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Delegations will find attached the 2017 Annual Report of the European Network of Public Employment Services (PES), as transmitted by the Employment Committee.



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ANNUAL REPORT 2017

# EUROPEAN NETWORK OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (PES)



Employment,  
Social Affairs  
and Inclusion

JANUARY 2017 – DECEMBER 2017

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The European Network of Public Employment Services was created following a Decision of the European Parliament and Council in June 2014 (DECISION No 573/2014/EU). Its objective is to reinforce PES capacity, effectiveness and efficiency. This activity has been developed within the work programme of the European PES Network. For further information: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/PESNetwork>.

This activity has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation 'EaSI' (2014-2020). For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>.

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ANNUAL REPORT 2017

**EUROPEAN NETWORK  
OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT  
SERVICES (PES)**

JANUARY 2017 – DECEMBER 2017



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## Acronyms

**AFEPA**s – Advisors for European PES Affaires

**AFIs** – Areas for Improvement

**ALMP** – Active Labour Market Policies

**BL** – Benchlearning

**CSRs** – Country Specific Recommendations

**DG EMPL** – Directorate-General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

**EASPD** – European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities

**ESF** – European Social Fund

**EMCO** – European Employment Committee

**EPSCO** – Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council

**EURES** – European Employment Services

**EUSE** – European Union of Supported Employment

**HoPES** – Heads of Public Employment Services

**LFS** – European Labour Force Survey

**LTU** – Long-term Unemployed

**ML** – Mutual Learning

**NEETS** – 'Not in Education, Employment, or Training'

**PES** – Public Employment Services

**PrES** – Private Employment Services

**YG** – Youth Guarantee





## Foreword

Today we look back at the third work intensive year of the PES Network. It was shaped by our strong collaboration and our joint conviction that the PES make a difference to the well-being of European citizens. Implementing labour market policies and bringing together employers and job-seekers remain highly challenging tasks in an ever faster changing world of work.

The broad range of our activities and initiatives shows that we are willing to face these challenges with an open-minded spirit, searching for continuous improvement and result-oriented solutions.

The main topics of 2016 – long-term unemployment, the integration of refugees into the labour market, or combatting youth unemployment – remained highly relevant in 2017. Moreover, the Network focused on topics related to the future world of work, such as digitalisation, a future-oriented skills management and making effective use of partnerships on the labour market. Last but not least, we opened up a debate on leadership among the Heads of PES, reflecting on the challenges and opportunities of leadership in nowadays changing and volatile environments.

Given the rapidly changing environments and labour markets, the PES Network updated its main strategy paper, which is looking beyond 2020 and guiding us on our pathway of change. Organisational agility is the key to cope with complex and ambiguous social-economic challenges. The evolving role of PES, striving for modernisation, means a transformation that affects all parts of the organisation.

Together with all actors on the labour market, such as private and public employment services, trade unions and employers associations, the education sector and other social services, we can stimulate and foster a forward-looking dialogue, while strengthening our conductor role on the labour market. We definitely need to commonly work on how to predict and deal with future trends and how to equip citizens and organisations with the skills indispensable in the 21st century.

Being well-aware of the need to change and innovate, the PES Network developed a common approach called Benchlearning. Following the second cycle of Benchlearning, we can be proud of the progress made. While discussing each PES's change agenda as well as further steps to take, we focus and advise on how change is managed within the organisations preparing for demanding times ahead.

I am proud to see how we all have already benefited from mutual advice and collaborative learning. I am looking very much forward to all the upcoming activities in our new Work Programme 2018 which promises an exciting next year.

**Fons Leroy**  
*Chair of the European Network  
of Public Employment Services*

*CEO of VDAB, the Flemish  
Public Employment Service*

# 1. Introduction

This third Annual Report of the European Public Employment Services Network (PES Network) covers the activities of the Network from January to December 2017. Having completed its first three years, the PES Network has achieved a higher degree of awareness as regards the institutional capacity enabling PES to pursue modernisation and increasing co-operation between European PES.

The PES Network yearly adopts an **Annual Work Programme**, which is based on exchange of views and a learning needs assessment agreed upon with all members of the Network. In 2017, the Work Programme contained a wide range of Network activities including those relating to the Benchmarking and Mutual Learning activities intended to further support PES modernisation and improve PES performance. The Work Programme also addressed strategic policy areas such as long-term unemployment, public-private partnerships, the refugees' situation, the PES working with employers and the PES as providers of career guidance.

Furthermore, the implementation of the Youth Guarantee continued to be a high priority for PES and therefore PES assessed their progress in implementing the EU recommendation. As European policy advisor, the Network also contributed to the public consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights. In line with the Pillar's principles, the PES Network updated their strategy document '**EU Network of Public Employment Services Strategy to 2020 and beyond**'.

A central part of the Network's activities relates to the **Benchlearning**. This project was successfully introduced in 2015, combining the concepts of Benchmarking and Mutual Learning with the aim of improving the performance of PES. The composition of the **Mutual Learning Programme** is strongly based on an in-depth learning needs assessment, which was continuously discussed and refined with PES, taking into account the results achieved through **Benchmarking**. In 2017, the second cycle of Benchlearning was launched, focusing on how PES are implementing and managing their modernisation agenda and change processes. Using this approach not only ensures the interlink between Benchmarking and Mutual Learning, but also fosters the ownership of the PES over the programme.

In 2017, the Mutual Learning Programme built more strongly on **PES performance evidence** and the learning needs emerging. The activities for 2017 therefore focused on strategic and operational matters that support PES modernisation to improve the impact on those who are in need of PES support.

Moreover, looking at the capacity of the PES, the annual PES capacity review indicated an improving labour market context with PES experiencing an overall reduction in the number of jobseekers and an increasing number of vacancies.

The outcomes of the PES Network activities can be found at the **PES Knowledge Centre** website<sup>1</sup>.

## 1.1 PES Network Update

### Change of Vice-Chair

Following the departure of the Network's first Vice-Chair, Ms Tuija Olvo (Head of the Finnish PES) on 6 December 2017, the December Board appointed Ms. Evita Simsons (Head of PES Latvia) from 7 December 2017 to 6 December 2019.

### Update of the PES Network's Strategy Paper: "EU Network of PES Strategy to 2020 and beyond"

The initial PES Network's Strategy 2020 was endorsed by the Heads of all European PES in 2012. Changing environments, labour markets and related challenges demonstrated the need to update the PES Network's Strategy 2020.

The updated strategy<sup>2</sup>, that was based on an input from the Network to the public consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights, was endorsed at the June Board meeting: It looks beyond 2020 and presents a common view of the evolving role of PES, while considering the differences in institutional settings, objectives, product portfolios and the structures of individual European PES. Finally, it provides a description of the operational impact

<sup>1</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/PESknowledgecentre>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BIobServlet?docId=9690&langId=en>



for PES, underlining the need to follow pathways of change to achieve the strategic reorientation of PES.

The core aspects are:

- Approach labour demand and supply from a more holistic point of view
- Collaboration with partners
- Join up the skills and education agenda
- Closer cooperation with employers
- Focus on sustained outcomes through secure professional transitions
- Career management tools for sustainable integration
- Acquire a mandate to fulfil conducting functions

The document is considered a living document and will be updated if considered necessary to capture recent developments.

#### Commission Report on PES Network

In June 2017, the Commission published a report<sup>3</sup> on the application of Decision 573/2014/EU on enhanced cooperation between Public Employment Services<sup>4</sup> (PES Network Decision). It shows that the Network is making encouraging progress: PES collaborate, share good practice and participate in learning events to constantly improve and provide a better and more effective service for jobseekers across Europe. The formalised structure of the Network has contributed to its successful performance. It gives a common voice to European PES to respond to emerging challenges such as the refugee crisis. The report judges the Benchlearning project as particularly innovative, allowing PES to compare their performance on the basis of indicators and learn from each other. The project has identified a range of inspiring practices from Member States and areas where PES can focus their development. In addition, the unique PES Knowledge Centre provides a wealth of information for researchers and decision-makers on the organisation of PES in Europe and the services they offer. Another report is scheduled to be published before the Decision expires on 31 December 2020.

<sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=17854&langId=en>

<sup>4</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AQJL\\_2014.159.01.0032.01.ENG](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AQJL_2014.159.01.0032.01.ENG)

#### Overview of PES Network Work Programme 2017

The Pes Network Decision requires the Network to adopt and implement an Annual Work Programme. This is designed to assist the PES in delivering the Network Mission to promote PES modernisation and supporting individual PES to enhance their contribution to the implementation of the EU2020 Strategy.

The Work Programme 2017 was grouped under three axes: Benchmarking, Mutual Learning and PES Network Governance (see Annex 4):

##### Benchmarking

- The second cycle of Benchmarking was launched in 2017. Throughout 2017, on site assessments were carried out in 15 PES with a strong focus on change and individual advice.
- Benchmarking results – good practices as well as identified learning needs – feed into the Mutual Learning Programme.

##### Mutual Learning

- The focus has been on policy areas like career guidance and lifelong-learning, relations with employers, the labour market integration of refugees as well as the support to the implementation of the Country Specific Recommendations under the European Semester in three mutual assistance projects.
- The modernisation of PES service delivery was supported in different learning formats with a specific focus on collaboration with employers and on the further development of digital tools. Several studies, analytical papers and a questionnaire on PES capacity were also carried out over the year.

##### PES Network Governance

- Network Governance is conducted by its biannual PES Board and Advisors for European PES Affaires (AFEPA) meetings.
- The PES Network Board is assisted by a Secretariat provided by and based within the European Commission<sup>5</sup>. The Secretariat, in co-operation with the Chair and Vice-Chairs, prepares the Board meetings, the Annual Work

<sup>5</sup> DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Unit B1 Employment Strategy.



Programme and this Annual Report. The Secretariat also organises and chairs the meetings of the AFEPAs. The PES Secretariat can be reached at [EMPL-PES-SECRETARIAT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-PES-SECRETARIAT@ec.europa.eu).

#### PES Board Meetings Summary

The PES Board has held two meetings in 2017, on 8-9 June and 7-8 December:

- At the June meeting in Malta the Board discussed, together with experts from the OECD and UNHCR, aspects of the labour market integration of migrants and refugees and how to effectively manage partnerships with other labour market stakeholders. Furthermore the Board adopted a revised version of the Network's principle strategy paper 'EU Network of Public Employment Services Strategy to 2020 and beyond'. Moreover the Board set up a working group on PES cooperation with the education sector.
- At the December meeting in Estonia, the Board elected a new first Vice-Chair (Ms Evita Simson). Moreover, the Board exchanged on opportunities and challenges of digitalisation for the PES such as the provision of e-services and the use of data for better services to customers. Furthermore the Board endorsed the 2018 Work Programme as well as the 2017 Annual Report. A strategic leadership seminar during the working dinner prior to the meeting in Estonia was organised.

