **Zwar hat die Krise augenscheinlich dazu geführt, dass der Behebung der geschlechterspezifischen Ungleichgewichte auf dem Arbeitsmarkt seitens der Politik weniger Beachtung geschenkt wird, jedoch bilden Frauen nach wie vor den größten potenziellen Arbeitskräftepool, sodass die Erhöhung der Erwerbsbeteiligung von Frauen weiterhin eine wichtige Aufgabe darstellt.**

Im Bereich der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung wurde im Europäischen Semester ein breites Spektrum von Reformen durchgeführt. **Es wurden besondere Anstrengungen unternommen, um die Leistungsfähigkeit der Systeme der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung zu verbessern und dafür zu sorgen, dass sie sich zügiger an die Entwicklungen des Arbeitsmarktes anpassen. Eine weitere**

¹⁷ **Schlussfolgerungen des Rates (Beschäftigung, Sozialpolitik, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz), 7477/14.**

¹⁸ Europäische Kommission (2012), Employment and social developments in Europe 2012.

¹⁹ In vielen EU-Ländern zeigen die Beveridge-Kurven der letzten Jahre einen vermeintlich widersprüchlichen Zusammenhang zwischen den Quoten der freien Stellen und den Arbeitslosenquoten: Trotz hoher Arbeitslosigkeit ist auch eine hohe Quote der freien Stellen festzustellen, was auf eine große Schieflage auf dem Arbeitsmarkt schließen lässt, die häufig auf ein Missverhältnis zwischen Qualifikationsangebot und -nachfrage und eine unzureichende Arbeitnehmermobilität zurückzuführen ist. Gewöhnlich zeigt eine Beveridge-Kurve auf der y-Achse freie Stellen und auf der x-Achse die Arbeitslosigkeit.

²⁰ LMD ECFIN 2013.

²¹ Eurofound (2012), Employment trends and policies for older workers in the recession.

Priorität war die Unterstützung des Übergangs von der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung in das Arbeitsleben. Die zur Eindämmung von Schulabbrüchen unternommenen Schritte können dazu beitragen, Problemen im Arbeitsmarkt vorzubeugen. Hinsichtlich der erzielten Fortschritte sind jedoch erhebliche Unterschiede festzustellen. Nach wie vor stellen sich große Herausforderungen, z. B. im Hinblick auf die strukturelle Verbesserung des Übergangs von der Schule ins Erwerbsleben, die dauerhafte Stärkung der Abstimmung der Bildungsergebnisse auf die Erfordernisse des Arbeitsmarktes und die Höherqualifizierung der gesamten Erwerbsbevölkerung, um neue Beschäftigungschancen zu schaffen. Die allgemeine und berufliche Bildung muss einen stärkeren Beitrag zur Eindämmung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit leisten.

Weniger deutliche Fortschritte wurden hinsichtlich der Senkung der Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit und der Verlagerung der Besteuerung auf wachstumsfreundlichere Verbrauchs- und Umweltsteuern erzielt. **Dies gilt sowohl für die allgemeine Senkung der Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit als auch für den Beitrag von Steuerreformen zur Verbesserung der Stellung bestimmter Gruppen (z. B. Frauen und ältere Arbeitnehmer) im Arbeitsmarkt. Teilweise wurde der Handlungsspielraum der Mitgliedstaaten durch finanzielle Engpässe infolge einer notwendigen Haushaltskonsolidierung eingeschränkt. Die Überprüfung zeigte jedoch zum einen, dass in diesem Bereich weitere Maßnahmen das Potenzial hätten, die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen zu fördern, und zum anderen, dass die Systeme der sozialen Sicherheit auch weiterhin eine wichtige Rolle im Hinblick auf Einkommensbeihilfen und die Gewährleistung des Zugangs zu Leistungen spielen müssen.**

Spürbare Fortschritte wurden schließlich bei der Überarbeitung der Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungssysteme mit Blick auf die Förderung der wirtschaftlichen Anpassung, der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und der Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen erzielt. **Wie anhand der Entwicklung der Lohnstückkosten in den letzten drei Jahren nachzuvollziehen ist, haben die umfassenden Reformen der Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungssysteme zweifelsohne zu einer Korrektur von Ungleichgewichten beigetragen. Häufig erfolgte die Korrektur von Ungleichgewichten im Wege von Kürzungen der Nominallöhne der Arbeitnehmer, in einigen Ländern war jedoch die deutlich steigende Arbeitsproduktivität die treibende Kraft der Lohnentwicklung. In mehreren Mitgliedstaaten stellen jedoch die Steigerung der Arbeitsproduktivität und die Knüpfung der Lohnentwicklung an die Produktivität, die Überarbeitung des Lohnindexierungsmechanismus und die Beobachtung der Auswirkungen von Änderungen hinsichtlich der Mindestlöhne auf die Beschäftigung von Geringqualifizierten und Jugendlichen nach wie vor Herausforderungen dar.**

Ausblick:

Als Reaktion auf die Krise wurden EU-weit umfassende und ehrgeizige Arbeitsmarktreformen durchgeführt. Nachdem zunächst die Bewältigung der Folgen der Krise im Mittelpunkt stand, geht es nun darum, die wirtschaftliche Erholung voranzutreiben. In diesem Zusammenhang müssen die Arbeitsmarktreformen fortgeführt werden, um einen arbeitsplatzintensiven Aufschwung voranzutreiben und dafür zu sorgen, dass das Funktionieren des Arbeitsmarktes in der EU langfristig verbessert wird. Dies gilt umso mehr, als viele der vormals „langfristigen Herausforderungen“, wie beispielsweise die globale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit, der demografische Wandel, der Klimawandel und die wissensbasierte Wirtschaft, mittlerweile akut geworden sind.

In den Bereichen, in denen bedeutsame, aber ungleichmäßige Fortschritte erzielt wurden, stehen die weniger ambitionierten Mitgliedstaaten vor der Aufgabe, ihre Reformen energisch voranzutreiben, während in Bereichen, in denen insgesamt weniger Fortschritte zu verzeichnen waren, neuer Schwung vonnöten ist. In diesem Zusammenhang ist allerdings einzuräumen, dass nicht alle Ergebnisse der unternommenen Reformen bereits sichtbar sind.

Aus der Krise ist eine ganze Reihe von Lehren zu ziehen. Um die Arbeitsmarktreformen weiter voranzubringen, ist es zum einen erforderlich, die wesentliche Funktion arbeitsmarktpolitischer

Maßnahmen im weiter gefassten wirtschafts- und sozialpolitischen Kontext sowie die Notwendigkeit anzuerkennen, im Rahmen makroökonomischer, produktmarktrelevanter und sozialpolitischer Maßnahmen größeres Augenmerk auf die Erfordernisse des Arbeitsmarktes zu legen. Die sorgfältige zeitliche Abstimmung von Arbeits- und Produktmarktreformen kann die positiven Ergebnisse verstärken. Darüber hinaus können Reformen nur dann erfolgreich sein, wenn sie von den Sozialpartnern und anderen Interessengruppen akzeptiert werden, diese im Einklang mit den einzelstaatlichen Traditionen eng daran mitwirken und ihre Autonomie gewahrt bleibt.

In diesem unmittelbaren Zusammenhang müssen die Mitgliedstaaten neue Ansätze für die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen untersuchen (unter anderem durch die Förderung des Unternehmertums), wobei sie das Potenzial arbeitsplatzintensiver Branchen ausschöpfen und die für diesen Zweck geeigneten Maßnahmen erarbeiten. Im weiteren Kontext macht der zügig voranschreitende Wandel infolge von Globalisierung und technischer Innovation eine energische Reaktion auf die zunehmende Polarisierung der Arbeitsmärkte erforderlich. Die Anstrengungen zur Gestaltung einer intelligenten, nachhaltigen und integrativen Wirtschaft werden in allen Branchen neue Wege der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung eröffnen und haben – sofern sie entschlossen fortgeführt werden – das Potenzial, ganze Wertschöpfungsketten umzugestalten.

Um dieses Potenzial in vollem Umfang auszuschöpfen, sind flexible arbeitsmarktpolitische Maßnahmen erforderlich. Qualifizierungspolitische Maßnahmen, darunter Investitionen in die Forschung sowie in die allgemeine und berufliche Bildung, Reformen der Bildungssysteme und Bemühungen um die Integration des Bildungswesens in die Arbeitswelt sind von entscheidender Bedeutung. In diesem Zusammenhang muss erneut ein Schwerpunkt auf das lebenslange Lernen gelegt werden, wobei unter anderem die Antizipierung des Qualifikationsbedarfs eine Rolle spielen muss.

Weniger denn je kann die EU den Verlust von Humankapital und die soziale Ausgrenzung infolge der Auswirkungen unzureichend funktionierender Arbeitsmärkte verkraften. Es sind Reformen vonnöten, um die Fähigkeit der Systeme der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung zu verbessern, hochwertige Bildungsergebnisse hervorzubringen. Es muss dringend dafür gesorgt werden, dass alle Bürger Zugang zu hochwertigen Arbeitsplätzen haben. Voraussetzungen hierfür sind die Stärkung der Widerstandsfähigkeit des Arbeitsmarktes, die Einführung einer größeren internen und externen Flexibilität, die Durchführung umfassender Strategien zur Prävention und Bekämpfung von Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit sowie die Gewährleistung der Ablösung passiver durch aktive Leistungen. Die strukturelle Verbesserung des Übergangs von der Schule in das Erwerbsleben unter anderem im Wege einer Jugendgarantie muss vollständig abgeschlossen werden. Zudem sollten die Grundsätze des aktiven Alterns²² im Arbeitsleben umgesetzt werden.

Die Situation der Arbeitsmärkte nach der Krise verlangt, dass alle Bevölkerungsgruppen lebenslang einbezogen werden. Dies begünstigt die Schaffung einer größeren Vielfalt von Arbeitsplätzen und Berufswegen. Voraussetzung hierfür sind neue Ansätze für die Gestaltung arbeitsmarktpolitischer Maßnahmen. Zudem müssen die öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen (häufig in Zusammenarbeit mit privaten Arbeitsvermittlern) ein System für eine effiziente und äußerst anpassungsfähige Abstimmung von Angebot und Nachfrage schaffen. Ein solches System muss in der Lage sein, reibungslose, zügige und sichere Arbeitsplatzwechsel zu ermöglichen, die sowohl den Bedürfnissen der Arbeitssuchenden oder Arbeitnehmer als auch den Ansprüchen der Arbeitgeber genügen. Um Mobilität und Innovation zu befördern und sichere Arbeitsplatzwechsel ohne ungerechtfertigte Hemmnisse oder Sanktionen zu unterstützen, müssen Abgaben- und Sozialleistungssysteme und arbeitsrechtliche Rahmenbedingungen geeignete Anreize bieten, wobei der Notwendigkeit der Bekämpfung nicht angemeldeter Erwerbsarbeit in angemessenem Maße Rechnung zu tragen ist.

²² Leitlinien für aktives Altern und Solidarität zwischen den Generationen, gemeinsam ausgearbeitet vom Ausschuss für Sozialschutz und vom Beschäftigungsausschuss, Dokument Nr. 17468/12.

In Bezug auf Abgabensysteme sowie Lohn- und Gehaltsbildungsmechanismen reicht es allerdings nicht aus, lediglich Anreize zu bieten. Eine erhebliche Senkung der Steuer- und Abgabenbelastung des Faktors Arbeit wird nur im Kontext einer breiter angelegten Debatte über verschiedene Steuerbemessungsgrundlagen möglich sein, bei der auch die finanzielle Nachhaltigkeit des europäischen Sozialmodells Berücksichtigung finden muss. Politische Maßnahmen im Bereich der Lohn- und Gehaltsbildung sollten auch künftig die Rolle der Sozialpartner respektieren und den Bezug angemessener Erwerbseinkommen gegen die Notwendigkeit abwägen, die Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zu erhalten und Produktivitätsentwicklungen Rechnung zu tragen.

Europäische wirtschaftspolitische Steuerung und Europa 2020

Die übergeordneten strategischen Prioritäten der Strategie Europa 2020 dienen dem Ziel eines intelligenten, nachhaltigen und integrativen Wachstums und haben seit ihrer Festlegung im Jahr 2010 nichts von ihrer Gültigkeit verloren. Die Wirtschaftskrise hat die Notwendigkeit, sich auf diese Prioritäten und die für ihre Realisierung erforderlichen Strukturreformen zu konzentrieren, eher noch verstärkt. Auch die für die EU formulierten fünf Kernziele, die zueinander in Wechselbeziehung stehen, bis 2020 erreicht werden sollten und auf die Bereiche Beschäftigung, Forschung und Entwicklung (FuE), Klimawandel und Energie, Bildung sowie die Bekämpfung von Armut und sozialer Ausgrenzung ausgerichtet sind, sind nach wie vor von Bedeutung. Zwar hat die Erfahrung gezeigt, dass diese Ziele nicht unabhängig voneinander betrachtet werden können, jedoch haben sie es erleichtert, den Schwerpunkt auf Prioritäten zu legen und ein Benchmarking vorzunehmen.

Das Europäische Semester hat sich als ein wirksamer Rahmen für die politische Koordinierung in schwierigen Zeiten gezeigt. Es ist erwiesenermaßen zweckmäßig und bedarf keiner größeren Veränderungen. Allerdings haben sich im Rahmen der fortgesetzten Bemühungen um die Bekämpfung makroökonomischer Ungleichgewichte und den Schutz der gemeinsamen Währung in der ersten Halbzeit der Strategie Europa 2020 bedeutsame und tief greifende Veränderungen hinsichtlich der europäischen wirtschaftspolitischen Steuerung ergeben. Dies führte dazu, dass haushaltspolitische und makroökonomische Belange zulasten beschäftigungs- und sozialpolitischer Maßnahmen in den Vordergrund rückten. Der gegenseitigen Abhängigkeit und zeitlichen Abstimmung politischer Maßnahmen wurde weniger Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt, als wünschenswert gewesen wäre.

Angesichts dessen sollte es, unbeschadet der Halbzeitüberprüfung der Strategie Europa 2020 und der beschäftigungspolitischen Leitlinien für 2015, machbar sein, diesen Problemen innerhalb der bestehenden Steuerungsstrukturen zu begegnen. Es bedarf keiner neuen Prozesse. Die vorhandenen Instrumente und Steuerungsmechanismen müssen besser genutzt werden.

Bedeutung der beschäftigungspolitischen Leitlinien im Kontext der integrierten Leitlinien

Im Zusammenhang mit dem Europäischen Semester hat die Europäische Beschäftigungsstrategie, die auf den beschäftigungspolitischen Leitlinien beruht und sich auf die Erfahrungen aus mittlerweile 15 Jahren stützt, unter Beweis gestellt, dass sie einen starken Rahmen für die Koordinierung der politischen Maßnahmen der Mitgliedstaaten durch multilaterale Überwachung bietet. Die Steuerung der Beschäftigungspolitik wurde kontinuierlich verstärkt, und zwar mit einem Konsens über die gemeinsamen Herausforderungen, einer strengen Überwachung der Fortschritte der Länder bei der Umsetzung der Empfehlungen, einem zunehmenden Konformitätsdruck, einer verstärkten Analysebasis und einer multilateralen Analyse der im Rat vereinbarten thematischen Prioritäten.

Der Beschäftigungsausschuss ist fest davon überzeugt, dass es keiner neuen Prozesse bedarf. Artikel 148 des Vertrags sollte voll und ganz ausgeschöpft werden, um eine größere Ausgewogenheit zwischen den derzeitigen Steuerungsmechanismen im Rahmen des Europäischen Semesters herzustellen. Dieser Artikel versetzt den Rat (Beschäftigung, Sozialpolitik, Gesundheit

und Verbraucherschutz) in die Lage, gestützt auf seine fundierte Kenntnis der Funktionsweise der Arbeitsmärkte der EU und seine besonders engen Beziehungen zu den Sozialpartnern seinen Mehrwert für den Prozess der wirtschaftspolitischen Steuerung in vollem Umfang zu entfalten. Zudem bietet Artikel 148 eine solide Grundlage für eine verstärkte Zusammenarbeit des Rates (Beschäftigung, Sozialpolitik, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz) mit anderen Ratsformationen und ihren Ausschüssen.

Die Halbzeitüberprüfung der Strategie Europa 2020 könnte daher dazu genutzt werden, die Leitlinien zu aktualisieren, ihren bereichsübergreifenden Charakter zu bekräftigen, und sie transparenter und benutzerfreundlicher zu gestalten. **Politische Leitlinien, die sich an den besten Leistungen und vergleichenden Leistungsbewertungen orientieren, können dazu beitragen, dass bewährte Vorgehensweisen weiter verbreitet werden und die Bemühungen zur Bewältigung von Herausforderungen für die EU insgesamt gebündelt werden.**

Zugleich sollte eine effizientere und vertiefte multilaterale Überwachung durch den Beschäftigungsausschuss, gestützt auf fundierte Analysen, Konformitätsdruck und den Austausch der jeweiligen optimalen Vorgehensweisen verstärkt als Hauptinstrument zur Förderung der Reform herangezogen werden. Einige der in den Zuständigkeitsbereich des Rates (Beschäftigung, Sozialpolitik, Gesundheit und Verbraucherschutz) fallenden Instrumente müssen weiterentwickelt und optimiert werden. Der Beschäftigungsausschuss wird im Anschluss an die eingehende Überprüfung diesbezüglich tätig werden.

Der Beschäftigungsausschuss ist der festen Überzeugung, dass die Bewertung sowohl der von den Mitgliedstaaten zu bewältigenden wirtschaftlichen Herausforderungen als auch der in diesem Zusammenhang erzielten Fortschritte nicht auf der Rechtsgrundlage der Instrumente basieren sollte, sondern auf der erheblichen Fachkompetenz der Ratsformationen und ihrer vorbereitenden Ausschüsse. Basierend auf diesem Grundsatz sollte ein klarerer Rahmen für die Interaktion zwischen den einzelnen Ratsformationen und ihren vorbereitenden Ausschüssen geschaffen werden.

Schließlich ist auch eine umfassende Einbeziehung der Sozialpartner aufgrund der bestehenden Mechanismen von entscheidender Bedeutung, um die Legitimität und Eigenverantwortung sowohl auf nationaler als auch auf europäischer Ebene zu gewährleisten, insbesondere durch einen besseren Dialog mit den Sozialpartnern bei der Ausarbeitung der nationalen Reformprogramme entsprechend den nationalen Gepflogenheiten.

1. ANNEX

Annex I:

CSRs per policy field and countries

Country-Specific Recommendations on EPL, 2011-2013

		B E	B G	C Z	D K	D E	E E	E I	E L	E S	F R	I T	C Y	L V	L T	L U	H U	M T	N L	A T	P L	P T	R O	S E	S I	S K	F I	U K
Overall	2011									X	X	X			X										X			
	2012					X				X	X	X			X					X		X				X		
	2013					X		N/A	N/A		X	X	N/A		X					X		X	N/A			X		
Segmentation	2011										X	X														X		
	2012										X	X										X				X		
	2013					X		N/A	N/A				N/A									X		N/A		X		
Flexibility	2011									X					X													
	2012									X	X	X			X						X					X		
	2013							N/A	N/A			X	N/A		X						X			N/A				

Source: EC 2013

Country-Specific Recommendations on ALMP+PES, 2011-2013

		B E	B G	C Z	D K	D E	E E	E I	E L	E S	F R	I T	C Y	L V	L T	L U	H U	M T	N L	A T	P L	P T	R O	S E	S I	S K	F I	U K
Overall	2011	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X						X			X					X	X	X	
	2012	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			X	X		X			X					X	X	X	
	2013	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	N/A	X	X	X	X						N/A	X	X	X	X	
Quality Effectiveness	2011	X			X		X			X	X						X			X					X	X	X	
	2012	X		X						X	X			X	X		X								X	X	X	
	2013						X			X	X	X		X	X	X	X							X	X	X	X	
Performance PES	2011		X	X							X						X										X	
	2012		X	X							X	X					X										X	
	2013		X	X							X	X	X				X							X			X	
Better Targeting	2011																											
	2012	X			X	X	X			X				X	X		X				X				X		X	
	2013	X			X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X				X					X	X	X	
Strengthen activation	2011																											
	2012			X		X					X							X									X	
	2013	X	X			X				X	X	X					X								X		X	

Source: EC 2013

Country-Specific Recommendations on Social Security System, 2011-2013

		B E	B G	C Z	D K	D E	E E	E I	E L	E S	F R	I T	C Y	L V	L T	L U	H U	M T	N L	A T	P L	P T	R O	S E	S I	S K	F I	U K
Adequacy	2011												X															
	2012						X						X															
	2013						X	N/A	N/A	X		X	N/A	X	X		X						N/A	X				X
Access to Quality social service	2011																											
	2012		X				X																					
	2013		X				X	N/A	N/A				N/A											N/A				X
Efficiency social assistance	2011																											
	2012		X				X							X	X													
	2013		X			X		N/A	N/A	X			N/A	X	X					X		X	N/A	X			X	X

Source: EC 2013

Table 1: Country-Specific Recommendations on Gender Equality and work-life balance, 2011-2013

		B E	B G	C Z	D K	D E	E E	E I	E L	E S	F R	I T	C Y	L V	L T	L U	H U	M T	N L	A T	P L	P T	R O	S E	S I	S K	F I	U K
Overall	2011			X		X						X					X			X	X	X						X
	2012			X		X						X					X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X
	2013			X		X	X	N/A	N/A			X	N/A				X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	X			X	X
Childcare	2011			X		X						X					X				X	X						X
	2012			X		X						X					X	X			X	X					X	X
	2013			X		X	X	N/A	N/A			X	N/A				X	X			X	X	N/A				X	X

growth and productivity	2012			X			X					X
	2013						X					X

Source: EC 2013

Annex II: Country portraits provide by the Member States: Reforms during European Semesters 2011-2013

BELGIUM: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Reform of the unemployment benefit system

Challenge and CSR tackled: Belgium was recommended to make sure “the level of unemployment benefits decreases gradually with the duration of unemployment” in 2011. After an initial set of reforms was put in place in 2013 a similar recommendation was issued to “further reduce disincentives to work by ensuring effective enforcement of job-search requirements and personalised job search assistance for all unemployed.”

Key objectives: The reform aims to strengthen the incentives to work, to strengthen the monitoring of search efforts and to improve assistance for jobseekers.

Key content of measure: The general unemployment benefit scheme has been reformed in order to reinforce the incentives to work through increased degressivity of the allowances. The specific scheme for school-leavers (“waiting allowance”) has undergone an even more thorough reform: the allowance has become conditional on proving active job search, search efforts will be continuously monitored and a time limit has been put in place. Both reforms have been topped up by a new cooperation agreement between the federal government and the regional authorities, streamlining benefits, search effort monitoring and active labour market policies. The deadline for submitting an individual action plan to the jobseekers by the regions has been brought forward, as have the federal follow-up interviews. Moreover, the target group of the agreement has been broadened.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): All unemployed are subject to this new approach.

State of implementation: The reforms have been fully implemented. However, the effects only kick in after some time, due to the different qualifying periods.

Measure 2: Wage moderation and labour tax reduction

Challenge and CSR tackled: After receiving similar recommendations in 2011 and 2012, in 2013 Belgium was asked to “pursue the on-going efforts to reform the wage setting system, including wage indexation (...) to ensure that wage setting is responsive to productivity developments, reflects subregional and local differences in productivity and labour market conditions, and provides automatic corrections when wage evolution undermines cost-competitiveness.” On the tax level the Council asked to “shift taxes from labour to less growth-distortive tax bases”.

Key objectives: Foster employment creation and competitiveness through keeping labour cost evolution in line with productivity while maintaining net wage purchasing power.

Key content of measure: After a period of moderate wage growth in 2011-2012, a real wage freeze for 2013-2014 has been imposed by the government. Moreover, the government has decided that the wage cost gap Belgium has accumulated since 1996 with respect to the neighbouring countries will be closed in a six year time frame. This has been complemented by adaptations to the price index used in the automatic indexation system, in order to reduce its impact. Finally, the policy of using budgetary margins to reduce labour costs, both in targeted and non-targeted measures, has been continued. In this context, supplementary measures have been taken to reduce social security and fiscal pressure on wages.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): -

State of implementation: All measures have been implemented.

Monitored Effects: For 2013 and 2014, nominal ULC in the private sector is expected to increase but more slowly (1.8 in 2013 and 0.6 in 2014) (NBB projections).

Measure 3: Encourage active ageing

Challenge and CSR tackled: After similar recommendations in 2011 and 2012, Belgium was in 2013 additionally asked to “step up efforts to close the gap between the effective and statutory retirement age, including by pursuing the on-going reforms to reduce the early-exit possibilities.”

Key objectives: Increasing the effective retirement age

Key content of measure: The admission age for the early exit route through unemployment allowances with company bonus has been raised from 58 to 60 years. The required seniority was raised to 40 years. This has been realized in several steps and will be fully operational by 2015. Equally, other early exits through the unemployment benefits have been made more restrictive.

