



The European Commission Mutual Learning Programme for Public Employment Services

Newsletter 4/2012

Dissemination Conference: 'Innovative and effective approaches for the strategic management of PES'

The conference was dedicated to the discussion and dissemination of the results from the second year of activities of the *PES to PES Dialogue* programme to both Public Employment Service (PES) representatives and a wider policy audience. Some key messages from the conference include:

PES services for jobseekers and employers: an increased focus on the demand side and extending working lives

There is an increasing focus amongst PES on engaging with the demand side, not only to achieve the sustainable integration of vulnerable groups, but also to improve labour market intelligence and to ensure up-skilling of jobseekers corresponding to the needs of the labour market as part of the new skills agenda. Effective approaches for working with employers were discussed in detail at the *Peer Review* on effective services for employers.

As a consequence of demographic ageing, PES must provide employment assistance to jobseekers close to pensionable age. Although an individualised approach is the most effective way to activate older jobseekers, age-specific measures like networking can be helpful and lessons can be drawn for PES universal services. There is also an increasing focus on the prevention of unemployment of older workers and HR counselling for SMEs by PES. The report from the *Peer Review* on PES and older workers contains further information.

Personalised services and employment guidance: developing effective IAPs

Individual action plans (IAPs) have become widely used

by PES to ensure that support for jobseekers is tailored to their needs. The conference discussed the critical role of the counsellor and the competences they bring to the individual action planning process including the ability to build trust. Further discussion on developing effective IAPs can be found in the report from the *Dialogue Conference*.

PES organisation and management strategies: Towards a more 'mature' approach to performance management and target-setting

Performance management has become increasingly widespread as part of the modernisation of PES across Europe, pushed by the introduction of public management models since the 1990s. PES are now entering a more 'mature' phase of performance management through using fewer, more focused targets and concentrating on the quality of the overall systems and procedures. Approaches to performance management in PES are discussed further in an *analytical paper*.



Performance management can also serve as part of a more evaluative approach to management, which focuses on organisational learning and performance improvement. An analytical paper (to be published soon) explores the strategies and methods used by PES to identify opportunities for innovation and improvement.

Staff competences and training are critical for offering quality services

A key message from the first year of the programme was the importance of staff competences and training in providing quality services to jobseekers and employers. An analytical paper (to be published soon) identifies a set of key competences while discussing similarities and differences between the job profiles, competence requirements, job entry requirements and training programmes for employment counsellors in the EU PES.

Further information can be found in the "PES to PES Dialogue Report 2012: results from the second year of programme" which will be published shortly.

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Follow up study visit on PES and older workers

Following the Peer Review on 'PES and older workers' in Nürnberg, representatives from PES in the Netherlands, Hungary and the UK visited the German PES, the Bundesagentur für Arbeit, to gain practical insights into their experience with qualification counselling, wage subsidies and marketing strategies to encourage the (re)employment of older workers. A report from the visit will be published [here](#).

Follow up study visit on agreements with large companies and international pilot for agreements with large companies

Representatives from PES in Sweden, Slovenia, Hungary, the UK and Belgium (ACTIRIS) visited the French PES, Pôle Emploi in June to obtain more information on their experience of cooperation with large companies through specific agreements. The report from the visit is available [here](#). Following the visit, PES representatives from Sweden, Slovenia, Hungary and France agreed to explore the potential to use agreements between a multinational company and a PES in one country as reference to stimulate an agreement or good relationships between the company with PES in another country. The Commission organised a video conference as a starting point for the participating PES to take forward further activities.



Analytical papers

Outcome oriented sub-contracting – September 2012

This paper identifies the advantages and risks associated with 'black box' subcontracts where the PES pays external providers on the basis of their success in securing job outcomes and give providers significant operational flexibility. It reviews evaluation findings on the service delivery strategies and supply chains associated with these systems and highlights the practical policy implications arising from the findings. The paper will be published shortly.

Further information

Dual training system – integration of young people into the labour market

The dual training system in Germany which combines practical skills and theoretical knowhow developed on the job and in a vocational school is one of the main reasons why youth unemployment in Germany is fairly low. The system was the focus of a Peer Review held under the *Mutual Learning Programme* in September.

Peer Review on Youth Guarantees

Due to an error, the paper from the German PES, Bundesagentur für Arbeit, was not published together with the other PES papers for this Peer Review last year. The paper is now available [here](#).