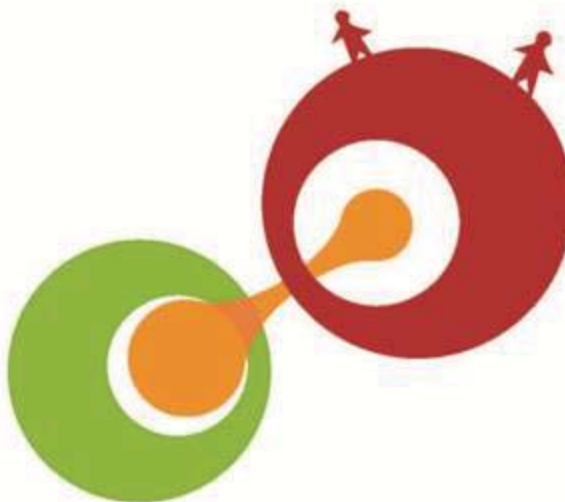
#### Meetings of the Advisors for European PES Affairs

The Advisors for European PES Affairs (AFEPA) meet twice a year in advance of Board meetings to review Network activities, progress on delivery of the Work Programme, and formulate draft positions on current issues in advance of subsequent Board discussion. In 2017 the advisers met on 16-17 March and on 12-13 October.

#### PES Knowledge Centre/PES Network Newsletter

The PES Knowledge Centre website<sup>6</sup> was launched in 2016 in order to collect and share information on the organisation and services of public employment services in Europe. Analytical papers, practitioners' toolkits, good practice examples, conference outcomes and other reports from the activities of the PES Network are published continuously. The centre aims at offering tools to learn from the experiences from other countries for PES, researchers, stakeholders and citizens. In the PES practices database<sup>7</sup> inspiring practices from PES across Europe can be found. The selected practices focus on issues such as integration of refugees, approaches to early and intensified counselling as well as skills assessment and competencies recognition.

In 2017 the PES Network continued its quarterly newsletter launched in November 2016. The newsletter can be received by subscribing to the PES Network Secretariat [EMPL-PES-SECRETARIAT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EMPL-PES-SECRETARIAT@ec.europa.eu) and is also uploaded to the DG EMPL website.<sup>8</sup>



<sup>6</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1163&langId=en>

<sup>7</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1206&langId=en>

<sup>8</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1100&langId=en>

## 2. PES Support for Implementation of Policy Initiatives

### 2.1 Long-term Unemployment

The Council Recommendation on the integration of the long-term unemployed (LTU) into the labour market<sup>9</sup> provides for the contribution of the PES Network to the monitoring of the implementation of the Recommendation. Therefore, in 2016 the PES Board mandated a working group to define quality standards for the implementation of the Recommendation. In October 2016 a set of proposals, identifying minimum, intermediate and advanced quality standards of delivery of customer contact facilities and job integration agreements, were endorsed by Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO).

Additionally, the PES Network decided in 2017 to further reflect the implementation of the LTU Recommendation within the Benchlearning assessment (see also section 3). Therefore, the qualitative assessment of 'Early engagement to reduce the duration of unemployment' was enhanced by additional information on the implementation of the LTU Recommendation.

### 2.2 The Youth Guarantee

The PES Network has committed to supporting and monitoring the delivery of the Youth Guarantee. Therefore assessment reports on the PES capacity to implement the Youth Guarantee (YG) have been published on an annual basis.

These reports have underlined the importance of the PES in the implementation of the YG. All PES have a wide range of responsibilities in the YG scheme. Moreover, the PES are not only providers of specific services, but almost half of them have responsibilities in the management and coordination of the national and regional YG schemes. Building up and strengthening the partnerships is the focus for many PES included in this analysis.

The implementation of the YG is supported through national sources (government funds), as well as EU financial instruments – the ESF and the YEI (Youth

Employment Initiative). National funding and the ESF seem to be the main sources of funding. Almost half the PES have staff exclusively dedicated to implementing the YG; otherwise YG activities have been incorporated into PES staff functions and roles. A very high proportion (95%) of the staff exclusively dedicated to implementing the YG are client-facing, which shows that direct services to young clients is the focus of PES efforts.

Around half the PES have access to the apprenticeship and traineeship vacancies databases, so the PES's access to this relevant information for their young clients remains quite limited. In many cases, this is due to the overall responsibility for such programmes resting with other institutions, mainly in the education sector.

Career guidance, face-to-face employment counselling, individual action planning, training and employment incentives (including support for geographical mobility through the EURES network) continue to be the core interventions under the YG schemes. An increased number of PES work with schools to re-integrate young people in education, and have a social media presence. The current analysis revealed that around two thirds of the PES are involved in proactive initiatives to prevent an increase in NEETs, through outreach work and by directly working with NEETs. Furthermore, some PES where the outreach work is not their responsibility have various activities directed to NEETs.

### 2.3 The European Pillar of Social Rights

The PES Network delivered a common response to the consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights after assessing its impact on the PES Network Decision and reflecting on new trends in work patterns and society. Following this input, the group updated the EU Network of PES 2020 Strategy paper, as mentioned earlier<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016H0220%2801%29>

<sup>10</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/lobServlet?docId=9690&langId=en>

## 2.4 Refugees

In December 2015, the PES Network Board decided to establish a working group to explore the PES perspective. The working group developed a paper on PES key considerations for the integration of refugees and asylum-seekers into the labour market<sup>11</sup>, endorsed by the Board at its June 2016 meeting, where the mandate of the working group was simultaneously extended to look at proposals for activities within the context of the 2017 PES Network Work Programme.

In April 2017, a Thematic Review Workshop in Nuremberg, Germany, looked at practices on integrating refugees into the labour market. A follow-up visit to Sweden on 29 September 2017 shed light on, inter alia, Swedish skills mapping tool and fast track practices and Finnish Social Impact Bonds. The PES Network also presented PES practices during a Commission/European Economic and Social Committee conference on the integration of refugees in November 2017. The Board continued to discuss the refugee situation in both its meetings in 2017.

## 2.5 Employers Day 2017

- The second European Employers Day took place between the 13 -24 November 2017. It was prepared by a Network working group on 'relations with employers'. The objective was to foster cooperation between employers and the PES and raise the visibility of the PES Network and national PES. PES showcased their local, regional or national activities targeted at employers in order to increase awareness of national and European PES activities amongst employers.
- This year's European Employers Day was linked to the European Vocational Skills Week 2017 in order to join forces with the European high-level event that promotes vocational education and training via various events across Europe.

<sup>11</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16068&langId=en>

## 2.6 Research and Studies on PES Topics

All finalised publications can be found on the PES Knowledge Centre website<sup>12</sup>.

### Bottleneck Vacancies Study

In 2017, a follow-up report was launched updating last year's bottleneck vacancies study<sup>13</sup>, identifying shortage occupations based on an analysis of data submitted by European PES. The follow-up report expands the study to include analyses of surplus occupations and explores possible matching of shortages and surpluses across countries. The analyses revealed that there is considerable potential for managing imbalances in the European labour market, by encouraging job-seekers in 'surplus occupations' to consider applying for jobs in countries where those occupations are classified as 'shortage occupations'.

### PES Support to Start-Ups

A new report, published in September 2017<sup>14</sup>, shows that start-up incentives are effective in bringing unemployed and specific target groups back into the labour market. In some cases, they can even be more effective than other labour market measures. This report offers real encouragement to PES to include start-up incentives as part of their service offer. But to do so, start-up support requires specialist trainers and advisers. It is also important that PES offer a healthy mix of support measures, including appropriate benefits, access to capital, training, counselling and guidance.

### Atypical Employment and the Role of European PES

A study on atypical workers, published in October 2017<sup>15</sup>, focuses on how national PES can facilitate labour market transitions for those people in new atypical forms of work (such as jobs in the "gig" economy). Based on the responses of national PES the paper looks at the availability of training, course curricula, client profiles, skill needs identification and the use of technology in both the promotion and delivery of training. The paper concludes with

<sup>12</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1163&langId=en>

<sup>13</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=17666&langId=en>

<sup>14</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=18257&langId=en>

<sup>15</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=18349&langId=en>

good practices to facilitate adaptation of the PES offer to the new world of work.

#### Performance Accountability

The performance measurement capacity is crucial to PES in order to improve results and to meet with political and public expectations. To receive a deeper understanding of successful implementation of performance measurement systems in European PES, an analytical paper was launched presenting good practices on the analysis of the reasoning behind when setting up the systems and the use of the information to improve capacity. The analytical paper has a strong connection to Section A in the Benchmarking exercise 'Performance Management'.

#### Multi-Channel Strategy

In 2017, a new report on developments in multi-channel management has been conducted. The report shows that there are four main topics emerging, when analysing the changes in the world that impact on the multi-channel management in European PES. These topics are: Changes in channel behaviour towards more online channels, evolution of multi-channel management towards omni-channel management, integration at different levels as the key challenge facing PES when implementing channel strategies and social robots as part of an increase in digitalisation and automation of processes and services.

Additionally, research is currently ongoing on the topics of employment sustainability, reaching out to the inactive as well as active support and employment promotion.

### 2.7 A new skills agenda for Europe

A strong role and expectation on PES concerning the skills agenda is clearly formulated in the PES Network Decision. PES are expected to play a role when it comes to improved skills matching, on facilitating the transition from education to work, including the provision of guidance, and to improve transparency of skills and qualifications. Subsequently, a strong attention is paid to key areas on the subject in the PES 'Strategy to 2020 and beyond'. The changing labour markets with new and different needs for basic skills and/or more developed competencies are challenging for PES. Higher awareness of labour market trends, skills shortages and gaps is one

important starting point to develop closer cooperation with the educational sector.

The new skills agenda was subject to discussions at the PES Board during the year. The necessary improvements of the service delivery to meet with new skills demand on the labour market, the capacity of PES to anticipate and recognise these, how to improve the capacity to be the career partner to jobseekers and citizens and the recognition of the Upskilling Pathways initiative,<sup>16</sup> were items highlighted on the agenda of the PES Board.

To further underline the importance of the skills agenda, the PES Board decided to designate a working group on the subject of PES cooperation with the educational sector. The objectives of the working group are to reflect on building efficient bridges between the education and employment sector, and the role PES can play to facilitate these by partnering with stakeholders from the education sector.

In this respect an important activity of the Mutual Learning programme during the year was the realisation of a seminar on 'Career guidance and lifelong learning' to improve PES services. The seminar focused on how PES need to stay one step ahead of the changing needs of the labour market in order to support customers to make good career choices. Several good practices from Network members were presented highlighting anticipation models to grasp tendencies on the labour market, the development of different tools when working with customers, the engagement with the education providers and the importance of a strong alliance with employers. A toolkit was launched in October supporting PES redesigning reconsidering and planning career guidance services including a guide to support the drafting of a PES Action Plan for 'Career guidance and lifelong learning'.