Early exits via early legal retirement have been rendered increasingly difficult as well. In general, the admission age for early retirement will gradually be raised by 2016 to 62 years after a professional career of 40 years. Moreover, the treatment of assimilated qualifying periods in the wage earner pension system has been changed, to reinforce the link between work (and contribution payment) and pensions. Finally, from 2013 onwards the unemployed have to be passively available for the labour market until the age of 60, and the regions have reinforced the follow-up of older jobseekers to different degrees.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): These measures concern the whole private sector.

State of implementation: All measures are being implemented according to the time-path that was foreseen and as indicated in the description.

Monitored Effects: The employment rate of older people (55-64) has gradually increased from 34.5% in 2008 to 39.5% 2012.

BULGARIA: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: National Initiative "Employment for Youth in Bulgaria"

Challenge and CSR tackled: 2011 CSR "...focusing support on young people with low skills"

Key objectives: To reduce youth unemployment through combined efforts of all stakeholders.

Key content of measure: In the period 2012-2013 a package of measures, programmes and services were implemented, aimed at activation, consultation, training and employment (incl. apprenticeship and traineeship) of young people up to the age of 29. Two new schemes were launched in the second half of 2012, namely "First job" and "New work place". Three new measures aimed at the employment promotion of unemployed young people under the age of 29 were introduced in the national legislation (Employment Promotion Act) in August 2013. One of the measures is for the part-time employment of long term unemployed young people. The other two measures are aimed at the facilitation of school to work transition. One of them supports creation of first jobs for young people who have graduated from higher and upper secondary education, the other one supports the creation of apprenticeship places for young school drop outs. For provision of specialised services to unemployed young people psychologists and case managers were employed in labour offices.

In pursuance of the initiative a National agreement "First job" was signed in June 2012 between the government and social partners with a purpose to support the inclusion of young people into the labour market by providing them opportunities to gain first professional experience.

With a view to provide timely support for young people an Agreement for exchange of information was signed in July 2012 between the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP). According to the Agreement MES provides to MLSP information for young people who have dropped out of school or have graduated secondary and higher education. MLSP provides information to MES regarding employment services, employment and training programmes and measures. The agreement between the MLSP and MES served as a basis for the adoption of legislative changes that regulate the exchange of personal data between the two institutions. The legislative regulation of the exchange of personal data between the MLSP and MES will be used in the process of activation of young people, which is part of the National Implementation Plan for European Youth Guarantee.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The youth employment measures, programmes and schemes implemented in the frameworks of the initiative are funded both by the state budget and ESF.

State of implementation: The implementation of the initiative completed at the end of 2013

Monitored Effects: In 2012 and 2013, 70 000 young people up to the age of 29 found non-subsidized jobs and other 25 600 young people were involved in training and employment, funded by the state budget. For the same period with the financial support of ESF 37 000 young people were enrolled in training and 20 000 started work.

Measure 2: Scheme "Improving the quality of services provided by the Employment Agency to citizens and business with a focus on the vulnerable groups on the labour market" **implemented by the Employment Agency**

Challenge and CSR tackled: **2011 CSR: “...to enhance administrative capacity in key government functions and regulatory authorities, in order to make public services more effective in responding to the needs of citizens and businesses; ...”, “...combating poverty and promoting social inclusion, especially for vulnerable groups...”**

Key objectives: **The main objective of the scheme is to improve the quality and effectiveness of the services provided by the Employment Agency through capacity development for provision of individualized approach in the job search services targeted to vulnerable groups on the labour market. Furthermore the project aims to increase the effectiveness of the services provided to business through organisation of labour exchanges for better matching of demand and supply of labour.**

Key content of measure: **The duration of the project is 2011-2014. The main activities include recruitment and training of 450 new job search mediators for provision of job search services targeted to vulnerable groups, as 100 of them will work with Roma people and 100 of them with young unemployed people; recruitment of 11 labour consultants at Regional Employment Services and the Employment Agency; training of 1200 job search mediators from labour offices for acquiring of knowledge and skills to implement individualised approach in the work with vulnerable groups taking into consideration their specific needs; organisation of regional labour exchanges and labour exchanges targeted to different target groups – people with disabilities, Roma people, unemployed young people, etc.**

Scope of the measure: **The budget of the project is 5 521 950 EUR and it is funded by the European Social Fund under the Human Resource Development Operational Programme 2007-2013.**

State of implementation: **The project is going to be implemented until the end of 2014.**

Monitored Effects: For the period since the beginning of the project until the end of March 2014 about 461 new job search mediators were hired at labour offices, 109 regional labour exchanges and labour exchanges for vulnerable groups were organized, 1505 job search mediators were trained to work with vulnerable groups.

CROATIA: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Amendments to the Labour Act (2013)

Challenge tackled: To reduce labour legislation rigidity by reducing EPL Index (starting from 2.61 to 2.34)

Key objectives: To improve employment on flexible employment contracts, to reduce operating costs of the employers operating in seasonal activities, to reduce costs for employers' restructuring by reducing dismissal costs.

Key content of measure: The Amendments to the Labour Act opened up the possibility for employers to hire on fixed term contracts for a period longer than three years, and to prevent abuses in the usage of successive fixed-term contracts. The objective reasons, as well as the limitation of the total duration of fixed-term employment contracts to three years, refer only to successive fixed-term employment contracts, and not to the first fixed-term employment contract. In this way, employers are enabled to employ employees for a fixed-term period longer than three years, and at the same time an employee would have additional security, since in this period there will be no new successive fixed-term employment contracts concluded for a shorter period of time. The Amendments to the Labour Act also reduce operating costs of the employers operating in seasonal activities through flexible organization of working time. With the amendments the minimum number of continuous hours of rest allowed by the Act is reduced from ten to eight hours for adult employees doing seasonal works, which are performed on two occasions during a working day. A problem has occurred especially in the activities of agriculture, tourism and hotel industry, in relation to organization of the work, which requires the employee to work on two occasions during the day. Due to the prescribed shortest duration of rest prescribed by the Act of ten hours, the work could not be organized on two occasions during the day. The Amendments to the Labour Act also reduce the costs of firing workers by simplifying and shortening procedures of collective redundancy procedures and through the simplification of the procedure for the termination of the employment contract during the probation period.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Target groups are employers operating in seasonal activities, employees employed on fixed-term contracts and in a period of probation.

State of implementation: Act has been in force since June 2013.

Monitored Effects: Longer period of employment for workers on fixed-term contracts, while reducing a number of fixed-term contracts with short duration. Shorter period of collective redundancies procedure, having as a consequence a shorter period of time for the restructuring of companies. A reduced number of abuses of the Labour Act provisions by allowing flexible organization of working time for the employers operating in seasonal activities.

Measure 2: Development and expansion of traineeship scheme (occupational training without commencing employment)

Challenge tackled: ... to improve the effectiveness of active labour market policy measures, while matching skills demand and supply.

Key objectives: To improve labour market integration of youth through enabling young persons to gain their first professionally relevant work experience, an opportunity to acquire skills and competences in their profession and/or to take professional/state/chamber licence exam needed for future employment in their profession. The objective meets the commitments by

improving access to and conditions of traineeship for young unemployed people.

Key content of measure: The scheme originating in late 2010 was meant as an instrument for those young people with an obligation to take professional/state exam, while receiving public financial support. However, its scope and aim were considerably broadened through the 2012 Employment Incentives Act, as it became a part of a reform process, enabling private sector employers to use work-place training and to provide youth in general with better opportunities to gain their first work experience. The access to the scheme was improved again in 2013 with the introduction of travel expenses and subsidies for subsequent employment.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Persons with less than one year of tenure in the vocation they were trained for. Duration: one year (in special cases up to 3). Monthly expenditure per person/year: about €122 in social security contributions, €250 for compensation, on average €65 for travel expenses. Total expenditure: €29.8 mil in 2013.

Participation: 19,322 persons in 2013, out of whom 14,446 new entrants (about 30% of generation).

State of implementation: Full roll-out achieved in 2013.

Monitored Effects: Change in youth unemployment, employment outcomes post-intervention

Measure 3: The „One Stop Shop“ – OSS

Challenge tackled: ... There is scope to improve the effectiveness of the social welfare system. ... there is little systematic monitoring of social assistance and benefits at national and local level. The attribution of different social benefits is scattered among services which hinders the exchange of information and opens the way to abuse.

Key objectives: Creating a single administrative point for the communication between citizens and the state in the area of granting the rights to benefits, for the administration of a large number of different benefits within the network of state administration offices.

Key content of measure: Based on the agreement of competent ministries to join the project "One Stop Shop", in April 2013, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth appointed a working group for concept development, which, together with the representatives of competent bodies discussed the feasibility of transferring authority for the payment of the four stated benefits (N4) to a new single administrative body. The result is a new concept based on the existing legal and infrastructural preconditions.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The measure will provide for financial and material savings as well as for better efficiency in managing human resources. At the state level, there are currently four benefits (maintenance benefit, unemployment benefit, maternity benefit and child's allowance) administrated in over 400 different local offices in the Republic of Croatia within the jurisdiction of the Croatian Health Insurance Fund, the Croatian Pension Insurance Institute, the Croatian Employment Service and social welfare centres (in the area of social benefits in the Republic of Croatia a total of 70 different benefits are currently administrated under the competence of 8 ministries and 4 institutions). The concept of "One Stop Shop" is implemented as a pilot project in the area of social benefits. If we add the social programmes of the local government units amounting to HRK 1.5 billion annually, the total amount of all measures reaches 10 billion HRK annually. The estimated amount of savings after full implementation (2016) is about HRK 6 million.

State of implementation: The completion of process is in 2016.

Monitored Effects: The number of reduction of 400 state offices to 126 OSS centres; change in the number of administrated benefit: Guaranteed Minimum Benefit, child's benefit, maternity and parental supports, unemployment benefit; saving effects.

CYPRUS: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Job placement and training of young unemployed tertiary education graduates

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR 5

Key objectives: Facilitate the transition from school to work.

Key content of measure: The Scheme aims at strengthening the management capacity of enterprises by giving incentives to enterprises to provide employment, practical training and work experience to young university and other tertiary education graduates.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.):

In 2013, the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) completed an evaluation study regarding the impact on the participants of the Scheme to whom a subsidy was granted during the period 2009-2012. According to the results of the telephone interviews conducted with the participants, 81,9% of them were employed after completion of the programmes. Actual participants 2013: 713 persons. The measure runs since 1983. Actual expenditure 2013: € 5.612.108

State of implementation: Ongoing

Monitored Effects: In 2014, a second evaluation study will be carried out.

Measure 2: Stimulate business innovation through the development of innovative products/services.

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR 5 (Promote Employment and create new jobs)

Key objectives: The Scheme aims at promoting employment and creation of new and viable businesses.

Key content of measure: The scheme promotes the development of innovative products and services by SMEs. The Scheme of Youth Entrepreneurship was launched in Feb 2008 for the first time, and was implemented until Dec 2013 time at which a fourth and last call was launched. During that period, MECID received more than 1500 applications from young people that wanted to create their own businesses.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): By the end of Dec 2013, 339 applicants have signed contracts with the Ministry and is expected that more than 500 applicants will sign in 2014. The budget for the period 2007-2013 is about 13 million euros. The amount paid by 31/12/2013 was 3.1 million euros. Payments will continue and finish by the end of 2015.

State of implementation: Completion of the evaluation process of the received applications of the 3rd call, signing contracts and payments of subsidies to the applicants.

Monitored Effects: ERDF operational program «sustainable development and competitiveness» Action «Know-ledge society and Innovation». Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism.

Measure 3: Scheme providing incentives for employment of the unemployed

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR 5 (Emphasis on work placements in companies)

Key objectives: Aim of this scheme was to alleviate the effects that the financial crisis has induced on the labour market.

Key content of measure: This scheme was about providing incentives for hiring unemployed individuals in the private sector. Financial aid of 60% of the yearly wage cost with maximum amount of €7.200 per person per semester is provided. The subsidy was granted only for the first 6 months of employment.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Approved budget: €6.000.000. 1984 unemployed applied to benefit from this Scheme. Under the evaluation approved only 1318 unemployed. The Scheme is co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Republic of Cyprus within

the framework of the Operational Programme “Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion” 2007-2013.

State of implementation: **Implementation period: from 27/11/2009 until 30/06/2011.**

Monitored Effects: **Not applicable. There were not implemented relevant measures to monitor the beneficiaries after the period of implementation.**

CZECH REPUBLIC: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Traineeships in companies – education through practice

Challenge and CSR tackled: Low employment rate of the low-skilled, relatively low ALMP spending activation

Key objectives: The main aim is to develop an innovative system of further education through traineeships and to increase employability of job-seekers. The project should contribute also to introducing traineeships as a form of further education into the national legislation.

Key content of measure: Insufficient work practice is one of the key obstacles faced by graduates. The project addresses this challenge: graduates can take up traineeships and thus improve their labour market position. Companies participating in the projects have a unique opportunity to train their future experts. Duration of the traineeships is between 1 and 6 months.

Scope of the measure: Traineeships in companies are targeted at persons with limited work experience (e.g. graduates, unemployed, parents after parental leave). The project budget is approx. 800 mill. CZK.

State of implementation: The project runs from June 2012 - October 2014 and is co-funded by the ESF.

Monitored effects: In February 2014, more than 33,000 applicants and more than 9,000 providers of traineeships were registered in the project. Since the start of the project, some 5,400 traineeships have been launched, of which 4,000 have been already finished. Nearly 40% of trainees have been offered a permanent employment or external cooperation after the traineeship.

Measure 2: Methodology of Comprehensive and Individualized Counselling services to clients of the Labour Office (MIKOP)

Challenge and CSR tackled: Strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the public employment service.

Key objectives: The project focuses on mapping current practice in the employment section of the Labour Office and on introduction of a systematic set-up of procedures in relation to clients. The purpose of the measure is to strengthen advisory and consultancy activities, to ensure standardized services at all workplaces of the Labour Office so that they are able to provide comprehensive advisory and consultancy services.

Key content of measure: The objectives of the project will be achieved by: - strengthening capacity of employment sections of the Labour Office by 253 employees; - training of employees participating in the project in the field of legislation and presentation and communication skills; - development of a new methodology for work with clients.

Scope of the measure: The project budget is approximately 320 mill. CZK and it is co-funded by the ESF.

State of implementation: The project runs from January 2013 until June 2015.

Monitored effects: Within the project, situation in provision of services of the Labour Office will be analysed and methodologies for counselling and job assistance, labour market services and the ESF will be developed. The project will cover 3,427 employees from the labour offices, 1,826 persons will be trained.

Measure 3: Professional experience for the young up to 30

Challenge and CSR tackled: Low employment rate of the low-skilled, relatively low ALMP spending and

activation

Key objectives: The project focuses on increasing employability of young people up to 30 years of age through targeted measures of the Labour Office.

Key content of measure: The main aim is to help young people gain professional experience with a concrete employer. The project also promotes deepening of qualifications and skills required by employers with a view to prepare job-seekers for a concrete occupation and/or to bring their skills closer to the current and future needs of the labour market. The measure is based on creation of subsidised jobs for young graduates. The duration of the subsidy is 6-12 months.

Scope of the measure: The target group are young people up to 30 years, who are unemployed for a longer period and have limited work experience, irrespective of their educational attainment. The Labour Office identifies potential participants from the register of unemployed. The project budget is approx. 1 bill. CZK, the project is co-funded from the ESF.

State of implementation: The project runs from July 2013 until August 2015.

Monitored effects: By January 2014, regional branches of the Labour Office concluded 1,620 agreements on employment subsidy, and 600 agreements on subsidy for mentors. In total, 4,586 job-seekers and 4,140 companies (offering 5,912 jobs) showed interest in participation.

DENMARK: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Cash Benefit Reform ('*Kontanthjælpsreform*')

Challenge and CSR tackled: Take further steps to enhance long-term labour supply by reforming the disability pension, better targeting subsidised employment schemes (the 'flex-job' system) towards people with reduced work capacity, and improving the employability of people with a migrant background (2012).

Key objectives: The Cash Benefit Reform ('*Kontanthjælpsreformen*') focuses on getting young people in education or employment. At the core of the reform is also the aim that if people are able to, they must work for their maintenance allowance until they are in regular employment. Correspondingly, people who need help to get closer to a job or an education must receive better assistance than previously. Key to the reform is that young persons under the age of 30 years should complete an education and that persons over the age of 30 years return to the workforce. It is expected that the reform will contribute to provide jobs and formal competences for amongst others people with a migrant background.

Key content of measure: E.g. young people below the age of 30 without an education are eligible to educational grants equivalent to the level of state education support (SU) and an extra activity allowance for those who cannot start an education right away. Furthermore, young people have a duty to begin an education as soon as possible, and people with complex issues will receive a holistic effort.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The target group is all persons receiving cash benefits ('*kontanthjælp*'). It will largely affect the non-western immigrants and descendants as they make up about 20 pct. of the persons receiving cash benefits ('*kontanthjælp*').

State of implementation: The reform entered into force on January 1 2014.

Monitored Effects: Currently a monitor system is under development, which measures the progress in implementing the reform. It is expected to commence at in June 2014.

Measure 2: Reform of disability pension and flexi-jobs scheme

Challenge and CSR tackled: Phase out as planned the voluntary early retirement pension (VERP) scheme, reform the disability pension, and better target subsidised employment schemes (the "flexjob" system) towards the most vulnerable groups (2011).

Key objectives: The reform is intended to include even more individuals in the labour market and enable people to support themselves, so as few as possible end up in continuous passive income support and as many as possible are employed. The reform of the flexi-job scheme is targeted at people with the smallest working capacity, and the way subsidies are given is restructured. The purpose is to enable persons with a small working capacity to enter the scheme as well as ensuring that those in the highest income groups do not receive the highest grants.

Key content of measure: The reform is intended to ensure further emphasis on the resources of the individual, as well as on the development of the working capacity of the individual. Several initiatives are launched to ensure a successful implementation of the reform of the flexi-job scheme.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The flexi-job scheme is targeted at people with the smallest working capacity, and the way subsidies are given is restructured in the reform. The purpose is to enable persons with a small working capacity to enter the scheme as well as ensuring that those in the highest income groups do not receive the highest grants.

State of implementation: Was adopted by Parliament in December 2012 and entered into force 1 January 2013.

Monitored Effects: Implementation of the reform is closely monitored. The reform is expected to reduce public spending by 1.9 billion DKK (approx. 253 million EUR) in 2020 in total from the integrated reforms

of disability pension and the flexi- job scheme. The number of people who are granted a disability pension has been halved from 2012 to 2013. This effect is in accordance with the aim of the reform, which is to encourage alternatives to passive public income support.

Measure 3: Sickness benefits reform

Challenge and CSR tackled: Take further steps to enhance long-term labour supply by reforming the disability pension, better targeting subsidised employment schemes (the 'flex-job' system) towards people with reduced work capacity, and improving the employability of people with a migrant background (2012).

Key objectives: The government wishes to abolish the limited duration of sickness benefits, in order to ensure that no one on sick leave risks finding themselves without maintenance. At the same time, those on sick leave must be met with a swifter and better effort than is the case today.

Key content of measure: Abolition of the limited duration of sickness benefits, a new possibility of extension of sickness benefit for seriously ill persons and the possibility of refusing to receive treatment without losing the right to sickness benefit will be put into force on 1 July 2014. A number of elements in order to improve the effort for sick and involve the employers in the effort will be put into force on 1 January 2015.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Expected reduction of public expenditure of 107 million DKK in 2020, rising to a reduction of 385 million DKK in 2032.

State of implementation: The political agreement was reached on December 2013. The law proposal is under preparation.

Monitored Effects: Since the reform is not implemented yet, no effects have been monitored. However, it is expected that the reform will initially lead to a slightly negative impact on employment and to increased expenses. In the long run, from 2016, the reform is expected to have a positive impact on employment and expenses will thereby be decreased. The reform is expected to be fully implemented in 2031, and the expected cuts in expenses are of about DKK 380 million, at this point.

GERMANY: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Act to Improve Chances for Labour Market Integration

Challenge and CSR tackled: Enhance participation in the labour market by improving equitable access to education and training systems and by taking further steps to reduce the high tax wedge in a budgetary neutral way and improve work incentives for persons with low income perspectives.

Key objectives: Labour market instruments are designed to further improve the support for persons seeking training or employment by making available measures that are best suited to their needs. The instruments were simplified and their number was reduced.

Key content of measure: Objectives for a successful use of instruments by employment agencies and job centres: - More decentralization: Decision-making competence but also responsibility at local level are strengthened; - Greater flexibility: Labour market instruments can be flexibly used and tailored to individual support needs; - Greater individuality: More personalised counselling and support; - Higher quality: Quality assurance is implemented through certification of providers and measures. - More transparency: Client orientation is improved by means of a well-structured and clearly arranged set of instruments.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Target group: all jobseekers (objective: individually tailored measures)

State of implementation: The essential provisions entered into force on 1 April 2012.

Monitored Effects: Individual labour market instruments are continually evaluated (as stipulated by the legislation). Results are not yet available.

Measure 2: Consolidating support in the transition from school to work

Challenge and CSR tackled: Enhance participation in the labour market by improving equitable access to education and training systems.

Key objectives: The measures aim at a sustainable integration of young people into vocational training.

Key content of measure: A coach provides individual support for pupils with a low performance; the measures start in the last but one grade of general secondary or special needs schools and continue for a period of up to six months after the start of vocational training. If a seamless transition is not achieved, support is provided during the transitional period for a maximum of up to six months after the end of school.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Support in the transition from school to work was tested at about 1,000 pilot schools since 2009 and legally consolidated with effect from 1 April 2012 - with a co-financing requirement by third parties in the amount of 50 per cent of the total costs (section 49 of Book Three of the Social Code). The Federal Government will use ESF funds for this purpose as from 2014. It has made sure that in the interim period (school-year cohorts 2012/2013 and 2013/2014) co-financing at the pilot schools is covered from national funds as from February 2013. For the transitional financing of the Federal Government (continued financing of the measures up until 2017) total costs in the amount of roughly 206m EUR (including co-financing share) have been estimated. In 2013, about 22,100 participants enrolled in the programme under section 49 of Book Three of the Social Code according to preliminary data, largely in the framework of the transitional financing of the Federal Government.

State of implementation: In 2012 the measures were consolidated in Book III of the Social Code.

Monitored Effects: **Improved transitions from general schools to vocational training**

Measure 3: *Expanding childcare provision for children 0-3 years*

Challenge and CSR tackled: Enhance (especially female) participation in the labour market and gender equality by expanding childcare provision

Key objectives: improving access to childcare facilities and thus the compatibility of family and work

Key content of measure: Legislation enacted in December 2008, the “Kinderförderungsgesetz” (KiFöG), included the provision of a subjective right to a place in centre- or home-based Early Childhood Education Center for children aged 1 and 2 years. It thus extended the legal entitlement, which already existed for children from 3 years to school age. After a transitional phase the entitlement entered into force on 1st of August, 2013. The law offered a remarkable financial support for the expansion of places to the federal states. With the “Kinderzuschutzförderungsgesetz” (KiZuFöG), entered into force in February 2013, the Federal Government gave another financial support to the Federal States for 30.000 additional places. These legal measures triggered a significant expansion of ECEC services.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The Federal Government spend 5,4 billion EUR until 2014 for the expansion of ECEC for children under age 3. From 2014 onwards it will contribute 845 million EUR per annum to the operational costs of ECEC services. Between 2008 and 2013 the rate of children 0-3 years enrolled in ECEC increased from 12.1 to 24.2 per cent in West Germany and from 41.9 to 49.8 per cent in East Germany.

State of implementation: on-going

Monitored Effects: Expansion of ECEC provision for children 0-3 has been monitored by the yearly reports of the Federal Government submitted to the German Bundestag.

ESTONIA Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Employment Programme 2012-2013

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR 2. Increase the participation of the young and the long-term unemployed in the labour market.

Key objectives: The aim of the programme was to prevent unemployment, reduce the duration of unemployment, and to provide help in finding work to people for whom finding work is difficult due to long-term unemployment or other special impediments.

Key content of measure: The Employment programme 2012–2013 established following services: mediation of career information; job-seeking counselling; business support; individual engagement in employment; counselling for elimination of impediments to employment; supporting readiness for work; supporting the acquisition of qualifications. Several services were provided under more favourable conditions: job mediation; labour market training; coaching for working life; wage subsidy; adaptation of work premises and equipment; working with a support person.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): 55,5 mln euros

State of implementation: finalized

Monitored Effects: Inflow to Employment Programme measures in 2012 was 90 283. 2013 data about inflow will be available in May 2014.

Measure 2:

Higher education reform

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR 3: Link training and education more effectively to the needs of the labour market, and enhance cooperation between businesses and academia. Foster prioritisation and internationalisation of the research and innovation systems.

Key objectives: To increase capacity of a higher education institutions to respond to labour market needs and widen access and increase the effectiveness of higher education, change higher education funding system and introduce performance contracts to set goals and support institutions of higher education in strengthening their areas of responsibility, internationalisation, entrepreneurship training, PhD studies, development of practical training systems etc.

