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DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

**JOB PROFILES AND TRAINING FOR
EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS**

Analytical paper

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 The skills and competences of employment counsellors have been identified as being critical to achieving successful placement outcomes, but little was known about existing profiles, training and career pathways from a comparative perspective	1
1.2 Aims, objectives and methodology for compiling the paper: a clear emphasis on primary data collection for the development of a comparative evidence base	2
2 JOB AND COMPETENCE PROFILES OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS.....	4
2.1 Introduction: analysis of employment counsellors' work reveals unclear occupational status, significant role differentiation and insufficient training provisions.....	4
2.2 Distinguishing job content and competences required to perform a job effectively	15
2.3 Degree of flexibility and autonomy of PES in preparation of job profiles of employment counsellors varies, but trends towards decentralisation are visible	17
2.4 Job profiles of employment counsellors are conditioned by operational structure and priority tasks of each PES	19
2.5 The analysis of the common elements of job profiles, as well as relative importance of tasks can help to identify the core tasks of employment counsellors.....	28
2.6 The analysis of the common elements of competence profiles, as well as the relative importance of competencies can help to identify the core competences of employment counsellors	32
2.7 Availability, transparency and the use of job and competency profiles in the assessment of counsellors' work can help to increase the effectiveness of this approach.....	35
3 TRAINING OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS	36
3.1 Entry requirements for employment counsellors: level of education, education disciplines and additional qualifications differentiate the country approaches.....	36
3.2 Specialised inception training is provided to employment counsellors in all countries, but the duration and content varies	40

3.3	Training needs analysis is found to be more important than formal obligations as the factor determining further training of employment counsellors.....	45
3.4	Diversified methods, providers and content of training characterise the further training of employment counsellors	48
3.5	Quality of training is not only achieved through formal quality assurance procedures, but also through internal informal support	53
3.6	More focus on the career development opportunities for PES employment counsellors is needed as the career paths are found to be short.....	54
3.7	Changes in job profiles, competence profiles and training of employment counsellors can be attributed mostly to service digitalisation	56
4	CONCLUSIONS.....	59
5	ANNEXES.....	65
5.1	Bibliography	65
5.2	Examples of job and competence profiles of employment counsellors	68
5.3	Examples of training of employment counsellors	79
5.4	Previous research findings.....	87

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **objective of the paper** is to give an overview of the specifics of job profiles, competences requirements and training programmes for employment counsellors in public employment services (PES) in Europe.

The **skills and competences of employment counsellors were identified as being critical** to achieving successful placement outcomes, but thus far little was known about existing profiles, training and career pathways from a **structured, analytical and comparative perspective**.

The study revealed that:

- **Job profiles** including tasks/responsibilities for employment counsellors exist in **all of the analysed countries**.
- **The degree of flexibility and autonomy** of PES in the preparation of job profiles of employment counsellors **varies**, with visible trends towards decentralisation.
- **Diversification** of the job profiles is to a large extent dependent on the operational PES structure, priority tasks and activation strategy used in the country.
- A number of **key commonalities and differences** have been identified in job and competence profiles, as well as the training of employment counsellors.
- **There are different entry requirements** for employment counsellors: level of education, education disciplines and additional qualifications vary from country to country.

The analysis showed that it is possible to create a basic common profile for the key job tasks and required competences of employment counsellors, although there is currently no common job classification. The role of the employment counsellor should therefore be regarded as **an emerging occupation** combining elements of job broking, administrative, counselling, social work and human resources management tasks.

Within this role, there are certain specialisations. For example, in relation to **the core tasks for employment counsellors specialising in employer services in Europe**, the job profile could be considered to include:

- Tasks focused on **placement** – which requires a mix of administrative, assessment and human resources management knowledge and skills;
- Tasks focused on **networking and sales** – which requires strong communication and cooperation skills, as well as service specific knowledge (e.g. on ALMPs);
- Tasks focused on **organising** – which requires a high level of organisational knowledge and skills.

In relation to **the core tasks for employment counsellors specialising in services for jobseekers in Europe**, the adequate job profile includes:

- Tasks focused on **placement** – which requires communication and interviewing skills, as well as client orientation;
- Tasks focused on **counselling** – which requires counselling, assessment and matching skills, the ability to motivate and inspire clients, stress resistance, patience, understanding and the ability to listen non-judgmentally;
- Tasks focused on **information provision** – which requires knowledge of the current labour market situation and trends, communication skills and client orientation;
- Tasks focused on **administration and monitoring** – which requires communication and cooperation skills, and service-specific knowledge.

In addition, **'soft skills' are increasingly important** to facilitate not only contact with clients, but also other stakeholders linked to employment service delivery.

There is a **limited availability** in the European market of individuals who are well prepared to play the role of employment counsellors, so policymakers should be encouraged to **strengthen institutional and legal provisions towards the development of employment counsellors' education at the tertiary level**. An important role must also be addressed by **internally developed, PES-specific inception and on-going training** for employment counsellors.

The training activities should be planned and tailored to the **needs of the specific country's service**, as well as **individual training needs** of counsellors. Proper selection of the **training contents is crucial**. More efforts to establish and maintain **the cooperation and partnerships with external knowledge providers** is needed to provide professional expertise that may be lacking inside the PES. The training should be well **balanced**, comprising of **theoretical knowledge and practical skills**. There is also a need to develop further the **career paths** of employment counsellors.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The skills and competences of employment counsellors have been identified as being critical to achieving successful placement outcomes, but little was known about existing profiles, training and career pathways from a comparative perspective

['PES to PES Dialogue'](#) is the European Commission's mutual learning support programme for public employment services (PES) in the European Union. It aims to contribute to the implementation of the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy and the Employment Guidelines by helping to increase the capacity and effectiveness of PES. The Commission launched 'PES to PES Dialogue' to help public employment services (PES) to anticipate new trends and needs which require adjustment of their service offer and business models.

As the PES to PES Dialogue workshops, conferences and papers have shown¹, staff competences and training are key to offering quality services for jobseekers and employers. The paper focuses on job profiles, competences requirements and training programmes of **employment counsellors who deliver employment guidance and counselling or employer services**, and not on other PES workers like vocational/career guidance counsellors, psychologists, etc. Many instances of a more or less identical job of 'placement officer' were identified: case worker or case manager (however, not in the sense of social work methods), mediator, employment advisor or employment counsellor. **A certain shift can be observed with a decreasing use of the notion 'placement officer' and an increasing use of the notions 'employment advisor' and 'employment counsellor'**, due to a shift of public employment services from more passive (benefit-payment oriented) authorities to activation and more service-oriented labour agencies.

It is also worth noting that public employment services are in general staffed with a broader range of specialists or professionals (generally depending on the particular organisation and role of the PES in each country):

- Payment officers
- Employment counsellor for jobseekers
- Special employment counsellors for young people
- Special employment counsellors for those with complex problems
- Employment counsellors for employers
- Career guidance counsellors (for young, adults or both)
- (Vocational) Psychologists.

