



PES to PES Dialogue

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DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

PES PAPER

**Peer Review "PES approaches to low-skilled adults and
young people: work first or train first?"**

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1. Labour market situation of low-skilled adults and young people

1.1. What is the situation of low-skilled individuals in the labour market?

According to LFS data from the 4th quarter of 2012, the employment rate among low-skilled individuals was only 15.9%, compared to 75.6% of those in work with tertiary education and 50.4% of the overall population. When compared to the 4th quarter of 2010, there had been a 0.3 percentage point fall in the employment rate amongst the low-skilled.

In 2012 there were 583,000 individuals with low-skills registered unemployed in Poland, accounting for 27% of all those unemployed. with women accounting for 42.7% of low skilled unemployed individuals.

Almost 40% of low-skilled unemployed in Poland were classified as being long-term unemployed, i.e. being out of work for longer than 12 months. Amongst low-skilled unemployed women this percentage was 45%.

At the end of 2012 there were almost 95,000 unemployed young people with low-skills in Poland, accounting for 22.4% of all those unemployed aged under 25. There were 41,500 young low-skilled unemployed women.

1.2. What are the factors influencing the situation of low-skilled people in the labour market?

Results of the Human Capital Balance (BKL) survey indicate that only one in six employers declared that they were looking for new employees (17% in autumn 2010, 16% in spring 2011 and 2012). The category most sought for was qualified labour, in the construction industry in particular (to a much lesser extent, industry and mining). The second most popular category of employees sought by employers was specialists. Compared to the 2011 situation, in 2012 the number of job offers requiring professional experience dropped for every sector where employers looked for specialists. Resignation from this selection criterion in job offers enables inclusion of graduates in the first recruitment stage, however, in the opinion of the employers responding to the survey, only candidates with one year's experience of the position for which they apply are likely to be taken on.

2. Services for low-skilled adults and young people: overall strategy and approach

2.1. What is the overall approach to the delivery of services to low-skilled adults and young people?

2.1.1 Do legal activation rules/regulations make a distinction between low-skilled and other job seekers and between low-skilled young people and adults?

In Poland young people remain in compulsory education until the age of 18. Consequently ISCED level 2 qualifications can only be delivered to young people in school, although thereafter they can be delivered through other modes, e.g. work-based training.

This has led to the level of Early School Leavers (ESL) in Poland being one of the lowest in the EU (5.7% in PL, 12.8% in EU in 2012), and to the levels of NEETs in the age groups of 15-19 and 20-24 also being relatively low (11.8% in PL, 13.2% in EU). In addition professionalised support (including vocational guidance) is available for those at risk of dropping-out/social exclusion. This is delivered by the Voluntary Labour Corps, a specialist agency providing VET and professional activation services to the youth aged 15-25.

Lower and upper secondary schools are obliged to create intraschool vocational guidance systems, with weekly mandatory teaching hours for vocational counsellors, and supporting students to select education and vocation courses.

The Public Employment Services in Poland offers its services to people aged 18 and over. Article 49 of the Act on promotion of employment and labour market institutions sets out seven categories of unemployed in difficult situations in the labour market, two of which are:

- 1) the unemployed below the age of 25, and
- 2) the unemployed without vocational qualifications, occupational experience or secondary education.

The Act draws a legal distinction between low-skilled and other job seekers and between low-skilled young people and adults.

The differences in the treatment by group are:

- Training financed by Local Labour Offices (LLO) is designed for all unemployed individuals. Training normally lasts up to six months, but in some cases 12 months or longer (e.g. when justified by the occupation in question, or if the individual has existing vocational qualifications).
- A program of Work Practice (internship) designed for all groups in a special situation on the labour market. Sessions normally last for up to 6 months, and up to 12 months for young people (aged up to 25 years/27 years if have tertiary education).
- Scholarships for Continuing School Education are available to unemployed individuals without vocational qualifications living in families with low income.
- The PES is obliged to create an Individual Action Plan for each individual registered at the LLO for over 180 days for group 1) and 2).

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- The LLO should present, within six months of the date of registration, a proposal of employment/other paid work or an instrument of activation (work practice, training or apprenticeship) to every registered unemployed individual aged 18 to 25 (or 27 years of age if completed education at the tertiary level).