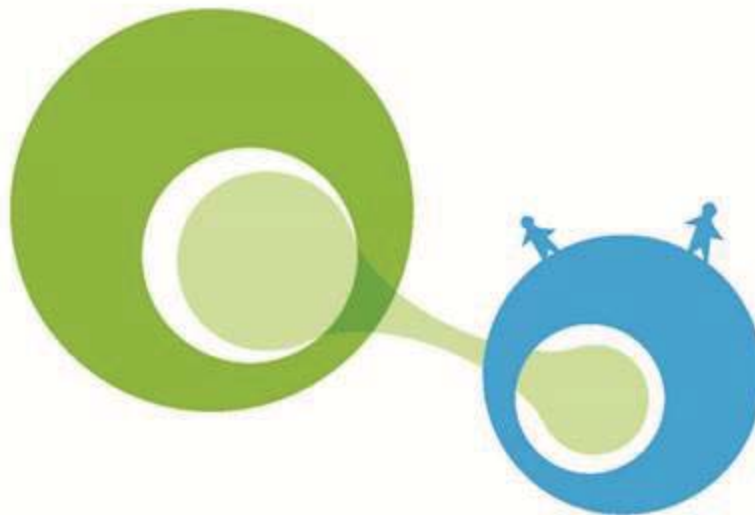
### 2.8 Partnership Agreement to promote employment of persons with disabilities

Developing an inclusive society is an overarching objective pursued by European PES. Integration into the labour market is crucial for people with disabilities. The first World Conference on Supported

<sup>16</sup> The Upskilling Pathways Initiative includes skills assessment, a tailored offer of learning and the validation of the skills acquired and is a Council Recommendation 2016/C 484/01

Employment was held in June 2017 in Belfast to place this issue in the spotlight. It was organised by the European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) and the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD).

As a result of the conference, the PES Network, EUSE and EASPD signed a joint declaration of intent to promote the increase of employment rates of persons with disabilities. This is a stepping-stone toward the EU Network's PES 2020 Strategy and it should contribute to creating a more inclusive society.



## 3. PES Modernisation

### 3.1 Benchlearning

Benchlearning (BL) is central to the Network's activities as defined by the PES Network Decision. It is the process of creating a systematic and integrated link between Benchmarking and Mutual Learning activities. The ultimate aim is to support each PES in improving their performance through comparisons and institutional learning from peers.

The core idea is that this will lead to better results and contribute towards improved functioning and convergence of labour markets, and therefore demonstrating the added value of PES.

#### Benchmarking

In order to achieve this aim, a structured and systematic analysis of PES performance and its drivers is conducted through the analysis of performance data (quantitative Benchmarking) and an on-going process of PES self-, peer and expert review (qualitative Benchmarking).

Each year PES are asked to provide data on eight mandatory indicators collected from PES and other sources. The data are published on a dashboard and made accessible to registered users. The dashboard is the major tool used to promote transparency between all members of the PES Network.

In the beginning of 2017, the second cycle of Benchlearning seamlessly followed the first cycle, building up on the achievements so far and supporting PES in their modernisation initiatives.

Its main elements are again a comprehensive PES self-assessment and an external assessment (site visit at the headquarter and local office of a PES) by peer PES and experts. The assessment now focuses on changes implemented since the first cycle. Therefore, the change agenda of all PES is assessed in order to discuss the progress made and support them in change implementations. To this end, a new enabler section has been introduced - Section H: Identification and implementation of a reform agenda (see Annex 1).

Following to the external assessments, each PES again receives a feedback report with a detailed

assessment of all changes since the first visit as well as practical suggestions for further improvements and peer PES as potential partners for exchange. Annex 2 gives an impression of PES follow-up activities. The assessment is moreover an important source for collecting good practices from PES.

The results of the first cycle already showed, that PES highly differ in their "business models" as well as their institutional contexts. Looking to the different performance sections, there is more than one opportunity to study the good approaches of peer PES for organisational development. Benchmarking thereby creates a mechanism for PES to develop partnerships for ongoing learning exchange, and mutual support.

Due to the quantitative and qualitative Benchmarking, an evidence base is available, which feeds into the development and implementation of the Network's Mutual Learning (ML) Programme.

#### Mutual Learning – Concept, Activities and Integral Part of Benchlearning

The Mutual Learning (ML) concept uses evidence such as the Benchlearning results to identify and address PES learning needs. The ML activities of the PES Network support PES modernisation and improvement of PES performance by addressing PES learning needs identified through Benchmarking, while facilitating PES learning on subjects that contribute to the goals of the EU 2020 Strategy and the implementation of PES-related country-specific recommendations.

With the completion of the first full Benchlearning assessment visits by July 2016, the PES Network's ML Work Programme 2017<sup>17</sup> has been shaped and enhanced through the use of direct and comparable evidence from the Benchlearning data collection and assessments. This evidence has enabled ML activities to be increasingly designed, delivered and targeted in relation to PES learning needs and to identify, disseminate and facilitate the transfer of good practice amongst PES. In addition, the format

<sup>17</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=18251&langId=en> \*last updated in September 2017.

of ML activities in 2017 provided PES with access to more targeted, support-orientated and peer-based learning activities, which have been reflected in the growing prevalence of workshops, mutual assistance and working group-based activities throughout the year.

### Themes and Activities

The ML activities in 2017 were focused on strategic and operational matters that support the modernisation of PES and improve the reach and impact on those who need PES to progress in their working lives. As such, ML addressed key operational aspects of PES, such as communication strategies, multi-channel management, evaluation activities and leadership. ML also supported dialogues on building partnerships and improving engagement with employers, the education sector and career-guidance partners. Transversally, topics in 2017 centred on priority target groups for PES, notably vulnerable groups covered by the European Pillar of Social Rights, especially those at risk of or in long-term unemployment, young people and refugees who could integrate the European labour market faster through better assessment and recognition of their competences. Activities in 2017 took the form of learning events (seminars, thematic review workshops, visits, mutual assistance projects and webinars) and written resources (reports, toolkits, practices and studies) accessible on the dedicated webpages for the European Network of PES<sup>18</sup> (see Annex 3).

Ongoing evaluation of these activities captured the benefit and impact of ML events for individual PES (Annex 3). There were positive signs that PES were not only sharing and identifying good practices, but also actively following up on their participation in learning events. PES have capitalised and communicated results from learning activities within their own organisations or with their immediate stakeholders. Results from onsite and post-event surveys showed that participants in learning activities in 2016 have communicated and disseminated the information and learning from events to colleagues in their PES organisations.

The qualitative evaluation report in 2017 also confirmed positive effects from attending a sequence of activities. In particular:

- Transfer of knowledge takes place in PES, albeit shaped by organisational processes in each PES.
- Shortly after taking part in a learning sequence, PES reported that follow-up visits provided them with ideas on possible long-term strategies.
- In the medium-term (12 months after the last qualitative evaluation in 2016), PES reported making progress towards improving the efficiency and quality of their performance management and customer satisfaction measurement systems, including initiating their own follow-up activities with PES in other countries. These results are particularly significant insofar as it is the first time it has been possible to evaluate the longer-term outcomes and impact of the ML programme, tracking back to PES participation in activities in 2015.

### 3.2 Mutual Assistance

The Network and its Members continued to provide Mutual Assistance (Technical Assistance through peer PES support) for PES modernisation in Romania, Italy and Cyprus.

#### Romania

In 2016 and in 2017, Romania received Country Specific Recommendations closely linked to the capacity of the PES specifically when it comes to the improvement of services towards employers and jobseekers. The inclusion of young and people far from the labour market was underlined.

The PES Network supported Romanian colleagues already during 2015, and the result served as basis for the strategy up to 2020 for the National Employment Agency of Romania. After having received the CSR for 2017 to further improve capacity, Romania approached the Network with another request for Mutual Assistance.

Understanding the labour market needs as well as the close collaboration with employers are crucial for PES. A programme for Mutual Assistance addressing these areas has been launched during the second half of the year and will be followed up early 2018. The Mutual Assistance project is being carried out in close cooperation with the European Commission in order to facilitate the translation of the Roadmaps into ESF projects.

<sup>18</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/PESNetwork>



PES colleagues from Belgium (VDAB), Germany and Sweden are participating in this project.

### Italy

The Italian 'Jobs Act' established a new National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies (ANPAL) to coordinate a wide network of institutions and agencies responsible for the management and monitoring of active labour market policies. The 2016 Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) encouraged Italy to implement the reform of the public administration by adopting and implementing all necessary legislative decrees.

ANPAL requested assistance and support within the framework of the "Mutual Assistance Project to Italy 2017" focused on the following thematic areas:

- Setting up a Management Information System (MIS).
- Support the work on a mission and communication strategy.

PES colleagues from Spain, Germany and the Netherlands participated in this project.

### Cyprus

In 2016 and 2017 Cyprus received CSRs to enhance the capacity of their PES in their provision to the LTU and improve outreach to the non-registered unemployed. Responding to this, the PES requested mutual assistance from the PES Network to develop specific aspects of their services.

The Cypriot PES requested assistance and support within the framework of the "Mutual Assistance Project to Cyprus 2017" focused on the following thematic areas:

- Customer Segmentation/functionalisation of services.
- Expanded use of IT for self-service provision.
- Evidence based design and enhanced delivery of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) / improved activation services (including outreach) for jobseekers especially from the most disadvantaged groups, e.g. the young, the disabled, the LTU.
- Services for employers.
- Performance Management/Organisational Culture/Quality Management.

PES colleagues from Germany, France and Estonia participated in this project.

## 4. Performance Capacity Overview

### 4.1 Assessment Report on PES Capacity 2017

Within its Annual Work Programme the Network has undertaken a questionnaire, which covers both PES capacity and PES implementation of the YG. PES from all 30 countries active in the PES Network (EU 28, Norway and Iceland) answered the questionnaire, based on which two assessment reports have been produced. However, due to the design of the questionnaire it has not been possible for every PES to provide answers on all questions, which will be addressed throughout this section.

The main findings from the PES capacity report 2017 are summarised below and also supported in Annex 5.

#### A Labour Market Context still developing for the Better

The number of job-seeking clients registered with the European PES has steadily decreased over the past three years. The overall number of job-seeking clients decreased with 15.8%, from 23.1 million in April 2014 to 19.3 million in April 2017<sup>19</sup>.

This trend was not universal; however the actual decrease occurred in 23 PES, while 5 PES still recorded increasing numbers of job-seeking clients. This was matched by an increase in the number of registered unemployed in most PES, with the exception of one country.

The total number of vacancies increased by 2% from 2015 to 2016<sup>20</sup>. Comparatively, the increase was 6.8% for 2013-2014 and 10.5% for 2014-2015.

#### Gradual Ageing of PES Client Base

One of the key factors determining the implementation of PES services is the profile of job-seeking clients<sup>21</sup>.

The last year's report showed that LTU and especially young people profited from the economic recovery. The recent figures in 2017 confirm these findings, as the PES see a gradually decreasing share of young people in their job-seeking clients compared to 2015 (around 9%). The segment of LTU however still shows a small increase (around 3%). The European PES experience an ageing client base, which is shown as a 14% increase in the share of older workers between 2015 and 2017.