¹ See for example: *Youth Guarantees – PES approaches and measures for low skilled young people*, Peer Review, Vienna, 22-23 March 2011; *Activation and integration – Working with Individual Action Plans*, PES to PES Dialogue conference, 8-9 March 2012; *Profiling systems for effective labour market integration*, PES to PES Dialogue conference, 11-12 May 2011; European Commission (2011) *The Role of Public Employment Services in Extending Working Lives. Sustainable Employability for Older Workers*, The European Commission Mutual Learning Programme for Public Employment Services, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Analytical Paper, Author: Barry J Hake

This study uses the notion of employment counsellor, as recent studies² show an increasing importance of the quality of interviewing and individual action planning. **It focuses on the tasks, the job profile and competences needed by employment counsellors for jobseekers and employers, without further specifying per groups of clients.**

For the purpose of this analysis the **job profile** is defined as a description of the exact tasks/responsibilities involved in a particular job. The **competency profile** is defined as a list of the competences (commonly organised within categories of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes – or KSA in short) needed to perform the given job. A competency profile usually defines competencies in a descriptive way, providing behavioural indicators and dividing each competence into several levels of proficiency.

1.2 Aims, objectives and methodology for compiling the paper: a clear emphasis on primary data collection for the development of a comparative evidence base

The **objective of the paper** is not only to provide an overview of the similarities and differences of the specifics of job profiles and competences requirements as applied in PES in different EU and accession countries, but also to highlight – where possible – common core jobs profiles and competences considered to be vital for an employment counsellor. Furthermore, it aims to deliver the first cross-country overview of job entry requirements and training programmes for employment counsellors in public employment services in Europe. In doing so, the paper seeks to inspire debate about the future development of core competences for a modern PES, the emergence of new requirements resulting from technological developments, changing demands on the service, the emergence of different forms of working (e.g. increasing co-operation with private sector providers and other public sector / third sector partners) and new - or indeed changes in the profile of - client groups. Issues surrounding the career paths and attractiveness of the role of the employment counsellor will also be discussed.

Reaching this aim required a strong **analytical and comparative perspective**, due to the limited information available as well as observed differences in approaches to job/competency profiling and training in EU Member States. Thus, the formulation of sound and realistic recommendations required not only a simple listing and comparison of core competencies of employment advisors, but also a deep understanding of the mechanisms and institutional context behind them, within different countries covered by this study. As a comprehensive multi-Member State analysis on job and competence profiles, as well as entry requirements and career

² *Activation and integration – Working with Individual Action Plans*, PES to PES Dialogue conference, 8-9 March 2012; *Profiling systems for effective labour market integration*, PES to PES Dialogue conference, 11-12 May 2011.

pathways in PES is not available in the academic literature, it was necessary to use a broad range of sources such as:

- State of the art review of the literature on job and competence profiling, training and development, qualifications and quality assurance from the perspective of PES and more specifically – employment counsellors;
- Available recent research in the above mentioned areas (focusing on EU Member States' national and international analyses as well as good practices that can be transferred from outside of EU);
- Information provided and gathered directly from PES in EU Member States – both in the form of available documentation (job/competency profiles; tasks descriptions; training and development regulations/statutes, etc.) as well as direct research in PES (survey and telephone interviewing).

As indicated, a structured survey of PES was carried out to supplement existing information and provide up to date data. The questionnaire focused on capturing job and competence profiles, entry requirements, career pathways, methods of providing training and requested information on the latest or upcoming changes/innovations. The survey was forwarded to the relevant person within Member States' public employment services with knowledge of the issue of job / competence profiles and training for employment counsellors in June 2012. A total of 22 completed questionnaires have been received, from the following countries: Austria, Belgium (two answers from FOREM and VDAB), Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Romania, Hungary, Malta, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Results from the survey served as the major source of information, adding to findings from other sources reviewed as part of this study. PES representatives were also asked to provide additional information such as existing job profiles, competency profiles of employment counsellors, and training curricula for initial training or ongoing training for employment counsellors.

One has to strongly emphasise the informative and non-formative character of this study. Primary research undertaken allows us to provide an evidence base and comparative analysis of the models of job and competence profiles and training for employment counsellors prevailing in countries responding to the survey. While it does seek to crystallise comparable core competences common to most Member States, it does not pretend to highlight one or the other approach as best practice, as all systems are rooted within their PES's operational context, as well as other existing structures, such as prevalent education and training frameworks. This paper is intended to start the discussion regarding key tasks, competencies and corresponding training for employment counsellors in PES and explore how these are changing / need to be adapted as part of a changing environment for PES.

2 JOB AND COMPETENCE PROFILES OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS

'Employment advisers and career guidance staff are at the crucible of most of the transformations taking place in the PES, and their training, competence levels and motivation have a great bearing on the quality and nature of services provided'³.

2.1 Introduction: analysis of employment counsellors' work reveals unclear occupational status, significant role differentiation and insufficient training provisions.

A number of recent studies focus on the 'professionalisation' of public employment services⁴, with the special attention paid to the professionalisation of career guidance and employment counselling roles. Despite the fact, that the roles of career guidance counsellor and employment counsellor are distinct and should not be used interchangeably, they are often analysed together in the existing literature. The majority of the sources focus on the career guidance perspective, sometimes mixing in information on employment advisors, however without making a clear distinction between the two roles.

One of the most pressing questions is whether career guidance and employment counselling is in fact 'a role, occupation or a profession'. As stated explicitly in an OECD report of 2004⁵: *'Career guidance may not satisfy the standard criteria for a profession in most OECD countries, but neither in very many cases it is a clearly identifiable and separate occupation. **It is a role, combined uneasily with many others. And if it is not a separate occupational category, the problems of creating separate and appropriate training arrangements for it will persist'*** (emphasised by the author). As the cited report underlines, the work roles, qualifications and training of PES workers (both within and for the service) are not distinctive as a consequence of the fact that in most cases career guidance is not a specialised function, (with a number of exceptions), with differentiated qualification requirements in relation to entry-level counsellors (with specialised, tertiary-level qualifications required in a minority of countries) as well as insufficiently developed training provisions.⁶

There is extremely little evidence that supports the notion that employment counselling can be regarded as a separate profession⁷. From the perspective of the

³ European Commission (Sultana R., Watts A.), *Career Guidance in Public Employment Services across Europe. Trends and challenges*, 2005, p. 7.

⁴ CEDEFOP, *Professionalising career guidance. Practitioner competences and qualification routes in Europe*, CEDEFOP Panorama series 164, Luxembourg 2009; *Professionalisation of Career Guidance in Europe: Training, Guidance Research, Service Organisation and Mobility*, Kraatz S., Ertelt B.J., Dgvt-Verlag, Tuebingen, 2011.