2.2. What types of special measure does the PES offer to (unemployed and employed) low-skilled adults and young people and how effective are they?

Type of measure	Offered? (yes/ no)	For which group (adults, young people or both)?	Brief operational description of measure	Year introduced	Year abolished	Effectiveness of measure (scale: 1 = not very effective, 5 = very effective)	Reasons for effectiveness or ineffectiveness
Work-first approaches e.g. wage subsidies, work experience, internships	YES	BOTH	WORK PRACTICE (internship) gives the unemployed a chance of gaining practical skills by performing tasks at the workplace without concluding an employment contract. The program lasts up to 6 months, extended up to 12 months for young people.	1991	Ongoing (all initiatives mentioned)	4	According to the BKL survey, in the opinion of employers – only candidates who have one year experience on the position they apply for can hope for employment.
			APPRENTICESHIP FOR ADULTS ALMP to learn a profession in a company and receive formal qualifications. 80% of program is intended for practice, and 20% for theoretical topics. A participant receives a monthly scholarship equal to 120% of unemployment benefit. The employer is entitled to a premium at the end of the program if the participant passes the exams. Attention: It is a validation scheme (enables to gain a diploma without attending school) so can be also considered as a training measure.	2009		4	
			REFUND OF COSTS OF EQUIPMENT FOR THE PLACED UNEMPLOYED LLO can refund the costs of equipment or retrofitting the workplace for the referred individual up to six times the amount of the average remuneration.	2004		4	



			<p>REFUND OF SOCIAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS</p> <p>The LLO may contract with the employer to provide a single refund of incurred costs in respect of paid social insurance contributions in connection with the employment of the unemployed individual placed. The employer must employ the placed person on a full-time basis for at least 12 months. The amount of refunded contributions may not exceed 300% of the minimum salary.</p>	1990		4	The financial incentives are very attractive to the employers.
			<p>INTERVENTION WORKS</p> <p>The LLO reimburses part of the costs of remuneration, bonuses and social insurance contributions of the placed persons to the employer. If the employer, directly after completing a period of subsidised work lasting at least 6 months, takes on the placed person for a further 6 months, and after this period continues to employ him/her on a full-time basis, LLO may grant to the employer a total refund of remuneration not exceeding 150% of average salary.</p>	1990		3	
			<p>ACTIVATION ALLOWANCE</p> <p>Allowances are paid to the eligible unemployed person if she/he takes up a job or any other profitable work. When as the result of a placement by the LLO he/she has started employment on a part-time basis and receives remuneration lower than minimum salary, the activation allowance is granted to make up the difference between the minimum salary level and the remuneration received. When an unemployed individual finds a job by herself/himself, the activation</p>	2004			Creation of subsidised jobs addresses the symptoms rather than the cause of the problem and is not preventive in character. But for some groups of unemployed is a good preparation before integration to the 'real' labour market.

		For unemployed in difficult situation in the Labour market excluding young unemployed	<p>allowance is granted in the amount not exceeding 50% of the benefit for unemployed for half a period when the unemployed person would be entitled to the benefit.</p> <p>PUBLIC WORKS</p> <p>LLO reimburses to the organizer of public works who employed placed unemployed persons a part of costs of remuneration, bonuses and social insurance contributions of the placed unemployed persons in previously agreed amount, however not exceeding the amount being a product of a number of persons employed in a given month, counted as the full-time employment and 50% of average salary being in force on the last day of employment of each considered month and social insurance contributions on refunded remuneration.</p>	1991			
Train-first approaches e.g. training	YES	BOTH	<p>TRAINING - A Training Course funded by the PES can last up to 6 months, and 12 months in special situations (and if required by the curriculum). Training for people without vocational qualifications can last up to 12 months, or 24 months in special situations. Unemployed trainees receives a monthly scholarship equal to 120% of the unemployment benefit</p> <p>TRAINING LOANS - funded by the PES, for up to 400% of the average monthly salary. The loan is interest free and has to be repaid up to 18 months after completion of the training.</p> <p>FINANCING OF EXAMINATIONS</p> <p>The PES can fund the cost of</p>	1991	Ongoing	3	<p>The effectiveness depends on several success factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevancy of the training program to the labour market needs - quality of training - individual engagement in the ALMP. <p>The effectiveness of trainings proposed by unemployed</p>



