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In collaboration with GHK and the Budapest Institute

# **1. SERVICES FOR EMPLOYERS: OVERALL MISSION, STRATEGY AND PROFILE**

FAS-Training and Employment Service, Ireland, is an organisation in transition. Currently a state agency with a tripartite board which reports to the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, it will after January 2012 join with the Ministry responsible for benefits, the Department of Social Protection. This may change some or many of the answers below.

## **1.1. What is the PES's overall mission and strategy in relation to employers?**

FAS see the importance of the employer as an integral element in the reintegration of jobseekers into the labour market and one which cannot be understated. Proactively engaging with employers and associated stakeholders is central to the development and enhancement of services to both employers and jobseekers alike. FAS's overall strategy is to maximise the benefits to the job seeker, both those 'at a distance' from the labour market and those who are 'job ready' by providing employers with an efficient means of clearing their vacancies. In doing so FAS can increase its share of total labour market opportunities thus allowing us some influence in the selection choices of employers. Employer services are part of the FAS mission of providing 'service excellence' to client groups. The most recent figures available show that FAS currently have around 55 % of the market share and that this share is rising.

As part of the current strategy and going in to the new organisational arrangements, the importance of the role of the employer is clearly recognised and through the integration of services it is evident that strong relationships with employers must be achieved. These relationships, many of which are developed by helping employers with their recruitment needs, are essential to the successful delivery and achievement of positive outcomes of activation measures for job seekers.

In preparation for the migration of FAS functions to the new organisation, FAS are currently reviewing all engagement with employers (with a view to strengthening these engagements).

**1.2 How does the PES view its role via-à-vis employers?**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Importance of the role (1 least important, 5 most important)</b>
Labour market advisor	4
Job broker and filler of vacancies	5
Human resource consultant	3
Partner in addressing the needs of jobseekers	5
Other (please specify):	

**1.3. Which services are offered only on a chargeable basis?**

All FÁS services are free to employers

**1.4. Are all services offered in all regions/localities or is there local discretion on what to offer and what not to offer?**

All FAS services are offered equally throughout the country.

## 1.5 What services are currently offered to employers?

Type of service	Offered yes or no?	Brief operational description of services	Segmented or universal service?	Service delivered by which PES staff?
<b>Collection and provision of labour market information</b>	<b>YES</b>	<p>Information is collected twice yearly through our call centre (The National Contact Centre, NCC) and it is processed by our Research and Planning Department. This department also conducts 'employer satisfaction surveys' on the level and quality of service.</p> <p>The NCC team provide advice on recruitment and employment legislation; wage rates; work permits and other supports available by responding to calls from employers. This advice is supported through the distribution of the Employer Pack.</p>	Universal	As before, questionnaires and telephone surveys carried out by advisors in NCC, results are processed by research specialists employed in our Planning and Research Department. From time to time some of these surveys can be outsourced to private sector researchers
<b>Drafting and posting of vacancies</b>	<b>YES</b>	All vacancies go through NCC and are quality checked at this point. This can be done online by registered employers and also 'over the phone' (Free Phone).	Universal	As stated, either by the employers online or over the phone, where calls are handled by PES staff.
<b>Recruitment services</b>	<b>YES</b>	<p>A level of pre selection is offered by way of 'matching'. Interview facilities and assistance with interviews is supplied when requested.</p> <p>The Jobseeker Team at the NCC conduct matches against job opportunities for jobseekers who contact the service.</p>	Universal	NCC is organised around specialist teams, one team takes vacancies and advises employers on legislative and other relevant issues while other teams provide employers with an instant matching service.
<b>Human resource consultancy</b>	<b>YES (currently)</b>	We give advice on recruitment strategies, support in international recruitment, technical assistance for disabled job seekers/workers, and supply of job-seekers in different areas. At the moment (up to 1/1/2012) FAS are the combined Employment and State Training Service. Our responsibilities are to those most	Universal	There are specialist staff within FAS for various 'specialist groups'.