Young people now constitute 10.5% of the group, who PES assist to enter the labour market. The number of job-seeking clients under 25 decreased by 19.6% during the past two years, reaching over 2 million people in 2017, whereas the number of older workers increased by 0.2% in the same period, reaching 5.5 million people in 2017.

#### Long-term Unemployed and Disabled continue to require Support

The number of the LTU on the PES registry has also decreased by 9.6% since 2015. However, this rate did not match the overall decrease in jobseekers and as a result their share in the PES clients increased by 3%. This trend was by no means uniform amongst PES. Between 2015 and 2017, an increase occurred in 15 PES and a decrease in 12 PES.

This year's report also presents data on disabled. 1.3 million citizens with disabilities were registered in 2017<sup>22</sup>. The share of disabled citizens in these PES amounts to 7% of all registered.

#### Financial resources and ALMPs share continue to increase in many PES

Total expenditure, excluding benefit payments, steadily increased since 2011. Over the entire period from 2011-2016 expenditure increased by 27%. The number of PES with growing or decreasing expenditure has, however, been fairly stable since 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Information available for 28 PES

<sup>20</sup> Information available for 29 PES

<sup>21</sup> Data are available on the developments for three specific target groups for 28 PES (young people under 25) or 27 PES (LTU and older workers).

<sup>22</sup> Information available for 17 PES

For 20 out of 21 PES, the expenditure on ALMPs increased at higher rates than the total expenditure without benefits, namely by 34%. The share of ALMPs rose from 47% in 2010 to 51% in 2016.

#### **Staff Numbers are declining but signs of change appear**

The total number of PES staff is below the level in 2014 and over the past 3 years, the number of PES staff in full-time equivalent (FTF) has decreased by 1.8%. The number of FTE posts decreased from 215,442 in 2014 to 211,568 in 2016<sup>23</sup>.

The number of FTE posts decreased by 0.2% between April 2016 and April 2017, compared to 0.7% the year before. These aggregate figures also mask different experiences among the individual PES. In fact, only 7 PES saw their staff numbers decreasing over the entire period, and for the other PES the number of FTE did not change. The outlook for 2017 is positive, with 21 PES expecting increasing staff numbers only one PES that is foreseeing a fall in numbers.

#### **PES are adapting their staff deployment to the changing environment**

In 2016 changes took place related to the deployment of staff in 12 PES, and in 2017 this occurred in 15 PES. In total, changes took place in 17 PES during the last two years. Many changes were related to structural reorganisations at national level, and in particular regional and local level.

#### **Specialised teams for target group-tailored approach still gaining more support**

The number of PES that provide services to employers using staff exclusively dedicated to this purpose has been steadily increasing since 2014 reaching almost two thirds of the PES. Most of these PES also increased the number of staff dedicated to this target group last year.

#### **Innovation in ALMPs continues**

21 PES reported the introduction of new ALMPs and 17 PES reported amendments of existing ALMPs to better respond to current labour market conditions. On average this concerned 2.9 new and 2.7 amended ALMPs per PES that made these changes. Only 2 PES recorded no changes in ALMPs.

The main target group of ALMPs were youth. Disabled were more visible than last year, with 9 measures introduced in 5 PES. 53% of the new measures that PES introduced were employment incentives, where 23% relied on the provision of training.

#### **Target setting now also for refugees**

Most PES set targets for their performance in assisting jobseekers to enter the labour market. 21 PES set targets for clients in general. Specific targets are set for young people (21 PES) and LTU (17 PES). Around 40% of the PES<sup>24</sup> set targets for older workers and disabled. A small number of PES set targets for women (3 PES) and employers (5 PES). The recent refugee crisis has led 8 PES to set targets related to this group.

All 21 PES that set general targets include output targets, 13 PES set results targets, and 6 PES set targets for customer satisfaction.

<sup>23</sup> Information available for 28 PES

<sup>24</sup> For which this information is available

## 5. Concluding Remarks

The PES Network has completed a two full years of Mutual Learning activities as an integral part of Benchlearning. To add value to the Mutual Learning programme of 2017, a first learning needs assessment was made already after the first year. At this point, and after the finalisation of a full cycle we also have access to Benchlearning Change Reports from 14 PES and likewise to reports from the first site visits of the second cycle, including the new section H on the Change Agenda. With this growing set of identified learning needs the starting point for the shape of the 2018 year Work Programme is much stronger than in earlier years.

This evidence based approach of learning needs has been combined with a discussion between the AFEPAs concerning learning formats, the use of learning tools and other suggested improvements to add the value of the Mutual Learning Programme for PES. A reference group with the representation of five PES (Denmark, Spain, France, Netherlands and Norway) contributed strongly to the development of the Network's Work Programme 2018 and beyond.

With the above mentioned factors at hand, plus a thorough analysis of the activities during the last three-year period, the proposed 2018 Work Programme includes a Mutual Learning part somewhat different and with a more strategic approach than earlier. In order to present a longer term and future-proof programme, the proposal builds on four interlinked thematic clusters which are: the future of work, digitalisation, holistic approach and human resource management.

The work in thematic clusters will offer the opportunity to build learning packages around topics and allowing for targeted participation of PES staff. Therefore same topic can be treated in different formats and the opportunities to meet and exchange in smaller settings will increase. The introduction of collaborative platforms as well as the extended use of webinars to increase access to learning events will be realised in 2018.

The benchmarking project will continue in 2018 and by the end of the year the second cycle will be completed. This means that all PES will have had two visits from peer PES assessing and discussing their institutional capacity. Therefore, the Network will need to reflect and decide on the future design and setting of the third cycle 2018-2020.

As the PES Network Decision establishes the Network until 31 December 2020, the Commission is furthermore currently preparing an evaluation to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and EU added value of the Decision. The respective evaluation roadmap was published in October 2017<sup>25</sup>. The evaluation's geographical scope is the European Union in its present composition of 28 Member States and the European Economic Area countries Iceland and Norway, who are participating in the activities of the Network. The evaluation will cover the period from the entry into force of the Decision establishing the PES Network (May 2014) to the latest possible date.

The results of the evaluation will feed reflections over the possible future cooperation between European PES post-2020 and the Commission's role herein.

<sup>25</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2017-5258712\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2017-5258712_en)

## Annexes

### Annex 1 – Benchlearning Project Organisation and Activities

#### 1. Introduction

In order to put Benchlearning into practice it was necessary to establish a systematic link between performance enablers and performance outcomes while controlling for context/external factors.

The 2016 Annual Report<sup>26</sup> demonstrated the main results of the quantitative and qualitative Benchlearning exercise, as well as the combined analyses. These results serve as basis and learning resource for the ongoing second cycle.

This annex summarises the main elements of the Benchmarking exercise and the results of the second cycle conducted so far.

#### 2. Quantitative Benchmarking

A structured and systematic analysis of PES performance and its drivers through analysis of performance data and an on-going process of PES self, peer and expert review is now conducted in its second cycle, which bases on the achievements of the first cycle (see Annual Report 2016, annex 1).

In 2017, in the course of the yearly Benchlearning data collection, PES again were asked to provide variables according to clearly defined requirements. Thus, data on eight mandatory indicators collected from PES and other sources were placed on an internet dashboard and made accessible to registered users. PES have the possibility to enhance performance comparison between PES, as well as an opportunity to assess their own performance over time which could provide a rich source of useful information.

The set of performance outcomes will need to be adjusted to reflect other additional performance dimensions including the quality and sustainability of employment. Empirical results will be more

<sup>26</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/lobServlet?docid=17000&langid=en>

robust over time when having collected more data and methodology has been refined. This will increase the potential for comparative study across PES to support mutual learning.

#### 3. Qualitative Benchmarking – the second Cycle

During the first cycle, qualitative Benchmarking was based upon seven areas analysed in a two-staged assessment process (self and external assessment). After the assessment, considered as core element of the whole Benchlearning exercise, each PES received an individual feedback report on the strengths including good practices as well as an analysis of its major areas for improvement together with detailed suggestions and recommendations.

For the second cycle, since 2017, the assessment exercise focuses on change, in order to accompany and support PES on their way into the future. A "Benchlearning Report – National PES Change Agenda" serves as basis for the second cycle's assessment. These so-called change reports are delivered by each PES one year after they received the first cycle's feedback report.

In order to continue refined measurement approaches and to identify and assess changes over time within each PES, the self and external assessment exercise this time is focussing on:

- **Measuring change** and thereby broadening the empirical basis for context-free performance comparisons across PES and to find out which organisational structures, processes or services (performance enabler) lead to improved performance results.
- **Supporting change** by providing individual feedback and advice to PES regarding their organisational development projects.

Specifically, the assessment exercise is based on an update of the 29 original performance enablers with a clear focus on changes since the last site visit. To this end, a new enabler section was introduced - Section H: "Identification and implementation of a reform agenda". The updated and extended (by Section H) self-assessment together

with the change report serves as an essential information base for external assessors to prepare for the 3-day site visits of the second cycle. After the visit, each PES again receives a feedback report with a detailed assessment of all changes since the first visit as well as practical suggestions for further improvements.

After all second site visits have been completed and the externally validated scores for PES performance enablers have been collected, quantitative indicators from qualitative Benchmarking will be generated. They will serve as essential input for the empirical identification of "true performance enablers" of the combined quantitative-qualitative analysis.

#### 4. Combined Quantitative-Qualitative Analyses

The empirical analysis of the first cycle already identified statistically significant associations between performance outcomes and maturity indicators while controlling for a small set of important context factors (see last Annual Report, 2016<sup>27</sup>). Results illustrated that PES across the Network exhibit good results in certain performance dimensions. Simultaneously, all PES exhibit room for improvement for at least one valid outcome. As a consequence, there is not one single PES that can be considered the performance benchmark in all relevant dimensions.

After having completed the second cycle of Benchlearning, a broader data set will allow for a refined performance analyses in the end of 2018. The potential for organisational improvements in every PES will serve as a reference point for the ongoing Mutual Learning activities.

#### 5. Findings from the second Cycle and Outlook

Benchlearning is by its very nature an ongoing process. Its ultimate aim is to support each PES in improving its performance. As a general observation from the second cycle conducted so far, PES profit by receiving detailed and tailor-made feedback from informed external assessors on their change efforts to date.

This feedback is again supposed to be a "helping hand" to illustrate to PES the strengths of their organisational development while also highlighting those areas for which improvements could further enhance the results and the impact of these. Participating PES further receive practical suggestions on how to proceed in addition to information on peer PES with comparable organisational development objectives. This information is also used to develop topics for mutual learning events and/or for bilateral exchanges on common challenges and potential solutions to them.

Summarising the findings of the 15 PES visited in 2017, while considering the information of the PES change agendas, several challenges occur for most of the PES throughout the Network, although the level of maturity differs. Most of the PES are further developing their organisations with a focus on the following topics:

- Cooperation with employers.
- ICT systems and e-Services.
- Review of indicators, target setting, overall organisational structure.
- Competence-based matching.
- Training, motivation and impact of introduced changes on staff.