			<p>examinations for beneficiaries to obtain certificates, diplomas or professional titles, and the costs of obtaining licenses needed to get a job. The cost of an examination or license may be covered for a participant once in a year and up to 100% of the average monthly salary.</p> <p>SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CONTINUING SCHOOL EDUCATION</p> <p>Unemployed individuals with low family incomes who enter further education above the compulsory level (including secondary and tertiary extramural education) can receive a monthly scholarship equal to 100% of the unemployment benefit, payable for 12 months. A student who returns to employment receives a monthly scholarship equal to 20% of the unemployment benefit until the end of the school program.</p>	1996			(individual trainings) is higher than those contracted by PES (group trainings)
Services and measures to prevent low-skilled from being made redundant	YES	BOTH	<p>OUTPLACEMENT SERVICES</p> <p>PES offer outplacement services for workers of all ages being made redundant. The outplacement program must be performed by every employer intending to make at least 50 workers redundant within 3 months. The employer is obliged to provide a program of labour market services to employees about to be made redundant - including mediation and counselling, psychological support, training, fellowship training and assistance in active job search. The program can be implemented by the LLO, agency, employment or training organisation.</p>	2004	Ongoing	2	<p>Service does not cover all redundancies.</p> <p>In the situation of budgetary constraints labour offices</p>



			<p>REFUND OF COSTS OF TRAINING FOR WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS CO-FINANCED BY EMPLOYERS</p> <p>From the initiative of the employer who has created the training fund, LLO may refund, under conditions defined in the contract, up to 50% of the costs of training for workers or employer but not more than the amount of the average salary. In case of persons aged 45 and above the refund equals up to 80% of the training cost, but not more than 300% of the average salary.</p>	2004			decided to spend majority of funds on the ALMPS for unemployed. In result, measures for employed were rarely used.
Other services or measures e.g. career guidance or specialist guidance for low-skilled, specialist counsellors etc.			<p>SPECIAL PROGRAMS – activation programs which include specific employment supporting measures (other than services and labour market measures necessary to implement the tasks tailored to individual needs).</p>	2008	Ongoing	4,5	Tailored and individualised programs with not only standardised ALMP but also untypical measures are very effective.

3. PES services and measures for low-skilled adults and young people

3.1. Does the PES offer services and measures to prevent low-skilled individuals from being made redundant? What types of services are offered, which kind of measures are funded and how successful have these been in different areas (ideally based on performance measurement)?

From the initiative of the employer who has created the training fund, LLO may refund, under conditions defined in the contract, up to 50% of the costs of training for workers or employer but not more than the amount of the average salary. In case of persons aged 45 and above the refund equals up to 80% of the training cost, but not more than 300% of the average salary.

An employer intending to dismiss at least 50 employees within 3 months is obliged to agree with the competent LLO the scope and form of assistance for the employees to be dismissed as regards in particular:

- job placement;
- vocational counseling;
- training;
- assistance in active job seeking.

In the case of outplacement, the employer is obliged to provide a program of labour market services for employees to be dismissed, or others during the period of notice or within 6 months of the termination of employment.

3.2. Is the basic approach underpinning the PES concept for unemployed low-skilled individuals one of 'work first' or 'train first'?

The basic approach of PES towards unemployed low-skilled individuals is 'work first' with the opportunity to train.

3.3. Is a different approach used for low-skilled adults in comparison to low-skilled young people? If so, please explain which approach is taken for which group.

The two main problems facing young people in the Polish labour market are: a lack of professional experience and a lack of professional qualifications. The activation services offered to the young low-skilled unemployed aims to overcome both those obstacles.

The strategy for adult unemployed is most often 'work first' and they are more reluctant to take up training. This strategy is also taken due to the financial need to support a family etc. Young people are more open to take part in ALMP e.g. 49% of participants in work practice are persons aged below 25, and one third is from the group aged 26-35. Participation rate of above mentioned groups in training programs is respectively 28% and 31%.