Key content of measure: Providing free higher education: all students who fulfil the requirements of their curricula can study for free in Estonian-medium curricula. Reform of study allowances system: allowances are more needs-based and support students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. Also, a new type of scholarships is introduced to motivate students to study in STEM areas (e.g. smart specialisation). Reformed higher education institutions funding system provides more autonomy to higher education institutions and allows state to address shortages in certain areas by establishing performance contracts. Adjusted funding system facilitates supporting nationally important areas of development.

Scope of the measure: added budget to higher education institutions: € 6.1 million in 2013, € 18.8 million in 2014 and € 33.0 million in 2015. Needs-based study allowance will double the budget of allowances by 2016 (increase by € 8,8 million).

State of implementation: continues

Expected outcomes: Needs-based study allowances and free study possibilities have increased the

access to higher education. The new financing system facilitates state's capacity to specify the functions and areas of activity of the institutions of higher education, reduce duplication, and provide support for nationally important areas of development.

Measure 3:

Title of the measure: Amendment Parental Benefit Act

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR2: Improve incentives to work by streamlining the social benefits system and increasing flexibility in the allocation of disability, unemployment and parental benefits, while ensuring adequate social protection. Improve delivery of social services, while better targeting family and parental benefits and removing distortionary income tax exemptions related to children.**

Key objectives: Favour parental benefit receivers who want to return to work on the period of parental leave.

Key content of measure: Parental benefit is paid to a parent raising a child up to 18 months of age. A parent can take up employment when receiving the benefit, however, the benefit is recalculated in this case. The recalculation formula was changed and came into force 01.01.2014. Amendment of the act facilitates working or earning income during the period of receiving parental benefit. If the income earned exceeds the rate of the benefit, the amount of the benefit for the month in question is reduced, but with a more favorable formula than before. If the income earned is less than the 320 € per month (base rate of the benefit), the amount of the benefit is not changed. If more than 320 € is earned in a month, the amount of the benefit is changed as follows: new benefit amount = benefit – (income – benefit base rate) / 2. Still, the benefit may not be reduced more than 50 per cent of originally granted amount. It is also prohibited to reduce the amount of the benefit under the limit of the benefit base rate.

State of implementation: on going.

Monitored Effects: **Impact assessment will be conducted in 2015.**

IRELAND: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Pathways to Work

Challenge and Memorandum of Understanding commitment tackled: reforms to strengthen the labour market activation system and its link to unemployment supports in the fight against long-term unemployment.

Key objectives: 50 point plan to tackle long-term unemployment

Key content of measure: Integration of employment and income support services with an intensified work activation focus. More activation places and opportunities for those on the live register; Removing disincentives to the take-up of opportunities by unemployed people; Incentivising employers to provide more jobs for those who are unemployed; Reforming institutions to deliver better services.

Scope of the measure (budget, target, group with estimated coverage etc.): Fill additional scheme places. Open 60 "one stop shop" offices. Enable access to courses for long term unemployed. By end 2015 - Move 75,000 long-term unemployed at start of 2012 into employment; Increase the exit rate of people on the live register for two years or more by 50% (to 40%); Reduce the persistence rate to 25%; Increase the % of vacancies filled by employment services to 15%; Provide group information sessions/engagement sessions and interviews to jobseekers.

State of implementation: The Pathways to Work strategy was launched in 2011. In 2012 and 2013 most milestones\targets were either met or ahead of schedule. Over 26,000 of long-term unemployed at end-2011 had secured work by 2013 (over 6,000 ahead of the 20,000 target for 2013). The Pathways to Work approach will be rolled out across the country by end 2014.

Monitored Effects: A quarterly report on the performance Pathways to Work is published. Unemployment down 41,000 year on year to 253,000; Unemployment rate down from 12.7% to 12.1% in last quarter 2013; Long term unemployment down from 8.2% to 7.2% year on year; Youth unemployment down from 27.2% to 24.2% year on year; Employment up 61,000 year on year; Employment up 14,600 quarter on quarter.

Measure 2: Reform of the Further Education and Training Sector

Challenge and Memorandum of Understanding commitment tackled: The establishment of SOLAS, the new Further Education and Training Authority, and of regional Education and Training Boards in order to enhance their relevance for activation purposes.

Key objectives: To ensure that Ireland has a Further Education and Training sector that is aligned to local and regional skills demand and responsive to the needs of both learners and the business sector.

Key content of measure: SOLAS will bring a strategic direction to the sector and enable the new Education and Training Boards to deliver an integrated further education and training sector.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): In addition to the FET Strategy, SOLAS is also developing an integrated FET Services Plan for 2014. This plan will present a detailed picture of how the Irish State's investment in 2014 is being applied by ETBs and SOLAS against current policy objectives

State of implementation: The Education and Training Boards Act 2013 was passed in May 2013. The Further Education and Training Act 2013 was signed into law in July 2013. Arising from the commencement of the Education and Training Boards Act, the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) were established on 1st July 2013. SOLAS was established on 27th October 2013, bringing about the dissolution of FÁS. Report of the Review of the Apprenticeship System in Ireland submitted in January

2014.

Monitored effects: A strategic review of FET was completed for the Troika in 2013. SOLAS, with assistance of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) is engaged in a comprehensive consultation process as part of the development of a five year strategy for the FET Sector. It is expected that a proposed FET Strategy will be available for consideration towards the end of March 2014.

Measure 3: Reform of Sectoral Wage Setting mechanisms

Challenge and Memorandum of Understanding commitment tackled: The EU/IMF/ECB Support Programme required an independent review to be undertaken to consider the continued relevance, fairness and efficiency of two distinct types of statutory wage fixing mechanisms and the implementation of a time-bound follow-up comprehensive action plan.

Key objectives: Introduction of statutory rules governing the establishment and operation of the wage fixing mechanisms so as to make them more fair and more responsive to changing economic circumstances and labour market conditions.

Key content of measure:

- **Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (EROs) in certain low paid sectors:** Only a single basic adult rate and two supplementary minimum rates may be fixed; Unemployment levels, competitiveness and wage trends must be taken into account in fixing new rates; Enterprises may seek derogations in cases of financial difficulty.

- **Extension procedures applicable to sector level collective agreements (REAs):** Opening clauses may be inserted allowing companies to seek derogations in cases of financial difficulty; Legally extended agreements may be cancelled if either the worker or employer parties ceases to be substantially representative of workers or employers concerned

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): In 2011, between 170,000 and 300,000 workers were estimated to be covered by either Employment Regulation Orders (EROs) or Regulated Employment Agreements (REAs)

State of implementation: As Court decisions have already resulted in the elimination of both sectoral wage setting mechanisms on constitutional grounds, Government reforms are aimed at reinstating a more robust system in conformity with the reform objectives agreed with the Troika. The Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012 implemented reforms and reduced the number of sectors in which the wage fixing machinery may be established from 13 to 8.

Monitored Effects: Evaluation of the effect of the reforms must await the re-instatement of the sectoral wage setting mechanisms.

Measure 1: Voucher for integration into the labour market for youngsters up to the age of 29.

Challenge tackled: This measure addresses the challenge of youth unemployment which has reached 55,5% (age group 15-24) in December 2013 in Greece. It aims to protect young people from becoming inactive and long term unemployed due to their lack of previous working experience.

Key objectives: The program is aiming to provide 45.000 young unemployed people up to the age of 29 with a pathway to the labour market. The beneficiaries can benefit from vocational training, on the job training and subsidization of social security contributions in case the employer wants to hire them after the end of the training phase.

Key content of measure: The young unemployed receive certain training in order to find a job. Afterwards, private sector businesses are subsidized in order to hire the beneficiaries of that training. The total duration of the training is 80 hours while the subsidies of the businesses concern six months.

Scope of the measure: The measure is included in the comprehensive Action Plan for the youth and is co-funded by the European Social Fund. The budget reaches 174.900.000 €. The target group concerns young unemployed up to 29 years from all educational levels. The eligible geographical areas are eight (8) regions from the Pure Convergence Objective and three (3) phasing-out regions.

State of implementation: The first phase of the measure, concerning the training of young unemployed beneficiaries, has been completed. Enterprises are now invited to enroll in the second phase that concerns the subsidies for the private sector to hire those beneficiaries.

Monitored Effects: The places offered through the programme are registered in the ERGANI information system which monitors on a monthly basis the incoming/ outgoing flows in the labour market. Moreover, this measure will be evaluated from an external contractor in terms of effectiveness efficiency and impact of its implementation. So far, according to the available data 35.000 young unemployed have participated in training programs until October 2013. The program will also be evaluated by the Action Plan Monitoring and Steering Committee.

Measure 2: Reforming the system of collective bargaining

Challenge tackled: This measure addresses the high unemployment rates in Greece, which had reached 27,5% in December 2013. It aims to ensure the rapid adjustment of the labour market and strengthen labour market institutions.

Key objectives: The key objective of the measure is to reduce unemployment and make it easier and less costly for the employers to hire more staff.

Key content of measure: By Law 2024/2011, the legislature gives the opportunity to have business contracts that supersede the terms of the sectoral collective labour agreements. The Cabinet Decision 6/28.2.2012 decreased the prevailed wage thresholds by 22%, while by 32% for young people up to 24 year old. Also, until unemployment rate falls below 10%, the provisions for salary increases due to working experience are suspended. By Law 4093/2012, a new wage setting mechanism is set out for the private sector, by which the national general collective labour agreements will no longer determine wage working conditions. At the same time, Law 4046/2012 determines the minimum statutory wage.

Scope of the measure: The measure concerns legislative reform with no economic burden. All employers, employees, unions and collective labour organisations are affected and could be considered as stakeholders of that policy. However, the target group of that measure are the employers of the private sector.

State of implementation: The new measures are already in force.

Monitored Effects: In 2011, there were 170 business contracts, 38 national sectoral contracts and 7 local sectoral contracts. In 2012, there were 976 business contracts, 23 national sectoral contracts and 6 local sectoral contracts. In 2013, there were 409 business contracts, 14 national sectoral contracts and 10 local sectoral contracts.

1. 2012 Labor market reform and developments

Challenge and CSR tackled: The Labor reform and its developments face the main traditional problems of the Spanish labor market regulation that explain a high structural unemployment, an excessive volatility of employment to business cycle, the lack of flexibility in HR management and duality. Besides, they favour active ageing in response to the gradual ageing population that generates a risk to long term sustainability of the Social Security and complementing the profound pension system reform enacted in recent years. 2011-2013 CSRs on labour market regulation and active ageing are comprehensively addressed through this set of reforms.

Key objectives: Among its specific objectives are the following:

- Favor internal flexibility within firms as an alternative to job destruction and so as to improve HR management.
- Modernize collective bargaining to bring it into line with the specific needs of firms and workers and ease a more fluid dialogue.
- Rationalize external flexibility measures to foster permanent contracts.
- Improve workers' employability through more effective activation policies.
- To foster active ageing and avoid age discrimination in collective dismissals.
- Fostering permanent contracts, fighting duality and accelerating employment creation.

Key content of measure: The 2012 Labor market reform is a major regulatory reform that widely affects internal flexibility measures, collective bargaining, labor contracts regulation, individual and collective dismissals and activation policies. It includes both short term and structural measures:

The reform enhances internal flexibility to allow a more efficient HR management and to foster permanent contracts. It lowers unfair dismissals severance payments and clarifies when a dismissal should be considered fair. It also gives total freedom to reach firm level collective agreements, eases opt-out decisions and puts an end to unlimited "ultractividad" of the agreements. It includes important measures to improve activation policies in both training and matching services. It reforms part-time jobs, training contracts and introduces a new permanent contract with one year probatory period for SME that is linked to hiring subsidies. Finally, it regulates the right to continuous training of the workforce and regulates teleworking.

The reform was launched on February 2012. In autumn several legal developments were published and all the specific measures were finished by the end of that year, including training contracts and

collective dismissals more specific regulation. In August 2013 the Government published a report on the impact of the labor reform that was followed by new fine tuning measures. In December 2013 OECD published an independent report on the impact of the reform that was followed by a major reform of part-time jobs. In March 2014 a temporary flat tax rate for new permanent contracts was introduced. New permanent contracts will only cost 100€/month in social security contributions during two years if employment is maintained at least three years and total permanent workforce is maintained to avoid substitution effect.

Besides, additional measures in labour market regulation promoted active ageing, thus complementing the important measures undertaken through the pension reforms. These include: to forbid compulsory retirement at a determined age in collective bargaining agreements; to penalize those firms that include in collective dismissals a share of older than 50 years old workers that is larger than that of the workforce; rationalization of non-contributory unemployment benefits targeted at older workers.

Budget allocated (incl. amount contribution from ESF, if present)

State of implementation: fully implemented.

Monitored Effects: In August 2013 the Spanish Government presented a comprehensive report on the impact of the labor reform that is available online: “Report evaluating the impact of the labour reform”. In December that year the OECD published an additional analysis: “The 2012 Labour market reform”. Both reports find clear improvements in the functioning of the Spanish labor market thanks to the reform. Besides, effective and legal retirement age are approaching quickly, while activity rates of older workers grow steadily. The effectiveness and cost of the flat rate introduced in March 2014 is being closely monitored.

2. Activation policies regulation and modernization of the Public Employment Services

Challenge and CSR tackled: The modernization of the Spanish public employment services and a better regulation of the different tools to foster activation have been traditional recommendations that have been included in 2011-2013 Council CSRs. It is a long term deep institutional reform that has been advancing steadily and that will continue to be one of the priorities in this area in the following years.

Key objectives: This set of measures aims at modernizing public employment services and developing tools to enhance activation. It includes a better programming and coordination of the strategies followed by the central and regional labor authorities, a result oriented focus, the development of

private-public collaborations, enhanced management tools and a better use of new technologies.

Key content of measure: The strategy to modernize public employment services and supply better tools to foster activation includes a wide variety of measures that have been developed and put in place in 2011-2013. The process continues as there are many initiatives in the pipeline and further regulatory developments are expected. The main initiatives are the following:

- **A new coordination and programming framework through multi annual strategies (Spanish Activation Strategy) and Annual employment plans in which funding of the regions depends on past results measured through a set of indicators. There are many initiatives included in this area such as the development of common concepts and monitoring indicators, the sharing and spreading of best practices, IT developments, and so on.**
- **A whole new legal framework in training for the employment based on transparency, monitoring and selection of suppliers through open competition.**
- **New possibilities in matching services through a common framework of public-private collaboration and a new National employment webpage that includes information about vacancies and candidates.**
- **The rationalization of hiring subsidies that included a large reduction in the use of this tools and a new design of new measures, more suitable to avoid deadweight and substitution effects.**
- **A new national Strategy for the development of vocational in job training.**
- **The development of links between active and passive labor policies and a better adaptation of transfers to the real needs of the unemployed.**

State of implementation: some measures have already been fully implemented such as the 2012 and 2013 Annual Employment Plans or the PREPARA non contributory unemployment benefit reform. Others have been developing for months and continue to be implemented, such as the public-private collaboration in matching services. In other cases, important advances have been done but there is further reform on track, such as training for the employment. In the first semester 2013 initiatives such as the National employment webpage or the 2014-2016 Activation Strategy will be launched.

Monitored Effects: The August 2013 Report on the impact of the labor reform included monitoring of some specific measures included in this set of reform. Annual Employment Plans include monitoring indicators that are already conditioning funding of the regions.

3. Strategy for Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment 2013-2016 including the Youth Guarantee.

Challenge and CSR tackled: Promote access of the youth to the labour market, including through

entrepreneurship. CSRs in 2011-2013 focused on young people: improve employment opportunities for young people (2011); Implement the Youth Action Plan (2012); Implement and monitor closely the effectiveness of the measures to fight youth unemployment set out in the Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Strategy 2013- 2016, for example through a Youth Guarantee (2013).

Key objectives: Promote measures to reduce unemployment among young people, either through opportunities in the job market or through self-employment and entrepreneurship. The Strategy aims essentially at reducing the rate of youth unemployment and dealing with the structural causes that make it higher than that for the rest of the population. The YG will strengthen partnerships with all stakeholders involved in the early intervention aimed at preventing and reducing unemployment spells and inactivity among young people under 25 years of age.

Key content of measure: The actions covered by the Strategy address young people in general under the age of 30, and especially those who are unemployed. The 100 measures of the Strategy have been drawn up to address the challenges identified, focusing on the integration of young people in the labour market, promotion of entrepreneurship and improved employability. They include:

- Early-impact or emergency measures expected to have an effect in the short term. Among others: temporary flat rate of about 50 euros in social contributions for young self-employed workers registering for the first time; elimination of the Social Security contribution for open-ended employment of young people by micro-enterprises and self-employed workers; temporary contract conditional only on lack of experience of the worker newly hired; incentives for part-time employment including training of young people under 30 with no work experience in certain conditions; compatibility of unemployment benefits with the start of self-employed activity; greater possibilities of capitalisation to a lump sum of 100% of unemployment benefit; second opportunity allowing workers to once again receive unemployment benefit after carrying out self-employed activity if they quit; creation of specialised offices in the Public Employment Services for advice and support for new entrepreneurs.
- Measures whose impact can be expected in the medium to long term addressing the structural problems that affect youth employment. They include: actions aiming to improve the employability of young people through education, training, better foreign language skills and the use of information and communication technologies; initiatives to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment; incentives for hiring workers and for enhancing flexibility and equal opportunities; measures to improve the management and efficiency of PES and actions aiming to promote public-private collaboration in order to improve job searching and mediation.

- Measures to address the situation of NEETs, later developed by the National Implementation Plan for the Youth Guarantee, which sets out the basic lines for the gradual rolling out of the YG system in Spain, based on a common set of core elements, such as an on-line registration site, a profiling tool, a common set of offers and monitoring and evaluation.

Budget allocated (incl. amount contribution from ESF, if present) Resources amounting to 3.485 million Euros were earmarked to the Strategy. Of this amount, just over 1.1 billion from the European Social Fund. The emergency measures were estimated to have an economic impact over the 4 years of implementation of the Strategy of over 1.75 billion, of which 40% aim to promote hiring, 38% for measures to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship, and 22% for training and improved mediation. There was also a budgetary provision of 1.7 billion additional Euros for other measures to be adopted over the four years of implementation of the Strategy, of which at least 50% will be for actions in the field of Training and Education.

In addition, the budget assigned to Spain for the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) is a total of 943,5 million Euros. In compliance with the regulations governing the YEI, Spain should match that figure with additional funding from the ESF. In the view of the restrictions for the use of the YEI, an amount larger than the compulsory minimum required will be allocated, totalling 2,358 million Euros between 2016 and 2020. The national budget will provide for paying in advance almost all the funds from the YEI and the ESF to fund the Youth Guarantee Scheme.

State of implementation: All short term impact measures implemented. Implemented 64% of the envisaged measures. Plan for the YG presented in December 2013. Gradually being implemented since the beginning of 2014.

Monitored Effects: Up to the end of March 2014, 140.000 young people had benefit of the measures included in the Strategy. The Strategy foresees a monitoring report over the first full year of data after its entry into force. The Plan for the YG foresees close monitoring in accordance with criteria and regulation at EU level.

Measure 1: Youth Guarantee

Challenge and CSR tackled: to implement and monitor closely the impact of on-going measures to improve the labour market position of young people and the long-term unemployed, with a particular focus on the development of job-relevant skills.

Key objectives: The objectives of the Youth Guarantee are to support young people in gaining a job or education place, to prevent prolonged youth unemployment and to offer support at an early stage to avoid social exclusion.

Key content of measure: All major action contributing to education, employment and social policies for young people are coordinated under the comprehensive Youth Guarantee programme. The Youth Guarantee offers each young person under 25 and recently graduated under 30 a job, a traineeship, on-the-job training, a study place, or a period in a workshop or rehabilitation within 3 months of becoming unemployed. In addition, every school-leaver will be guaranteed a place in upper secondary, school, in vocational education and training, in apprenticeship training, in a youth workshop, in rehabilitation or by other means. The Skills Programme for young adults provides people without an upper secondary level qualification the opportunity to complete a vocational qualification.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): All persons under the age of 25 who lack employment or vocational training, and to those aged 25–29 who have recently (12 months) graduated. The skills programme for young adults is targeted to 20–29-year-olds without vocational training. The number of registered unemployed young were 37 500 registered young unemployed job seekers in 2013. There are approximately 120 000 young people aged 20–29 who do not have a post-basic qualification. The number of socially excluded young people under 30 without an upper secondary education qualification is approximately 40 000. Of these, it is estimated that there are 25 000 young NEETs.

The additional annual finance for the Youth Guarantee for 2013-2016 includes: - strengthened public employment services, 28 million €, - education guarantee for all comprehensive school graduates, 24 million €, - youth outreach work and youth workshops, 9 million €, - Skills programme for young adults, 52 million €. The labour market situation of young people has deteriorated because of economic recession. Therefore the Government has appointed an additional 81 million € to develop apprenticeship training and on-the-job training during 2014 – 2017.

State of implementation: The implementation started guarantee started at the beginning of 2013.

Monitored Effects: 92.6 % of young job seekers completed an employment plan with PES-officer within 3 months in 2013. 74.4 % of young job seekers found a job, education place or started on active programme within three months in 2013. The activation rate of young unemployed was 32.9 % (26.8 % for all age groups) in 2013 which demonstrates that young job seekers are a priority in the PES.

Measure 2: Reducing long-term unemployment and unemployment of those who are most difficult to get employed

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR 3 (partial) (...) Implement and monitor closely the impact of on-going measures to improve the labour-market position of (...) the long-term unemployed, with a particular focus on the development of job-relevant skills.

Key objectives: Key objectives are to develop cooperation between state and municipalities and to develop network cooperation with the intermediate labour market.

Key content of measure: **The Labour Force Service Centers (TYPs) bring together the services of TE offices, the municipalities and the Social Insurance Institution (Kela) with a view to improving the employability of the long-term unemployed. The current network of 38 TYPs will be extended to cover the whole country as planned before. Experiences from the fix-term trial in 65 municipalities will be exploited in the preparation of the legislation. The fix-term trial piloting new services models continues until the end of 2015 as agreed earlier. Funding responsibility for the labour market support of the long-term unemployed (covering those received labour market support more than 300 days instead of the current 500 days) will partially be transferred to the municipalities (an estimated EUR 150 million transfer of funding responsibility). The functioning of the intermediate labour market is being developed in 2013-2014. The intermediate partner organization have been segmented in 2 groups depending on what kind of services they can provide for unemployed jobseekers: (1) actors that can offer transition work for unemployed with wage subsidy, and support him/her to find a job in the open labour market and (2) actors that can employ unemployed person with wage subsidy to improve his/her general working life and occupational skills with necessary advisory services and to help so jobseekers clarify their employment plan.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): see above

State of implementation: The legislation concerned shall come into force on 1 January 2015. The legislation of social enterprises will be reformed by 2015.

Monitored Effects: -

Measure 3: Moderate wage agreement by the Social Partners

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR 5 (partial)...** in the current low-growth environment, support the alignment of the real wage and productivity developments whilst fully respecting the role of social partners and in line with national practices.