So far, some major areas shared by many PES with regards to management of change, can be summarised as well:

- Integrated and consistent Change Management.
- Effective communication.
- Bottom up processes and staff empowerment.
- Systematic monitoring of results and implementing measures for improvement.

The next chapter (annex 2) demonstrates concrete changes by PES and underlines the progress achieved through Benchlearning.

<sup>27</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/lobServlet?docid=17000&langid=en>

## Annex 2 - Reports from PES follow-up on Benchmarking Activities

### Austria

As a result of the first Benchmarking assessment in 2015, the following QM priorities in the work programme of 2017 have been set up:

- Implementation of risk management in our management system.
- Risk assessment and definition of areas of risk with a high priority.
- Working ahead on a strategy map and a strategy communication.
- In reviewing the results of the second Benchmarking assessments in 2017, the focus for the next strategy conference with the Regional Directors will be on the issue of future vision. Moreover, in relation to the recommendation on advisory skills, a study visit to Estonia has been planned.

### Belgium – VDAB

- Based on the results of the first Benchmarking site visit, in combination with other evaluation and policy initiatives, the VDAB has defined several change projects.
- Following the Benchmarking assessment, one of the change projects, that has a high priority, is the sectoral approach. This will be rolled out in all the VDAB services and furthermore reflected in the new organisation model. Another project is ensuring that the Business Process Management stays on track and will be integrated in the management tools and forums. This will also be reflected in the new organisational model.

### Belgium – Le Forem

The PES has undergone the first Benchmarking external assessment end of August 2017, catching up with the other PES (this late start was due to the fact that according to the Belgian Constitution, not one but three independent PES need to be assessed). Results will be available very soon. The Benchmarking project has been a very positive learning experience, both during the self-assessment exercise as well as during the assessment visit. Interactions with the assessors' team pro-

vided the PES with great opportunities to get a helicopter view of its own practices and learn more about best practices implemented in other PES.

### Belgium – ACTIRIS

The Benchmarking assessment is underway in Actiris and will culminate with the first cycle site visit in January 2018. It will catch up the second cycle by mid-2019. In the meantime, Actiris continues to contribute actively to data collection and other Benchmarking activities.

### Bulgaria

The PES has undergone the first Benchmarking external assessment in August 2015. Based on the results, the PES has focused on the following areas:

- A review of the progress of the Employment Agency Modernization Strategy has been carried out.
- The pilot mobile teams for providing complex services to the key employers have been assessed as successful and the practice is spread across all regions.
- The current services for the vulnerable groups have been analysed. On this basis the design of new and improvement of the current services are being developed.
- A project is being carried out between the EA and the Agency for Social Assistance for Integrated Servicing of Vulnerable Groups.

### Croatia

The PES has undergone the second Benchmarking external assessment in May 2017. Based on the results of the first and the second Benchmarking visit, the PES has focused on the following:

- **Employer engagement and the quality of services to employers.** The PES has developed a role and tasks of the counsellor for providing services to significant employers.
- **Client profiling and competences upgrading for better matching.** The implementation of a tailor-made jobseeker support model is in the final phase. The monitoring of the counsellors work as well as measurement of the counsellors satisfaction have been

organised. A new tool for all newly registered unemployed persons in all PES regional offices has been implemented.

### Cyprus

The PES has undergone the Benchlearning external assessment in April 2016. Based on the results, the PES has focused on the following areas:

- The development of a new online platform for facilitating the online communication between employers and jobseekers without the PES officers' intervention.
- A new innovative employment scheme, which provides for subsidies to private employment agencies for every placement of GMI (Guarantee Minimum Income) recipients and LTU achieved in employment.
- Strengthened its cooperation with the GMI Service aiming to exchange information more frequently and coordinate efforts to increase the integration of GMI recipients (e.g. long-term unemployed) into the labour market.
- PES staff participated in an IT Training Programme aiming to upgrade computerised skills.

### Denmark

Based on the result of the first Benchlearning visit in 2015, the PES has focused on the implementation of the many employment reforms and the proposals from the evaluation report.

In the PES's Change Agenda from 2017 the following three principal areas are highlighted and will form the hub of STAR's Change Agenda in 2017:

- Ambitious goals in the municipalities and dissemination of best practice.
- Stronger initiatives for businesses.
- Empowerment and digital self-service.

The PES actively participates in Mutual Learning activities and chairs a working group on 'Piloting and Evaluation'.

### Estonia

The PES has undergone the Benchlearning external assessment in April 2016. Based on the recom-

mendations, the PES has developed the employers' strategy and an upgraded version of online job mediation tool will be launched at the end of 2017.

In addition, the PES has had a special attention and focus on the implementation of the work ability reform that has brought along new responsibilities for the PES, and in May 2017, the PES started with new unemployment prevention measures. New services were developed and targeted to working people, who need support in changing jobs or remaining employed, as well as to employers to support them in finding and training suitably skilled workforce.

### Finland

The PES has undergone the Benchlearning external assessment in February 2016. Based on the results, the PES will focus on the following areas:

- Performance management. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has implemented an indicator model based on the effectiveness of matching and expenditures.
- Closer integration of the individual and enterprise customers, which will be one of the main elements in the future growth services.
- The operational level development will be transferred to the national Growth Services Company. The company will offer support to the growth services as regards ICT and employment services.
- As part of a regional reform, the current employment and business services will be gathered into growth services located in the counties.

### France

The PES has undergone the second Benchlearning external assessment in April 2017. Based on the Change Report and Agenda, the PES has focused on three main change projects and governance and steering of these projects in a performance perspective:

- The Recruitment and Skills project. The central aim is to improve the matching quality by paying more attention to competences the jobseekers have and competences requested by the employers. The new approach will provide businesses with a candidate search



that has more relevance and is better able to support occupational mobility.

- The #DigitalPôleEmploi2020 project. To make full use of the potential of digitalisation, this project focuses on several actions for: improving services on line, innovating by using data, introducing new approach for accessibility, physical/digital mix and added value of provision of services, developing digital autonomy for jobseekers, making digital available to serve counsellors.
- The Career Development Advice project. This project seeks to provide new tools that help to activate jobseekers by putting them at the centre of the integration process, and introducing new kind of counsellors support jobseekers.

### Germany

Based on the results of the first Benchlearning visit, the PES has focused on the identified areas of improvement:

- Establishing an integrated management of quality and innovation.
- Empowerment of staff.
- Communication and networking.

The PES started the first initiatives and measures to ensure progress (e.g. developing a system for customers and staff to participate in the continuous improvement process). Furthermore the PES intensified the bilateral exchange with other PES to strengthen mutual learning activities.

The PES expects to present first insights into the progress of the changes during the next Benchlearning assessment in 2018.

### Greece

The PES has undergone the Benchlearning external assessment in June 2016.

The 2016 has been a year of reforms according the reengineering Programme that continues in 2018.

The 2017 Implementation Plan endorsed by the Organisation is structured around five key axes:

- Staff training.  
The aim is to complete the staff training programmes according to the needs of the Programme and to create an internal network of trainers within the Organisation.
- Design of an organisational unit for HR management and development.  
The objective is the modernisation and effective management and development of OAED's human resources.
- Implementation of a performance management system.  
The objective is to develop a performance management system to measure the effectiveness and performance of the Organisation.
- Procedure simplification and automation.  
The goal is to streamline key operating procedures and services provided to the users of the Organisation, and improve the quality of these services.
- Communication Plan Development.  
The aim is to inform all levels of the Organisation and the Organisation's external environment about changes in the Organisation's new service model.

### Hungary

The reform, on the basis of the Assessment Report of the first BL cycle, was supposed to be carried out within the framework of the Economic Development and Innovation Operation Programme (EDIOP). However the launch of the relevant activities has been delayed due to technical and public procurement related issues. For that reason, the work could not start earlier than the summer of 2017. At the same time, there has also been a change in the labour market. The massive unemployment has been replaced by major labour demand in certain sectors and an increase in real wages. This change has been reflected in a new government decree aiming to direct the labour supply from public employment to the open labour market.

### Iceland

The PES has undergone the Benchlearning external assessment in June 2016 and is scheduled to

undergo the second cycle external assessment in March 2018. Based on the results of the first cycle Benchlearning self-assessment and site visit, the PES is focusing on:

- Evolving strategic performance management with more effective target setting.
- Improving process management with more systematic processes review and employee training.
- Increasing the focus towards employers.
- Expanding and developing its digital services to increase efficiency and raise service levels.
- The implementation of more regular customer surveys.

### Ireland

The PES of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) continues its radical reform programme initiated in 2012. This ongoing reform agenda is provided for in the Government Policy Document Pathways to Work 2016-2020.

The PES DEASP has undergone the first Benchlearning external assessment in August 2015. Based on the findings, the PES has focused on the following areas:

- Complete the development and implementation of IT systems to:
  - offer online services to jobseekers and employers;
  - support staff to provide an efficient and effective service to their clients and
  - support the end-to-end reporting of performance across all elements of service provision.
- Complete the establishment of a professional account management capability with employers.
- Design, develop and implement an accredited professional development programme for its Case Officers.

These actions will serve to improve the quality of the service provided by Intreo to all its clients and stakeholders and by so doing will consolidate the progress made to date and improve the quality of activation services.

### Italy

Based on the results of the first and the second Benchlearning visit, the PES has focused on:

- A unified IT-system.
- Adoption of the strategic guidelines and annual objectives.
- Implementation of a nationwide methodology of qualitative profiling.
- PES employers' national strategy. EURES network will be included in actions, with focus on the project led by ANPAL. Synergies will be created also with ESF programmes.
- Replacement voucher: End of pilot project and implementation of the measure on large scale.
- Setting up a management information system.
- Defining the roles of ANPAL and ANPAL Servizi and the interaction with regions and job centres.

### Latvia

Based on the results of the first PES Benchlearning visit, the PES of Latvia has revised its activities in several spheres:

- Employers Strategy for 2017-2019 has been elaborated and now is being implemented.
- Internal procedures have been reconsidered in order to foster greater participation and input from the PES branch offices.
- Channel Strategy has been elaborated in order to differentiate the communication channels for different clients.
- Profiling has been re-evaluated in order to keep its methodology up-to-date and in accordance with the needs of the labour market.
- QMS is undergoing further simplification procedure.
- Horizontal cooperation takes place with other state institutions dealing with the issues of the labour market.
- Activating the cooperation with employers, NGOs, municipalities and their social services in order to work with the long term unemployed.
- IT infrastructure undergoes further centralisation process, yet further administrative burden has decreased by elaborating the IT tools.

It is expected that the Public Employment reform would be launched by the end of this year. Thus several PES initiatives have been withheld in order to see the framework of the forthcoming reform.