3.3.1. Why was this approach selected and has this changed during the last three years?

There is a legislative proposal to address the barriers facing young people accessing the labour market, by offering support in the following two areas:

- education – offering opportunities to use training vouchers for vocational or post-secondary education, and for post-graduate studies and thus acquiring the desired skills;
- employment – creating opportunities for gaining professional experience in the form of probation followed by employment (probation voucher) or subsidised employment (voucher for the employer to hire a graduate of a tertiary education institution) and increasing professional mobility (accommodation subsidy).

3.4. If a 'work first' approach is used to integrate low-skilled adult and/or young jobseekers, please describe the approach taken, specifying what approach is taken for which group.

3.4.1. Is the emphasis placed on the first available match or is attention paid to matching with future development and training opportunities (with or without PES assistance) to ensure the sustainability of work?

The LLO shall revoke the unemployed status of individuals who without reasonable cause refuse to accept an offer of suitable work. Suitable work is understood to be that for which the individual has sufficient qualifications or occupational experience, or which can be performed after prior training or an apprenticeship, and which can be performed with the parameters of any existing health condition. In addition the total return travel time to the place of work by public transport must not exceed three hours, and the individual's monthly gross remuneration must be at least the minimum allowed calculated as a full-time equivalent. Any revoking of the unemployed status can last between 120 to 270 days.

3.4.2. What support/encouragement is offered to employers to provide opportunities to low-skilled workers?

Apprenticeship for adults

Employers offering apprenticeship training for adults are reimbursed the costs up to 2% of the average wage for each month of the measure. Additionally, employers may receive a one-off bonus for participants passing exams after participating in a measure.

Refund of costs of equipment for the placed unemployed

The LLO can refund to the employer the costs of equipment or retrofitting the workplace for unemployed individuals, up to six times the amount of the average remuneration.

Refund of social insurance contributions

The LLO may contract with an employer to provide a single refund of incurred costs in respect of paid social insurance contributions in connection with the employment of the unemployed individual placed. The employer must employ the placed person on a full-time basis for a period of at least 12 months. The amount of refunded contributions may not exceed 300% of the minimum salary.

Intervention works

The LLO reimburses part of the costs of remuneration, bonuses and social insurance contributions for placed unemployed individuals. If the employer, directly after completion of subsidised work lasting at least six months, has employed the placed unemployed person for a further six months, and continues to employ him/her on a full-time basis, LLO may grant a total refund of remuneration paid but not exceeding 150% of average salary on the day of fulfilling this requirement.

Employers hiring adolescents may receive the following support:

- Facultative assistance, consisting of the opportunity to be reimbursed for the remuneration and social insurance contributions of adolescents hired on apprenticeship contracts, to the value of 4% in the first year, 5% in the second year, and 6% in the third year, of the average monthly remuneration in the national economy;
- An obligatory premium if a participant passes an exam after an apprenticeship, currently PLN 8081 (ca. EUR 2000) per participant in case of the 36-month vocational training period.

3.4.3. Are any training elements offered?

Training in job-search skills is provided by LLO through job clubs and other non-commercial organisations and local governments, and consists of two parts: theoretical, which lasts for two weeks, and practical - one week long.

There are several ALMP aimed to develop professional competences and qualifications:

- Training - the trainee who pursues employment during the training receives a monthly scholarship equal to 20% of the unemployed benefit until the end of the Training Course.
- Training Loans
- Scholarships For Continuing School Education
- Financing of Examinations

- Apprenticeship for adults

3.5. If a 'train-first' approach is used to integrate low-skilled adult and/or young jobseekers, please describe the approach taken, specifying what approach is taken for which group.

Planning and management of measures

3.5.1. How does the PES link provision of training to an assessment of current/future labour market requirements? And what are the preferred sectors and occupations for training?

It is the task of local and regional labour offices to prepare analyses and reports about the situation on the labour market, including monitoring the deficit and surplus vocations.

Local employment offices draw up a list of professions and specialties, including the qualifications and professional skills that are in demand in the local market, according to the classification of professions and specialties, using:

- regional development strategy for employment;
- results of research on demand for professional qualifications and skills;
- results of analyses of job offers reported by domestic employers and information about job vacancies in newspapers and the Internet;
- results of analyses and forecasts of labour market and studies on the demand for labour, including monitoring of deficit and surplus professions, conducted by voivodeship and poviats governments;
- reports of employers, employer organisations and trade unions;
- results of efficiency and effectiveness analyses of completed trainings.