⁵ OECD, *Career Guidance and Public Policy. Bridging the Gap*, 2004.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 95.

⁷ This situation is to some extent different in relation to career guidance counsellors. Even if it is not fully recognised as a separate profession in all countries, guidance counsellors are provided with more specialised training than employment counsellors.

field of the sociology of professions and occupations,⁸ distinctive features of a profession include:

- Regulation (assessed on the existence of: formal qualifications and corresponding education; certification – e.g. examination, certification; regulatory bodies; etc.).
- Autonomy (assessed on the existence of: the degree of control of own affairs; ability to create and implement ethical standards; interest in self-development of the occupational field; etc.).
- Social status (assessed on the existence of: prestige of the profession; power and social influence; authority; etc.).

In relation to career guidance and employment counselling jobs, it is noted in the OECD report⁹ that none of these criteria are met in full, with the lack of *'clear, formal, specialised and lengthy entry and qualification routes into clearly defined occupational roles, staffed by (generally full-time) specialists'*, as well as limited *'control, or substantial influence, over occupational supply: for example by licensing'* and inadequate *'existence of a network of supporting professional associations, training institutions and research organisations'*. One of the distinctive features of the counselling roles towards both reaching the professionalisation of the service itself, as well as meeting formal requirements of the occupation is professional identity¹⁰. People who are engaged in performing a specific occupation cannot always be characterised as a cohesive social group, with strong internal and/or labour relations. Both the status and professional identity can be strengthened by the development of professional associations in this field, and as the study shows, there is a growing trend in this respect¹¹. Although the report of CEDEFOP of 2009 mentions some signs of change towards a more distinctive identity, in a few countries, this still constitutes a major challenge. Thus one has to agree, that **at the current level, both the career guidance and employment counsellors roles do not meet the requirements of a separate profession.**

From the formal perspective, an 'occupation' can also be analysed as a category in the national and international classifications of occupations. The International Standard Classification of Occupations (under the current version of ISCO 08) prepared by the International Labour Office (ILO) does not clearly refer to the 'employment counsellor' as an occupation. A clear resemblance of the tasks attributed to the employment counsellors' work can be found under three separate unit groups of occupations: Personnel and careers professionals (code: 2423), Training and staff development professionals (code: 2424) and Social work and

⁸ See for example: Macdonald K.M., *The Sociology of the Professions*, SAGE, 1995; Jackson J.A., *Professions and Professionalization*, Sociological Studies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (1970, reprinted in 2010).

⁹ OECD, *Career Guidance and Public Policy*, op.cit., p. 95.

¹⁰ CEDEFOP, *Professionalising career guidance*, op. cit., p. 43.

¹¹ Ibidem.

counselling professionals (code: 2635) (in the major group 2: Professionals¹², sub-major group 24: Business and administration professionals, and minor group 242: Administration professionals; and sub-major group 26: Legal, social and cultural professionals, minor group 263: Social and religious professionals) (see Table 1).

Table 1. Occupational groups linked to employment counsellors' work in ISCO08

Personnel and careers professionals (2423)	Training and staff development professionals (2424)	Social work and counselling professionals (2635)
Definition	Definition	Definition
Personnel and careers professionals provide professional business services related to personnel policies such as employee recruitment or development, occupational analysis and vocational guidance.	Training and staff development professionals plan, develop, implement and evaluate training and development programs to ensure management and staff acquire the skills and develop the competencies required by organisations to meet organisational objectives.	Social work and counselling professionals provide advice and guidance to individuals, families, groups, communities and organisations in response to social and personal difficulties. They assist clients to develop skills and access resources and support services needed to respond to issues arising from unemployment, poverty, disability, addiction, criminal and delinquent behaviour, marital and other problems.
Key tasks:	Key tasks:	Key tasks:
(a) advising on and performing personnel functions relating to employee recruitment, placement, training, promotion, compensation, and employee-management relations or other areas of personnel policy; (b) studying and analysing jobs performed in an establishment by various means, including interviews with workers, supervisors and management, and writing detailed position, job or occupation descriptions from information obtained; (c) preparing occupational information or working on occupational classification systems; (d) advising and working on the foregoing and other aspects of job and occupational analysis in such fields as personnel administration, workforce research and planning, training, or occupational information and vocational guidance; (e) studying and advising individuals on employment opportunities, career choices and further education or training that may be desirable.	(a) identifying training needs and requirements of individuals and organisations; (b) setting human resource development objectives and evaluating learning outcomes; (c) preparing and developing instructional training material and aids such as handbooks, visual aids, online tutorials, demonstration models, and supporting training reference documentation; (d) designing, coordinating, scheduling and conducting training and development programs that can be delivered in the form of individual and group instruction, and facilitating workshops, meetings, demonstrations and conferences; (e) liaising with external training providers to arrange delivery of specific training and development programs; (f) promoting internal and external training and development, and evaluating these promotional activities; (g) monitoring and performing	(a) interviewing clients individually, in families, or in groups, to assess their situation and problems and determine the types of services required; (b) analysing the client's situation and presenting alternative approaches to resolving problems; (c) compiling case records or reports for courts and other legal proceedings; (d) providing counselling, therapy and mediation services and facilitating group sessions to assist clients to develop skills and insights needed to deal with and resolve their social and personal problems; (e) planning and implementing programs of assistance for clients including crisis intervention and referral to agencies that provide financial assistance, legal aid, housing, medical treatment and other services; (f) investigating cases of abuse or neglect and taking action to protect children and other at risk persons; (g) working with offenders during and after sentence, to help them to

¹² Generally, as defined in ISCO 08 for the Major Group 2 (Professionals): 'Professionals increase the existing stock of knowledge; apply scientific or artistic concepts and theories; teach about the foregoing in a systematic manner; or engage in any combination of these activities'.

	<p>ongoing evaluation and assessment of internal and external training quality and effectiveness, and reviewing and modifying training objectives, methods and course deliverables;</p> <p>(h) gathering, investigating and researching background materials to gain an understanding of various subject matters and systems.</p>	<p>integrate into the community and to change attitudes and behaviour in order to reduce further offending;</p> <p>(h) providing advice to prison governors and to probation and parole review boards that help determine whether, and under what conditions, an offender should be incarcerated, released from prison or undergo alternative correctional measures;</p> <p>(i) acting as advocates for client groups in the community and lobbying for solutions to problems affecting them;</p> <p>(j) developing prevention and intervention programs to meet community needs;</p> <p>(k) maintaining contact with other social service agencies, educational institutions and health care providers involved with clients to provide information and obtain feedback on clients' overall situation and progress.</p>
Examples of occupations classified include:	Examples of occupations classified include:	Examples of occupations classified include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers adviser, • Job analyst, • Occupational analyst, • Vocational guidance counsellor, • Human resource expert, • Outplacement expert, • Personnel specialist, • Recruitment officer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training officer, • Workforce development specialist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addictions counsellor • Bereavement counsellor • Child and youth counsellor • Family counsellor • Marriage counsellor • Parole officer • Probation officer • Social worker • Women's welfare organiser • Related occupations classified elsewhere: • - Welfare worker - 3412

Source: ISCO 08, International Labour Office.