### Lithuania

The PES has undergone the Benchlearning external assessment in October 2015. Based on the results, the PES has:

- Introduced a new PDCA-cycle based organisational structure at the central office.
- Piloted and introduced a new client services model and a new management structure for the territorial offices.
- Established a new Quality Management and Control Division for introduction of a newly implemented quality management system and provided training for the territorial offices staff on the use of it.
- Defined, documented and mapped essential management processes, core operational processes and supporting processes.
- Improved and expanded electronic document management and exchange system where employers can prepare and sign electronic documents.
- Prepared for the third phase of restructuring process in 2018.

### Luxembourg

Based on the results of the first Benchlearning visit, the PES has focused on operational processes towards the development of more personalised and client friendly services:

- The modalities for the registration and the support of jobseekers have been revised in order to allow pre-scheduled and well-prepared meetings between each employment advisor and the client.
- A large-scale Customer Satisfaction Survey among employers was carried out by an external research institute. The results were presented during the PES annual press conference.
- Regarding further digitalisation, the new online job-matching tool for jobseekers and employers was actively promoted by the PES and employers' associations.

### Malta

Based on the results of the Benchlearning visit in 2016, the Maltese PES has made huge progress by:

- Rebranding the Employment and Training Corporation to Jobsplus.
- Setting up a Labour Market Analysis Unit.
- Developing a new and exhaustive performance management system.
- Improving the registration process, by immediately assigning of new jobseekers to their respective Employment Advisor.
- Launching a Training Pays Scheme to assist individuals to upgrade their skills through financial assistance.
- Launching an Investing in Skills Programme to promote the training of persons actively participating in the Maltese Labour Market.
- Creating a new online job matching system that includes to the skills and competences of jobseekers for a better matching.

### Netherlands

As a result of the first Benchlearning cycle, recommendations from the Assessment Report have been analysed in conjunction with the policy priorities for 2017/2018. Relevant recommendations have been incorporated into the Strategic Priority Plan and further elaborated into a concrete activity plan containing clear objectives and time planning.

The strategic priorities are:

- Further development of a future proof and broad PES in cooperation with relevant public stakeholders.
- Investment in sustainable employability partly based on proactive and demand driven employer services.
- Optimisation of National and Regional cooperation with relevant partners.
- Excellent Staff Performance by permanent investment in professionalism of our employees.

The second site visit will be organised in May 2018 during which the Change Agenda will be evaluated.

### Norway

Based on the results of the first Benchlearning visit during June 2016, the Norwegian PES has decided to focus on several ongoing processes, such as the NAV Reform Programme; which is based on two overarching initiatives:

- A new model for regional structure and the development of NAV offices. The aim is to strengthen our organisation, thus ensuring the ability to deliver better services and increase transitions to work.
- A new regional structure is determined. Two counties will be merged into one new region in 2018. Steps are being taken to ensure that lessons from this merger can be used in succeeding mergers. A limited number of NAV offices have already merged or are in the process of doing so.

### Poland

The PES has undergone the Benchlearning external assessment in May 2016. The PES has not undertaken any activities in order to implement the recommendations, due to the very general character that indicates the direction of changes without pointing to specific implementation activities.

The BL recommendations will be analysed during the upcoming reform of the labour market in Poland.

Additionally, in 2016 local labour offices were provided with new electronic services intended for the unemployed and jobseekers, which are fully integrated to the SYRIUSZ software – the ICT tool used by all local labour offices. It was improved, considering the users' expectation.

### Portugal

Based on the results of the first and second Benchlearning visits, the PT PES reform agenda comprises three major areas:

- **PES modernisation, particularly in the communication/technology sector:** The Document Management System; the interface project with the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Training and an unified system integrating the several existing infor-

mation systems are examples of new tools towards service efficiency.

- **Improving the provision of services to citizens:** In particular working on methodologies to anticipate employers' needs in order to assure better jobs/skills matching and on an early intervention approach.
- **Human resources and work processes:** Developing key actions to continuous improvement of work processes with a view to eliminating non-value-added activities.

### Romania

Based on the results of the first Benchlearning visit, the Romanian PES has focused on: the implementation of new measures in order to increase the internal labour mobility, youth employment improving the apprenticeships and traineeship schemes increasing the subsidised granted to employers if hiring young graduates, introducing the NEETs and LTU as new target groups with subsidised employment, introducing the profiling and segmentation of jobseekers in four groups depending on their employability level and improving the co-operation with employers.

### Slovakia

Based on the results of the first and the second Benchlearning visit, the Slovak PES (COLSAF) developed a project of further PES development called "Through efficient service to the citizen". In July 2017 it was approved by the Ministry.

The project is aiming to create a new quality level approach towards employers, building of performance management within PES, creating effective education of PES staff and make use of big data and data warehousing for the tailored targeting of services to clients.

The Slovak PES also prepared a project of introduction of CAF and EFQM to PES, which was approved by the Ministry of Interior.

### Slovenia

The second Benchlearning visit took place in July 2017 and was primarily focused on the PES Change Agenda. The assessment report acknowledged the work already done in implementation of

recommendations received after the first visit, as well as high relevance of the Change Agenda for further improvements of the business and service model.

Discussions of all main elements of the Change Agenda revealed that there is still room of improvement in implementation strategies and approaches in order to ensure sustainable reform results. Well-structured recommendations consist of concrete ideas on how to refine and up-grade the existing performance management dialogue, the customers' needs identification and evidence-based corrective activities. The assessors also recognised the importance of activities for fully integrated IT support.

### Spain

Based on the results of the first Benchlearning visit in July 2016, a Reform Measures Agenda to be implemented in the Spanish National Employment System (SNE), (17 regional + 1 State PES) was designed. This Reform Agenda includes the establishment of eight measures. These are incorporated as actions in the 2017-2020 Spanish Strategy for Employment Activation, currently at the approval stage.

Organisational and structural measures:

- Implementation of PES-BL methodology in the SNE.
- Promotion and systematisation of the sharing of good practices.
- Improvement of annual strategic planning.
- Information system for spending on activation policies.

Operational measures to improve support for job-seekers and employers:

- Implementation of a statistical profiling system.
- Improvement of identification of vacancies and job-matching, providing employers with a candidate search tool.
- Improvement of the management and support system for the Youth Guarantee.
- Development of a common methodology to measure user satisfaction among jobseekers and employers.

While the new 2017-2020 Employment Activation Strategy provides for other measures, for the

purposes of this Reform Agenda, priority has been given to those that derive from the recommendations following the first cycle of assessment.

### Sweden

Based on the results of the first Benchlearning external assessment in April 2016 and the assessment report from June 2016, the PES has reviewed the recommendations in relation to our on-going reform process and change agenda. The efforts to integrate the findings of the review, where applicable, are documented in the Change Report submitted in June 2017.

The second Benchlearning visit will take place in May 2018 and will focus on areas the PES would like to strengthen with the help of the partners in the network as well as the assessment team.

### United Kingdom

The 2016 Benchlearning assessment happened as PES was converting offices to deliver the new working age benefit, Universal Credit. Building on already strong Performance Management, performance measures are being adapted better to fit Universal Credit, particularly around supporting unemployed and employed claimants. Assessors suggested that employer engagement should be strengthened. This is being done, with focussed engagement, particularly around supporting those hardest to help to gain employment. On support for people with a disability or ill-health, also discussed by the assessors, policy development continues through the recently created joint Work and Health Unit in partnership with the Department of Health.

## Annex 3 – Mutual Learning Events and Evaluation

### Mutual Learning Events

Overall, **485** people participated in Mutual Learning events during 2017, of whom **381** were PES Representatives. ML activities supported PES leaders, managers and practitioners by:

Planning, delivering and supporting **17** learning activities in 2017:

- **2** Thematic Review Workshops, each with a Follow-up Visit on 'Integration of refugees into the labour market' and 'Engaging with and improving services to employers'.
  - **2** Follow-up Visits from Thematic Review Workshops on 'Sustainable integration into the labour market' and 'Engaging with and improving services to employers' (the latter programmed into early 2018).
  - **2** PES Network Seminars on 'Making the PES business case' and 'Career guidance and lifelong learning'.
  - **1** Webinar linked to the topic of career guidance and lifelong learning on 'Connecting to employers' and 'Competency assessment of jobseekers who are in work' (with **1** more programmed for January 2018).
  - **3** Mutual Assistance Projects to the Cypriot, Romanian and Italian PES.
  - **5** Working Groups on: 'Working with employers', 'The social pillar', 'Long-term unemployment', 'Piloting and evaluation' and 'PES cooperation with the education system'.
  - **1** leadership activity for Members of the PES Network Board.
- Developing and/or publishing 49 learning resources in 2017:
    - **2** Analytical Papers on 'Developing a multi-channel strategy including blended management services' and 'Performance, accountability and links with Benchlearning'.
    - **3** Practitioner's Toolkits on 'Building career guidance and lifelong learning', 'Communication and branding strategies in PES' and 'Engaging with and improving services to employers'.
    - **2** Summary Reports from Network Seminars on 'Making the PES business case' and 'Career guidance and lifelong learning'.
  - **2** Thematic Papers from Thematic Review Workshops on 'Integration of refugees into the labour market' and 'Engaging with and improving services to employers'.
  - **2** Summary Reports from Follow-up Visits on 'Sustainable integration into the labour market', 'Integration of refugees into the labour market', with **1** more on 'Engaging with and improving services to employers' programmed for early 2018.
  - **37** PES practices.

### Enhancing the web presence of the PES Network:

- Maintenance of the PES Knowledge Centre to disseminate the key outputs and learning resources of the Network.
- Maintenance of the PES Practice Repository, as a searchable, growing directory of PES practices.

### Evaluation Results Released in 2017

Evaluation surveys continuously informed the development of ML activities and helped to identify their benefits and impact for PES. A full evaluation report was produced in January 2017, covering surveys of activities which took place in 2016. In addition, qualitative interviews were undertaken in 2017 with PES who attended the learning sequence of a Thematic Review Workshop plus a Follow-up Visit in 2015 and in 2016 (building a continuum with interviews undertaken with 2015 cohorts in 2016 already); results were summarised in a qualitative evaluation report in September 2017.

Results and surveys from both these reports show that:

The **strategic objectives** for PES Mutual Learning were met throughout activities in 2016, by delivering learning activities and supporting material with a strong focus on:

- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of PES services, notably by delivering learning activities on making the PES business case, strategic data and IT, process efficiency, change management and continuous improvement in PES organisations.

- Supporting three priority initiatives for the EU in 2016, pertaining to combatting and preventing long-term unemployment, supporting the development of the European Pillar of Social Right and promoting the social and labour market inclusion of refugees.
- Making sharing of good practice an integral part of all the activities and the thematic support provided to PES, right from the moment of preparing discussion papers, through to facilitation methods on the day of learning events – followed by Analytical Papers, Summary Reports and Practitioners' Toolkits.