In addition, LLOs establish a list of training needs of unemployed and job seekers using:

- reports of entitled persons;
- results of studies on training needs of entitled persons;
- reports of local labour offices' staff, counsellors, job placement agents and job club leaders;
- reports of organisational units of social assistance and social integration centres;
- other documents, studies or information that may be important in drawing up the list of training needs.

The training plan is drawn up by LLOs for the period of one year, including funds provided to finance the costs of trainings.

In 2012, the most popular training courses were courses in the area of:

- transport services (including driving courses)
- sales, marketing, public relations, real estate,
- management and administration.

3.5.2. Is employer involvement a pre-condition for training to take place?

Employer involvement is not a pre-condition, but the LLO can decide on their own pre-conditions. An example is the employers' declaration that he or she will employ the participant after completing the training.

An amendment to the act on employment promotion and labour market institutions is to introduce tripartite training agreements concluded by the staroste (supervising the LLO) with the employer and the training institution. Agreements will consider, in particular the professional skills or competences required by the employer.

3.5.3. What type of training is offered for which categories of jobseekers?

Training financed by the LLO takes the form of a course, implemented according to a curriculum plan covering an average of not less than 25 clock hours per week, unless separate provisions provide for shorter training. Training can last up to 6 months, and in cases justified by the training program for a given occupation no longer than 12 months, in the cases of persons without vocational qualifications, training can take up to 12 months, and in cases justified by the training program for a given occupation no longer than 24 months.

The most popular training programs last from 31 to 80 hours, while the least popular are the long ones which last more than 300 hours.

3.5.4. What are incentives for job search within the training? Are any measures in place to ensure jobseekers are not hooked into training if a suitable job becomes available or is the emphasis on the completion of training? Does the training include internships and job search assistance to bridge the transition from training to employment?

The person referred by the LLO to training, in case of taking up employment, other gainful work or economic activity during the training, has the right to complete the training without having to incur the costs. The trainee, who during the training took up employment, other gainful work or economic activity, shall be entitled to a scholarship of the amount of 20% of the unemployment benefit, regardless of the number of hours of training, from the date of taking up employment, other gainful work or economic activity to the end of training.

3.6. What are the main challenges in the integration of low-skilled job seekers?

They need complex support in the form of individualised programs including different elements – training, work experience, workshops on autopresentation, how to prepare CV etc.

3.7. Based on your experience (ideally backed up by details of integration rates where applicable, including those after 6 months if available) what works best for which category of low-skilled job seeker? What factors ensure a fast and more sustainable integration of low-skilled job seekers? What works best in encouraging employers to offer opportunities?

Work first approach gives better results in short-term perspective, whereas partial data shows that employability after training increases in longer periods. To ensure both fast and sustainable integration there is need to combine training and experience elements. That is also one reason why Apprenticeship for adults program was established. It enables to gain both professional experience in the company and qualification (diploma). Moreover, special programs offer a comprehensive tool to effectively bring the unemployed or job seeker to employment. Specific solutions designed at the stage of local analysis are a direct path to fix the diagnosed problems. They are a tailored support for a personalised problem.

4. Partnership working to support low-skilled adults and young people

4.1. Are services (e.g. career guidance, testing) and training measures for low-skilled adults and young people delivered in-house by the PES or are part or most of these contracted out to private or third sector/other public service providers (and if so, which)? What is considered to be the added value of external provision (what can external providers offer that PES cannot)?

The LLO deliver basic labour market services including: job placement, vocational counselling and guidance, assistance in active job seeking and organization of the trainings. These services can be outsourced to:

- territorial local government units;
 - non-governmental organisations whose statutory tasks cover the labour market issues;
 - trade unions;
 - employers' organisations;
 - training institutions;
 - employment agencies;
 - social integration centres.
- 1a. When commissioning the labour market services, referred to in

.An amendment to the act on employment promotion and labour market institutions assumes the introduction of an option to subcontract activation services, financed from the Labour Fund, to a greater extent than it is currently the case. This Model is now being tested through a pilot project "Partnership for work". Ultimately, it is expected to be part of broader legislative changes aimed at outsourcing services for customers, whom the labour office is unable to help, to private operators with a view to ensuring that customers are in work. It is planned to create an effective system of activation of unemployed groups in a particularly difficult situation on the labour market, as well as selected groups of the unemployed, who as a result of profiling will be assigned to the profile "far away from the labour market", based on transferring the support of the unemployed to private operators to increase access to personalised services necessary in the activation process. From Labour Fund resources, the Voivodeship Marshal will be able to subcontract activation services to selected private operators.