Similarly, neither O*NET nor the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the US Department of Labor¹³, use a similar occupational category. Again, there are three major classificatory groups under which the tasks resembling the ones of 'employment counsellors' can be found, namely: Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counsellors (code: 21-1012.00), Human Resources Specialists (code: 13-1071.00) and Social and Human Service Assistants (code: 21-1093.00) (see Table 2).

¹³ Available at: <http://www.onetonline.org> and Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2012-13 Edition.

Table 2. Occupational groups linked to employment counsellors’ work in O*NET and US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics

Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counsellors (code: 21-1012.00)	Human Resources Specialists (code: 13-1071.00)	Social and Human Service Assistants (code: 21-1093.00)
Definition	Definition	Definition
<p>Career counsellors assist people with the process of making career decisions. School counsellors help students develop social skills and succeed in school. Career counsellors assist people with the process of making career decisions by helping them choose a career or educational program.</p>	<p>Human resources specialists recruit, screen, interview, and place workers. They also may handle human resources work in a variety of other areas, such as employee relations, payroll and benefits, and training. Recruitment specialists may distribute information at job fairs.</p>	<p>Assist in providing client services in a wide variety of fields, such as psychology, rehabilitation, or social work, including support for families. May assist clients in identifying and obtaining available benefits and social and community services. May assist social workers with developing, organising, and conducting programs to prevent and resolve problems relevant to substance abuse, human relationships, rehabilitation, or dependent care.</p>
Key tasks:	Key tasks:	Key tasks:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsel individuals to help them understand and overcome personal, social, or behavioural problems affecting their educational or vocational situations. • Provide crisis intervention to students when difficult situations occur at schools. • Confer with parents or guardians, teachers, administrators, and other professionals to discuss children's progress, resolve behavioural, academic, and other problems, and to determine priorities for students and their resource needs. • Maintain accurate and complete student records as required by laws, district policies, and administrative regulations. • Prepare students for later educational experiences by encouraging them to explore learning opportunities and to persevere with challenging tasks. • Evaluate students' or individuals' abilities, interests, and personality characteristics using tests, records, interviews, or professional sources. • Identify cases of domestic abuse or other family problems and encourage students or parents to seek additional assistance from mental health professionals. • Counsel students regarding educational issues, such as course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address employee relations issues, such as harassment allegations, work complaints, or other employee concerns. • Analyse employment-related data and prepare required reports. • Conduct exit interviews and ensure that the necessary employment termination paperwork is completed. • Conduct reference or background checks on job applicants. • Confer with management to develop or implement personnel policies or procedures. • Contact job applicants to inform them of the status of their applications. • Develop or implement recruiting strategies to meet current or anticipated staffing needs. • Hire employees and process hiring-related paperwork. • Inform job applicants of details such as duties and responsibilities, compensation, benefits, schedules, working conditions, or promotion opportunities. • Interpret and explain human resources policies, procedures, laws, standards, or regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep records or prepare reports for owner or management concerning visits with clients. • Submit reports and review reports or problems with superior. • Interview individuals or family members to compile information on social, educational, criminal, institutional, or drug history. • Provide information or refer individuals to public or private agencies or community services for assistance. • Consult with supervisor concerning programs for individual families. • Advise clients regarding food stamps, child care, food, money management, sanitation, or housekeeping. • Oversee day-to-day group activities of residents in institution. • Visit individuals in homes or attend group meetings to provide information on agency services, requirements, or procedures. • Monitor free, supplementary meal programs to ensure the cleanliness of the facility and that eligibility guidelines are met for persons receiving meals. • Meet with youth groups to acquaint them with consequences of delinquent acts.

<p>and program selection, class scheduling and registration, school adjustment, truancy, study habits, and career planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide special services such as alcohol and drug prevention programs and classes that teach students to handle conflicts without resorting to violence. • Conduct follow-up interviews with counselees to determine if their needs have been met. 		
Examples of reported job titles include:	Examples of reported job titles include:	Examples of reported job titles include:
Guidance Counsellor, Counsellor, School Counsellor, Academic Advisor, Career Counsellor, College Counsellor, Career Services Director, Academic Counsellor, Advisor, Career Centre Director	Employment interviewers, Human resources generalists, Labour relations specialists, Placements specialists, Recruitment specialists	Social Worker, Caseworker, Advocate, Home based Assistant, Human Services Program Specialist, Mental Health Technician, Outreach Specialist, Addictions Counsellor Assistant, Case Worker, Casework Specialist

Source: www.onetonline.org and Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2012-13 Edition.

As argued in the CEDEFOP report,¹⁴ a formal recognition of the distinct role of the employment counselling occupation by inclusion into the respective country's classification of occupations, could be an important step towards the establishment of a professional identity. Policy-makers are encouraged by the OECD to intervene in order to create clear occupational structures in term of appropriate occupational classifications entries, along with associated qualification requirements¹⁵.

However, even if 'employment counsellor' is not usually an occupation in the system of classification, the criteria for differentiating occupations do create such a possibility. The main criterion for differentiating occupations is a relative stability and sustainability of actions (tasks) undertaken in performing a given job, which was separated from the others in the process of social division of labour. Performance of these actions (tasks) requires specific knowledge and skills (otherwise stated: specific qualifications and vocational knowledge/skills of an occupational group), and should lead to the fulfilment of clearly defined needs. Other distinguishing factors include: acquiring a livelihood as a result of work (performing work for payment) and identification with a given occupational group. From this 'occupational' perspective, if the activities (tasks) performed by employment counsellors are of distinct and permanent character, and they use distinct knowledge and skills required to perform them, there are grounds to treat this job as a separate occupation.

Thus a major perspective in the first part of this analytical paper is the existence of specific job content and competences required to perform a job of employment counsellor, as a key differentiating occupational factor.

¹⁴ CEDEFOP, *Professionalising...*, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁵ OECD, *Career Guidance...*, op. cit.

Achieving this goal may be difficult due to the interrelation (if not overlapping) of the activities and tasks performed by career guidance specialists and employment counsellors. As reported by European Commission¹⁶, the range of career guidance activities is broad and comprises: assessment/screening, career management planning, individual intensive employment counselling, personality development, specialised employment counselling, job broking, job-search assistance activities, group programmes, services offered to students and providing labour market information. Sultana and Watts advocate a connection (if not merging) of the functions of career guidance and job broking, with the latter being understood in a broad sense. Although, job broking being more administrative in terms of activities it comprises, some elements of career guidance, as *'advisers may also need to help clients in clarifying what their job aspirations are, and even making a judgement as to the likelihood that such aspirations will be fulfilled, given the client's profile and the structure of employment opportunities'*. The authors point to examples in an OECD 2004 study, with the evidence being not so clear-cut between the roles of guidance counsellors and placement officers.