In 2016, **operational objectives** for PES Mutual Learning were also met, notably by:

- Deploying the 'learning group' concept of mixing experienced PES with PES learners when preparing intensive learning activities (in particular Thematic Review Workshops, Follow-up Visits and Network Seminars).
- Ensuring that PES cooperation with relevant stakeholders (as featured in the work programme of the PES Network) was reflected in Mutual Learning activities.
- Promoting outcomes of events and providing insights from further research on the PES Knowledge Centre, and making the latest PES Practices accessible to the wider PES audience via the PES Practice Repository.
- Stimulating, informing and/or supporting organisational learning, initiatives and changes within PES by i) ensuring that practices that are shared in learning activities clearly outline the challenges and success factors, ii) ensuring that events provides PES with practical tools to take home to their organisations, and iii) ensuring that Follow-up Visits continue to provide a practical, sequential learning experience to PES.

**Survey results from all 2016 activities** show that most participants felt the objectives related to cooperation between PES and stakeholders through peer-to-peer activities were met 'highly' or 'very highly', notably:

- 84% of participants believed that the events provided them with the opportunity to identify learning points and relevant practices.
- 83% of participants considered that the events encouraged them to network and identify further opportunities for Mutual Learning.

- 86% of participants felt that the events gave them the opportunity to exchange information and experiences.
- 72% of participants indicated that the events allowed for critical self-reflection and comparative assessment of PES strategies and practices.

The **content** of Mutual Learning events and the material disseminated through the PES webpages were deemed 'highly' or 'very highly' relevant by the majority of participants and users, notably:

- 95% of participants considered the overall content of the activities to be relevant.
- 81% of respondents believed that the information provided on the PES Knowledge Centre was relevant to their organisation.
- Similarly, 70% of respondents considered the information provided on the PES Practice Repository to be relevant.

Survey results also show how most participants felt that the objectives related to **learning methods** were met 'highly' or 'very highly', notably:

- 54% of participants held the view that events helped to provide guidance and practical tools on to how to embed the learning in their organisation.
- 83% of participants found that the practices presented at events highlighted key success factors and challenges.

There were positive signs that PES were not only sharing and identifying good practices, but also actively **following-up on their participation in learning events**. PES have capitalised and communicated results from learning activities *within* their own organisations or with their immediate stakeholders. Results from onsite and post-event surveys showed that participants in learning activities have communicated and disseminated the information and learning from events to colleagues in their PES organisations. Often, preparation of reports and feedback is a planned requirement for PES participants (with clear instructions from their PES for reports, notes or presentations from learning events). This demonstrates the commitment of PES in being actively involved in events and 'taking the learning back home'. Additionally, it emerged that feedback was often disseminated internally to all levels in the PES, including directors and managers in charge of departments linked to a specific event's topic.

Finally, the **qualitative evaluation** report in 2017 confirmed positive effects from attending a *sequence of activities* (Thematic Review Workshop + Follow-up Visit). The report in 2017 covered first-stage interviews with PES participants of 2016 Follow-up Visits on 'Modernising PES through supportive data and IT strategies' and 'Sustainable integration into the labour market', and second-stage interviews with PES participants of 2015 Follow-up Visits on 'Measuring customer satisfaction' and 'Performance management'. Notable results showed that:

**Transfer of knowledge** takes place in PES, albeit shaped by organisational processes in each PES:

- In all cases, knowledge was transferred through formal (mission reports, Intranet, meetings, etc.) and informal channels (bi-/multi-lateral discussions with colleagues). How the knowledge was transferred and disseminated depended on individual PES participants. For example, five PES that were questioned as part of the first-stage interviews (relating to the visit on digital tools) prepared a written report, which was directly distributed directly to staff working on the topic at hand, making it also available on the PES Intranet. Materials from the visit, such as presentations, were also circulated.
- In most cases, the information was shared with staff who directly worked on the topic in question. However, in three instances, information was further disseminated to relevant PES staff at different levels of the organisation (either through regular team meetings or dedicated presentation sessions).

**Shortly after taking part in a learning sequence** (Thematic Review Workshop + Follow-up Visit), PES reported that Follow-up Visits provided them with ideas on possible long-term strategies:

- The Follow-up Visit on digital tools helped two PES make decisions and changes that were directly influenced by discussions/learning during the visit. Changes ranged from introducing a Big Data Lab, integrating ideas to improve an online portal and the use of data analysis techniques into an ongoing development programme.
- Three PES contacted other PES as a follow-up to the visits that took place in 2016, indicating that sequenced activities can be a useful platform to generate further, bilateral

exchanges since the subject narrows into more practical detail as the sequence evolves.

**In the medium-term** (12 months after the last interviews with PES participants who took part in Follow-up Visits in 2015), PES speak clearly of a range of outcomes:

- All eight PES interviewed in 2017 reported making progress towards improving the efficiency and quality of their performance management and customer satisfaction measurement systems.
- For developing PES, outcomes were substantially informed by the knowledge gained at the Follow-up Visits, which provided a basis for the exchange of knowledge and experience. One PES used the visit to raise awareness among staff on the need for an improved customer satisfaction measurement system. Following participation in the Follow-up Visit, a public tender was issued to conduct an external study on how to improve the current customer satisfaction measurement system (this study is now carried out internally by the PES).
- For more developed PES, Follow-up Visits provided an additional basis for inspiration and an opportunity to establish bilateral relationships with individual PES to further share the learning experience. One PES in particular began reviewing its processes in relation to client service models for jobseekers and employers. A new client service model was piloted in a number of offices thereafter, and it is set to be fully integrated into regional offices by September 2017. The new client model for employers draws on insights gained during the Follow-up Visit on performance management and a further bilaterally study visit with a PES.

Finally, the qualitative evaluation in 2017 reinforced that **outcomes** from ML activities vary substantially in PES, and that they are **determined by internal and external factors**. The most influential factors were internal, spanning strategic priorities set by PES management, as well as staff and budgetary capacity. An external factor that significantly impacted outcomes was the political environment in which PES operated in.



### New in 2017: Results from the First Web-Survey

To assess the use of the dedicated website and the learning resources uploaded onto the PES Knowledge Centre and PES Practice Repository, an online survey was carried out for the first time between 12 December 2016 and 9 January 2017. Results show that since its launch in March 2016, the PES website provides a key channel through which outcomes, results and learning material from Mutual Learning across the PES Network are communicated beyond the Network itself – and reach wider audiences. It does so in two ways:

- By promoting outcomes of events and providing insights from further research on the PES Knowledge Centre, where the public can access a range of learning tools such as Analytical Papers, Practitioner's Toolkits and Summary Report from specific events (Network Seminars, Network Conferences and Follow-up Visits). 39% of respondents of the online web survey said they use the PES Knowledge Centre at least two times per month.
- By making the latest PES Practices accessible to the wider PES audience via the PES Practice Repository. 41% of respondents of the online web survey said they use the PES Practice Repository once or twice per month.

The PES website is used most frequently by users 'To find out about the activities and results of the PES Network', closely followed by 'To identify good practice on a specific topic' and 'To be inspired by different approaches and new ideas'. This means that users tend to visit the PES website with a specific theme or objective in mind. The majority of respondents believed that they can use the information contained in the document in their daily work (93% of respondents), and that the level of detail was in line with their needs (83% of respondents). However, the profile of survey respondents showed that the website may not have reached a wide audience as of yet. Here, two points were noted in the report: the PES website has only been open to the public since March 2016, results could be different at the same time next year. In 2016, the PES Network issued its first Newsletter, which openly promotes the communication and dissemination of Mutual learning activities, outcomes and results via the website and through members of the PES network. The target audience for the newsletter and the PES website is therefore likely to grow in 2017.

## Annex 4 - Work Programme 2017

### Work programme axis: Benchmarking

ACTIVITY	INPUT	OUTPUT AND OUTCOME	DATE
Collection of quantitative data	All PES provide data on-line according to indicators and methodology developed.	Complete set of data for each indicator has been submitted. All indicators can be calculated.	15th May 2017
Site visits	Initial site visits to pilot the adapted methodology Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia to receive PES site visit, prepare self-assessment, etc. New assessors for new cycle to be appointed.	Qualitative assessment of PES is conducted.	1st round of Benchmarking visits completed by mid-December 2017
Benchmarking working group	All PES participate in the meeting	Two WG a year, coordinating the programme of PES peer review visits, refining data collection/definition to support assessment of benchmarks, support definition of PES learning concepts.	1st meeting, 30th March 2017 2nd meeting, 14th-15th November 2017
Benchmarking – Change Reports	PES deliver their change report one year after the BL report is finalised.	PES change reports feed into PES learning activities.	2017

### Work programme axis: PES Mutual learning

ACTIVITY	INPUT	INPUT	DATE
Thematic review workshop: Engaging with and improving services to employers	PES to participate in the seminar with experts with relevant profile and present good practices.	a. PES experts exchange on and learn new strategies and practices. b. Analytical paper including good practice fiches c. Organisation of follow-up visits	13th-14th June 2017
European Employers Day	To be determined by the Working Group "Working with Employers".	PES to improve relations with employers.	November 2017
Working Group: Working with Employers	Chair of the Working Group: Spain. PES Nominations for Working Group members.	PES exchange to improve their approaches and techniques to improve their employer engagement strategies. Specify the PES Network role in organising a European Employers Day, and PES representation at the VET Skills Week in November 2017.	21st February 2017 and 12th July 2017.

ACTIVITY	INPUT	INPUT	DATE
Working Group: The Social Pillar	Chair of the Working Group: Ireland. PES nominations for Working Group members.	PES exchange to 'future proof' the PES 2020 Strategy against key items identified in preparing the PES Network contribution to the consultation on the Social Pillar.	3rd March 2017
Working Group: Long-term unemployed	Chair of the Working Group: Poland. PES nominations for Working Group members.	PES exchange on practices, strategies and techniques to improve the integration of the long term unemployed.	21st April 2017
Working Group: Piloting and evaluation	Chair of the Working Group: Denmark. PES nominations for Working Group members.	PES exchange on practices, methodologies, dissemination approaches and contextual settings in undertaking piloting and evaluation activities.	19th June 2017 and 10th November 2017 + event to share practices with European PES in January 2018 to be discussed
Working Group: PES cooperation with the Education System	Co-chairs of the Working Group: Austria and Germany. PES nominations for Working Group members.	PES to exchange to draft a common PES Network Position paper (TBC) on PES cooperation with the education sector, and provide recommendations to support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.	October 2017 (TBC) and November 2017 (TBC)
Network conference: Making the PES business case	All PES to participate in the conference and present good practices. COM to support the process through external contractors.	PES experts/strategic managers exchange on and learn new strategies and practices.	17th January 2017 (postponed from 2016 Work Programme)
Toolkit and two webinars: Career guidance and lifelong learning	PES to provide practices and expertise. COM to prepare the toolkit and the webinars through external contractors. Webinars on the subjects of collaboration with employers and assessment of jobseekers.	Toolkit and support PES in strengthening their activation activities.	September 2017 4th quarter 2017
Toolkit: Communication and Branding Strategies in PES	PES to provide practices and expertise. COM to prepare the toolkit through external contractors.	Toolkit and support PES in strengthening their activation activities.	October 2017 (TBC)
Toolkit: Engaging with and improving services to employers	PES to provide practices and expertise. COM to prepare the toolkit through external contractors.	Toolkit and support PES in strengthening their activation activities.	October 2017
Analytical paper with presentation at AFEPA meeting Developing a multi-channel strategy including blended management services	PES to provide examples of good practices.	a. Analytical papers containing strategies and good practices b. Presentation at AFEPA meeting.	October 2017 (TBC)