Key objectives: **The objectives is to increase employment, competitiveness and economic growth.**

Key content of measure: **The labour market organisations have concluded a three-year Pact for Employment and Growth in August 2013. According to the agreement, the first-year wage increase will be EUR 20 per month. In the second year, the increase will be 0.4 per cent. The size and timing of the increase for the third year of the agreement period will be agreed upon by the labour market organisations by 15 June 2015. The first contracts under the Pact for Employment and Growth entered into force in November 2013. The Pact for Employment and Growth is also associated with a number of measures pertaining to taxes and benefits as decided by the Government. The agreement is expected to increase nominal earnings by 1.3 per cent in 2014 and by 1.2 per cent in 2015 measured by the level-of-earnings index. This increase in wage level is notably slower than the average rate for the 2000s, as the contracting parties have taken into account the slow growth of the economy and productivity and the declining employment level.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **The agreement covers 93 % of wage earners.**

State of implementation: **The agreement has entered into force in October 2013. The first phase of the agreement period will be 22-24 months depending of the collective agreement. The second phase of the agreement period will end between November 2016 – January 2017 depending on sector.**

Monitored Effects: **The effects of the agreement are monitored by the Information Committee on Cost and Income Developments.**

FRANCE: Most representative reform measures

Title of the measure 1: Law on Securing Job (June 2013)

Challenge and CSR tackled: **Enhancing labour market functioning and combating segmentation**

Key objectives: **This major law on the labour market functioning is actually a transposition of the interprofessional agreement reached by the social Partners in January 2013. This new Law addresses directly the segmentation of the labour market issues, with a series of measures namely: the jobs preserving agreements, the simplification and improvement of the legal procedure in case of collective dismissals, the incentives to substitute short term contracts to regular contracts. The spirit of the Law of June 2014 aimed to promoting anticipating and negotiated adaptation of the job situation with the Social partners in the firms, by using internal flexibility tools.**

Key content of measure: **The combination of the various measures issued from the Law and the agreements of the social Partners aim to reach a common goal: easing the transition from fixed-term contracts to permanent contracts. A comprehensive approach of the labour market functioning was actually adopted. The main innovation are the followings :**

- **The Jobs preserving Firm-level agreements favouring internal mobility : these firm agreements allow social Partners to negotiate a firm-level agreement on temporary wage and working time reductions when difficult economic time so require, in exchange of a guarantee of job preservation. These agreements are called “competitiveness agreements”.Some major agreements have been signed in big firms. The development of these competitiveness agreements is positive being a tool of the social dialogue to prevent the situation of collective economic dismissals in the firms.**
- **The reform of the “very short part-time” with a minimum hour duration : 24h a week for the part-time job, except for young workers under 26 years who are still in education and for people in an integration pathway to employment and except for branches who ask (and obtain) derogation due to their activity.**
- **The refilling rights to unemployment insurance. The new agreement of the Social Partners on the Unemployment Benefit Insurance reached 22nd of march 2014 is determining the modalities of this new scheme.**
- **The Agreement on Interim Agency workers reached on the 11th July 2013 on securing the career path of the interim Agency workers. The extension order of this Agreement has been published the 22nd February. This Agreement make possible for the temporary Agencies to recruit employees on permanent contract and to assign them to the user undertaking.**

State of implementation: **Since its entry into force, the practices of the negotiated arrangements have been developed in various French Companies.**

Monitored Effects: **In progress.**

Measure 2: Law on vocational training, employment and social democracy (March 2014)

Challenge and CSR tackled: **Securing career path by improving the adult participation in lifelong learning and vocational training, in particular the low qualified and the jobseekers, and strengthening apprenticeship scheme**

Key objectives: **The new law on vocational training, employment and social democracy was passed in March 2014. This Bill is a transcription of the interprofessional Agreement of December 2013. This reform is the first comprehensive reform on vocational training dealing at the same time with: the measures, the financing, the Governance issues. The changes introduced by the law, are expected to eliminate the unbalanced in the public beneficiaries of the vocational training schemes which are under represented beyond the jobseekers and the least qualified people.**

Key content of the measures:

- **The central innovation of the law is the organisation of the implementation of the Personal training account, introduced in the law on securing employment of last June 2013. The personal training**

account is open to all active people: representing more than 40 millions of people. The personal training account (PCA) is attached to each individual and open from the first insertion in the labour market (16 years of age or 15 in an apprenticeship scheme) up to the retirement. The new training rights entitled for an employee in the PTA are constituted by: 24 hours of training per year, up to a maximum of 150 hours. Personal training can be used whenever by its holder with an express agreement. The eligible trainings are determined on the basis of a list decided by the social partners, and must be delivered by a skill qualification, a certification or a diploma in direct link with the needs of the economy in short or a medium term.

- The Law institutes also a Career development Consulting in the framework of the new Public Orientation service (coordination of the actors at the local level by the Regions). This career development consulting is a free service delivered by the main operators of the Public employment service, by some approved collectors of training funds (OPCA), and by operators appointed by the Regions.
- The new law aim to simplify the funding system of the training by the firms.
- The social dialogue on vocational training and skills of the employees in the companies is strengthened. Every three year, at the branches level and at the companies level, there are compulsory negotiations on the jobs and competencies management and planning. Furthermore, at the companies level (firms with 300 employees and more) the issue of the “feeding” modalities of the personal training account of the employees is compulsory. Every two years, all firms have to organise a career appraisal for all employees.

State of implementation: Decrees for enforcement of the law are under preparation

Measure 3 : The Tax credit for competitiveness and job creation (CICE) and the Responsibility and Solidarity Pact

Challenge and CSR tackled : Improving competitiveness of economy and supporting job creation

Key objectives : The Tax Credit for competitiveness and job creation aim at improving growth perspectives and support job creation and competitiveness of the firms by a reduction on statutory social contribution on labor. The measures of the Responsibility and Solidarity Pact will increase these effects.

Key content of the measures : The CICE came into force 15 months ago with a global envelope of 20 billion euros, and constituted a major effort to reduce statutory contributions on labor in order to improve our long term growth perspectives and to support employment and competitiveness of French firms. This tax break, which went from 4 to 6% of the wage bill in 2014 (for the wages below 2.5 times the minimum wage), has already generated a decrease in labor cost by 3% on average, for the companies and should enable the creation of 300 000 jobs by 2017.

The Responsibility and Solidarity Pact is organized around four pillars: additional relief of employer contributions for companies, funded by expenditure savings; modernization of the tax system and lowering of corporate taxes; simplification of administrative procedures; and sectorial commitments for job creation. The Pact is followed by a number of solidarity measures to support the purchasing power of households, especially those in need.

The Pact includes a decrease in labor cost to respond to a twofold challenge: promote job creation and improve the competitiveness of the economy and its export capacity. In particular, labour cost on the minimum wage, the SMIC, will be reduced through the removal of employer contributions paid to the URSSAF (apart from unemployment insurance contributions) as well as a review of the marking scale of existing reliefs up to 1.6 times the minimum wage. Beyond 1.6 times the minimum wage, and up to 3.5 times the minimum wage, the family contributions will be lowered by 1.8 points. Overall, the additional relief on wages lower than 1.6 times the minimum wage, as well as those for wages between 1.6 and 3.5 times the minimum wage, will amount to 4.5 billion Euros each in 2016. The family contributions will be reduced by 1 billion Euros for the independent workers. The amount of these reliefs add to the CICE, which has been extended beyond 2014, and bringing the whole set of measures to a total of 30 billion Euros by 2016 (this is an amount comparable to that of family contributions). These reliefs aim at maximizing the impact on competitiveness and employment: 90% of workers are concerned by this set of measures, with particular emphasis on the lowest wages. In counterpart, companies will commit in job creation, especially for the young, in vocational training and job quality. These conditions will be detailed over the course of the next negotiations per branch.

State of implementation : The negotiations of the professional branches are under way.

ITALY: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Labour Market Reform (Law 92/2012)

Challenge and CSR tackled: - **CSR 2 (2011):** “Take measures to combat segmentation in the labour market, by reviewing selected aspects of employment protection legislation and reforming in a comprehensive manner the currently fragmented unemployment benefit system. Step up efforts to fight undeclared work. In addition, take steps to promote greater participation of women in the labour market, by increasing the availability of care facilities throughout the country and providing financial incentives to second earners to take up work in a budgetary neutral way. - **CSR 4 (2012):** “Adopt the labour market reform as a priority to tackle the segmentation of the labour market and establish an integrated unemployment benefit scheme. Take further action to incentivise labour market participation of women, in particular through the provision of child and elderly care”.

Key objectives: The July 2012 labour market reform main goals are: a) making labour market more inclusive and dynamic by tackling labour market segmentation and restoring equity in the level of employment protection by reviewing individual dismissal rules according to changing labour market and b) making social protection and active policies more efficient, fair and consistent both with economic background and with the changing labour market structure and protection legislation.

Key content of measure: Law 92/2012 is a comprehensive package of interventions that encompassed a review of many labour contracts, a revision of individual and collective dismissal rules and procedures, the design of a new social security system including a unemployment benefit scheme, the reshaping of active policies and life-long learning system and the introduction of several measures devoted to promote the inclusion and the employment of young people, women and older workers. The review of existing labour contract – which aims at increasing the incidence of typical contracts among workforce thus also allowing for a more uniform employment protection legislation – is based on: a) the promotion of apprenticeship through a solid social contribution exemption, increasing the number of apprentices employers can hire and the introduction of a minimum contract duration; b) a more flexible use of fixed-term contract through the abolition of the justification clause for the first 12 months; c) revising administrative procedures concerning job-on-call to prevent it being used to conceal undeclared work; d) limiting the scope of project work to high skilled occupations thus to prevent concealing subordinate employment relationships; e) introducing a new regulatory framework concerning internship including the provision of a minimum compensation to be defined by each Region. Labour market reform established that individual dismissal on redundancy ground were justified, without any monetary compensation requirement . To cope with possible disputes, measures were introduced to reduce time and uncertainty on the outcome of possible legal proceedings, thus cutting down indirect costs stemming from layoffs contests..

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The reform has a potential impact on the vast majority of private sector employee (around 15,000 thousands people) and unemployed (around 2,000 thousands in 2012). Projected costs of the reform were been calculated in 1,719 million of Euros for 2013, 2,219 for 2014, 2,501 for 2015, 2,482 for 2016.

State of implementation: Enacted.

Monitored Effects: The proportion of hiring through fixed-term contracts increased replacing in particular job-on-call contracts and project work. Unemployment benefit recipients increased, though business cycle effect should be taken into consideration. Individual dismissals figures did not showed significant deviations from the past, while voluntary dismissals have slightly decreased.

Measure 2: Pacchetto Giovani ("Youth Package) (Law 99/2013)

Challenge and CSR tackled: - "Take further action to foster labour market participation, especially of women and young people, for example through a Youth Guarantee."

- "Strengthen general and vocational education to better match young people's skills with labour demand, in particular for people with migrant background. Reinforce efforts to increase the participation rate of older workers, including by improving their employability through lifelong learning."

- "Step up efforts to reduce youth unemployment by improving the design and monitoring of active labour market policies."

Key objectives: To increase labour content of economic recovery, reduce inactivity rate, enhance employability of young persons and combat poverty – especially in the southern regions.

Key content of measure: The policy measure rests on several interventions aiming at a) boosting job creation both on a permanent and temporary basis, especially for young persons and unemployed; b) prepare the ground for an immediate start of Youth Guarantee, thus allowing for new job and training opportunities for young persons, preventing inactivity and combating unemployment; c) reducing poverty and social exclusion.

a) Employers are exempted from paying an amount of social contribution equal to 30% of gross salary - up to a maximum of 650 monthly Euros - for each newly engaged young person (aged between 18 and 29 years) who is eligible according to EC Regulation 800/2008. Measure applies only if engagements increase firm size. For permanent contracts social contribution relief extends up to 18 months, whilst for transformation from fixed term to permanent contracts the benefit is limited to 12 months. In order to ensure greater uniformity among regional regulations of apprenticeship contracts and to enhance on-the-job training, new Guidelines have been issued concerning the procedures concerning vocational content certification of apprenticeships contracts. In particular: i) a national standard for acquired qualification certification was defined; ii) certification is now required only for job-specific training; c) companies with branches in different regions should follow the Apprenticeships regulation of the Region where the headquarter is located. Law 99/2013 allocates around 13.6 million Euros to promote internships in public sector, cultural services, Universities and private companies. Further 168 million Euros (reprogrammed ESF) are allocated to incentive internships in Southern Regions for NEET. Overall ESF 180 million Euros were reprogrammed to incentive self-entrepreneurship and to fund the implementation of social projects promoted by young and disadvantaged persons in Southern Regions.

b) A steering committee (Struttura di Missione) was appointed with the aim of defining a set of Guidelines for the implementation of Youth Guarantee at national and regional level. Struttura di Missione – supported by ISFOL and Italia Lavoro - will moreover monitor the implementation of Youth Guarantee, gathering data and relevant information from PES. A national dataset on active and passive labour market policies will be implemented, gathering information at individual level on benefit allowances and participation in active policy measures. Struttura di Missione – supported by Italia Lavoro and ISFOL – will moreover undertake a monitoring activity on vocational training activities carried out at regional level, particularly focussing on assessing the outcomes of training programmes in terms of employability.

c) 168 million Euros are allocated to further extend Social Card in Southern Regions

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The reform has potentially a broad impact. Incentives are intended to create 100 thousands jobs for young people in three years.

State of implementation: Enacted.

Monitored Effects: As of December 2013, around 10 thousands contracts were stipulated benefiting

from social contribution partial exemption.

Measure 3: Stability Law 2014

Challenge and CSR tackled: **High Unit Labour Cost.** “Shift the tax burden from labour and capital to consumption, property and the environment in a budgetary neutral manner.”

Key objectives: **Reducing labour cost**

Key content of measure: **An overall amount of 14.6 billion Euros are allocated to reduce tax burden on labour income and labour cost for the period 2014-2016. In particular the Stability Law 2014 increases tax deductions for employees whose labour income ranges between 8,001 and 32,000 Euros (1.5 billion Euros for 2014); allocates 3.7 billion Euros to reduce non-pensions employers’ social contribution for 2014-2016. (1 billion in 2014, 1.1 in 2015, 1.2 in 2016); recognises to employers hiring workers on permanent basis for the next three years a maximum 15,000 € per-year and per-worker deduction from Regional Tax on Business Activities (IRAP). Measure applies only if engagements increase firm size and is suspended if the number of employees decreases; increases reimbursements to employers in case of transformation from fixed-term to permanent contract; cancels the extra surcharge of 1.4 % on social contribution for fixed-term contacts introduced by Law 92/2012.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **14.6 billion Euros for the period 2014-2016.**

State of implementation: **Enacted**

Monitored Effects: **Not yet monitored.**

LATVIA: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: ALMPS and PES reforms

Challenge and CSR tackled: (CSR 3, 2013) (...) Tackle long-term and youth unemployment by increasing coverage and effectiveness of active labour market policies and targeted social services. Improve the employability of young people [...]

Key objectives: to improve effectiveness and efficiency of ALMPS with impact on better coverage for those in need of support.

Key content of measure: 1. Profiling system and enhanced job search support, including a clear definition of a suitable job offer; 2. Evidenced-based policy approach, including the study "Latvia: Who is Unemployed, Inactive or Needy?" (World Bank); 3. Implementation of a training voucher system to ensure a demand led training; 4. Youth guarantee.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): 1. EUR 54 000 were allocated for profiling system concept (ESF- 28 000), for administrative costs and IT improvements EUR 26 000 (central budget). All registered unemployed – 93 000 at the end of 2013; 2. EUR 284 576, government, ministries, society and other experts, registered unemployed, people, receiving social benefits and other; 3. No additional costs applied – changes in existing regulation were introduced, all registered unemployed; 4. EUR 66 000 000 in 2014-2020, 40 000 young people not in employment or training (NEETs).

State of implementation: 1, 3,4 - continuing, 2, 5 – finalized.

Monitored Effects: labour market outcomes of ALMPs and PES support including training programmes.

Measure 2: Social Safety Net

Challenge tackled: Memorandum of Understanding between the European Community and the Republic of Latvia (...) by end-August 2011, submit to international lenders proposals for the reform of scope and financing of a comprehensive and targeted social safety net program [...]

Key objectives: to protect vulnerable groups with emergency safety net support during a severe economic crisis, to mitigate the social costs of fiscal consolidation, and to support important structural reforms in social sector programs.

Key content of measure: health co-payments for the poor (including compensations for medicine), homecare services, additional transportation for schoolchildren, provision of pre-school education to children, implementation of the measure Workplaces with Stipend Emergency Public Works Programme for registered long-term unemployed, co-financing for municipal social assistance programmes and other.

Scope of the measure: (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Euro 418 500 952, more than 200 thousand persons received support during 2009-2012; 123 thousand unemployed participated in WWS measure, 82 thousand temporary workplaces were created in municipalities

State of implementation: finalized (31.12.2012.)

Monitored Effects: number of beneficiaries, coverage, results in evaluation:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTHDOFFICE/Resources/5485726-1288802844934/LatviaE2P.pdf>

Measure 3: Decision on increase in the statutory retirement age and preparations for the development of a comprehensive Active Ageing Strategy

Challenge and CSR tackled: (MoU, 2011) [...] improve management and performance of human resources [...]

Key objectives: **1. Reduce the risks to long-term budgetary sustainability of the state pension system from the impact of demographic changes; 2. Active Ageing Strategy - identify the main obstacles, incentives and disincentives for the elderly population to stay in the labour market including coverage of labour demand, employer attitudes and policies, family care obligations, to improve ALMPS impact on better coverage for those in need of support.**

Key content of measure: **1. Latvia has started to gradually increase the retirement age for men and women (starting from 2014 with an increase by 3 months per year from 62 years reaching 65 years in 2025; 2. Develop a comprehensive strategy - examine the profile of the older population and identify major diversities, propose policy options.**

Scope of the measure: **1. Projected savings: 2014 - 11 million EUR; 2015 - 24 million EUR, 2016 - 43 million EUR; 2. Active Ageing Strategy - EUR 287 916, government, ministries, society and other experts, registered unemployed, people, receiving social benefits and other.**

State of implementation: continuing.

Monitored Effects: fiscal impacts, providing a strong evidence basis and policy options for the future active ageing strategy

LITHUANIA: Most representative policy measures

Measure 1: New Model of Vocational training of the unemployed and employees of working age who have been given notice of dismissal

Challenge and CSR tackled: **(CSR 3) Tackle high unemployment amongst low-skilled and long-term while improving efficiency of active labour market policy measures; improve the employability of young people and address persistent skill mismatches.**

Key objectives: **The Law on Support for Employment has been changed in March 2012 – person is sent to trainings only in cases they are relevant to fulfil concrete workplace or start his/her own individual economic activities. The aim of the new vocational training model is to help unemployed and employees who have been given notice of dismissal to find employment, acquire or improve qualifications or develop necessary competences.**

Key content of measure: **Vocational training is being organized according two cases:**

Case I. Vocational training is organized with regard to the needs of the labour market and a specific employer in order to help to be placed in vacancies, to retain employees who have been given notice of dismissal in their workplaces or to start a self-employment activity.

The above cases are related to the following agreements regarding the provision of vocational training organisation services: a tripartite vocational training and employment agreement or a vocational training and self-employment agreement.

Case II. Vocational training is organised with regard to the needs of the future labour market, based on the tendencies of job creation by economic sectors, identified in annual labour market forecasts conducted by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange, and the barometer of employability by occupations, in order to increase employability in future jobs by providing qualifications or competences that are in demand on the labour market, if the number of specialists planned to be trained by education institutions for these jobs is insufficient.

In this case, a vocational training agreement regarding the provision of vocational training organization services is concluded.

A local labour exchange office issues a training voucher to the unemployed person or employee who has been given notice of dismissal, who have been referred to vocational training. The training voucher serves as a commitment of the labour exchange to pay to the chosen vocational training provider for vocational training services rendered according to the specified vocational training programme.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.):

Socio-economic group targeted – persons motivated to participate in the labour market and meeting the requirements of a vocational training programme and the requirements of employers in the case of a tripartite vocational training and employment agreement are referred to training:

Unemployed persons, ready and motivated for the labour market with only minimum inadequacy of qualification or competence to a vacancy;

Unemployed persons, for whom the labour exchange cannot offer a suitable job within a period of three months and whose individual employment activity plan envisages vocational training;

Employees of working age who have been given notice of dismissal, who have presented their notice

of dismissal and have registered with the labour exchange at the prescribed procedure.

6 million EUR were used for vocational training in 2012, 14.4 million EUR in 2013. It is planned that ~12.5 million EUR will be used for vocational training in 2014.

State of implementation: continuing

Monitored Effects: A total of 95 % percent became employed in 6 months after the measure, compared with 84% in 2012 and 52% in the same period of 2011. According to the preliminary research results on impact assessment of active labour market policy measures made by Ministry of Finance, vocational training was determined as the most effective active labour market policy measure (research results are still on a preparation).

Measure 2: Reform of the Cash Social Assistance System

Challenge and CSR tackled: Implement concrete targeted measures to reduce poverty and social exclusion. Continue strengthening the links between the cash social assistance reform and activation measures.

Key objectives: Cash Social Assistance Reform was launched in 2012. The key objective of the reform was to increase work incentives, strengthen links between cash social assistance and activation measures, also to better target assistance to those in need.

Key content of measure: According to the reform, cash social assistance for poor residents was provided through implementation of two models: in 55 non-pilot municipalities in the form of state function (function assigned by the state to the municipalities), while in 5 pilot municipalities (Akmene, Panevezys, Radviliskis, Raseiniai and Silale) from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2014 as an independent municipal function. Continuing the reform of the cash social assistance system, taking into consideration the good practice and outcomes of providing cash social assistance in 5 pilot municipalities, the amendments to the Law on Cash Social Assistance for Poor Residents and Law on Local Self-Government were prepared in 2013 and came into effect on the 1 January 2014. According to these amendments, the function to grant one of cash social assistance types, i.e. social benefit, was assigned also to the remaining 55 municipalities to implement as an independent municipal function. It should be noted that in order to increase motivation of working-age persons to integrate into the labour market, carry out active search for a job and reduce long-term dependence on social assistance system to social benefit recipients an additional social benefit is paid if a long-term unemployed social benefit recipient gets employed. Additional social benefit is paid for the period no longer than 6 months for every month related with work or service relations, which amounts to 50% of the average social benefit paid in the last 12 months prior to the employment. While reforming the Cash Social Assistance System Scheme a proportional reduction scheme was introduced which is applicable for long-term beneficiaries of a working age who do not work. This scheme is not applicable for the part of social benefit paid for children and when social benefit is paid only for children, also in certain cases stated in the of Law on Cash Social Assistance for Poor Residents, e. g. person is studying, nursing ill relative, woman is pregnant, etc.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Upon assigning social benefit provision to independent municipal function for the rest 55 non-pilot municipalities, the amount of LTL 575.4 million was assigned from the national budget to municipal budgets for 2014. In 2012, the funds amounting to LTL 312.3 thousand were spent to pay additional social benefit, while the funds spent in 2013 amounted to LTL 649.9 thousand, i.e. more than 2 times more.

State of implementation: Taking into consideration that a pilot project in 5 municipalities will end 31 December 2014, a unified model of provision of cash social assistance in all 60 municipalities from 1 January 2015 is planned to be adopted.

Monitored Effects: Monitoring of the reform of the cash social assistance system has been carried out. The scientists evaluated the reform in terms of adequacy, efficiency, outcomes and benefits in the term of 2012-2014 in 5 pilot municipalities. Aforementioned measures delivered impressive results in terms of saving expenditure and better targeting beneficiaries. The number of persons receiving social benefit in 5 pilot municipalities performing the independent municipal function since 1 January 2012 decreased by 18.7% in 2013 if compared with year 2012 (from 15.5 thousand down to 12.6 thousand people). Expenditure for social benefit decreased by 26.8% (from LTL 38.1 million down to LTL 27.9 million). The average social benefit amount per month per person in the above-mentioned 5 municipalities decreased by 9.5% in 2013, if compared with the 2012, i.e. from LTL 204.3 down to LTL 184.8. The saved funds were used for financing the social programs in municipalities and for providing additional social assistance for the most vulnerable groups.

In comparison, 55 non-pilot municipalities, which provided social benefit by performing the state function of the municipalities (assigned by the state to the municipalities) spent LTL 480.2 million to pay social benefit in 2013. If compared with the year 2012, the expenses for social benefit decreased by 14.5% (from LTL 561.4 million to LTL 480.2 million). In 2013, social benefit in the above-mentioned 55 municipalities was paid to 177.4 thousand persons. If compared with the year 2012, the number of persons receiving social benefit decreased by 14.1% (from 206.4 thousand to 177.4 thousand persons). The average social benefit amount per month per person in the above-mentioned 55 municipalities decreased by 0.5% in 2013, if compared with the year 2012, i.e. from LTL 226.7 down to LTL 225.6. As for the additionally paid social benefit, in 2012, additional social benefit was paid to 930 beneficiaries, while in 2013, it was paid to 2383 persons, i.e. about 2.6 times more.

Measure 3: Pension reform

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR Adopt and implement legislation on a comprehensive pension system reform. Align the statutory retirement age with life expectancy, restrict access to early retirement, establish clear rules for the indexation of pensions, and promote the use of complementary savings schemes while ensuring implementation of ongoing reforms. Underpin pension reform with measures that promote the employability of older workers.

Key objectives: improve future pension adequacy

Key content of measure: At the end of 2012, the Parliament adopted changes in the funded pension scheme. From 2014 the contributions to the Pension Funds for the new members will comprise of three sources: 2 percent of obligatory pension contribution, 1 percent paid by the member and 1 percent of the country average wage additionally paid by the State (so-called “2+2+2” formula). The members, already participating in the pension accumulation, will have to make a decision on the form of accumulation. From 1 April till 30 November, 2013 these members can write an agreement to pay additional contribution of 1 percent by themselves and have a grant of 1 percent of the country average wage by the State. Another two options are to accumulate only the obligatory pension contribution or to stop the transferring the contributions to the pension funds. When a person expresses the will to stop accumulation in the pension fund, the accumulated sum is left in the pension fund till the person acquires the right for the benefit from pension fund.

Contributions:

Year	Fraction of	Additional	Contribution paid by state (from average

	pension contribution	contribution paid by member	wage in the state)
2014	2%	1%	1%
2016	2%	2%	2%
2020	3,5%	2%	2%

Also the fees were reduced by amendments. From 2013 the fee from accumulated assets, which is paid by member, is up to 0.65 percent of a members average annual assets held in conservative pension funds and up to 1 from assets held in other pension funds. From 2013 the fee from contribution is up to 2 percent and every year is reduced by 0.5 percent till it reaches 0 percent:

Contribution fee (maximum amount) is gradually decreased since 2013:

2013 – 2%

2014 – 1.5%

2015 – 1%

2016 –0.5%

Since 2017 – no contribution fee applied.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **409 thousand out of 1.1 million participants.**

State of implementation: **implemented**

Monitored Effects: **improved future pension adequacy.**

Luxemburg Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Reform of the youth employment contracts.