		'at a distance from the labour market' and active engagement with employers for this group is an important part of the FAS remit.		
<b>Information and advice on subsidies and ALMPs</b>	<b>YES</b>	PES is responsible for the delivery of most ALMPs and advice, and where necessary, the organisation is delivered by FAS PES staff.	Universal	Delivered by PES staff. Some larger ALMPs will have specialised staff e.g. the 'Community Employment Programme'.
<b>Support for the integration of disadvantaged groups and long-term unemployed before and/or after employment</b>	<b>YES (sometimes)</b>	This depends on the programme. If it is an ALMP, then such supports are offered. If it is just a 'straight forward' placement then there is little further support.	Universal	Specialist staff deliver certain programmes, but it is usually the local employment service officer (ESO) who delivers. However, these are supported at Head Office level by specialised staff.
<b>Rapid response and redeployment for large-scale redundancies</b>	<b>YES</b>	A team of ESO's are deployed whenever a large (or small) scale redundancy is notified.	Universal	ESOs from the area where the redundancy is taking place.
<b>Legal advice and support in relation to employment law</b>	<b>NO</b>	However, employers are redirected to the relevant state agencies that deal with employment law. Some basic information is supplied.	N/A	N/A
<b>Other service(s)</b>				

**1.6 On average, how many employers does the PES work with per year? What share is this of the total number of employers in the country?**

Approximately 20 000. We can only estimate that this is approximately 50 % of the market share.

**1.7 What is the profile of the employers that the PES typically work with?**

Employers of all sizes use the service and they are from all geographical locations and sectors.

**1.8 Are there some types of employers who are currently less likely to engage with the PES and why?**

State agencies as they have to recruit through a separate state system, the Civil Service Commission.

**1.9 What are the services most used by employers and why?**

Placing vacancies on our system (JOB BANK).

**1.10 What financial resources are allocated to the services for employers compared to services for jobseekers?**

This is not possible to answer as most services offered by PES benefit both sets of clients. For example, resources can be spent upskilling a job seeker to meet an employer's needs. It is impossible to determine who the main beneficiary is in this case. However, the majority of expenditure (70 %+ ) will be directed at the job seeker.

## **2. ORGANISATION OF THE SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS**

**2.1 Does the PES have specialist staff who provide services to employers? If so:**

**2.1.1 How is their work organised?**

Staff working in the Contact Centre (call centre) are specialised in dealing with employers' recruitment needs. However, we do not have specialist staff to deal with specific sectors. Most staff are generalists and deal with all employers regardless of which sector they come from. However, the FAS is



organised regionally and locally and sufficient numbers of staff are allocated to meet the demands and level of work existing in the locality/region.

### **2.1.2 What training and skills development do the specialist staff receive and for how long?**

All staff are trained to Diploma (Just below degree) level in relevant issues for employment services. The emphasis on this training and development is on career guidance and counselling.

## **2.2. Does the PES have generalist staff to work with employers? Yes, as stated, all ESO staff deal with all employers.**

### **2.2.1.How is their work organised?**

Generalist staff work less than 20 % of their time with employers. (Note: Contact Centre staff work, more or less, full time with employers).

### **2.2.2.What training and skills development do the generalist staff receive and for how long?**

As stated, all ESO staff receive three years training in the work of PES. In addition, training and development programmes are an integral part of the introduction of any new measures aimed at employers or job seekers and in addition, training and development programmes are available whenever a change is introduced to any aspect of our service delivery.

## **2.3 What partnership arrangements does the PES have in place to deliver the service to employers? What type of partner organisations and with what purpose?**

FAS cooperate with all stakeholders who might impact on our service delivery or quality of service to an employer. Partnerships tend to be on an 'ad hoc' basis with key stakeholders coming together as and when required. Among the cooperative and practical arrangements here are:

- Promotional material;
- Service pack – outlining national supports for employers;
- Attendance/participation at relevant employer conferences/events;
- Proactive engagement through industry targeted information updates;

- Forum for employer contributions to the on-going strategy evolution;
- Expanding the utilisation of social media to engage with the client group. Many employers are utilising 'Linked in' to promote job opportunities;
- Regular labour market bulletins and updates to employers registered with FÁS (NEES) and to employer bodies;
- Breakfast meetings;
- Regional employer packs which will outline regional supports and contacts;
- Regional Job Fairs to which local employers are invited.

### **3. CONTACTING AND ENGAGING WITH EMPLOYERS**

#### **3.1 How does the PES identify, target and make initial contact with employers that could potentially benefit from the PES services?**

There are two ways: FAS will contact a new start-up employer as soon as there is an announcement of the start-up. Also, the NCC will make all services known to an employer as soon as they make their first call. Also, the NCC will advise all employers when there is a change in the services being delivered or when a new ALMP is being introduced. Regular updates are supplied to the NCC on current service availability.

Existing employers will be contacted regularly, either by the local employment office or by the Contact Centre to update them on relevant events and issues which may be of interest to them. Contact is also made by individual employment service officers when acting as advocates for a job seeking client.