However, as noted in the OECD report¹⁷: *'there is a common core of knowledge and skills required by practitioners in all areas of career guidance'*. The OECD calls for balance between 'the necessary theoretical understanding and 'strong foundation of the skills required for practice'. As a key differentiating criterion for career guidance in relation to other PES roles, the 'stronger theoretical background'¹⁸ or 'substantial underpinning of theoretical knowledge'¹⁹ is often emphasised.

Analysis of both classifications (Tables 1 and 2) shows that the job of employment counsellor interfaces with other occupations, such as career guidance counsellor, social worker, private agency placement officer and human resources specialist. This has to do with the fact that PES were originally more passive and administrative authorities, while activation policies together with a shift to public management have changed the job profile towards more service and client orientation. However, there are clear differences in relation to career guidance counselling and employment counselling job profiles. One important distinction is that employment counsellors usually play a double role – supporting clients on the one hand, but monitoring and sanctioning them on the other. Their work is also more outcome/result oriented, with the focus on a rapid (and possibly sustainable) labour market integration of the clients. Career guidance counsellors' work is more client-oriented, with the focus on longer-term personal and career development. Their work allows for a more in-depth and profound counselling services.

Thus, it is important to strengthen counselling and guidance elements in the job and competences profiles of employment counsellors, however, a clear distinction has to be drawn, as the guidance elements are different than those for career guidance

¹⁶ European Commission, *Career Guidance in Public Employment Services across Europe. Trends and challenges*, 2005, p. 21-22.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ OECD, *Career Guidance...*, op.cit.

counsellors. In cases where orientation employment is needed, counsellors can for example, refer clients to specialist career guidance counsellors for deeper assessment and support for decision-making. **As such, the employment counsellors have a job profile that is a combination of broker, counsellor, social worker, and administrator of tasks.** This differentiation of the tasks requires a broad range of interdisciplinary knowledge, comprising both of theoretical background (with psychological knowledge being more important in relation to career guidance counsellors) and profound knowledge of labour market situation and trends, placement, integration and ALMPs²⁰.

As noted in the OECD report²¹, comprehensive competency frameworks, describing the knowledge and skills required at all levels, in all sectors and for diverse types of clients, should be developed. The structure of such frameworks allows for the modular design of training and qualifications provisions, with the focus on the **core competences** acquired by all, as well as optional elements depicting differentiated needs. Based on these assumptions, the CEDEFOP report²² presents a **core competence framework** for career guidance roles, comprising of: (1) foundation competences (focusing on communication, ethical, needs analysis and IT skills), (2) client-interaction competences (focusing on career development, assessment, learning and counselling skills) and (3) supporting competences (focusing on networking, self-organisation, research, evaluation and self-development skills).

As stipulated by the European Commission²³, in respect to four major areas of skills related to career guidance (counselling skills of relationship-building; diagnostic/assessment skills, to define the customer's needs, work experience, skills and qualifications relevant to his or her job-search; skills of making occupational/educational suggestions, based partly on the customer's needs and wishes, and partly on the employment counsellor's knowledge of the labour market and of employers' demands; and skills of supporting action planning) the skills of the employment adviser are more limited than those of career guidance specialist. However, the main training provided for employment service staff has been found to be rather administrative than career guidance-focused. As such, the **role of employment counsellor calls for more specialised training in terms of interviewing and counselling competences.**

The work of PES employment counsellors can also be, to some extent, similar to the work of both social workers and placement specialists in private agencies or firms. As can be seen in Tables 1 and 2, the tasks and area of practice do often overlap. As an example, as stated in the Occupational Outlook Handbook²⁴:

²⁰ *Professionalisation of Career Guidance in Europe: Training, Guidance Research, Service Organisation and Mobility*, Kraatz S., Ertelt B.J. (eds.), Dgvt-Verlag, Tuebingen, 2011.

²¹ Ibid.

²² CEDEFOP, *Professionalising...*, op. cit., p. 76.

²³ European Commission, (2005), op. cit., p. 21-22.

²⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition, Human Resources Specialists, on the Internet at: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/business-and-financial/human-resources-specialists.htm>

'placement specialists match employers with qualified jobseekers. They search for candidates who have the skills, education, and work experience needed for jobs, and they try to place those candidates with employers. They also may help set up interviews.' An argument supporting the clear linkages is also the existing evidence of trained PES staff leaving the service in order to move to developing private employment agencies, especially in New Member States (characterised by the highest public-private sector wage discrepancies)²⁵.

Generally, the **job profiles and training for employment counsellors is less clearly defined in the analysed studies than for career guidance counsellors**. Thus, the need for a more detailed analysis of the job content and competence requirements arises. This study aims to go forward and enrich the knowledge with evidence from PES, to better define the role of employment counsellor as an occupation at the interface of job brokering, counselling, social work and administrative tasks.

Changing job requirements may also stem from the **digitalisation of services**. The use of ICT has undoubtedly had a large impact on extending access to counselling services²⁶. Sultana and Watts provide examples of how differentiated the innovative marketing and delivery of PES services from the perspective of ICT can be²⁷, with the use of: free-phone; the Internet to provide self-service career guidance and information facilities; e-mail contacts with career and information officers; biometric registration system; SMS/mobile phone texting; web-cam consulting; distance career guidance using video-conferencing facilities; TV to disseminate information and 'messages' and website development. With such developments, as reported by Sultana and Watts, many countries noted a *'quantitative and qualitative improvement of online information about employment opportunities and open internet access to labour market and occupation related information'*. As a consequence of the digitalisation of services, a major shift towards self-help services is observed²⁸, supported by the substantial investment in software and ICT developments to facilitate self-help mode access to required information. Based on the above, two major observations can be made: (1) the time spent by employment counsellors on information and administrative services can be put to more effective use through an in-depth approach to more difficult cases (in relation to clients with more complex problems); (2) the rising ICT skills requirements of the work should be supported by relevant ICT training. **As the use of ICT technologies in the work of employment counsellors seems to be increasing, it should also be evident in their respective job profiles, competence profiles and training.**

As indicated by a literature review and desk research, the current training provision for career guidance and employment counsellors is highly diverse. As strongly underlined, appropriate initial and further training of counsellors is crucial, as they

²⁵ European Commission, (2005), op. cit., p. 70.

²⁶ CEDEFOP, *Professionalising...* op. cit., p. 14.