Challenge and CSR tackled: (CSR 4 from 2012) *Continue efforts to reduce youth unemployment by reinforcing stakeholders' involvement, and by strengthening training and education measures, in particular for those with low education levels, with the aim of better matching young people's skills and qualifications to labour demand.*

Key objectives:

The law aims to reform the two main youth employment measures of the public employment service in order to ameliorate the practical training and professional integration of the young job seekers in the labour market. The two measures are the “employment initiation contract” (private sector) and the “employment support contract” (public sector).

These two types of youth employment contracts will also be a key element of the Youth Guarantee, mainly in the “employment path” of the guarantee, which is being implemented and will be launched in June 2014.

Key content of measure:

The youth employment contracts had been modified in 2009 in order to offer better chances for the young job seekers during the crisis. Following a study on these measures and the discussions with the stakeholders, the Government proposed modifications in December 2012 which have been adopted by parliament in February 2013. The purpose of the amendments is to improve the practical training and monitoring of young job seekers within the employment measures, increasing their chances of finding a job quickly while providing a stable legal framework.

At the same time the youth employment service of the public employment service has been reinforced to allow a better orientation and follow-up of the young job seekers, and to fully implement the Youth Guarantee.

Budget allocated (incl. amount contribution from ESF, if present): **21 million Euros for 2013 and for both type of contracts (national budget only).**

State of implementation: **The bill has been adopted in March 2013.**

Monitored Effects: **As the bill has been adopted in March 2013 and the duration of the contracts can be up to 18 months, so far no study could be carried out regarding the effectiveness of the new measures because it is too early.**

However, the previous measures were evaluated by an external research and studies centre. For the “employment initiation contract”, 75% had an employment 6 months after the end of the contract. Without this contract they would be 50%. For the “employment support contract” 48% had an employment 6 months after the end of the contract against 42% without it.

It is expected that the new measures will attain better results for both type of contracts.

Measure 2: Reform of the secondary education system.

Challenge and CSR tackled: (CSR 5 from 2013) [...] *Strengthen general and vocational education to better match young people's skills with labour demand, in particular for people with migrant background. [...]*

Key objectives: **This reform aims four main themes to assure a better integration and continuation of the youngsters through a more simple and flexible framework with clearly defined responsibilities and procedures which are specified in the organization of the schools themselves:**

- **students' progress through the school system;**
- **preparation of students for higher education;**
- **language teaching;**
- **development of school quality and autonomy of colleges.**

The current draft reform provides a better framework, a more relevant orientation in the lower classes, a broad general culture, a progressive specialization with more choices in the upper classes, clearly defined responsibilities and procedures specified in the organization of schools.

Key content of measure:

This measure consists in the reform of the whole secondary education system. Many of the classes and education paths will be restructured to better match the requirements of an efficient education system. For the lower classes a mentoring system will be introduced to better support and guide the youngsters in the secondary education system. The personal work of the students will be better supervised, from the chosen methodology to the presentation of the personal work. This will develop their skills and give a better individual assessment.

The language teaching will become more flexible and for the higher classes the levels will be set accordingly to the European reference framework. Furthermore the system will be skill based as this has been done in the primary education system. The different levels that have to be attained will be determined for every discipline of the lower classes. Also orientation plays a crucial role in the new system and will be based on better assessments of the students' skills and performance in different fields. The colleges will become more autonomous and the quality follow-up of the education system will be developed.

State of implementation: **A bill has been introduced in 2013 and is being discussed in the Parliamentary commission in charge of the bill.**

Monitored Effects: **As the bill has not been passed yet, no effect can be monitored.**

Measure 3: Bill introducing a bundle of measures to promote an age policy in companies.

Challenge and CSR tackled: (CSR 5 from 2013) ***[...] Reinforce efforts to increase the participation rate of older workers, including by improving their employability through lifelong learning.***

Key objectives:

This bill will introduce some key measures that will seek to increase the employment rate, provided the well-being, safety and health of older workers.

The idea is to support older workers to stay in employment and to facilitate the professional integration of the older job seekers.

Key content of measure:

This bill includes an obligation for employers with over 150 staff to draw up an age management plan that focuses on at least three of the following issues: recruiting older workers, anticipating career changes, improving working conditions, providing access to life-long education (LLL) and

passing on knowledge and skills to lesser experienced workers.

Financial initiatives are being included for the companies in this group, as well as for those companies not required to draw up plans but who voluntarily apply an age management plan. Companies with more than 150 employees that are already covered by such a plan through a collective bargaining agreement or an inter-professional accord are not constrained by this obligation if they already fulfil a certain number of conditions.

This bill will also introduce a short time internship of up to 6 weeks for job seekers over 50 years old who apply in firms. The aim is to increase the chances of the older job seekers by offering the employers the opportunity to assess the job seekers in a workplace.

Budget allocated (incl. amount contribution from ESF, if present): *no additional budget is needed.*

State of implementation: **A bill has been introduced in April 2014 to the Parliament.**

Monitored Effects: **As the bill has not been passed yet, no effect can be monitored.**

HUNGARY: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Introduction of a new vocational education and training system

Challenge and CSR tackled: 'Ensure that the education system provides all young people with labour-market-relevant skills, competences and qualifications. Support the transition between different stages of education and towards the labour market.' (2013 CSR)

Key objectives: - increase quality and relevance of the VET-system with regard to the labour market demand to improve employability of participants, - guarantee that students participating in vocational training find employment within a shorter period of time to reduce youth unemployment, - raise attractiveness of the VET-system among students, - develop partnership between VET schools and enterprises.

Key content of measure: Act CLXXXVII of 2011 on vocational training launched the mandatory introduction of the new type three-year dual vocational training on 1 September, 2013, - transformation (until 2017) of regional integrated vocational training centres in order to make the vocational training school system more transparent and more efficient, - reinforcement of social inclusion role of vocational school system.

The key features of the system include: - the strengthening of elements of dual training, - better channelling economic demands with an increase in the role of the chambers of commerce, - the introduction of new professional and examination requirements (and that of the content of training courses) that follow labour market needs more closely

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The required resources of the implementation in 2013 were HUF 25 billion. Costs were financed partly by the National Labour Market Fund, partly from ESF funds (SoROP Priority 2). The amount was used primarily for the production of new educational material, further training of teachers and instructors, on-going supervision of the system, etc.

State of implementation: On-going. The approval process of implementing legislation is still in progress.

Monitored Effects: Monitoring is currently in progress through ex post impact assessment of measures; research projects and inspections conducted by the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Measure 2: Job Protection Act

Challenge and CSR tackled: Relatively high tax wedge on labour and unfavourable labour market situation of certain disadvantaged groups. CSR: 'Enhance participation in the labour market by alleviating the impact of the tax reform on low earners in a budget-neutral manner' (2011); 'Make the taxation of labour more employment-friendly' (2012); 'Continue making taxation of labour more employment-friendly by alleviating the tax burden on low-wage earners' (2013).

Key objectives: Reduce tax wedge; support job creation and job retention, promote employment of low-skilled, the youth, older people, parents with young children and the long-term unemployed.

Key content of measure: The Job Protection Act reduces employment costs of certain disadvantaged groups facing difficulties on the labour market by granting substantial tax credits to employers. Employers of these employees are eligible for social security contribution (SSC) deductions (exemption or discount on the social contribution tax and the vocational training contribution amounting in total to 28.5% of the gross income of the employee) up to the income ceiling of HUF

100,000 per month. Besides, new, simpler and more advantageous tax forms are also available for SMEs.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Budget of the measure is approx. HUF 300 billion, which is solely ensured by national budget. The focus is on groups that are in the worst labour market position and in respect of which Hungary's employment figures show the largest divergence in international comparison, such as: - low-skilled persons (working in elementary occupations not requiring qualification), - young people below the age of 25, - older workers above the age of 55, - long-term unemployed (registered as jobseekers for at least 6 months), - parents with young children.

State of implementation: On-going (since January 2013).

Monitored Effects: Monitoring by the national tax authority is continuous. In January 2014 the tax credits helped the employment of more than 790 thousand disadvantaged employees

Measure 3: Youth employment package

Challenge and CSR tackled: 'Address youth unemployment for example through a Youth Guarantee. Support the transition between different stages of education and towards the labour market.' (2013 CSR)

Key objectives: Improve employability of young people.

Key content of measure: The Youth employment package consists of several interventions:

- Large-scale ALMP programmes aimed at improving employability have been increasingly focused on the young target group since 2013, with a budget increase of HUF 22 billion to support at least 37 thousand young people until 2015. These ALMPs implemented by PES, aim at enabling access to the labour market for disadvantaged people by means of comprehensive, tailor-made individual support comprising training, wage subsidies and labour market services.
- A programme to foster entrepreneurship of young people has been launched where young participants are provided training, start-up support, follow-up guidance and mentoring.
- An apprenticeship programme fostering the employment of young qualified career starters by fully or partially subsidizing their wages and social contributions for nine months is also underway since 2013.
- Within the framework of labour market programmes implemented by NGOs since the beginning of 2013, the objective of piloting new methods to promote the employability of young people and help them gain work experience is supported.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Generally, in the framework of the programmes young people below 25 (30 in the case of career starters with tertiary education) are targeted. The entrepreneurship programme supports young people between 18-35. Total budget of the programmes is approx. HUF 140 billion (ALMP programme for all six target groups HUF 113 bill; Entrepreneurship programme HUF 6.94 bill; Apprenticeship programme HUF 8.5 bill; NGO programmes: HUF 12 bill)

State of implementation: Ongoing.

Monitored Effects: Programmes are still on-going. (Interim data: in the large-scale ALMP programmes, more than 36 000 young people have been involved until January

Malta Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Revision of Tax Bands

Challenge and CSR tackled: *To address Growth Bottlenecks and Economic Imbalances*

Key objectives: *To stimulate growth*

Key content of measure: *As from January 2013, the maximum rate of income tax was reduced from 35 percent to 25 percent, for income below €60,000.*

Therefore in the years 2013-2016, Government is widening the tax bands of single, joint computation and parents, so that income up to a maximum of €60,000 will be taxed as shown in the table below:

	Single Computation	Joint Computation	Parent Computation
0%	0 - 8,500	0 - 11,900	0 - 9,300
15%	8,501 - 14,500	11,901 - 21,200	9,301 - 15,800
25%	14,501 - 19,500	21,201 - 28,700	15,801 - 21,200
32% (2013) 29% (2014) 25% (2015)	19,501 – 60,000	28,701 – 60,000	21,201 – 60,000
35%	60,001	60,001	60,001

Persons whose income tax is computed on the single rate and whose only income throughout the year is the minimum wage and the statutory bonus, will not be taxable. This will come about through a specific adjustment whereby persons whose income derived solely from employment, including the bonus, did not exceed €8950 during 2013 would not be liable to income tax.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The revised tax bands aim to raise employment growth, support employment creation and make work pay.

State of implementation: *Ongoing*

Monitored Effects:

Measure 2: Introduction of vocational subjects in secondary schools

Challenge and CSR tackled: **2012 CSR - Take steps to reduce the high rate of early school leaving. Pursue policy efforts in the education system to match the skills required by the labour market.**

Key objectives: Provision of vocational training in secondary schools with the aim of making education more relevant to the labour market.

Key content of measure: During 2010, the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE), signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Pearson Education Ltd. expressing the intention to collaborate on the provision of BTEC (Business and Technician Education Council) qualifications for the schools sector in Malta. The collaboration agreement covered the supply of qualifications and associated teaching and learning resources, training of staff as appropriate to enable the delivery of the qualifications in Malta, training in quality assurance methodology and practice to ensure high

quality standards in the delivery of all programmes, support for the promotion and marketing to parents and learners, and advice and guidance to support the establishment and implementation of the vocational and core programmes. Four vocational subject areas (Engineering, Health and Social Care, Hospitality, and Information Technology) were identified and scheduled to be piloted in six state colleges and 4 non-state schools from September 2011.

During scholastic year 2012-2013, the BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council qualification) vocational project started its second year of implementation.

A VET Unit was set up within the Office of the Permanent Secretary MEDE to oversee the completion of the BTEC Pilot, the piloting of the home-grown qualifications and the eventual implementation of the planned national roll-out of vocational education in secondary schools in Q3, 2015.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The long-term objective is to eventually develop a VET qualification delivery model suitable for Malta.

State of implementation: Ongoing.

Measure 3: Free Child Care

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR 2013 - Continue supporting the improving labour-market participation of women by promoting flexible working arrangements, in particular by enhancing the provision and affordability of child-care and out-of-school centres.

Key objectives: Increase the number of women in employment

Key content of measure: To improve the affordability of childcare services, as from April 2014, families with both parents in employment will benefit from free childcare. Free childcare will also be provided to parents who are in education or part-time employment. This initiative will be financed by Government through a public private partnership.

To this end, the Maltese Government has allocated a total of €3.8 million for free child care centres. Government will pay the childcare centre a uniform rate of €3.00 per hour per child availing of the free childcare scheme in 2014 and 2015. The rate will go up to €3.05 per hour in 2016. This is intended to shift competition between providers on the basis of quality instead of price thus improving the quality of service in general.

In April 2014, the Government will also be launching a Breakfast Club measure intended to provide care for children before the schools' official opening hours, from 7.00am till 8.30a.m. This initiative is open to every public school in Malta and Gozo. Parents will have the possibility to drop off their children at school before they go to work having the peace of mind that their children are being taken care of by teachers. This incentive will allow further flexibility to working parents and may also encourage more women to either return or enter into the labour market.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The free childcare initiative is expected to foster a substantial increase in employment especially by raising the percentage of female employment and older workers.

State of implementation: To start in April 2014

Measure 1: *Wet Werk en Zekerheid* (Law for Work and Security)

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR4 2013: “(...)Foster labour market transitions and address labour market rigidities, including by reforming employment protection legislation and the unemployment benefit system.”**

Key objectives: **This legal reform aims to a) modernise EPL, b) strengthen flexworkers’ legal position, c) cap the maximum UB duration and amend the UB conditions.**

Key content of measure: **a) dismissal procedures will be simplified and severance pay will be capped. b) flexworkers’ rights position will be improved, for instance: employees with a fixed-term contract will *de facto* get a permanent position if their contract is extended more than three times or lasts for more than two years (in the current situation the threshold is three years). c) the maximum publicly funded duration of the UB scheme will be capped from 38 months to 24 months, the accrual of UB rights will be slowed down and the conditions for receiving UB will be modernised.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **The measure is expected to improve the functioning of the labour market *inter alia* by increasing labour mobility and to structurally increase employment with 0.3 per cent (20 000 fte jobs). The reform of the UB scheme will generate a structural saving of 1,0 billion euro.**

State of implementation: **The Tweede Kamer (lower house) of the Dutch Parliament approved of this act in February 2014. The Eerste Kamer (upper house) is expected to approve of the law before the Summer of 2014. The legal provisions are expected to (gradually) come into effect as of 2015 respectively 2016.**

Monitored Effects: **The effects of the reforms will be closely monitored. The effects on the labour market were *ex ante* monitored by the Dutch Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis CPB.**

Measure 2: *Participatiewet* (Participation Act)

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR4 2013: “Take further measures to enhance participation in the labour market, particularly of people at the margin of the labour market (...)”**

Key objectives: **The Participation Act will increase the labour participation of people who are able to work, but in need of support, for instance because they have a handicap.**

Key content of measure: **The measure will merge and reform three existing schemes (benefit for young handicapped, sheltered work places and social benefit scheme) and make municipalities responsible for the participation and re-integration of people with a handicap. Wage subsidies will be made available by the government for employers to cover the difference between the wage capacity of an employed person and the statutory minimum wage. Employers and the government as an employer have agreed (in the context of the Social Agreement that was agreed on 11 April 2013) to create 100.000 respectively 25.000 jobs for this target group gradually until 2026. A quote scheme will enter into force if these jobs will not be created.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **This measure will generate a long-term structural saving of 1.8 billion euro. 125.000 jobs for people with a handicap are to be created.**

State of implementation: **The Tweede Kamer (lower house) of the Dutch Parliament approved of this act in March 2014. The Eerste Kamer (upper house) is expected to approve of the law before the Summer of 2014. The legal provisions are expected to come into effect as of 2015.**

Monitored Effects: The law has yet to come into force. The effects will be closely monitored.

Measure 3: Wet verhogen AOW-leeftijd (Law for increasing statutory pension age)

Challenge and CSR tackled: CSR2 2012: “Take measures to increase the statutory retirement age, including linking it to life expectancy (...)”

Key objectives: To uphold the financial sustainability of the Dutch social (pension) system by increasing labour supply and linking the statutory pension age to life expectancy.

Key content of measure: As of 2013, the statutory pension age is increasing gradually up to the age of 67 in 2023. As of then it will be linked to life expectancy. A new legal proposal has been prepared to fasten the increase of the pension age to 67 in 2021 (and then linked to life expectancy). The measure is underpinned with policies to increase the employability of older workers. Parallel to the increase of the statutory pension age, a policy package is implemented to adjust the second pillar pension to the increasing statutory pension age. Pre-pension arrangements have been abolished.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The measures in this law improve the sustainability of the public finances with 1.1% of GDP.

State of implementation: The act for increasing the statutory pension age has been approved by Parliament in November 2012 and has come into force as of January 2013. The additional act to speed up this increase is expected to be dealt with by the Tweede Kamer (lower house) of the Dutch Parliament before the Summer of 2014.

Monitored Effects: The statutory pension age is increasing but the effective retirement age is also going up. Measures taken in the past to cut off early retirement possibilities have resulted in an average effective retirement age increasing up to 63.9 years in 2013 (in 2006, this was only 61 years). In 2013, the most common age to retire was 65 years old.

POLAND: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Development of childcare facilities for children under the age of 3

Challenge and CSR tackled: **low female labour market participation, low availability of childcare facilities for children under the age of 3.**

Key objectives: - **improving the availability and quality of care for children under the age of 3, - enabling parents to take professional activity (in particular to facilitate women's return to the labour market after maternity leave), - promoting early childhood education, - ensuring equal opportunities for children, - facilitation the establishment of childcare institutions.**

Key content of measure: **As of the 4th of April 2011 The Act on the care for children under the age of 3 introduced a ground-breaking change to more efficient setting up and operation of different forms of care for the children under 3 years old. The Act sets out the following forms of care: nursery, children's club, daily carer and nanny. Since then, nurseries and children's clubs can be established by: gminas (municipality), as well as non-public entities, including private persons. In order to support gminas in the process of setting up nurseries, children's clubs and providing services by daily carers the government has launched a "Toddler" Programme. In July 2013, the Act on care for a child under the age of 3, was amended. The new law introduced a number of changes with a view to creating better conditions for the development different forms of care for children under 3 years and enabling parents to take professional activity: - the amount of gminas' own contribution was reduced from 50% to 20% when applying for funding from the state budget for the establishment and operation costs of care institutions, - the list of companies that can apply for funding from the state budget was expanded to individuals, legal persons and entities without legal personality, - the number of entities that may employ a daily carer (and obtain a targeted subsidy) was increased, - persons carrying out farming activity obtained a possibility to hire a nanny, for whom the social and health insurance contributions are paid from the state budget.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **It is planned that in 2014 the measure will contribute to increasing the number of places in care institutions for young children up to 6.1%. State Budget: PLN 16.3 million in 2011, PLN 118 million in 2012, PLN 101 million in 2013. The budget planned for 2014 is PLN 101 million.**

State of implementation: **The measure is being implemented.**

Monitored Effects: **Since the entry into force of the Act on the care for children under the age of 3 (since 2011), the systematic increase in the number of childcare places has been observed. In 2011 nurseries, children's clubs and daily carers provided care for 3% children under the age of 3, in 2013, the enrolment rate increased to 5.6% (the accumulated increase of available places was 60% from 2011). To this figure should be added about 9.1 thousand nannies for whom the social insurance contributions up to the minimum wage are paid by the state.**

Measure 2: The reform of pension system with a view to increasing the retirement age to 67 years

Challenge and CSR tackled: **low professional activity of older people, low effective retirement age, shrinking of the economically active population.**

Key objectives: **alleviating the decline in the working age population, which will be noticeable after 2020, extending the effective retirement age, mitigating the effects of aging society on the public finance, maintaining the GDP growth.**

Key content of measure: **Starting from 1 of January 2013, the statutory retirement age is being**

increased for both sexes in order to reach 67 years for men by 2020 and for women by 2040.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The statutory retirement age for both sexes is being increased by one month every four months in a year. This measure also provide for restrictions for the use of early retirement schemes which have prevailed so far in the special pension systems for farmers, as well as for judges and prosecutors.

State of implementation: The measure is being implemented.

Monitored Effects: The review of the functioning of the regulations has to be done no later than by the 31st of December 2016.

PORTUGAL: Most representative reform measures from the MoU

Measure 1: Apprenticeship Courses (“Cursos de Aprendizagem”)

Challenge tackled: Youth unemployment – low level of education and training; high rate of early leavers from education and training; to cover an increasing number of young people in this type of vocational training.

Key objectives: Promote the initial vocational training of young, people in order to increase their employability given the needs of the labour market, allowing education and career progression.

Key content of measure: Apprenticeship courses are courses of initial vocational training in alternation, for young people under 25 years of age who have successfully completed the 3rd. cycle of basic education or who have attended upper secondary education without conclusion, focusing on their integration into the labour market and allowing further studies. They are governed by the following principles: Intervention with young people in transition to the labour force and with those who are already part of the labour market but without the complete secondary level of education, academic or vocational, to improve the levels of employability and social inclusion; Structuring of four training components for the various dimensions of knowledge considering the appropriate level of qualification, mainly vocational curriculum frameworks, and the various professional opportunities; Recognition of the training potential of the labour condition through a higher valuation of the assistance and training contribution from enterprises, taking them as true training spaces and learning progression boosters; An alternating system construed as the interaction between theory and practical training and the respective contexts, with practical training in enterprises distributed progressively along the course. Apprenticeship courses give priority to skills development within work context, being about 40% of the curricula of these courses accomplished in companies. This system of rotation between the training center and the enterprise aims to further increase the employability of young people by taking into account the needs of the business sector and promoting the development of combined knowledge and skills that lead to job profiles.

<i>Scope of the measure:</i>	2011	2012	2013
N. ° of trainees covered	23,737	32,844	40,246
Financial costs (Euros)	60,537,590.23	75,418,699.87	105,098,667.39

State of implementation: The reform of this type of vocational training was implemented in 2008 and has been consolidated since 2011 mainly in what concerns to the growth of the numbers of young people covered by apprenticeship courses.

Monitored Effects: There was an increasing number of young people in integrated apprenticeship courses from 2011 to 2013 (73%) which explains the proportional increase of the associated financial costs. These include technological areas demanded by the labour market and expected to increase until 2020. The average rate of young people coming out of training and becoming employed is around 42%.

Measure 2: Employment Traineeships (“Estágios Emprego”)

Challenge and CSR tackled: **Youth unemployment – transition from education to work**

Key objectives: **The measure supports the transition between the education system and the labour market, promoting the improvement of qualifications and the adaptation of the Portuguese economy to the challenges of a global economy. It seeks to: complement and improve the skills of the unemployed in order to facilitate their recruitment and integration into the labour market; and raise awareness among enterprises (particularly SME’s) of new qualifications and competences available, and to promote employment in new areas.**

Key content of measure: **The measure is focused on the integration of young people, aged between 18 and 30 years, inclusive, and with a qualification at level 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 of the National Qualifications Framework, as well as on the (re)integration of unemployed jobseekers belonging to disadvantaged groups (people with disabilities, lone parents, unemployed jobseekers whose spouses people are equally unemployed and victims of domestic violence) into the labour market by complementing their basic pre-existing qualifications with practical on-the-job experience in a company for a maximum period of 12 months. The traineeships allow young people to get a first contact with the labour market and, at the same time, help companies, particularly SMEs, increase their awareness of new knowledge and competences. The trainees are entitled to monthly subsidies that vary depending on the level of education.**

Scope of the measure: **Target Group 2013: 40.000 beneficiaries, Budget 2013: 161,433 million Euros**

State of implementation: **The measure is in place since 1997, having undergone successive changes, being that the most important occurred in February 2011 and, recently, in June 2013.**

Implementation in 2013: 43,922 beneficiaries (109.8% of the target) and total payments amounted to 156.959 million Euros (97.2% of total budget)

Monitored Effects: **The programme led to an increase in the number of traineeships, high transition rates into employment, incorporation of highly qualified staff in the labour market, encouraging investment in career development and improving productivity and competitiveness. The results of evaluations reveal that: - Between 1997 and 2011 over 170 000 young unemployed individuals have benefitted from this measure. - Transition rates from the traineeship programme to employment have been consistently high (over 70%), with many young people staying in employment with the same company; transition rate represented 25% of the total annual inflow of highly qualified people into the employed population. - Company benefits: incorporation of highly qualified staff at reduced costs; helping fill the gap between universities and companies, generating a change in staffing cultures, encouraging investment in career development and improving productivity and competitiveness. - Trainee benefits: improved employability; smoother transition between academic environment and professional life. More recently, 2013 data reveals that from near 13.365 beneficiaries that finished the programme in 2012, 44.5% stayed in the enterprise/entity after finishing the programme and 23.9% became employed in other entity. In 2012 (full year) the share of those who became employed was 68.4%.**

Measure 3: Model of Intervention for Matching

Challenge and CSR tackled: **increase the effectiveness and efficiency of public service employment (in the work with job seekers and employers)**

Key objectives: **- Maximizing the resources of Job Centers; - Optimizing internal organization; - Increasing the speed and appropriateness of responses; - Assuring the follow-up of the jobseekers**

pathways, minimizing the inflow into long-term unemployment; - Increasing proactivity and responsibility of the unemployed jobseekers in their professional integration process; - Speeding up the interaction with the unemployed jobseekers and the employers; - Making sure that Job Centers are more accountable for handling job vacancies; - Increasing the uptake of job vacancies and their disclosure.