ACTIVITY	INPUT	INPUT	DATE
Analytical paper with presentation at AFEPA meeting Performance, accountability and links with Benchmarking	PES to provide examples of good practices.	a Analytical papers containing strategies and good practices. b Presentation at AFEPA meeting.	November 2017 (TBC)
Discussion at Board on strategic partnerships	Contributions from Board members and key stakeholders.	Sharing of knowledge and strategies.	Board meetings
Network seminar: Career and lifelong guidance	PES to participate in the seminar and present good practices.	a. PES exchange on and learn new strategies and practices. b. Analytical paper including good practice fiches. c. Toolkit + webinars to support PES in implementation d. Small or medium scale study	28th-29th June 2017
Thematic review workshop and follow-up visit: Integration of refugees into the labour market.	PES to participate to the seminar with experts with relevant profile and present good practices.	a. PES experts exchange on and learn new strategies and practices. b. Analytical paper including good practice fiches. c. Organisation of follow-up visits or seminar	27th-28th April 2017 and 29th September 2017
Network seminar (working dinner) on Leadership	Contribution from Board members on the implementation of an ambitious reform agenda.	Sharing of knowledge and experience.	6th December 2017
Technical assistance to 3 PES with PES-related CSRs	Technical assistance visit by team led by COM with PES experts to support the implementation of PES-related CSRs  Request to be submitted to the Secretariat by a PES with a PES-related CSR.	Three PES to formulate a PES reform package in response to the CSR.	15th-16th May 2017 and 26th July 2017 (CY) 12th-14th September 2017 and 13th-15th November 2017 (TBC) (RO) + follow-up January 2018 October 2017 (TBC) (IT)
PES capacity survey 2017	All PES to provide response within deadline.	a Updated PES/country fiche to become input for PES site visits and input to PES knowledge base. b. Information on obligatory PES Network YG monitoring. c. Information on PES network monitoring of LTU recommendation, in cooperation with EMCO indicators group, if decided and adopted.	2nd-3rd quarter 2017

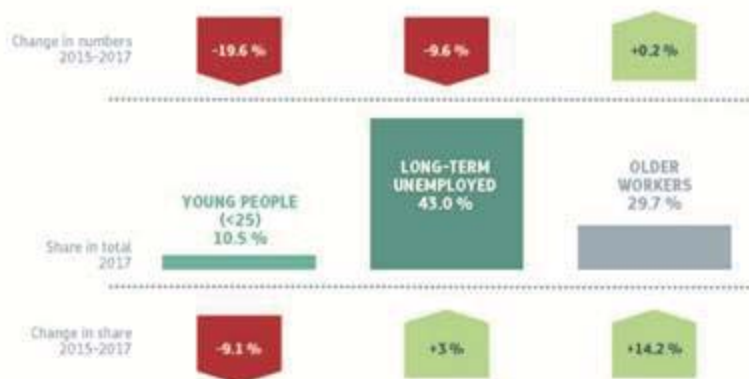
ACTIVITY	INPUT	INPUT	DATE
Draft future Work Programme	Bottom up approach Reference Group of 5 PES invited to cooperate with PES Secretariat	Draft Work Programme 2018, presentation at AFEPA meeting.	2nd and 3rd quarter 2017
Study on "PES support to start-ups"	PES to provide qualitative information.	Lessons learnt from PES experience on effectiveness of and requirements or well-designed start-up support measures.	3rd quarter 2017
Study on "Labour shortages and surpluses 2017"	PES to provide data on Bottleneck Vacancies and surpluses.	Updated information to identify occupations for which there is an imbalance between demand and supply	4th quarter 2017
Study on "Active support and employment promotion"	PES to provide qualitative information.	Updated information on timely and tailor-made jobseeker support (practices, methodology to measure).	4th quarter 2017
Study on "Employment sustainability after registered unemployment"	PES to provide qualitative information.	Information on how PES can measure employment sustainability and use this data.	4th quarter 2017
Study on "Mandates and complementarity of efforts to reach out to the inactive"	PES to provide qualitative information.	Mapping of existing measures and responsibilities.	4th quarter 2017
Study on "How PES address atypical workers"	PES to provide qualitative information.	Information on PES practices to support those in atypical employment.	4th quarter 2017

#### Work programme axis: PES Network Governance

ACTIVITY	INPUT	OUTCOME	DATE
2 PES Network Board meetings (MT, EE)	All Board members and/or alternate members to participate  The PES of the second vice-President and the Secretariat to organise the meetings	a. Discussion on PES modernisation agenda and other relevant topics.  b. Endorsement of documents and reports including the 2017 PES Network Annual Report and the 2018 Work Programme.	8th-9th June 2017 (MT)  7th-8th December 2017 (EE)
2 AFEPA meetings	All AFEPA to participate and contribute in the Network's activities.  The Secretariat to organise the meetings	a. Discussion and preparation of relevant documents for the Board.  b. Exchange and monitoring on work programme implementation etc.	16th-17th March 2017  12th-13th October 2017

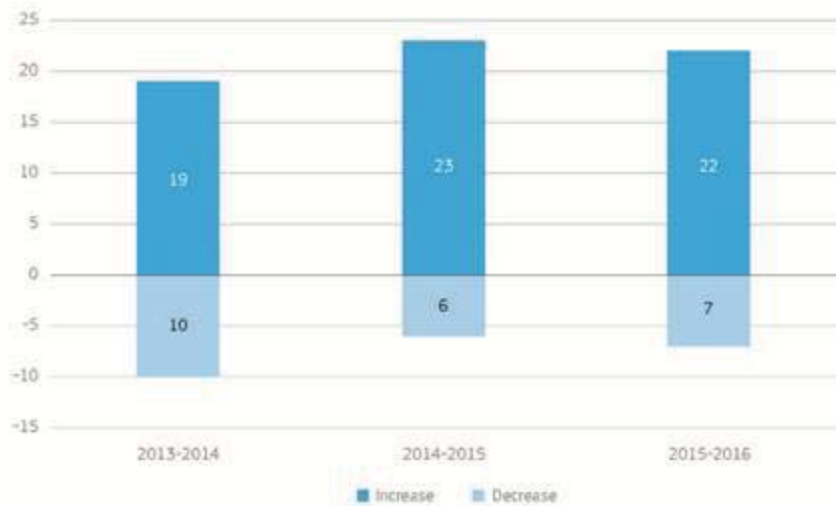
## Annex 5 - PES Capacity Questionnaire Figures

Figure 1: Share of specific groups in total number of job-seeking clients in 2017 and change of numbers and shares from 2015-2017



Source: Responses to PES Capacity Report questionnaire 2017

Figure 2: Number of PES experiencing an increase/decrease in the number of vacancies notified, % increase in annual average of monthly inflow, 2013-2016



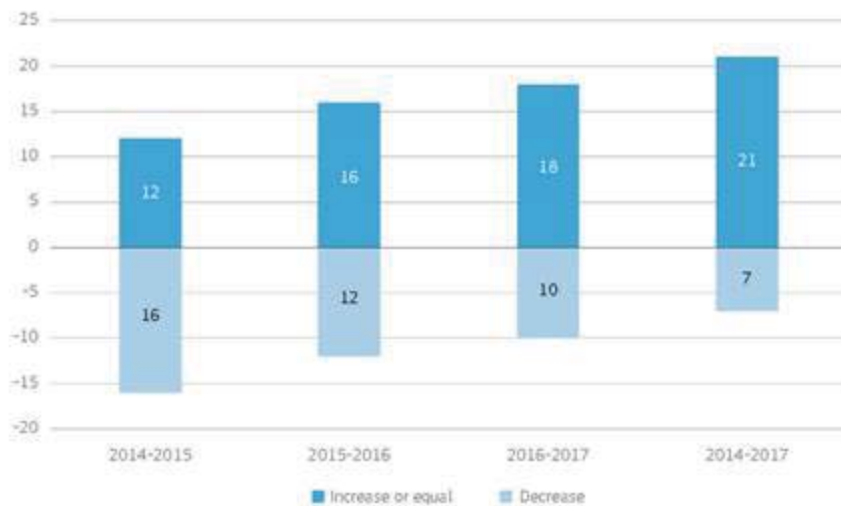
Source: Responses to PES Capacity Report questionnaire 2017

Figure 3: Number of PES reporting changes in total expenditure excluding benefits paid, 2010-2016



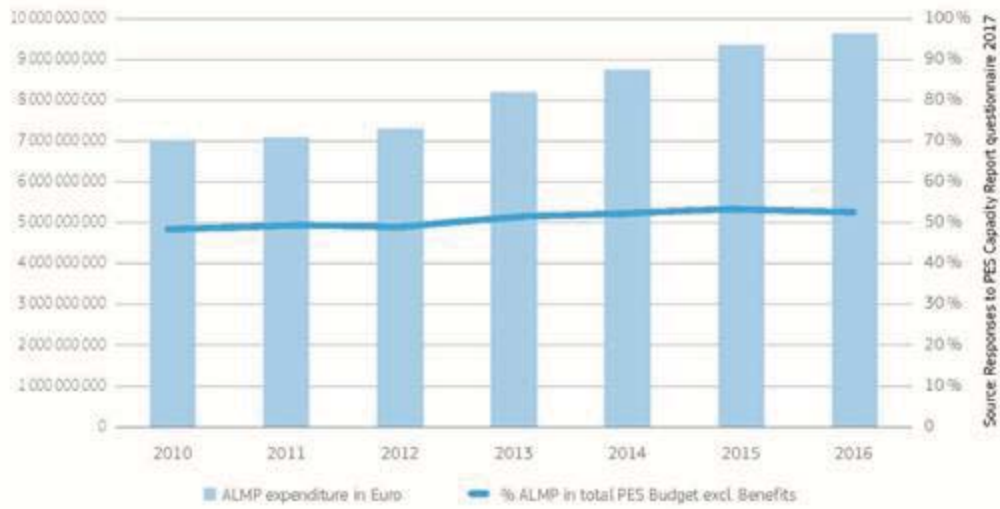
Source: Responses to PES Capacity Report questionnaire 2017

Figure 4: Number of PES experiencing increase or decrease in staff (in FTE) between 2014 and 2017



Source: Responses to PES Capacity Report questionnaire 2017

Figure 5: PES expenditure on ALMPs and as share of total expenditure without benefits, 2010-2016





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