#### **3.2 What tools, approaches and communication channels are used to develop a sustained contact and relationship with the employer and how effective are they? In particular, what is the most effective channel for initial contact?**

The main tool is the call centre, NCC. However, this is augmented by face to face meetings, attendance at employer functions, etc. (see the list in 2.3 above).

### **4. WORKING WITH EMPLOYERS: RECRUITMENT AND FINDING JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS**

#### **4.1 Is the reporting of vacancies compulsory?**

No.

**4.2. What types of vacancies are most reported? For example, what is the share of high, medium, low-skilled jobs?**

Vacancies come in at all levels. There is a high level of skilled and professional vacancies notified as FAS have a very dynamic and successful international recruitment service (EURES).

**4.3. What specific tools and systems do the staff use in their work with employers and which ones are particularly effective for recruitment and vacancy filling?**

There is a 'quality' standard in operation at the time the vacancy is taken. All employers who wish to advertise on Jobs Ireland must first be registered and approved by the NCC, and the terms of service use are provided upon acceptance as a registered employer. All vacancies advertised on FAS Jobs Ireland are validated by the NCC prior to publication to ensure compliance with both employment legislation and FAS policies. Vacancies may be submitted by employers through a variety of methods: online; by phoning the NCC; email; or fax. This process of validation is undertaken in relation to Irish; European and overseas vacancies.

Jobs are matched from our comprehensive register of job seekers and job changers. The main strengths of the service are that job seekers can view job opportunities through a variety of forums including:

- At FAS offices through vacancy displays
- At self service kiosks located in FAS offices
- Online at [www.fas.ie](http://www.fas.ie)
- Via smartphone applications

**4.4. What tools and approaches are used to incentivise employers to take on disadvantaged individuals and the long-term unemployed and which ones are most effective?**

There are a number of incentives available to employers who take on disadvantaged clients. These can include the long term unemployed, people with disabilities, etc. Employers are usually notified of these incentives by being contacted by the NCC, through 'cold calling' by ESOs (in consultation with NCC) and by liaison with the various employers and trade unions' representative bodies.

## **5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **5.1. What systems are in place for performance measurement and evaluation?**

As mentioned above, all placement activity and its measurement are conducted by way of twice yearly surveys conducted by the NCC and our Planning and Research Department. These surveys measure the success of the recruitment processes including the satisfaction ratings of employers with the service they receive.

Other methods such as 'balanced scorecards' are being trialled.

### **5.2. What are the main indicators used in evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the services to employers? Aside from measuring the number or duration of vacancies filled, what other indicators are used? What have been the main evaluation results in recent years?**

As 5.1 above.

### **5.3. What have been the satisfaction levels and feedback of employers to the services offered?**

Satisfaction levels have been extraordinarily high, up to 87 % in recent surveys.

### **5.4. Is there a system in place to feed evaluation results into service development?**

All information is carefully considered at all levels in the organisation and all reports on customer satisfaction must also include a response which will require a change in service delivery, if required.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1. What do you see as the main challenges in relation to delivering effective services to employers?**

Greater use must be made of personal contacts with employers. This does not mitigate the importance of tools such as 'call centres'.

A portion of human resources should be specialised e.g. experts in ICT should be available on a national basis and be available to support the work of the ESO at local and regional levels.

Greater use should be made of an integrated International Employment Service, in particular EURES which makes the PES different to other (private) employment services. This international dimension should be integrated at all levels of PES service and its usage should be considered to be a 'key indicator' on which local and regional management are required to report on.

There should also be more engagement by PES at the local level with employers' representatives, e.g. the establishment of 'local labour market' consultative groups which have all actors in the labour market involved.

## **6.2. What are your conclusions on what works best in relation to delivery of effective services to employers?**

The most effective elements include:

- The ease of vacancy notification
- The speed of matching
- Widening the talent pool- international dimension
- A bespoke recruitment service where required
- An easy to follow and to access range of incentives to recruit more vulnerable employees.

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

<b>Role</b>	<b>Importance of the focus (scale 1 – 5)</b>	<b>What would you most like to learn from others in the area(s) you are most interested in (three points in total)?</b>
PES organisation and staffing	5	How they organise and what levels of staff are allocated to the various tasks and why
Contacting and engaging with employers	5	As above. New and innovative methods employed
Recruitment and finding job opportunities for disadvantaged individuals	5	What incentives are used and which have been most successful and why
Monitoring and evaluation	5	How it is done in other MSP