Key content of the measure: The model is based on a set of essential elements, namely:

- **Profiling System:** it categorizes the unemployed jobseekers in three types of profiles, differentiated according to the expected difficulty in their labor market integration at the time of registration for employment, and the consequent required efforts from Job Centers. Thus, based on the probability of becoming long-term unemployed, estimated by a specific model, the unemployed jobseekers will be segmented into three categories: (1) high-risk group, including unemployed jobseekers needing intensive support; (2) moderate risk group, including unemployed jobseekers needing counseling and vocational training; (3) low-risk group, including unemployed jobseekers whose profile is adequate to direct integration into the labor market and the unemployed needing counseling and activation.
- **Online PPE: Integration Itinerary,** autonomously designed by the unemployed jobseeker, at the time of online registration for employment (through [NetEmprego](#));
- **Career Manager:** Role played by employment counsellors who are responsible for contracting the integration pathway of a number of unemployed jobseekers and for the respective close and regular follow-up, so as to ensure their timely integration into sustainable opportunities.
- **Matching System:** Matching tool that presupposes the action of a career manager or a job vacancy manager, which allows a pre-selection of unemployed jobseekers and / or the identification of adjustable job vacancies based on coded and open fields and different weights of the relevant variables.
- **Levels of Job Vacancy Handling:** differentiation of the degree of involvement and responsibility of the Job Centers in the mediation between employers and the unemployed jobseekers
- **Job Vacancy Manager:** Role also played by employment counsellors, who are responsible for handling the job vacancies assigned to them, thus contributing to the satisfaction of employers and to an effective matching between job offer and demand.

Scope of the measure: These procedures were adopted for the relationship between the Public Employment Service and unemployed jobseekers, on one hand, and with the employers, on the other hand.

State of implementation: It was implemented in December 2012 and it is now being evaluated.

Monitored Effects: Increase of 33% of registered job vacancies; Increase of 31% of job vacancies filled

Romania Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Promoting internship for higher education graduates (adoption of Law no. 335/2013)

Challenge and CSR tackled: **Ensuring the transition of university graduates from the education system to the labour market**

Key objectives: - **strengthening the professional skills and abilities to adapt to practical requirements and job demands; - achieving rapid integration into work, and also the acquisition of work experience and seniority, and, where appropriate, specialisation**

Key content of measure: **Internship reform entails, on the one hand, providing a quality job in the young graduate specialization with an appropriate level of social security, offering the possibility of strengthening the professional skills to adapt to practical requirements and job demands and the acquisition of work experience, and on the other, the possibility of funding from a wide range of sources, including the unemployment insurance budget and ESF. The duration of internship contract is 6 months.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **Budget - 4,5 mil EURO ESF + 4,5 mil EURO YEI + 8,1 mil. RON from Unemployment insurance budget (UIB)+ 1,35 mil EUR national co-financing related to ESF and YEI/2014; Funding arrangements - ESF, YEI, UIB, state budget; Expected outcome - 6.800 young people aged 20 – 25 years in 2014.**

State of implementation: **implementation start date: Mar 2014 – end date: permanent.**

Monitored Effects: **monitoring is based on indicators included in NEA statistics, database of National Labour Inspectorate and monitoring reports of SOPHRD. Evaluation is based on monthly implementation reports submitted by the NEA and evaluation reports of SOPHRD. Methodologies for ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of employment policies impact will be developed in some projects funded from the state budget and enclosed in the R&D sectoral plan.**

Measure 2: Promoting apprenticeship at workplace (reform of Law no. 279/2005, republished)

Challenge and CSR tackled: **Providing young people with the opportunity to obtain a qualification in adult vocational training system in order to obtain a job and further learning**

Key objectives: - **allowing employers to secure their skilled and quality workforce, depending on their requirements; - facilitating the social integration of the persons concerned, aged over 16 years, in accordance with the professional aspirations and labour market needs;- ensuring an appropriate level of social security, in order to reduce the labour market segmentation;- contributing to economic growth, create new jobs, social cohesion;- possibility of financing the apprenticeship schemes from other sources than unemployment insurance budget.**

Key content of measure: **Apprenticeship reform entails, on the one hand, providing quality training by authorized training providers and completion of training with nationally recognized qualification certificates, and on the other, the possibility of funding from other sources, including the ESF, not only the unemployment insurance budget. The duration of vocational training is in accordance with the level of qualification for the occupation for which the apprenticeship contract is concluded: one year for level 1 of qualification, two years for the level 2 and three years for level 3.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **Budget - 9 mil EURO ESF + 9 mil EURO YEI + 3,6 mil. RON from Unemployment insurance budget (UIB)+ 2,7 mil EUR national co-**

financing related to ESF and YEI/2014; Funding arrangements - ESF, YEI, UIB, state budget; Expected outcome - 3.500 young people aged 16 – 25 years in 2014.

State of implementation: **implementation start date: Nov 2013 – end date: permanent.**

Monitored Effects: **monitoring is based on indicators included in National Training Plan, database of National Labour Inspectorate and monitoring reports of SOPHRD. Evaluation is based on monthly implementation reports submitted by the NEA and evaluation reports of SOPHRD. Methodologies for ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of employment policies impact will be developed in some projects funded from the state budget and enclosed in the R & D sectoral plan.**

Measure 3: Assessment and recognition of competences obtained in non-formal and informal contexts

Challenge and CSR tackled: **Increase employability of registered unemployed persons.**

Key objectives: - **facilitate reintegration into the labour market of those furthest away by giving them access to employment opportunities in sectors they have acquired skills/competences non-formally or informally but they don't have any certification for those skills/competences;- improve upward transitions and occupational mobility;-provide new opportunities to early school leavers and school dropouts;-tackle unemployment and boost productivity and competitiveness.**

Key content of measure: **Registered unemployed persons have access to services of assessment and recognition of competences obtained via non-formal or informal channels, free of charge. Through this measure the registered unemployed persons (including the long-term unemployed) may obtain a certificate of qualification recognized at national level and thus increasing their employment perspectives.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **Budget - 0,68 mil. RON from UIB + 0,2 mil EURO ESF + 0,03 mil EUR national co-financing related to ESF; Funding arrangements -UIB, ESF and state budget (national co-financing related to ESF); Expected outcome - 1.340 persons in 2014 (340 persons funded from Unemployment insurance budget -UIB and 1.000 financed from ESF 2014-2020).**

State of implementation: **implementation start date: Jan 2014 – end date: permanent.**

Monitored Effects: **monitoring is based on indicators included in NEA statistics and monitoring reports of HCOP. Evaluation is based on monthly implementation reports submitted by the NEA and evaluation reports of Human Capital Operational Programme. Methodologies for ex-ante and ex-post evaluation of employment policies impact will be developed in some projects funded from the state budget and enclosed in the R & D sector plan of the Ministry of Labour.**

SLOVENIA: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: The Labour Market Regulation Act

Challenge and CSR tackled: **segmentation in the labour market, efficiency of the public employment services, improving matching and efficiency of career guidance, increase the labour market participation of specific target groups (young, graduates, low skilled, older workers...)**

Key objectives: **Provision of adequate safety net along expansion of active labour market policy to wider target groups, reduction of administrative burdens, introduction of life-long career guidance as a general service, transitions from passive support to active inclusion for social assistance recipients.**

Key content of measure: **Higher flexibility in the labour market, making possible to accelerate activation and reduce the possibility of long-term unemployment, accompanied by a special program of active employment policy, aimed at promoting the transition from temporary work to regular employment. By enrolling into the unemployment records during the period of notice (termination for business reasons and for reasons of incapacity) dismissed workers will already be provided with technical assistance and possibility to engage in the Active employment measures in order to quickly find a new full-time job. Partial wage reimbursement to the employer for the time when the worker is actively enrolled as job seeker at the PES implies a certain relief to employer. Novelty includes: - elimination of administrative barriers with termination of the compulsory registration of free job posts to the ESS, - acquisition of data for assessment of unemployment benefit and by supplementing the selection process of outsourced activities of ALMP, - possibility of temporary or occasional work for pensioners, - right to unemployment benefit for younger than 30 years with unemployment insurance at least 6 months in the last 24 months, - decrease of unemployment benefit after 12 months of receiving to 50 % of the eligible basis and reducing the maximum amount of unemployment benefits, - Contribution to elimination of segmentation as subsidy to employers by employing on the basis on permanent contacts.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **Better access and activation of all relevant target groups (wider scope of public works), reduction of unemployment trap.**

State of implementation: **2013, amended in 2013.**

Monitored Effects: **Evaluation of the reform/legislative changes (see Measure 2).**

Measure 2: Labour Relations Act

Challenge and CSR tackled: **Take steps, in consultation with the social partners and in accordance with national practices, to reduce asymmetries in rights and obligations guaranteed under permanent and temporary contracts, Adjust employment protection legislation as regards permanent contracts in order to reduce labour market segmentation, in consultation with social partners and in accordance with national practices, monitor closely the effects of the recent labour market reform and if necessary identify the areas where further action is needed to foster job creation and tackle segmentation.**

Key objectives: **simplification of procedures for concluding and termination of employment contracts, including reducing administrative barriers; increasing flexibility on the labour market and**

internal flexibility; reducing costs for permanent employment contracts; diminishing interest for fixed-term contracts and employment through employment agencies and securing legal safety of the workers with the intention to reduce violations.

Key content of measure: **The new labour legislation, that introduces the concept of flexicurity, reduces segmentation in the market and increases the effectiveness of the legal protection of workers. In the area of labour costs, the Employment Relationship Act allows for a different regulation of collective bargaining agreements in certain cases.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **Improved adaptability of the labour market with the economy needs, higher attractiveness to employ, simplifying the procedures (also related to dismissals).**

State of implementation: **2013.**

Monitored Effects: **The impact on segmentation in the labour market (the share of fixed-term contracts by age groups), flexibility (flows to and from unemployment, mobility between jobs) and on labour court proceedings has been monitored. A survey of employers and workers whose employment relationship has been terminated has been conducted. The findings serve as a basis for possible further amendments in the future.**

Measure 3: The pension reform

Challenge and CSR tackled: **take steps to ensure the long-term sustainability of the pension system, while preserving the adequacy of pensions, strengthen the long-term sustainability of the pension system beyond 2020 by further adjusting all relevant parameters, including through linking the statutory retirement age to gains in life expectancy, while preserving the adequacy of pensions.**

Key objectives: **equalising the retirement age for men and women by determining the 'full' retirement age of 65 if the insured person fulfils a minimum 15-year contribution payment period; Restrictive deduction system (reducing pensions) in the case of early retirement – reducing pensions by 3.6% for each retirement year before the age of 65. At the same time, the retirement age for acquiring the right to early pension is raised to 60 years of age if an individual (man/woman) has accumulated the minimum 40 years of pensionable service; a new formula for pension indexation according (pensions indexed at 60% of average wage growth and 40% growth in consumer prices).**

Key content of measure: **In 2013, the new Pension and Disability Insurance entered into force. The change in the pension system in Slovenia was urgent for two reasons: financial sustainability of the pension fund and prevention of further reductions in pensions. By achieving these objectives, Slovenia established a fairer, more reliable and financially more efficient pension system, based on intergenerational solidarity. This means that active workers pay contributions from their income, thus ensuring pensions for retirees. The pension system remains fair to all generations, as well as to future pension recipients, who provide pensions to current pensioners by paying contributions. Thus pension payments and contributions must be as balanced as possible, and the financial burden distributed fairly between generations.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **Improved fiscal sustainability and later exit from the labour market.**

State of implementation: **2013.**

Monitored Effects: **Monitoring of effectiveness and potential revisions of the existing pension reform.**

Slovakia: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: Comprehensive Revision of Active Labour Market Policies

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR 2012** – Enhance the administrative capacity of public employment services with a view to improving the targeting, design and evaluation of active labour market policies to ensure more individualised employment services for the young, the long-term unemployed, older workers and women.

Key objectives: Reduction of administrative burden of offices in order to improve the targeting of the design and assessment of active labour market policies and thus ensure more individualized employment services for disadvantaged job seekers; Reduction of unemployment among disadvantaged groups of individuals, the reduction of their labour market risk, and support for the job creation at the local and regional levels.

Key content of measure: Active labour market policies have gone through the significant reform in 2013. The system of active labour market measures was revised and simplified. The reform enhanced the focus of active labour market policies on disadvantaged jobseekers, in particular long-term unemployed, young people under 26, and older workers above 50 and job seekers with low or no qualifications. The emphasis on greater flexibility in the system of education, training and counselling was also increased. It was also created legislative framework to reduce the administrative burden on the labour offices and to personalize professional counselling services for disadvantaged job seekers.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): In 2014 - 77 million € (61 million € of ESF and 16 million € from the state budget)

State of implementation: Act no. 96/2013 amending and supplementing Law no. 5/2004 Coll. on employment services and on amending and supplementing certain acts, as amended, and amending and supplementing certain laws came into force on 1 May 2013.

Monitored Effects: The amendment created preconditions for the reduction of the administrative burden of employers and job seekers by introducing the coordination of relevant institutions in providing data necessary for maintaining a register of job seekers and the provision of benefits. Projected to increase efficiency in the implementation of active labour market measures, increase efficiency and focus more targeted support for the creation and retention of jobs for job seekers, including people with disabilities.

Measure 2: Adapting the benefit system

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR 2013** – Take measures to (...) strengthen the link between activation measures and social assistance.

Key objectives: The aim of this measure is to ensure better targeting, the merit principle and remuneration of those who strive to find work even for low wages or who mobilize themselves and in connection with the active labour market policies to strengthen the effect of motivation for recipients of social benefits to get job.

Key content of measure: In order to reduce the long-term unemployment of people who remain passively dependent on material need benefit for a long period of time, new measure aimed at activation of these persons was introduced. Material need benefit is provided to person in the

working-age, who will do at least 32 hours a month one of the activities defined in the law. It is concerned a small municipal services, volunteer activities or work during the declaration of a state of emergency. It is necessary to emphasize that the basic precondition for the determination of this entitlement for benefit in material need is that this activity will be offered to these persons. Only if persons in working-age refuse to participate in these activities material need benefit will be reduced. This measure is particularly related to those persons in material need who do not take advantage of the possibility to actively participate in employment services programmes and remain passively dependent on material need benefit for a long period of time without demonstrating any effort to find job. In order to encourage people to apply in the labour market and to maintain them in low-paid jobs, group of people entitled to receive the activation contribution has been extended. Activation contribution is also provided to persons in material need, who are working and have an income at least at the level of minimum wage. A special contribution has been also introduced. Entitled persons include adults, who were long-term unemployed and recipients of assistance in material need before starting a job. Contribution is provided to persons whose income is at least at the level of the minimum wage and at most three times the minimum wage. This contribution is provided for up to six months.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Introduction of new legislation, the Act on Assistance in Material Need anticipate demands on the general government budget in the amount of 283.099 thousand € in 2014.

State of implementation: New rules of assistance in material took effect from 1 January 2014.

Monitored Effects: Positively affected were mainly low-income households from employment, which currently are not in receipt of assistance in material need and households that are currently recipients of assistance in material need and try to actively participate in solving their material need. We expect that 2014 will go monthly average of about 8,000 recipients of activation allowance.

Measure 3: Reduction of tax wedge

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR 2013 – Reduce the tax wedge for low-paid workers (...).**

Key objectives: The main objective of this measure is to support the employment of long-term unemployed in the form of employment (including those practicing in the public interest) or civil service relationship with their entry into the workforce.

Key content of measure: In order to promote employment of long-term unemployed was approved the measure on the introduction reduction of tax wage for long-term unemployed and their employers. Regards exemption from payment of social and health insurance for the employer and the employee for the period is up to the first 12 months. Employees must be before the adoption of long-term unemployed - register as jobseekers at least 12 months and belong to low-income groups.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): With an expected support of 15 thousand long-term unemployed the effect on public finances is estimated at the level of 1.2 million € in 2013; 7.9 million € in 2014; 7.7 million € in 2015 and in 2016 in the amount of 8.6 million €.

State of implementation: The efficacy of the amended Act no. 461/2003 Coll. on social insurance, as amended, and amending and supplementing certain acts in connection with this measure was 1 November 2013.

Monitored Effects: The number of persons in long-term unemployment who have been provided with temporary release from payment of premiums for social insurance was 312 in November 2013

and 687 in December 2013.

SWEDEN: Most representative reform measures

Measure 1: The Introduction Act

Challenge and CSR tackled: Increase newly arrived immigrants participation in the labour market. The measure is tackling CSR number 3 from 2012/13 and CSR 4 from 2013/14.

Key objectives: To speed up the introduction of newly arrived immigrants in working and community life.

Key content of measure: Central government responsibility with the Swedish Public Employment Service as the coordinating agency: To underline the importance of fast introduction into the labour market, the PES has been given a central role and primary responsibility. *Individual introduction plan:* An introduction dialogue between the PES and the newly arrived immigrant should lead to an introduction plan that is based on a mapping of the newly arrived immigrant's educational background, previous work experience and need for training and other initiatives. *Individualized benefit:* Newly arrived immigrants who take part in activities in an introduction plan, are entitled to a benefit. *Civic orientation:* Its aim is to foster a basic understanding of Swedish society and provide a foundation for continued knowledge acquisition. *Introduction guide:* Is an independent actor working on assignment for the PES to support newly arrived immigrants in their search for work.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): The target group newly arrived immigrants are adult refugees and other protected persons, and their family members that arrive within two, or in some cases six years of the refugee. In 2010 the budget allocated almost 4.3 billion SEK (approx. 490 million EUR) to measures related to the Introduction Act (including compensation to municipalities for refugee reception). For 2014 the budget is almost 11.8 billion SEK (approx. 1.34 billion EUR). The increase is mainly due to the increasing inflow of refugees.

State of implementation: 1 December 2010

Monitored Effects: An evaluation of the reform will be presented in 2015.

Measure 2: Support for vocational introduction employments

Challenge and CSR tackled: In spite of the generally good performance of the Swedish labour market, many young people have difficulty entering the labour market and unemployment in the group remains high. Some young people face difficulties in the transition from school to work and in getting a firm foothold in the labour market. One of many reasons is that the vocational training programmes within regular upper secondary education do not prepare young people sufficiently for work. High hiring costs may also lead to difficulties for young people entering the labour market. The measure is tackling, amongst others, CSR 4 from 2013.

Key objectives: Facilitate the transition from school to work, to stimulate development of new forms of work-based learning, ensure a long-term skills supply for employers and overall to combat youth unemployment.

Key content of measure: The support measure targets young people aged 15–24 who are unemployed or lacking relevant experience in the occupation. It is available for employers bound by collective agreements on vocational introduction who are hiring on vocational introduction contracts, which consist of mentoring and training for part of the working hours. The employment must last for a period of at least six months. The employer is offered a wage subsidy equivalent to

the higher standard employer's contribution (31.42 per cent), subject to a ceiling on a gross salary of 18 750 SEK per month (approx. 2100 EUR). This means that all salaries at and below 18 750 SEK, will be subsidized by 31.42 per cent. The wage subsidy is limited to 12 months. Further, the employer receives a financial compensation for the cost of the training component of 2 500 SEK (approx. 285 EUR) per employee and month during the vocational introduction employment. The training compensation is also limited to 12 months. The measure is administrated by the PES.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): For 2014 a total of 155 million SEK (17.5 million EUR) have been allocated for this purpose. The total volume of the measure is expected to reach around 7 000 in the short run (approximately after 3 years) and 30 000 in the long run. (See also above, "Key content of measure".)

State of implementation: The measure was proposed in the 2014 budget bill and the support came into force on the 15th of January 2014.

Monitored Effects: It is still too early to see any effects of the measure (see above).

Measure 3: Lower VAT on restaurant and catering services

Challenge and CSR tackled: Simplify tax regulations for the companies in the restaurant business, as the VAT rate on food and hotel services is already 12 per cent. Increase labour demand for groups with high unemployment and a weak attachment to the labour market, such as young people. The measure is tackling CSR number 3 from 2011/12, CSR number 3 from 2012/13 and CSR 4 from 2013/14.

Key objectives: Higher permanent employment and simpler regulations. Work in the restaurant business gives many people their first contact with the labour market. This applies in particular to groups with high unemployment and a weak attachment to the labour market, such as young people. Many people find their first job in the restaurant business, giving them a gateway to the broader labour market. The measure will also considerably simplify tax regulations for the companies concerned, as the VAT rate on food and hotel services is already 12 per cent.

Key content of measure: That value added tax on restaurant and catering services (excluding alcohol) has been reduced from 25 per cent to 12 per cent from 1 January 2012.

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Budget effect: 5.4 SEK billion 2012 (approx.. 615 million EUR)

State of implementation: That value added tax on restaurant and catering services (excluding alcohol) has been reduced from 25 per cent to 12 per cent from 1 January 2012.

Monitored Effects: The Swedish National institute of economic research (NIER) analysis shows that the reform so far has reduced restaurant prices, increased demand for restaurant services and increased employment in the catering industry. Their result shows that the increase in hours worked in the restaurant sector, due to the reform, correspond to 4 000 persons. The Swedish tax agency, which examines how the VAT reduction affects evasion and other tax gap, leaving a final report in January 2014. The report shows that tax evasion has decreased due to the reduction in VAT of around 0.7 billion SEK annually (approx. 80 million EUR).

Measure 1: The Youth Contract

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR3 – Tackling youth unemployment**

Key objectives: **To provide additional support for unemployed young people, on top of substantial existing provision**

Key content of measure: **Wage incentives worth up to £2,275 each, for employers who recruit eligible 18-24 year-olds; An extra 250,000 work experience places; Extra adviser support through Jobcentre Plus for all 18-24 year olds (including a referral to a careers interview within the first 3 months of a Jobseeker's Allowance claim); An extra 20,000 apprenticeship incentive payments available in England, worth £1500 each. £126million to support the most disengaged 16 and 17 year olds who are not in education, employment and training in England into sustained learning, an apprenticeship or job with training.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **Almost £1.2 billion over 3 years from April 2012 targeting unemployed 18-24 year olds plus 16 and 17 year old NEETs**

State of implementation: **Launched from April 2012.**

Monitored Effects: **65,470 wage incentives job starts between April 2012 and December 2013; 141,000 starts to a work experience placement (including sector based work academies) between April 2012 and November 2013, 4,114 re-engagements of disengaged 16 and 17 year olds into education, training or employment with training September 2012 to the end of September 2013, 11,920 enrolments,**

Measure 2: Universal Credit

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR 4 – Supporting low income households and reducing child poverty**

Key objectives: **Improving and clarifying work incentives through reform of the UK benefit system**

Key content of measure: **Universal Credit provides a new single system of means-tested support for working-age people who are in or out of work. It aims to reduce the number of workless households by reducing the financial and administrative barriers to work that exist in the current system of benefits and tax credits.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): **All working age people eligible for means tested in or out of work support (There are currently approximately 12 to 13 million claims to benefits and tax credits)**

State of implementation: **Universal Credit is currently being progressively rolled out for single people with no dependent children (approximately 3000 starts to October 2013). The service will be expanded during 2014, with claims from couples expected to begin in summer and families with children expected to begin in autumn. The majority of the legacy caseload is expected to be migrated during 2016 and 2017.**

Monitored Effects: **Early qualitative research found that the majority of claimants felt that compared to Jobseekers' Allowance, Universal Credit: Is easier to understand what is required for payments; Provides a better financial incentive to work; Gives a better reward for small amounts of work; Is easier to claim.**

Measure 3: Apprenticeships Reform

Challenge and CSR tackled: **CSR 3 - increasing the quality and duration of apprenticeships, strengthening employer engagement**

Key objectives: **Reinforce Apprenticeships' role in raising skills in England by ensuring they become more rigorous and responsive to the needs of more employers. To become the norm for young people to go into an Apprenticeship or to university or in some cases both.**

Key content of measure: **Apprenticeships will be reformed so that standards will be designed by employers and will require a specified standard of English and Maths. Apprentices will undergo independent assessment.**

Scope of the measure (budget, target group with estimated coverage etc.): Apprenticeships in England (skills policy is an issue for the Devolved Governments)

State of implementation: **'The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation Plan' was published in October 2013. This announced a first phase of Trailblazers in eight sectors with immediate effect. Expanding the Trailblazer programme over time is intended to generate momentum for the reforms and provide a clear evidence base for full implementation. As the new standards are developed and agreed, funding for Apprenticeships under the current frameworks will cease.**

Monitored Effects: **Detailed evaluation of the reforms will be undertaken from the outset to learn lessons and refine implementation as it progresses. However, it is too early to see any measurable results from this programme yet.**

Annex III: Mutual Learning Programme

Policy field: Enhancing labour Market resilience and matching capabilities

- **Evaluations of training programmes strongly suggest that they are more likely to have positive effects for specific target groups, raising employment rates of beneficiaries with better labour market prospects (women re-entering the labour market, and educated people with migrant background). Training seems effective as long as it provides vocational skills that employers demand, and as long as the duration of the training is not too short. Training seems to offer more sustainable impacts on labour market outcomes in the medium run. Macroeconomic studies tend to find that training is the main category of ALMP that has a significant positive impact on aggregate labour market outcomes**

– *Source: EEO Review, Long-Term Unemployment for Mutual Learning Programme Review, 2012*

- **Direct job creation (eg. through public works) is usually targeted at long-term unemployed, youth or groups facing problems of integration in to the regular labour market. Typically created in the public or the non-for profit sector and publically financed, direct job creation is less likely than training programmes to show a positive impact on post-programme outcomes. However, if accompanied by job search guidance and appropriate incentives to search for regular jobs, they can effectively help long term unemployed to re-enter the job market.**

– *Source: EEO Review, Long-Term Unemployment for Mutual Learning Programme Review, 2012*

Policy field: Modernising social security systems

In a number of countries systems have been introduced with the objective to "make work pay". Those systems are aimed to replace existing systems of benefits (including unemployment benefits) with streamlined ones ensuring that work always pays and creating a disincentive to stay on unemployment benefit schemes. This is often accompanied by "means testing" in order to evaluate the claimant's individual circumstances such as disability, care commitments, housing conditions. The system could rely on the involvement of local authorities to reduce fraud and error with tougher penalties for the most serious offences. It can also be balanced by specific measures to address those who cannot work because of illness as well as those who are in special conditions in terms of housing or dependent children (in the latter case, by targeting firstly the needs of children).

