

Peer Review on ‘Blended service delivery for jobseekers’

The Dutch PES (UWV Werkbedrijf) hosted the second Peer Review of 2014. 13 countries came to Amsterdam to discuss recent developments in blended service delivery strategies and implementations in national PES. Key messages from the Peer Review include:

The Peer Review signals a definite rise in both interest and actual expansion of online services:

PES have been actively broadening the scope (and depth) of services that are offered online to clients, and as a consequence have witnessed an increase in the use of online services.

These changes have been threefold:

- First, an increasing number of PES have made it possible for their clients to undertake some basic activities online.
- Second, more of PES interaction with clients is now pursued online with the introduction of a larger array of services.
- Third, through more nuanced personalisation of online services, PES are able to convince clients of the benefits of using digital channels.

Over the recent years, three frontiers of innovation have emerged:

Firstly, there are **new ways of blending** various channels to achieve seamless service delivery.

- Blended services are mostly deployed in support situations or where part of a service has to be completed via a certain channel.
- Examples include new software enabling online assistance by counsellors to support customers using online self-service.
- There are also innovations that facilitate peer support, for example webinars combined

with a live chat facility. Secondly, there are innovations in **exploiting the rich data** generated by online service users.

- This includes software to allocate staff between clients who need online support, or indicators and “dashboards,” which provide an overview of clients’ characteristics and job search activities.
- The Dutch quality card uses job search statistics to steer clients towards job offers where there is less competition from their peers.
- Customer journey mapping is used in some PES to improve online services and to identify the need for additional assistance.

Thirdly, some PES are experimenting with the use of **new devices**, such as mobile applications that generate automated notifications of meetings or tasks, or even of job offers located in the customer’s area.

Performance measurement remains patchy:

- Some PES are more sophisticated than others in measuring the effectiveness of their services when introducing new channels.
- However, most PES have yet to fully capture the effectiveness of their individual and blended channels.
- Increased effectiveness is considered to be a desirable outcome of service digitalisation, the concept of service efficiency is better understood as supported by (some form of) data collection across PES.

Changes in service delivery have to be managed:

Extending blended and online service delivery has implications for a number of change management areas:

- ensuring PES staff buy-in
- staff allocation
- staff training in response to changes in roles and responsibilities

Major PES staff downsizing initiatives were not the prime driver for these programmes (with the exception of one PES), even though shifting administrative tasks to online self-services is intended to free up staff time in most (if not all) cases.

More information on the Peer Review, including the executive summary is available [here](http://ec.europa.eu/social/pes-to-pes).



Publication of the Analytical Paper 'European reference competence profile for PES and EURES counsellors'

The aim of this paper was to describe and confirm core operational competences to serve as both a manual and reference tool for European PES in their recruitment and training of employment counsellors.

PES face new challenges attributed to their changing role successfully implementing the EU 2020 strategy, this influences the job requirements for employment counsellors. The European reference competence profile for PES and EURES counsellors was developed on this basis. Optimisation of service delivery channels

The Analytical paper divides this profile into **three corresponding competence areas**

I. Foundational competences (general practitioners values and skills)

II. Client interaction competences (working with jobseekers and employers)

III. Supporting competences (systems and technical)

Foundational competences represent general (employment?) practitioners' characteristics and skills that are relevant to a number of different tasks and situations.

Client interaction competences (working with jobseekers and employers) represent the broadest area of competences, linked to the major tasks performed by

employment counsellors on a daily basis.

Supportive competences (systems and technical) represent both competences to deal with technological aspects of the work (ICT) as well as service and country-specific competences. These three major areas aim to represent the scope and diversity of tasks which employment counsellors deal with.

The full paper is available to read and download on the PES to PES website [here](http://ec.europa.eu/social/pes-to-pes).

Publications

Analytical Papers coming soon

Competence-based profiling and matching techniques (late summer)

This Analytical Paper will look at current developments in skills based profiling and matching in PES, outline lessons for effective practices and draw out key considerations of such matching techniques for counsellors and jobseekers.

Local autonomy and central steering (early autumn)

This Analytical Paper will look at trends in decentralisation of PES across member states and outline the level, scale and form of shifting competences to the local level that is taking place. It will look at the issue of PES finding the right balance between flexibility and accountability and the degree to which decentralisation within a national PES helps to effectively meet local needs.

PES partnership management (autumn)

The aim of this Analytical Paper is to provide an overview of how PES manage the partnership arrangements they have with other employment services. It should cover the different management approaches and the interaction between the strategic and the operational levels across PES to detect the potential for mutual exchange and learning.

PES to PES events coming up



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Dialogue Conferences

The Dissemination Conference will take place in Brussels, Belgium, on 9-10 October 2014. Registration is now open. The conference, which is dedicated to the discussion and dissemination of the results from this year's "PES to PES Dialogue" activities, will also include a retrospective of achievements over the four years of the programme.

The conference will focus on key issues on the PES agenda as proposed by and agreed with the European Heads of Employment Services (HoPES) Network:

- Activation, partnerships and employer engagement: enhancing cooperation for better labour market integration of specific target groups.
- Decentralisation, digitalisation and performance management in PES: fostering new ways of developing, delivering and measuring services.