How do PES assess/quality control the delivery of these services?

The implementation of these services has to be compliant with the standards of the labour market services defined in the Ordinance of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 14 September 2010 on the standards and conditions for labour market services.

4.2. Is there co-operation with chambers of commerce / other employer representatives, or social partners at management level to ensure opportunities can be offered to low-skilled individuals?

PES cooperate with the social partners (representatives of employers, employees, NGOs) on the basis of dialogue with the employment councils, which are consultative and advisory bodies. They are employment councils at the regional and local level, and

one on central level. Employment councils take part in the decision making process not only for labour market policies but also in the field of education. The meetings of employment councils may be attended by representatives of authorities, organisations and institutions not represented in the council, to represent their position in these matters. Meetings of the employment boards are held at least once in three months.

Regulations provide for support from self-governments to local partnership institutions which, as partners, jointly carry out specific activities and implement various initiatives for the benefit of local communities, in particular with regard to employment promotion, professional activation of the unemployed and prevention of unemployment. Local partnerships include representatives from the three main sectors: public, commercial and social development. Additional instrument supporting the creation of local partnerships is the Act on public private partnership which regulates the rules and procedure of cooperation between public entities and private partners under the public private partnership.

4.3. Is there co-operation with education and training providers, career guidance providers, municipalities, youth services etc at management level to reduce drop out and drive up qualifications?

Within the dialogue and partnership mentioned above there are examples of specific co-operation in the region, e.g. the Malopolska Partnership of Labour Market, Education and Training Institution, which has 111 members from the education, training and labour market sectors.

4.4. What works best to ensure good partnership working and in which areas do you see challenges for the future?

Better cooperation of social care institutions and developing cooperation between PES and another providers of labour market services.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

5.1. What systems are in place for performance measurement and evaluation for low-skilled adults and young people?

The monitoring of employment effectiveness and financial effectiveness of ALMPs is currently being conducted. There is no difference of approach to evaluating services for low-skilled adults, young people and other groups of clients.

5.2. What the main indicators used in evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of services and measures for low-skilled adults and young people?

- Status of being employed within three months after completing the program.
- Cost of delivering the ALMP per participant.
- Cost of delivering the ALMP per participant who found employment.

5.3. What have been the main evaluation results in recent years?

One of the most effective ALMP is Work Practice – where 57% of the participants found jobs within three months of completing the program.

The training which are found by unemployed are more effective that those contracted by PES.

5.4. Have these results led to any changes or are changes being considered in the organisation and delivery or services to improve the labour market situation of low-skilled adults and young people?

Implementing of the vouchers (training voucher for VET services, probation voucher) which will reinforce the initiative and engagement of the young unemployed.

6. Conclusions and questions

6.1. What lessons have you drawn from your experience and what are your main challenges, tasks, plans for the future?

To ensure the availability, high quality and effectiveness of the services implementing profiling system, outsourcing of the services and new instruments (e.g. vouchers).

6.2. What would you most like to learn from PES in other countries?

What support/encouragement is offered to employers to provide opportunities to low-skilled workers?

What systems are in place for performance measurement and evaluation for low-skilled adults and young people?

6.3. In the Peer Review discussions, on which of the following topics would you most like to focus and what would you most like to learn from others?

Topics	Importance of the topic (scale: 1 very unimportant, 5 = very important)	What would you most like to learn from others in the topic(s) you are most interested in? (maximum three bullet points)
PES services for low-skilled workers: overall strategy and approach	4	
Train-first approaches	3	
Work-first approaches	3	
Partnership with employers and other actors	4	
Monitoring and evaluation	5	Methods of performance measurement and evaluation