



Peer Review: 'Youth guarantees: PES approaches and measures for low skilled young people.'

The first Peer Review of PES to PES Dialogue was hosted by the Austrian Public Employment Service (PES) in Vienna on 22-23 March 2011 and was attended by PES representatives from thirteen countries. In the context of unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment, largely resulting from the impact of the financial and economic crises, it was particularly timely that this Peer Review should focus on this topic.

The key messages from the Peer Review include:

Ensuring early access to PES services: Go where young people are and use their language

Many young people who experience difficulties entering the labour market only access PES services once they are already unemployed, or do not access PES services at all, particularly if they are not entitled to any benefit. **Co-operation between all key actors** in the field of education and employment, as well as community groups, is critical here. Three main routes were identified towards establishing such early contact:

- **Contact with schools**, with PES advisors visiting schools, school classes visiting local PES offices or innovative activities for teachers
- **Outreach activities** through links with NGOs, youth clubs, social services or other community actors particularly for those at highest risk and those less



- likely to seek the assistance of public agencies
- **Use of modern media** which 'speak the language' of young people.

Structuring core and youth orientated PES services: the role of specialist advice and positive buy-in from employers

The use of **specialist youth counsellors** for all and strong interdisciplinary teams in PES or partner providers for those with particular needs was considered to be most successful in providing services to low skilled young people, not only because of the training and skills of such counsellors, but also because of their greater knowledge of relevant networks, services and measures to support the holistic integration of young people. Equally important to the delivery of effective services for young people are **well developed contacts with employers**. Personal relationships with employers have to be built up in a longer-term process.

Importance of "real life" work experience in effective PES measures

Although it is largely considered that active labour market policy measures which are close to "real" work situations are most effective in integrating young people into the labour market, a link with strong education and vocational training provision is also important in making such employment sustainable. Obstacles experienced include the ongoing reluctance of employers to offer opportunities to young people facing multiple disadvantages.

Need for better knowledge base of what works to better target labour market measures.

While some countries demonstrated good data collection systems which monitor beneficiaries before and after entry into each measure, in many countries this is not available, highlighting the need for more targeted evaluation studies or controlled trials. Even in countries with better data availability and existing evaluations, a stronger link needs to be made between the evidence base and using the findings for organisational learning and policy development. More information from the Peer Review is available [here](#).

Analytical Paper: European Public Employment Services and Lifelong Guidance

The paper, written by Tibor Bors Borbély-Pecze and A.G. Watts, emphasises the role of lifelong guidance in achieving the goals of the EU2020 strategy. The Strategy requires European policies to be more strongly co-ordinated to ensure competitiveness and sustainable employment creation. For the PES, this requires stronger relationships between employment policies and lifelong guidance and learning policies. Public Employment Services in the European Union engage in a broad range of lifelong guidance activities with the precise nature and level of service provisions depending on the business model adopted by different PES.

Four main trends and challenges can be identified at the interface between PES and lifelong guidance:

- The move to self-service approaches, linked to e-services and customer segmentation/profiling. This offers potential both for extending services and for focusing intensive services on those who need them most.
- The growing attention to quality assurance, including staff competencies. More attention is needed to linking PES competencies to broader professional competence frameworks.
- The recognition of the need for stronger performance measurement and impact measurement. More work is needed on standards and indicators.
- The roles of PES in the development of national

lifelong guidance strategies. These are likely to vary considerably. In all cases, however, it is important that PES are an integral part of such strategies, that they form closer relationships with other organisations and other policy areas in this respect, and that they review their own role in the light of the developing strategies.

The paper is available to read [here](#).

What's next on PES to PES?

Support for transfer

- Additional support can be provided to countries following a Peer Review (PR) to facilitate the transfer of practices, approaches or tools that were shared during the PR. The next issue of this newsletter will include a report on the support for transfer following PR 1.

Peer Review 2

- Integrated multi-channelling: combining e-services with personalised services in a customer-oriented and efficient way, Antwerp Belgium, 30 June – 1 July 2011

PES to PES Dialogue Conferences

- “Profiling Systems for Effective Labour Market Integration,” Brussels, 11-12 May 2011 including workshops on *New approaches to profiling* and *Use of profiling for resource allocation, action planning and matching*
- Dissemination conference, Brussels, 8-9 September 2011

Analytical Papers:

- “The Role of PES in Youth Integration: a Review of European Good Practice”: available [here](#).
- “Decentralisation and local flexibility of PES services”: June 2011
- “Sub-contracting of services – recent trends and business models in Public Employment Services”: June 2011
- “Public Employment Services and older workers”: July 2011
- “E-government and personalised services”: July 2011