²⁷ European Commission, (2005), op. cit., p. 57.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 61-62.

have a central position in guidance service delivery and development²⁹. However, the CEDEFOP report notes that: '*there is a huge variation across Europe in terms of professional training available, competences and qualifications acquired through such training, roles and functions carried out by guidance practitioners and settings in which guidance services are offered*'³⁰. The diversification of training provisions may stem from:

- Differentiation of national delivery systems, where guidance practice is frequently a subsidiary element within another main professional role³¹;
- Extent to which governments directly provide either initial or recurrent training, the extent to which they fund these and their involvement in setting the content of training;³²
- The fact that the training for guidance practitioners occurs at various stages of their personal career journey³³, and is provided in a number of organisational, educational and political settings.

The analysis of the current state of pre-service, induction and continuing training for guidance roles, on the basis of existing sources, is provided in Table 3.

²⁹ CEDEFOP, *Professionalising...*, op. cit., p. 1.

³⁰ Ibidem.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 9.

³² OECD, *Career Guidance...*, op. cit.

³³ CEDEFOP, *Professionalising...*, op. cit., p. 9.

Table 3. State of pre-service, induction and continuing training for guidance roles

Pre-service training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specialised training prior to recruitment in most cases, with a trend for more specialised training offered, through academic courses in universities and other higher education institutions or within the PES context (available for example in: Hungary, Malta; mandatory in: Austria, Czech Republic, Iceland, Portugal); • However, as noted by Sultana and Watts, specialised training within PES is usually delivered after (and not prior to) employment, so in fact it constitutes initial rather than pre-service training).
Induction training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered by a number of countries (e.g. Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Ireland), especially common within PES as a consequence and proxy of the lack of specialised pre-service training; • Covers a range of areas, including administrative knowledge and tasks (labour market regulations, legislation, IT systems, networking with partner agencies) and professional competences (awareness of the range of clients and their needs, conducting an interview, quality in service delivery), stemming from the need for PES employees to follow structured programmes and prone to changes in line with the policy initiatives directing services at a given point of time.
Continuing (further) training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly vital in PES experiencing fast context and organisational changes leading to the re-design of services and delivery methods; • PES give increasing attention to staff training and intensification of the overall level of continued training provision (in areas of: improving knowledge of the labour market; job-seeking counselling; developing skills to facilitate individual and group guidance sessions; learning how to use interest inventories; performing 'balance diagnostics' and the accreditation of prior learning; leading job clubs; learning new guidance approaches; learning methods in personnel recruitment and evaluation; handling customer segmentation; building relationships and networks with employers; organisational reforms and the use of new IT systems; time and project management); • Most PES offer a whole range of courses (often short and modular in nature) that do not lead to formal certification³⁴, that often focus on services for special target groups (disabled, with health problems, suffering from addictions, etc.); • The prevailing courses are offered in-house, using largely internal expertise, delivered during the staff's regular working time and targeting PES staff specifically, but rather ad hoc in nature; • More formal training structures exist in a number of countries (e.g. Slovenia, France, Finland, Belgium, Ireland) with set programmes offered on a regular basis (sometimes accredited within higher education, but with a noticeable diversity in the level and length of training courses) as well as internal experience sharing between local/regional offices (e.g. Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, France, Norway, Finland, Austria), and special EU-funded projects (e.g. Hungary, Poland).

Sources: Sultana R., Watts A., *Career Guidance in Public Employment Services across Europe. Trends and challenges*, 2005; *Professionalising career guidance. Practitioner competences and qualification routes in Europe*, CEDEFOP Panorama series 164, Luxembourg 2009; *Career Guidance and Public Policy. Bridging the Gap*, OECD, 2004; *Professionalisation of Career Guidance in Europe: Training, Guidance Research, Service Organisation and Mobility*, Kraatz S., Ertelt B.J., Dgvt-Verlag, Tuebingen, 2011.

³⁴European Commission, (2005), op. cit.

This differentiation has significant implications for the work of counsellors. As stated in the OECD report³⁵: *'these gaps and weaknesses suggest that in many countries insufficient training, inappropriate training, or both, constitute significant barriers to the capacity of career guidance services to contribute to the implementation of lifelong learning and active labour market policies'*.

As suggested by the European Commission³⁶, the areas that require further attention in relation to staff training (with the focus again on career guidance counsellors) include:

- (1) improved understanding of the world of work, and of labour market trends;
- (2) specific training in career guidance methods and models (for staff with no previous formal training or experiencing role changes and thus requiring re-training);
- (3) re-training and continued training in order to be able to implement service models;
- (4) training in the use of ICT (supporting the guidance process itself as well as delivery of computer-assisted career guidance services).

As the majority of available information relates to career guidance counsellors, **it is vital to analyse the job content, competency requirements and training for employment counsellors in a more systematic and comprehensive way, in order to characterise the existing and emerging similarities and differences in European PES.**

2.2 Distinguishing job content and competences required to perform a job effectively

As defined in the literature, the **job** is *'a collection of related positions that are all similar enough in terms of the work performed or in the goals that they serve for the organisation so that everybody in the organisation agrees to call the positions by the same job title'*, with positions being *'sets of duties, tasks, activities and elements able to be performed by a single worker'* and tasks being *'collections of activities that are directed towards the achievement of specific job objectives'*³⁷. These characteristics of the job provide information on the job content and are the basis for the formulation of the job profile. For the purpose of this analysis the **job profile** is defined as a description of the exact tasks/responsibilities involved in a particular job.

Equally important are the **competences** required to perform a job effectively. Individual characteristics, including knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA) and other traits like physical attributes, values, motives, etc., were first discussed as important predictors of employee effectiveness in the beginning of the 1970s by famous psychologist David McClelland³⁸. Originally being developed for public sector needs (in the field of diplomacy), the idea gained momentum in the private sector starting with their application to managers' performance by R. Boyatzis³⁹. However, starting

³⁵ OECD, *Career Guidance...*, op. cit.

³⁶ European Commission, (2005), op. cit.

³⁷ Brannick M.T., Levine E.L., Morgeson F.P., *Job and Work Analysis*, SAGE Publications, 2007, p. 7.