– *Source EEO Review, Adapting unemployment benefit systems to the economic cycle, for MLP seminar 2011*

Policy field: Addressing the cost of labour by lowering labour taxation

Shifting the burden of taxation away from labour to environmental sources: Innovative practices have emerged during the crisis to pursue fiscal consolidation by promoting energy and resource efficiency as well as employment in the green economy. By introducing taxes on environmental 'bads', such as excess emissions, non-renewable energy and other scarce resources, Member States can increase revenues to decrease labour taxes and finance investments on green economy sectors and occupations.

- *Source: EEO 2013, Promoting Green Jobs throughout the Crisis: a handbook of best practices in Europe.*

Annex IV: The Governance of the European Employment Strategy

The European Employment Strategy

Under the EU2020 strategy, the European employment strategy provides a framework (the "open method of coordination") for EU countries to share information, discuss and coordinate their employment policies.

It is based in the annual growth survey (AGS), which sets out the EU's priorities for the coming year to boost growth and job creation and opens the yearly European semester, which promotes closer coordination by national governments of their economic and fiscal policies.

Each year, this process (which is supported by the work of the Employment committee) involves the following steps:

- **Setting Employment guidelines as common priorities and targets for employment policies. They are proposed by Commission, agreed by national governments, adopted by the EU Council.**
- **Adopting the Joint employment report (JER) – based on (a) assessment of employment situation in Europe (b) implementation of the Employment Guidelines (c) examination of draft National Reform Programmes by the Employment Committee. The JER proposed together with the AGS as a draft by the Commission is jointly adopted by the EU Council.**
- **National Reform Programmes (NRPs) are submitted by national governments, analysed by Commission for compliance with Europe 2020**
- **Country-specific recommendations are issued by Commission, based on assessment of the NRPs.**

The Employment Guidelines

The Employment Guidelines issued under article 148 of the TFEU, together with Broad Economic Policy Guidelines, form part of the Integrated Guidelines and are geared to increase labour market participation of women and men, reducing structural unemployment and promoting job quality (guideline 7), to develop a skilled workforce responding to labour market needs and promoting lifelong learning (guideline 8), to improve the quality and performance of education and training system at all levels and increase participation in tertiary or equivalent education (guideline 9) and promote social inclusion and combating poverty (guideline 10). The Guidelines were revised in 2010 to take account of the initial impact of the crisis and to align them with the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The Employment Guidelines are made operational every year through the policy advice contained in the Annual Growth Survey, setting out the priorities for the EU in the coming year and launching the yearly policy cycle of the European Semester. **Member States are requested to submit yearly National Reform Programmes (NRPs) to identify the policy response to meet the Europe 2020 targets and the Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) adopted by the Council. The process of the European Semester (Reg. 1175/2011) involves the implementation of the Employment Guidelines.**

The 2011 Annual Growth Survey designed to chart Europe's pathway to recovery, put a strong emphasis on mobilising labour markets and creating job opportunities by making work more attractive, reforming pension systems, getting the unemployed back to work and balancing security and flexibility. The 2012 and 2013 AGS stressed the importance of tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis. This Committee, in its joint conclusions with the Social Protection Committee on the 2013 AGS and the JER²³, confirmed those priorities, stressing that avoiding a

²³ Reference to the Joint Employment Report 2014, to be completed.

lasting legacy of structural unemployment and poverty poses a major challenge and is important to reach the Europe 2020 employment and poverty targets.²⁴

The Multilateral Surveillance by EMCO under Europe 2020

The term is used to explain the review process amongst peers (Member States and the European Commission) of major policy reforms, and, in EMCO's context, to address labour market challenges. The focus is on the monitoring of the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, through the country specific recommendations (CSRs). These reviews are both ex-post (backward looking) assessing implementation over the year, but also contain a strong ex-ante (forward looking) flavour because they usually examine policy announcements before implementation.

The multilateral surveillance work uses a broad range of tools to help EMCO deliver Peer Pressure through a common view on the progress in the implementation of the reforms to address the CSRs: the multilateral position. Together with EMCO's analytical instruments (see box: EMCO statistical tools), this position is then used in June to discuss the Commission's proposals for new CSRs

In the follow-up to the June 2011 negotiations on the CSRs EMCO and its chair recognised that the committee needed to change the bilateral discussion on the CSRs between Member States and the Commission to a multilateral decision making process. EMCO has since been able to evaluate the implementation of policies in order to meet the CSRs and to better collectively assess the proposals in June. This has led to significant progress in the past eighteen months.

All Council adopted CSRS addressed to Member States which cover labour market issues are reviewed. This is an ambitious objective given that in the 2014 European Semester EMCO will review progress on over 60 CSRs from 2013. Furthermore, Member States operating under a Memorandum of Understanding are also fully included in the process, in recognition of the scale of reform and wealth of experience they have to offer. Given the inter-linkages of policy areas examined EMCO has elaborated a close partnership with other committees such as the Social Protection Committees (SPC), the Education Committee and the Economic Policy Committee (EPC), that also manifests itself with jointly conducted peer reviews.

²⁴ **The Annual Growth Survey and the Joint Employment Report in the context of the European Semester: political guidance on employment and social policies, Draft Conclusions, Council Document 6200/13**

EMCO Statistical Tools

EMCO is using a range of tools in the multilateral surveillance procedure. The basis is the Joint Assessment Framework (JAF) and the Employment Performance Monitor (EPM) which also includes the Benchmark.

The JAF monitors labour market developments in the Member States, indicating good labour market outcomes and challenges. It is an analytical tool based on a set of indicators under 10 domains commonly agreed by Commission and Member States. These indicators are used to monitor progress in the Member States towards the headline target (the employment rate target) and the identification of main challenges under the Employment Guidelines through a quantitative assessment. The JAF is a Commission-EMCO-SPC joint tool.

The EPM is a joint Commission/EMCO report providing a summary of the assessment produced by the JAF and an overview of the key challenges emerging from this analysis. The EPM relies on the JAF to establish the quantitative justification for such challenges, but also contains a qualitative assessment to nuance this. The full version containing the update of the challenges and the statistical part is endorsed by the June EPSCO Council and the purely statistical update is endorsed by the December EPSCO Council. As such, the challenges outlined in the EPM should be issues on which the Commission may propose CSRs.

In the EPM graphs with progress towards the EU-27 employment rate headline target (see graph 1) or with progress towards the national targets for the individual Member State are shown. The main feature of this is to show the growth rates that would be necessary to either reach the EU headline target for the employment rate or the national targets for the employment rate.

In the Employment Package published by the Commission in April 2012 it was stated that a "benchmarking system with selected employment indicators" would be published. This system is published together with the EPM and has been agreed with the Commission and Member States. The benchmarking tool is providing a visual representation of performance against the EU average and identified best performers, in order to illustrate areas of lagging behind and provide some peer pressure through this comparison. The benchmarking tool is being endorsed twice a year, alongside the EPM, in the December and June EPSCO councils.

The benchmark is normalised in the following way: average of highest 5=100, average of lowest 5=0. The interpretation of the benchmark is that it for a given indicator, in this case the employment rate, and country gives the relative distance to the highest 5 performers by subtracting the benchmark for a given country and indicator from the benchmark of the highest 5 performers (that is the value 100). The actual levels of the indicators can be found in the key indicator tables for each country

$$((\text{Value} - \text{average lowest 5}) / (\text{average highest 5} - \text{average lowest 5})) * 100.$$

Due to this definition there will be countries above or below the average of the group with the highest 5 or the lowest 5. This means that amongst the highest 5 there will be values above 100 and amongst the lowest 5 there will be values below 0.

The benchmark has been calculated for the following indicators that together is giving an overall picture of the labour market:

Employment rate of women (20-64), employment rate of men (20-64), employment rate for older workers (55-64), employment rate of young (15-24), employment rate of low-skilled (20-64), employment rate of medium skilled (20-64), employment rate of high-skilled (20-64), newly employed, youth NEET rate (15-24), long-term unemployment rate, transition from unemployment to employment, employment growth 3 recent years, nominal unit labour cost growth 3 recent years and labour productivity growth 3 recent years.

Annex IV: Mutual Learning Programme 2014

The Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) is a supporting tool of the European Employment Strategy (EES) that helps national administrations to learn from each other by exchanging good practice. More specifically it supports the following activities:

- Large public events for experts, policymakers, social partners and other stakeholders from across Europe. These include [Thematic Events](#) focusing on a specific policy topic and [Dissemination seminars](#) to discuss and promote the MLP's results and identified good practices.
- Per-invitation only learning events throughout the year for government representatives. These events include [Peer Reviews](#), supported by independent academic expertise, and [Learning Exchanges](#) for smaller groups of national representatives to share experiences in relation to a specific policy issue.
- [Database of labour market practices](#)- containing examples of national policies and measures within the context of the European Employment Strategy.

Facts and figures

In the last three years, the MLP has organized 6 Thematic Events, 11 Peer Reviews, 7 Learning Exchanges and 1 Dissemination Seminar. A total of 525 officials and selected experts have participated in the Peer Reviews and Learning Exchanges. The total number of participants to the larger events (Thematic Events and Dissemination Seminars) has been 688. The MLP launched its database of national labour market practices 6 months ago, and it currently features 24 cases from 14 countries. With the support EMCO, the database is expected to cover all countries by the end of the year.

Activities in 2014 (*organised and planned*)

- France, 10 and 11 February: [Peer Review on “Jobs for the Future”](#) (‘Emplois d’avenir’).
- United Kingdom, 07-08 April: [Peer Review on "Minimum wage"](#).
- Turkey, 23 May: [Learning Exchange on “Effects of Foreign Investment on Employment”](#).
- Belgium, 25 June: [Thematic event on “Job creation incentives: how to better integrate policies to create sustainable”](#).
- Finland, 18-19 September: Peer Review on “Youth Guarantee”.

- **Czech Republic, 6-7 October: Peer Review on “Evaluation Methods: Counterfactual Impact Evaluation”.**
- **Denmark, 13-14 November: Peer Review on “Flexicurity”.**
- **Belgium, 02 December, Dissemination Seminar.**

Documentation

In cooperation with the programme’s independent experts, the MLP team prepares a number of documents featuring relevant practice from the Peer Review Host Countries, comments from the independent experts from the participating countries, thematic discussion papers and expert papers, Executive Summaries and Full Summary Reports of each activity.

All the documentation relating to MLP activities are published on the MLP website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/mlp>,

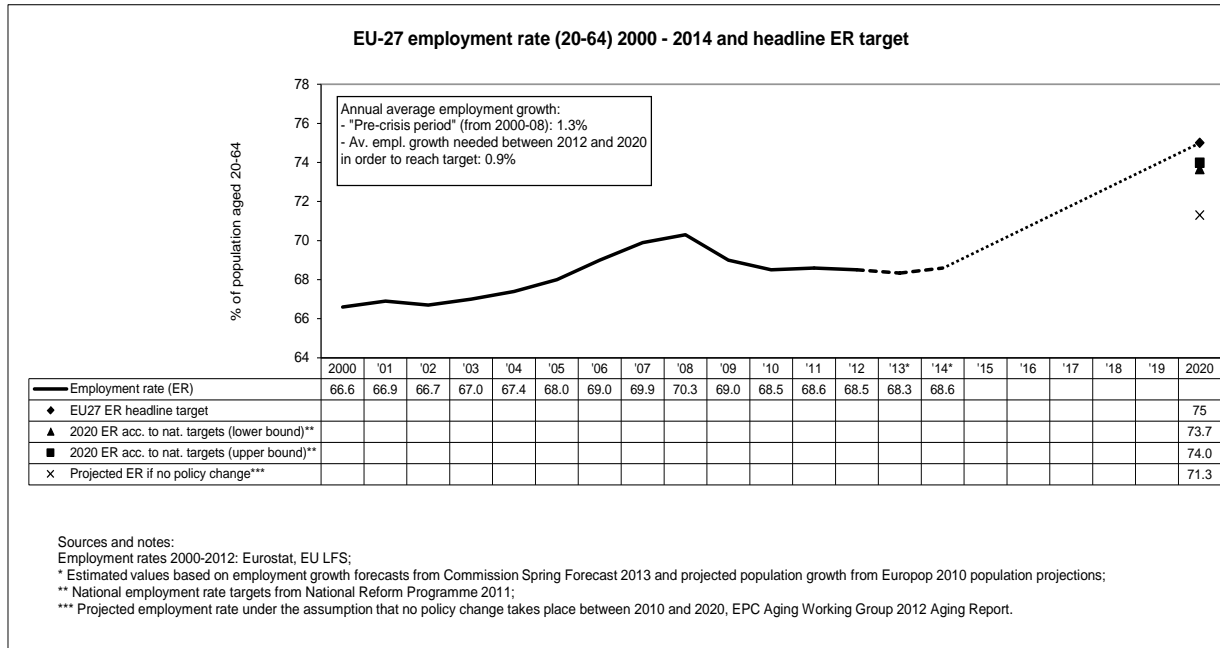
Next steps

During 2014, in addition to maintaining the usual rate of events and activities, the MLP will aim at specifically support the ongoing consultation on the Europe 2020 strategy as part of its activities.

The MLP will also increase its alignment to EMCO activities, by ensuring that the topics addressed at the different activities match the immediate needs of EMCO thematic reviews and EES discussions.

Annex V: Statistical Background

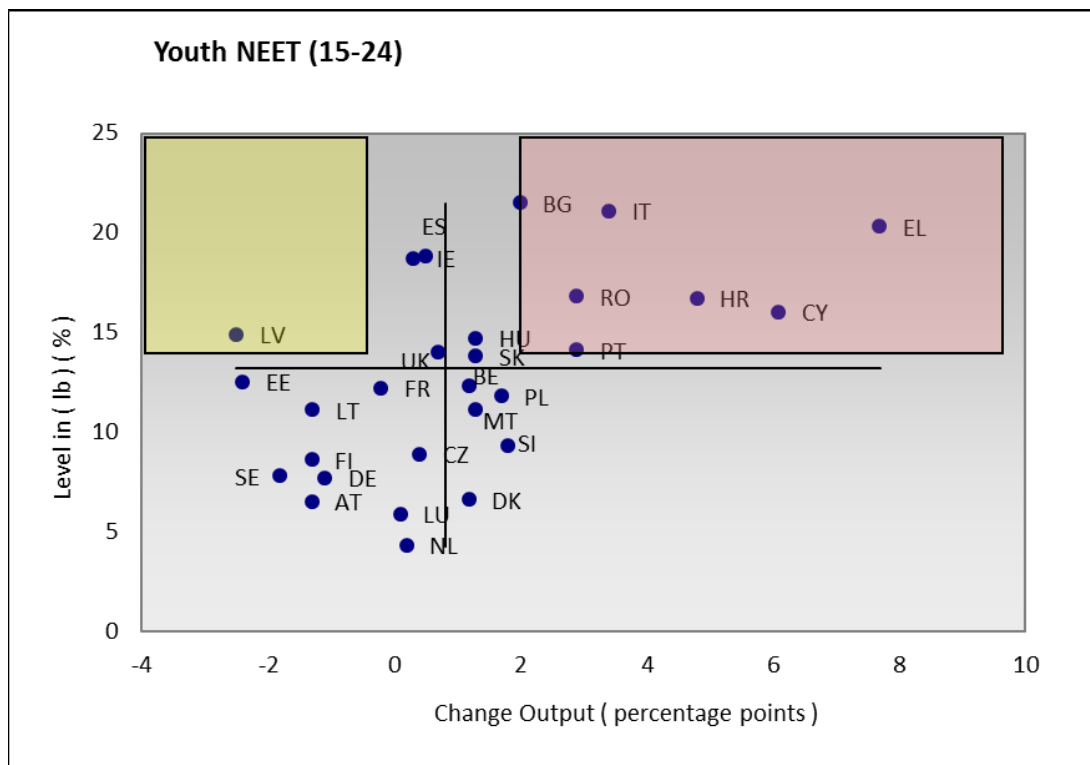
Graph 1: Progress towards the EU-27 employment rate headline target²⁵



Source: Employment Performance Monitor December 2013

²⁵ EPM June 2013 will be updated.

Graph 2: Scatter plots on the positioning of the development in the NEET (15-24)



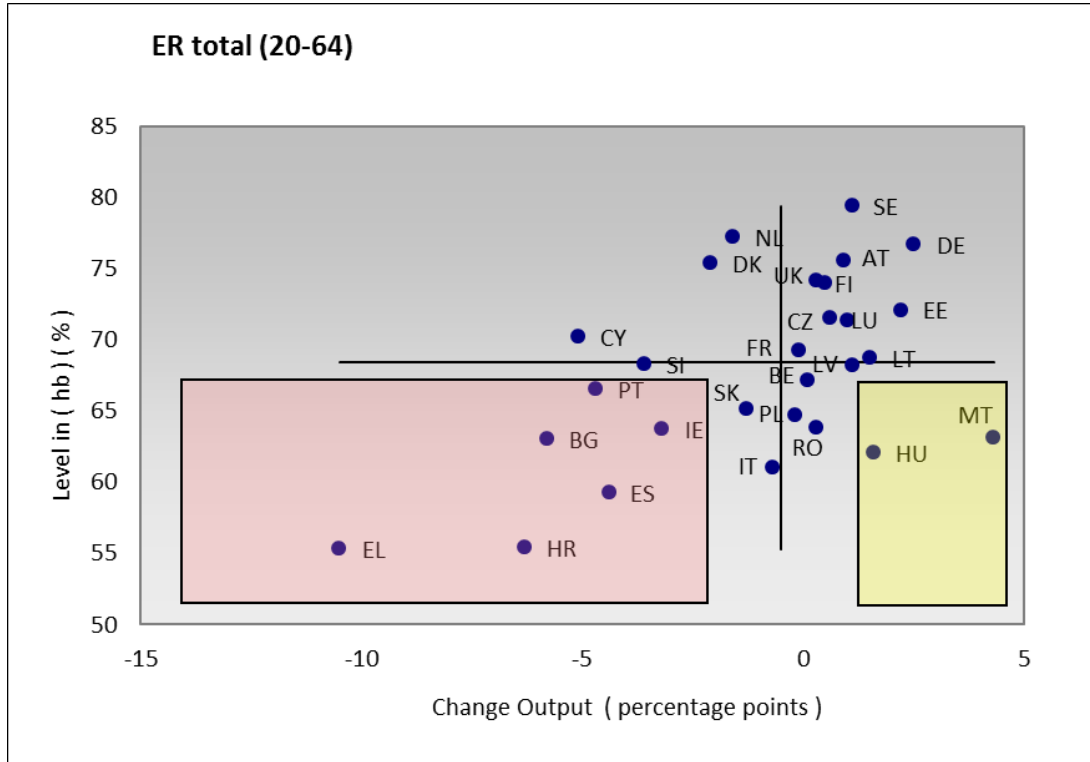
Outcome noticeably worse than av BUT recent progress signif better than av.

Outcome noticeably worse than av and recent progress signif worse than av.

Note: Changes relates to recent three years, 2009-2012

Source: JAF version December 2013

Graph 3: Scatter plots on the positioning of the development in the ER (20-64)



Outcome noticeably worse than av BUT recent progress signif better than av.
 Outcome noticeably worse than av and recent progress signif worse than av.

Source: JAF version December 2013

Annex VI: Statistical background from EPM

Benchmark table from the EPM

Country	Benchmark for the main labour market indicators																							
	Employment rate of women (20-64)				Employment rate of men (20-64)				Employment rate of older workers (55-64)				Employment rate of young persons (15-24)											
	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012						
Avg 5 High (level)	69.7	74.2	72.9	72.0	72.7	73.0	83.7	84.0	81.9	81.2	81.4	81.5	54.3	61.7	60.4	60.0	61.1	62.9	77.4	77.7	75.5	73.8	74.1	73.9
Avg 5 Low (level)	43.2	51.0	50.6	50.7	50.5	50.6	66.5	72.7	68.6	66.3	67.1	66.4	22.7	31.8	32.8	34.1	34.7	35.7	53.1	56.1	53.0	50.6	49.3	46.6
BE	48.3	44.6	46.6	51.2	49.7	49.7	52.1	17.4	35	48.4	41.5	42.0	11.5	9.0	9.2	12.4	15.1	14.0	62.5	38.9	39.2	44.8	45.2	46.9
BG	28.3	62.2	60.0	51.7	42.1	43.0	-36.9	29.8	39	18.8	-7.6	-3.7	-5.9	47.5	48.2	36.4	37.4	36.8	-28.2	26.8	21.5	10.2	5.0	12.1
CZ	70.7	49.7	48.4	47.9	50.6	53.3	79.4	84.1	87	89.4	89.8	81.1	43.1	52.9	50.7	48.0	48.8	50.0	53.0	32.4	31.7	33.6	36.3	41.1
DK	112.3	105.8	107.0	104.8	98.8	96.5	95.1	98.9	90	82.7	83.5	81.1	104.4	89.1	91.9	93.9	93.9	92.3	99.0	105.2	95.6	85.0	82.2	76.6
DE	66.9	72.6	81.0	88.8	93.0	93.4	57.9	65.2	83	92.7	100.3	102.3	47.2	73.3	84.3	91.2	95.4	94.9	71.9	62.1	70.3	81.6	88.6	89.1
EE	74.4	94.1	81.5	70.5	77.2	83.6	34.1	79.4	18	9.4	45.0	58.5	74.7	102.5	99.9	76.1	85.2	91.5	34.2	63.5	29.0	25.3	50.8	57.6
IE	55.5	56.6	50.6	44.6	40.3	39.4	94.5	67.9	29	18.8	7.8	11.5	71.6	73.3	67.0	62.2	57.9	50.0	97.0	82.5	54.3	41.3	35.1	41.4
EL	8.6	6.6	9.5	4.7	-8.4	-23.9	71.3	67.9	77	66.5	28.2	-7.0	51.6	36.8	34.1	31.7	17.7	2.6	18.6	12.0	21.9	14.5	-9.5	-22.0
ES	4.8	31.6	25.6	24.0	22.7	15.3	60.2	47.5	18	18.8	3.6	-12.3	45.3	46.2	41.0	36.8	37.0	30.1	22.7	44.9	19.3	15.8	7.8	-1.1
FR	64.6	62.7	64.0	66.3	64.1	64.4	52.7	24.5	41	50.4	47.8	49.3	22.9	21.4	22.5	22.1	25.7	32.4	41.5	41.7	47.2	52.6	52.4	52.8
IT	-3.9	-1.6	-3.9	-5.6	-2.5	-0.3	36.4	23.6	39	43.7	38.7	34.7	15.9	8.6	10.6	9.7	12.0	17.3	-13.1	-12.2	-13.1	-12.3	-9.5	-4.8
CY	59.7	74.3	79.2	85.1	77.7	63.5	115.5	110.5	107	103.5	87.7	64.5	84.5	77.0	82.9	85.8	76.1	55.1	92.4	83.4	84.0	86.3	72.9	61.2
LV	60.8	91.1	72.5	66.7	66.8	70.7	9.7	61.7	-9	-8.1	2.9	25.4	42.2	92.4	73.8	54.5	59.8	62.9	35.4	68.6	18.8	27.1	33.5	52.4
LT	78.2	76.9	75.7	67.7	72.7	77.3	5.0	24.5	-13	-18.1	2.9	20.1	56.1	71.3	68.1	56.1	58.3	59.2	36.6	25.9	13.0	0.3	12.6	34.1
LU	40.0	39.4	48.8	53.1	51.5	60.4	82.3	39.5	78	86.7	77.2	80.4	12.8	7.6	19.7	21.3	17.3	19.5	61.7	15.7	45.4	42.6	39.5	47.3
HU	40.4	17.8	17.1	20.2	20.0	26.0	13.7	-33.2	-12	-2.0	-2.0	11.5	-1.5	-1.4	0.1	1.2	4.1	4.4	26.4	-4.7	-6.5	0.3	6.2	15.8
MT	-37.9	-50.3	-48.2	-43.2	-31.8	-16.8	83.5	48.4	64	78.0	82.8	83.7	18.5	-8.8	-17.9	-14.2	-11.1	-7.7	86.7	93.1	91.1	100.2	102.3	101.9
NL	79.0	91.6	98.9	94.5	94.3	95.2	103.3	113.1	123	110.9	108.7	106.9	49.1	71.0	80.7	75.8	81.0	84.2	121.2	127.0	130.6	121.4	118.3	115.1
AT	72.2	76.0	84.2	88.8	86.2	88.0	81.7	79.4	87	93.4	96.1	96.3	19.4	30.8	30.1	32.1	25.7	27.2	87.5	91.3	98.7	103.6	107.1	107.8
PL	41.5	27.3	31.4	32.9	32.2	31.0	8.5	2.3	30	35.6	35.9	37.4	18.1	-0.7	-1.7	-0.3	8.3	11.0	3.8	27.3	37.9	41.8	41.2	44.0
PT	82.8	69.1	69.4	70.0	64.6	55.9	91.6	59.0	60	61.2	44.3	23.4	88.6	63.6	61.2	58.4	49.9	39.7	74.4	55.1	56.5	51.7	50.0	36.7
RO	74.8	27.3	25.6	24.4	23.6	25.6	51.5	-10.1	16	30.2	19.7	33.4	84.8	37.8	35.5	27.1	20.0	21.0	39.5	-10.8	-5.6	2.0	8.2	19.8
SI	77.1	75.6	77.5	74.2	64.6	62.6	38.7	41.3	53	51.7	33.1	36.0	0.1	3.3	10.3	3.6	-13.3	-10.3	51.8	62.1	52.1	53.5	46.8	43.6
SK	52.9	40.3	34.1	31.5	32.2	30.1	20.1	41.3	45	37.6	39.4	42.6	-4.3	24.7	24.3	24.8	25.3	27.2	19.0	18.9	12.2	9.8	11.8	20.5
FI	94.5	95.4	97.6	97.7	96.6	97.0	48.6	50.2	46	55.1	59.7	60.5	59.9	82.7	82.2	85.4	84.4	82.7	63.3	75.5	63.6	70.8	74.5	77.7
SE	121.3	113.1	112.3	114.2	117.3	117.3	78.8	95.4	93	99.5	105.2	102.9	133.5	128.3	134.5	140.2	141.2	137.1	53.4	73.2	63.2	69.0	76.9	75.5
UK	89.2	76.9	78.8	80.8	78.6	79.6	86.4	80.3	83	87.4	86.3	90.3	88.6	87.7	89.4	88.9	83.3	82.4	90.4	82.5	79.6	88.5	83.8	86.1
EU27	53.3	51.0	52.4	53.6	53.3	52.8	55.0	45.7	54	59.1	55.5	54.6	45.0	46.2	47.8	47.2	48.0	48.5	43.2	44.0	43.7	47.4	48.0	49.9

Sources: DG EMPL calculations on the basis of Eurostat database (labour market statistics, national accounts)

Note: the benchmark is normalised in the following way: average of highest 5=100, average of lowest 5=0. The interpretation of the benchmark is that if for a given indicator and country gives the relative distance to the highest 5 performers by subtracting the benchmark for a given country and indicator from the benchmark of the highest 5 performers (that is the value 100). The actual levels of the indicators can be found in the key indicator tables for each country ((Value-average lowest 5)/(average highest 5-average lowest 5)*100). Due to this definition there will be countries above or below the average of the group with the highest 5 or the lowest 5. This means that in the highest 5 there will be values above 100 and in the lowest 5 there will be values below 0.

Benchmark for the main labour market indicators																									
	Employment rate of low skilled persons (20-64)					Employment rate of medium skilled persons (20-64)					Employment rate of high skilled persons (20-64)					Newly employed									
	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011
Aug 5 Highest (level)	67.0	67.0	65.4	64.3	63.8	61.7	79.0	80.0	78.6	77.6	78.2	78.1	87.6	87.9	87.1	86.3	87.0	87.1	22.6	21.6	18.6	18.6	20.2	19.5	
Aug 5 Highest	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Aug 5 Lowest (level)	36.5	39.7	37.1	35.0	34.7	35.5	62.1	64.6	63.1	61.5	60.7	59.7	78.1	80.6	79.0	77.7	76.6	75.0	9.6	10.0	9.1	9.2	9.2	8.6	
Aug 5 Lowest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
BE	48.3	34.5	37.5	45.7	43.3	44.3	41.5	35.5	36.7	47.1	47.1	47.7	76.6	32.7	35.7	49.0	52.0	55.9	38.0	31.3	31.2	27.7	38.2	38.4	
BG	3.4	25.0	27.9	17.2	6.8	2.6	-3.6	62.1	54.9	37.8	23.7	26.0	-7.1	75.6	80.4	65.1	44.3	50.2	35.6	30.2	12.9	20.1	32.9	32.9	
CZ	30.6	18.8	19.1	22.6	19.6	11.8	67.6	58.2	57.4	60.1	63.1	69.5	73.4	35.5	37.0	38.6	42.4	51.0	4.2	12.3	22.8	22.4	21.9	20.0	
DK	90.6	105.8	101.1	94.1	93.9	94.3	106.8	110.8	101.4	101.0	97.4	93.9	105.9	107.5	95.3	89.4	85.6	90.6	114.2	139.2	137.8	121.8	109.8	114.7	
DE	53.2	59.4	65.8	71.6	77.8	85.2	46.9	62.1	71.0	83.0	89.4	91.7	52.5	70.1	90.3	104.4	105.8	103.8	46.5	51.1	59.7	62.6	58.2	60.5	
EE	17.8	70.0	34.7	31.1	46.8	53.8	30.2	76.4	28.3	18.0	52.2	60.8	48.3	63.2	38.2	9.7	24.2	51.8	71.8	52.0	60.8	73.2	87.1	87.1	
IE	65.3	61.5	45.6	40.0	34.4	28.6	75.3	57.5	25.1	9.9	5.4	10.8	89.1	53.5	24.6	20.1	26.1	32.8	95.7	70.1	32.3	24.5	33.7	45.8	
EL	67.3	75.8	80.3	78.1	65.0	48.5	-8.9	-5.5	-2.1	-3.1	-22.6	-43.0	26.4	20.2	32.0	14.3	-23.8	-38.9	5.7	-6.7	0.6	-7.2	-16.1	-14.9	
ES	60.1	72.1	58.7	59.0	57.4	48.5	-8.3	37.4	14.7	13.6	7.1	-0.1	-29.1	14.7	-0.2	-0.7	0.2	-1.0	96.5	97.8	85.0	77.4	63.6	60.5	
FR	61.7	62.6	64.7	67.2	69.8	73.3	57.5	51.0	52.9	57.6	53.9	54.2	7.5	10.5	20.8	36.3	42.4	52.6	53.4	52.0	54.4	57.3	54.5	58.6	
IT	42.1	46.6	49.2	51.5	53.7	56.5	14.8	29.6	30.3	34.7	33.4	32.0	30.5	-29.6	-25.1	-14.5	4.0	13.0	17.2	20.9	12.2	10.8	11.1	15.4	
CY	85.6	89.3	98.3	108.4	104.6	85.2	61.1	74.4	72.3	72.5	59.1	48.8	78.7	81.2	68.0	58.2	44.3	31.2	65.0	74.4	85.0	80.5	68.1	73.3	
LV	17.5	65.2	33.6	38.9	41.3	57.6	17.2	73.8	17.3	6.8	15.1	22.2	15.9	86.7	40.7	33.9	65.5	85.6	99.7	42.6	50.2	63.6	78.1	68.8	
LT	2.8	9.3	-1.4	-16.2	-9.4	1.1	18.4	31.6	0.5	-16.1	1.9	16.7	12.8	97.8	85.4	89.4	102.9	99.7	42.6	52.8	50.2	63.6	78.1	68.8	
LU	72.5	73.6	77.1	80.1	82.2	94.0	47.4	11.4	22.5	35.9	27.7	37.9	24.3	41.0	59.3	70.9	68.3	70.8	18.8	-3.3	44.9	28.8	38.2	38.4	
HU	-0.2	-6.1	-2.8	6.3	6.1	7.6	36.8	-1.6	-2.7	3.7	8.2	21.1	41.0	-15.8	-11.4	1.6	17.5	30.4	23.4	33.9	39.7	43.6	37.3	55.9	
MT	50.3	38.5	44.6	46.1	49.5	58.0	88.4	75.1	86.5	80.5	74.5	87.9	77.6	61.8	56.8	66.3	94.2	98.0	30.3	20.9	12.2	26.6	31.0	37.5	
NL	75.5	90.8	95.8	91.0	95.7	103.9	101.4	108.2	118.2	110.9	105.9	105.9	84.9	101.9	107.7	103.2	98.1	99.7	92.6	105.5	2.7	23.5	60.9	62.3	
AT	53.9	64.5	65.4	72.0	74.7	78.3	70.6	82.9	89.1	96.0	94.5	96.1	80.8	75.6	87.8	85.9	90.4	97.2	-45.8	55.4	68.1	68.9	69.0	67.8	
PL	16.8	9.6	13.8	14.4	13.7	12.9	5.9	-3.5	3.1	8.7	13.4	15.7	59.8	42.4	58.1	58.2	55.9	58.4	41.8	54.6	49.2	52.0	36.4	39.3	
PT	119.1	117.1	112.1	111.8	106.0	103.1	30.2	32.2	45.1	52.7	54.5	41.2	122.6	56.2	65.5	59.4	41.5	28.7	36.5	26.9	33.3	35.1	37.3	32.0	
RO	103.7	51.0	58.7	64.8	55.0	65.3	45.7	-0.9	1.2	9.9	14.5	22.7	60.9	70.1	63.0	54.7	53.0	52.6	20.3	42.5	34.4	27.7	22.8	32.9	
SI	53.2	55.3	56.9	52.9	38.2	41.6	50.4	56.2	52.3	50.8	38.5	40.1	80.8	70.1	63.0	54.7	53.0	52.6	20.3	42.5	34.4	27.7	22.8	32.9	
SK	-22.8	-31.7	-28.6	-21.6	-17.3	-23.0	28.5	41.3	30.9	27.3	32.2	36.8	72.4	43.8	15.9	3.9	2.1	-1.8	16.6	9.1	12.9	8.3	4.4	4.4	
FI	74.2	70.0	66.1	64.5	66.7	70.3	65.2	69.9	60.0	63.2	67.7	70.0	61.9	68.7	73.2	74.1	75.7	101.1	94.3	96.6	92.2	99.8	101.8		
SE	94.8	97.0	92.6	94.8	99.8	104.7	95.5	112.7	104.7	107.8	112.8	112.4	48.3	97.8	94.0	99.8	99.0	98.8	53.4	94.3	95.6	101.7	107.1	106.4	
UK	91.9	71.1	71.4	70.3	72.2	80.2	107.9	85.5	80.7	84.3	85.9	84.7	97.5	64.5	65.5	74.4	58.7	67.5	84.2	71.8	67.1	61.5	56.3	65.1	
EU27	60.4	61.5	61.2	62.8	62.9	63.8	45.1	46.5	47.1	52.0	52.8	54.2	46.2	43.8	48.1	53.6	53.0	56.8	53.4	50.3	48.1	47.8	45.5	48.5	

Sources: DG EMPL calculations on the basis of Eurostat database (labour market statistics, national accounts)

Note: the benchmark is normalised in the following way: average of highest 5=100, average of lowest 5=0. The interpretation of the benchmark is that it for a given indicator and country gives the relative distance to the highest 5 performers by subtracting the benchmark for a given country and indicator from the benchmark of the highest 5 performers (that is the value 100). The actual levels of the indicators can be found in the key indicator tables for each country ((Value-average lowest 5)/(average highest 5-average lowest 5)*100). Due to this definition there will be countries above or below the average of the group with the highest 5 or the lowest 5. This means that in the highest 5 there will be values above 100 and in the lowest 5 there will be values below 0.

Benchmark for the main labour market indicators																		
	Youth NEET rate (15-24)					Long-term unemployment					transition from unemployment to employment							
	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Avg 5 Highest (level)	5.5	5.4	6.1	5.9	5.8	6.2	0.9	0.8	0.8	1.3	0.8	1.5	49.6	45.8	45.2	40.6		
Avg 5 Highest	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Avg 5 Lowest	20.3	15.1	18.3	19.2	19.3	20.1	8.6	4.4	4.9	8.1	4.9	10.4	25.3	21.6	21.1	24.7		
Avg 5 Lowest (level)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BE	17.5	51.5	59.0	62.4	55.3	56.1	63.5	29.8	34.8	58.8	72.2	78.7	-20.7	-12.2	-2.7	-3.8		
BG		-24.3	-10.2	-19.8	-18.8	-10.2	-10.4	40.9	47.1	48.5	34.8	40.3	89.9	14.3	-8.5	-0.6		
CZ		86.7	80.4	78.3	81.2	80.5	55.7	60.2	71.6	74.9	82.9	83.3	68.8	16.0	27.7	50.9		
DK	105.4	111.6	105.9	99.4	96.0	97.1	99.7	107.2	105.9	96.8	94.9	93.4	83.3	143.3	57.2	130.7		
DE	85.1	69.1	77.9	82.1	87.1	89.2	58.3	10.5	34.8	69.0	81.6	88.9	-12.5	4.4	6.9			
EE	39.1	64.9	27.7	35.3	55.3	54.6	31.1	74.0	27.5	6.1	24.1	55.0	64.7	18.5	40.6			
IE		2.7	-1.2	-0.2	3.4	9.9	90.7	74.0	34.8	19.3	2.7	14.3						
EL	22.9	34.9	46.6	32.3	13.8	-1.6	31.1	21.5	25.0	35.4	1.3	-45.7	30.4	31.8	25.6			
ES	55.3	6.8	-0.3	8.9	5.6	9.2	47.9	65.7	15.2	12.0	-1.3	-8.4	42.4	23.1	39.3	22.6		
FR	68.2	50.4	48.3	51.1	53.8	56.8	66.1	40.9	37.3	61.7	65.5	70.8	35.4	30.5	47.2			
IT	8.0	-16.0	4.6	0.6	-4.0	-7.3	31.1	35.4	34.8	58.8	60.2	52.7	9.8	1.1	5.7	-33.9		
CY	68.9	55.6	68.9	56.4	34.5	29.4	95.9	107.2	105.9	99.7	97.6	76.5	151.3	134.6	107.5			
LV		38.0	7.1	10.4	24.1	37.3	9.1	63.0	0.5	-11.4	1.3	29.0	54.0	8.5	32.7	82.9		
LT	22.2	63.9	48.3	42.8	57.5	64.7	7.8	90.6	42.2	10.5	12.0	43.7	46.9	16.4	-1.4			
LU	103.4	91.9	102.6	106.2	107.9	102.2	104.9	76.8	91.2	99.7	100.3	99.1	98.5	35.9	76.3	72.2		
HU	33.0	36.9	40.0	51.1	44.1	38.8	72.5	21.5	17.6	38.3	49.5	61.8	65.1	66.2	58.9	79.1		
MT	-48.2	57.7	69.7	73.0	64.1	64.7	53.1	51.9	47.1	71.9	78.9	83.3	31.7	30.9	41.4	18.8		
NL	111.5	121.0	116.6	112.2	114.5	113.7	101.0	90.6	98.5	101.2	98.9	96.8	77.1	101.8	137.4			
AT	83.8	82.6	86.2	91.1	91.6	97.8	98.4	96.1	96.1	102.6	104.3	104.8	44.5	30.1	72.6	66.6		
PL		62.9	67.2	63.2	56.7	59.7	15.5	54.7	59.3	74.9	70.9	70.8	35.4	27.2	55.9			
PT	76.3	49.4	58.2	57.9	48.6	43.1	86.8	10.5	5.4	26.6	36.1	30.1	74.2	23.1	19.8	22.6		
RO	0.5	35.9	35.9	21.0	13.8	23.6	66.1	54.7	66.7	82.2	77.5	81.0	36.6	40.5	32.3			
SI		88.8	88.6	91.1	90.1	77.7	58.3	68.5	76.5	71.9	70.9	68.6	-7.1	-0.2	13.5			
SK		41.1	47.4	38.3	40.4	45.2	-22.0	-64.1	-38.7	-17.3	-4.0	10.9	35.8	24.7	26.8			
FI	71.6	75.3	68.9	76.8	80.4	82.7	75.1	87.8	86.3	89.5	96.3	99.1	32.1	6.9	10.2	19.5		
SE	94.6	75.3	71.3	86.6	87.1	88.5	93.3	98.9	93.6	95.3	98.9	100.2	69.6	54.1	106.2			
UK	63.5	30.7	40.9	41.3	36.7	43.8	93.3	82.3	74.0	82.2	82.9	85.5		28.0	60.5	86.1		
EU27	47.9	43.2	48.3	48.1	47.1	49.6	58.3	49.2	47.1	61.7	64.2	65.2	27.1	19.7	31.4			

Sources: DG EMPL calculations on the basis of Eurostat database (labour market statistics, national accounts)

Note: the benchmark is normalised in the following way: average of highest 5=100, average of lowest 5=0. The interpretation of the benchmark is that if for a given indicator and country gives the relative distance to the highest 5 performers by subtracting the benchmark for a given country and indicator from the benchmark of the highest 5 performers (that is the value 100). The actual levels of the indicators can be found in the key indicator tables for each country ((Value-average lowest 5)/(average highest 5-average lowest 5)*100). Due to this definition there will be countries above or below the average of the group with the highest 5 or the lowest 5. This means that in the highest 5 there will be values above 100 and in the lowest 5 there will be values below 0.

At this page, it is defined that a good performance is low youth NEET and low long-term unemployment (that is the highest performers) and for transition from unemployment to employment the higher transition the better.

Benchmark for the main labour market indicators: Development indicators																		
	Employment growth 3 recent years						Nom ULC growth 3 recent years						Labour productivity growth 3 recent years					
	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2000	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Avg 5 Highest (level)	11.3	9.5	5.2	3.0	2.4	4.3	1.0	4.1	7.5	1.3	-9.1	-7.2	21.7	15.4	5.7	5.6	9.1	15.1
Avg 5 Highest	99	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Avg 5 Lowest	-6.4	1.8	-6.3	-12.8	-13.5	-11.1	26.7	39.4	30.9	19.0	12.2	7.3	2.8	-0.4	-5.8	-5.6	-3.8	-0.9
Avg 5 Lowest (level)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BE	65.8	37.1	83.1	95.6	96.9	86.7	92.1	86.7	85.7	62.2	27.7	8.5	6.3	14.9	31.1	35.7	25.0	16.0
BG	-6.4	99.9	81.8	51.1	20.2	-4.9	-99.0	36.0	-32.5	-84.6	-48.9	-11.4	105.7	65.8	82.8	101.9	89.3	113.5
CZ	9.8	53.3	77.3	77.6	69.1	69.8	55.9	93.2	96.0	75.3	41.8	18.2	43.0	67.1	62.9	63.3	47.3	27.1
DK	52.2	63.7	72.4	62.2	54.0	52.1	80.0	73.1	56.3	45.2	35.2	50.6	14.3	-12.4	-8.9	32.1	44.3	39.0
DE	61.3	22.7	80.8	92.9	97.8	92.1	98.7	113.3	101.1	69.0	29.6	29.2	-1.8	31.3	16.3	32.4	28.0	35.3
EE	-6.7	59.9	-24.4	-8.1	33.1	98.4	58.2	-20.7	-22.7	56.0	86.5	66.4	126.2	43.6	27.8	41.7	68.9	75.3
IE	153.2	87.7	16.2	4.0	2.3	31.3	70.3	70.3	104.1	132.0	118.4	115.3	43.0	3.9	69.0	90.3	104.2	55.9
EL	57.7	37.3	72.5	68.5	30.9	-29.7	92.9	69.9	42.4	38.1	106.3	106.3	25.1	28.4	32.1	-6.5	-19.5	-6.5
ES	120.0	68.0	21.4	24.1	20.5	19.9	94.4	92.4	94.3	63.9	29.1	21.6	-13.6	17.6	89.9	104.6	85.5	52.8
FR	74.3	15.8	59.5	75.4	80.3	76.0	104.5	88.1	80.1	59.4	34.3	29.9	7.0	13.5	40.3	49.0	41.6	26.3
IT	59.3	22.8	53.4	67.7	72.2	67.5	89.3	100.3	101.1	67.9	17.4	21.6	2.1	6.7	26.8	44.3	30.6	15.2
CY	65.5	71.8	98.5	91.0	84.6	47.4	89.3	88.3	87.0	109.3	131.1	91.2	36.5	38.8	66.6	62.0	29.3	25.1
LV	6.9	103.2	-25.6	-23.9	-66.3	5.5	-113.3	-47.5	109.3	131.1	91.2	91.2	95.2	45.7	12.9	4.9	128.9	153.1
LT	-2.5	28.6	12.3	3.8	23.3	9.3	27.8	64.0	100.8	96.8	96.8	87.1	84.2	111.1	60.3	61.4	40.0	85.5
LU	66.9	-32.0	23.6	58.3	76.2	79.7	95.2	76.2	49.4	-1.2	-1.4	-6.6	28.1	-11.8	-23.0	-32.9	-11.3	-7.6
HU	32.1	56.7	95.4	106.4	112.1	115.3	-21.2	74.5	72.1	71.3	39.9	-0.4	18.0	38.2	29.8	40.0	9.0	5.7
MT	79.3	52.9	83.5	83.3	82.6	73.4	76.5	96.3	88.3	64.5	30.1	34.0	68.4	31.7	55.6	53.0	10.9	-2.1
NL	56.3	49.4	81.3	94.0	96.3	96.1	107.2	94.3	88.3	57.1	29.6	20.9	14.1	25.6	43.8	48.1	29.3	21.8
AT	132.8	132.5	111.1	96.9	96.9	71.1	63.3	85.6	77.2	43.5	38.1	29.2	28.2	30.3	43.3	39.8	32.4	18.9
PL	72.4	-11.1	35.6	57.9	50.1	25.8	63.3	95.8	97.7	78.1	52.6	90.5	88.6	43.2	91.4	103.5	92.1	72.6
PT	53.1	76.4	90.0	71.7	50.6	40.2	35.3	82.4	53.3	17.5	18.3	18.2	21.5	140.6	123.2	62.9	10.8	10.6
RO	8.7	75.5	83.5	78.9	74.2	74.0	29.0	92.6	85.3	54.3	36.7	47.1	40.9	57.8	31.4	31.6	22.3	35.2
SI	73.2	64.6	72.7	80.0	75.0	80.7	93.2	89.8	59.7	26.0	14.6	58.8	46.9	115.3	112.7	99.6	63.0	65.9
FI	72.3	41.6	60.9	77.2	89.9	98.1	88.2	92.1	80.2	78.1	50.3	25.1	22.9	23.6	2.7	5.5	19.0	34.8
SE	57.3	4.6	48.4	67.5	72.7	72.7	66.8	87.5	84.0	50.9	18.8	52.6	22.9	15.3	22.6	60.7	61.4	49.9
UK	60.3	35.1	63.2	73.1	73.1	68.8	66.8	87.5	84.0	50.9	18.8	9.9	23.9	21.2	40.6	29.0	25.9	13.9
EU27																		

Sources: DG EMPL calculations on the basis of Eurostat database (labour market statistics, national accounts)

Note: the benchmark is normalised in the following way: average of highest 5=100, average of lowest 5=0. The interpretation of the benchmark is that it for a given indicator and country gives the relative distance to the highest 5 performers by subtracting the benchmark for a given country and indicator from the benchmark of the highest 5 performers (that is the value 100). The actual levels of the indicators can be found in the key indicator tables for each country ((Value-average lowest 5)/(average highest 5-average lowest 5)*100). Due to this definition there will be countries above or below the average of the group with the highest 5 or the lowest 5. This means that in the highest 5 there will be values above 100 and in the lowest 5 there will be values below 0. For the indicators at this page, the interpretation of the benchmark is on the growth rates. The good outcomes (thus the highest performers) are increasing employment growth and increasing labour productivity growth but decreasing or slow increase in unit labour cost.