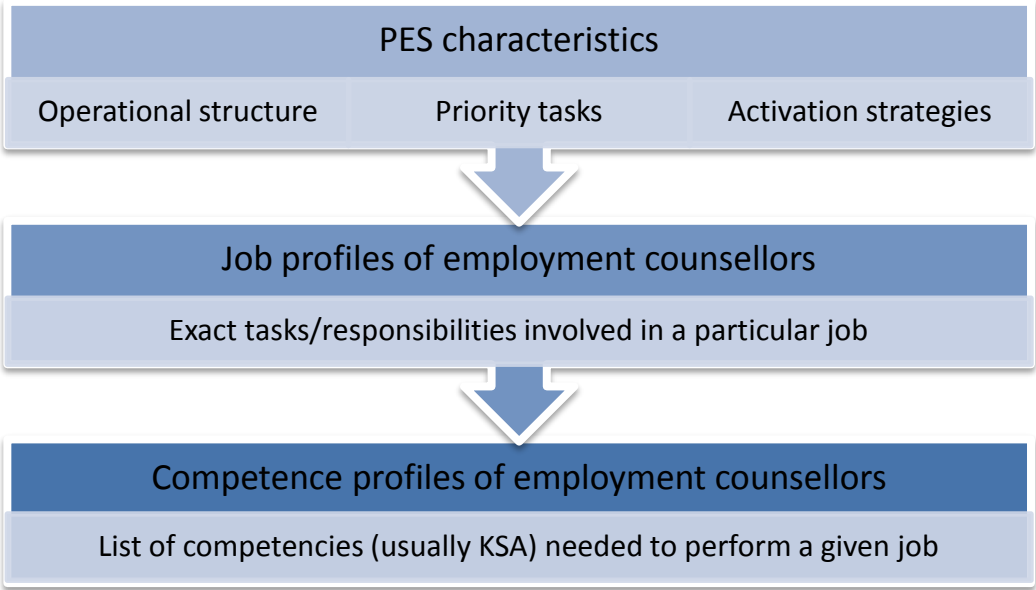
³⁸ McClelland D.C., *Testing for competence rather than for 'intelligence'*, *American Psychologist*, No 1, 1973.

³⁹ Boyatzis R. E., *The competent manager: a model for effective performance*, Wiley, New York, 1982.

in the mid-1990s, implementations of competency models in the public sector have vastly increased, especially in America (both in the USA⁴⁰ and Canada⁴¹). One can also observe a growing interest in competency modelling in the public sector in European countries, including in the public employment services. Competency modelling focuses on describing a set of attributes that are specifically linked to an organisation’s business strategy and goals⁴². It is as the result of such analysis that required competency profiles are created. For the purpose of this report, the term **competency profile** is defined as a list of the competences (commonly organised within categories of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and other characteristics) needed to perform the given job. A competency profile usually defines the required KSA in a descriptive way, providing behavioural indicators.

As presented in Graph 1, the PES characteristics (e.g. operational structure, priority tasks, activation strategies) strongly influence the division of work to be performed by PES employees, including employment counsellors. The job profiles of employment counsellors (defining the job content) in turn influence the competency requirements for the employment counsellor jobholders.

Graph 1. Interrelation of PES characteristics, job content and competence requirements of employment counsellors



⁴⁰ Ennis M.R., *Competency Models: A Review of the Literature and The Role of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA)*, Office of Policy Development and Research, Employment and Training Administration, U. S. Department of Labor, January 2008.

⁴¹ Cooper S., Lawrence E., Kierstead J., Lynch B., Luce S., *Competencies – A Brief Overview of Development and Application to Public and Private Sectors*, Research Directorate, Public Service Commission of Canada, 1998; Kierstead J., *Competencies and KSAO’s*, Research Directorate, Public Service Commission of Canada, 1998; Mansfield R.S., *Practical Questions for Building Competency Models*, Paper presented at Insight Information Company Conference ‘Competency-Based Management for the Federal Public Service, Ottawa, Nov 6-7, 2000.

⁴² Brannick M.T., Levine E.L., Morgeson F.P., *Job and Work Analysis*, SAGE Publications, 2007, p. 156.

From this perspective, the job content and competency requirements are interrelated. Thus, usually, the description of competencies and other job characteristics form a job description – a useful tool to communicate key functions of the job as well as to shape the effectiveness of employees through clear definitions of the job requirements and underlying characteristics needed to perform a job in an effective way.

In the following sections of the paper the key features of the job and competence profiles of the employment counsellors will be analysed, as well as the observed differentiation between European PES practice – both from the perspective of the content of these profiles as well as the process of their preparation.

2.3 Degree of flexibility and autonomy of PES in preparation of job profiles of employment counsellors varies, but trends towards decentralisation are visible

The need for the clear definition of the employment counsellors' job content is widespread in European PES. **Job profiles** including tasks/responsibilities for employment counsellors exist in **all of the analysed countries**. However, different approaches to the process of the preparation of job profiles in relation to autonomy and flexibility can be observed.

In the majority of the analysed countries, the **process of the preparation of job profiles is centralised**. According to the survey findings, the job profiles are prepared at the governmental/MS level in Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia. This process is clearly decentralised in Belgium FOREM, Lithuania, Sweden, United Kingdom and Spain, where job profiles are prepared at regional/local/municipality level.

However in some of the countries reporting that the preparation of job profiles is centralised, some possibility of adjustment to local conditions exist. In relation to the **flexibility of job profiles as a consequence of regulatory and legal framework**, three possibilities have been analysed⁴³:

- Flexible – job profiles of employment counsellors can be flexibly changed at local/service level, in line with the requirements of the service,
- Partially flexible – job profiles of employment counsellors can be changed at local/service level to some extent, in line with the requirements of the service,
- Fixed – job profiles of employment counsellors cannot be modified/changed at the local/service level.

⁴³ The information on the flexibility of profiles provided here refers to both the job and competence profiles.

Partial flexibility of job profiles – providing some possibility of local/regional adaptation – is the prevailing solution adapted in Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia and Austria. Full flexibility of adaptation of the job profiles is granted to PES in Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, France, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, United Kingdom and Spain. Job profiles cannot be modified at local or service level in Estonia, Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands.

In countries reporting the centralisation of the job profiles preparation, different approaches can be observed about the possibility of modifications and adaptations. For example:

- In France, the process of job profiles preparation is centralised at the Directorate General level, but regions can adapt/adjust profiles to the specific needs of local labour markets (e.g. an agency in Paris 11th district specialising more in challenges facing asylum seekers in their job search), while staying in line with the national framework.
- In Hungary, in line with statutory requirements with regard to conditions for filling the job, provisions lay down uniform nationwide rules for drawing up job descriptions.
- In Belgium VDAB, the framework has been set by the Flemish governments, which defines job families (groups of jobs) structure.
- In Romania, the Occupational Standards are approved, at national level, by the National Authority for Qualifications. Although these standards are approved at national level, they may be updated at any time.
- In Slovenia, the preparation of job profiles is coordinated and prepared by the Head Office of the PES. In the preparation process all regional offices are involved.

Also in countries reporting the decentralisation of job profiles, different approaches to their preparation exist. For example:

- In Belgium FOREM, the job profiles have been defined and agreed after a discussion with the Regional Directors (managers at regional level) of FOREM, then re-adapted by the head office.
- In Lithuania, job profiles are prepared at the local level, taking into account the situation in the local labour market.
- In Estonia, due to the organisation of the Estonian PES, which is an independent public body, that is not subordinate to any Ministries and operates 15 regional offices/departments under the supervision of a Head Office, the process of the preparation of job profiles is not centralised at government level. It is however, centralised at the PES Head Office level with the active involvement of regional managers and employment counsellors themselves. In Estonia, regions have most autonomy in the preparation of job and competency profiles.

Thus, the trend towards more autonomy allocated to the regional and local offices, observed in other research⁴⁴, is visible in the survey responses, although to a limited extent.

2.4 Job profiles of employment counsellors are conditioned by operational structure and priority tasks of each PES

As already stated, all of the analysed countries use job profiles for employment counsellors. However, the level of diversification of job profiles varies, as can be seen in Graph 2. A significant share of countries (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Latvia, Poland, Sweden, Romania, Hungary, Estonia) use a generic job profile for employment counsellors. In such organised services, the counsellors provide assistance both to jobseekers and employers as there is no specialisation for jobseekers' service or employers' service.

Graph 2. Level of diversification of job profiles of employment counsellors



As can be seen in Table 4 below, there is a clear diversification of job profiles according to the client group in analysed countries. Thus the analysis shows that the **diversification of the job profiles is to a large extent dependent on the operational PES structure, priority tasks and activation strategy used in the country.**

Table 4. Existence of specialised job profiles for employment counsellors

Job profiles for:	Countries:
Employment counsellors for employers	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, EE, DE, LT, MT, NL, PT, SI, AT, UK
Employment counsellors for jobseekers	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, EE, DE, LT, MT, NL, SI, AT, UK
Employment counsellors for unemployed with more complex problems	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, FR, LT, MT, NL, PT, SI, AT, UK
Employment counsellors for young jobseekers	BE VDAB, HR, DE, LT, UK
Employment counsellors for long-term unemployed	BE VDAB, HR, SI
Employment counsellors for older job seekers	BE VDAB, HR

⁴⁴ European Commission (Sultana & Watts), *Career Guidance in Public Employment Services across Europe*, p. 10; European Commission, *Decentralisation of Public Employment Services*, The European Commission Mutual Learning Programme for Public Employment Services, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Analytical Paper, Author: Hugh G. Mosley July 2011.

A generic job profile of the employment counsellors can be attributed to the service models in which the counsellors have to deal with a broad scope of clients (with the two prevailing groups of jobseekers and employers). As noted by de Koning and Gravesteijn,⁴⁵ this model offers more flexibility to the PES organisation, but seems to be drawing the attention of counsellors from employers to jobseekers as the service for the latter is more time-consuming. Thus, the trend towards the **diversification of the job profiles of employment counsellors for employers and counsellors for jobseekers, is visible**. This is in line with the general changes of the PES service model, in which a significant change from the jobseeker-led to the employer-led business model of PES can be noticed in a number of countries (Sweden, Netherlands, Canada, UK, Finland)⁴⁶. This change causes not only a substantial redefinition of the job task, but also requires employment counsellors to develop new sets of competences to deal with rising (or different) job requirements.

Therefore, the **job profiles for employment counsellors for employers** have been introduced in Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, United Kingdom and Austria. This list of countries is in line with the examples used by de Koning and Gravesteijn, who notify strong commitment to employer-focused services in the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Norway and Finland.

The survey showed that the specialisation seems to be deeper, even in relation to the work of employment counsellors for employers. For example in Belgium VDAB, the counsellors for employers are also divided according to their task specialisation, with some of them focused more on work groups, while others organise job fairs. However, the evidence for this is incidental and cannot be generalised.

At the same time, a similar group of countries (Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Slovenia, Austria, United Kingdom) use **job profiles for employment counsellors for jobseekers**. This supports the observation that the job profiles of employment counsellors are driven mainly by the prevailing PES strategy.

⁴⁵ *How to best structure services for employers?*, The European Commission Mutual Learning Programme for Public Employment Services, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Analytical Paper, December 2011, Authors: Jaap de Koning and José Gravesteijn

⁴⁶ Ibidem.

**COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY:
SERVICE ORGANISATION AND DIFFERENTIATION OF JOB PROFILES OF EMPLOYMENT
COUNSELLORS**

The rationale for the specification of the job profiles of employment advisors in the analysed countries is highly differentiated. The key reason for the differentiation is usually the PES model and activation approach used in the country. For example, in **Estonia** the differentiation can clearly be attributed to the approach to client segmentation. In Estonia the client servicing process is **two-tiered**, so that people who are looking for work can find the help they need at the right time. Two-tier client servicing means that the client servicing process is divided into **employment mediation** and **case management**. This enables PES to offer different forms of support to clients for whom finding work is easy and to those who find it difficult.

Thus, the employment counsellors for job seekers are divided into two different profiles:

1. **Employment mediation counsellor:** Job mediation counsellors work with clients who can be helped back to work first and foremost with job mediation and job search assistance services, career counselling, skills training or other mainstream measures.
2. **Case manager:** Case managers work with clients who face more difficulties in finding employment (including unemployed individuals with more complex problems) and who need more extensive help and diverse measures, including joint support from employment and social services.

Below are the job profiles of both employment mediation counsellors and case managers containing the **purpose of the position** and **key duties**:

EMPLOYMENT MEDIATION CONSULTANT:	CASE MANAGER:
Purpose of the position	
Informing and counselling job-seekers and providing employment mediation to them; organising the provision of the labour market services and benefits as well as other assistance they need to find employment.	Provision of labour market services and organisation of social services and other assistance that facilitates finding work for persons who find it difficult to find employment.
Duties	
Informing job-seekers about the situation on the labour market, unemployment insurance benefits, labour market benefits and services and the conditions on which they can be obtained.	Carrying out a thorough evaluation of persons whose employment is challenged (and involving other specialists if necessary) to identify searches for work and the problems that challenge their employment, and determining with the client the activities that will eliminate or reduce the challenges.
Registering persons as unemployed and job-seekers, and making the decision to terminate their registration if necessary.	If necessary, processing applications for registration as unemployed and for unemployment allowances, and accepting applications for unemployment insurance benefits.
Accepting applications for unemployment insurance benefits and start-up assistance, and accepting and processing applications for labour market benefits.	Preparing and updating individual action plans, coordination of the actions stated in the plans, monitoring their performance and evaluation of results.
Carrying out an initial evaluation and a work-centred interview in order to become familiar with the unemployed person's background, knowledge, skills and job requests, and the need for labour market services and other assistance in order to find employment.	Informing clients about the situation on the labour market, motivating and guiding searches for work, mediating job offers, referring unemployed persons to employers and monitoring the results.
Preparing individual action plans and monitoring compliance with the plan.	Provision of labour market services and/or referring to such services, or organising the participation in social services or other measures in cooperation with other service providers, monitoring and evaluation of results.
Mediating job offers, motivating and guiding searches for work, referring unemployed persons to employers	Explaining the pro-active requirements established for remaining registered as unemployed and receiving

and monitoring the results of job applications.	allowances and benefits, monitoring that these requirements are complied with and applying the sanctions provided for by law in the event of non-compliance.
Referring unemployed persons to case managers or other labour market services if necessary.	Introducing the rights and obligations associated with participation in services, and the conditions on which benefits are paid.
Explaining the activity requirements established for remaining registered as unemployed and receiving unemployment insurance benefits and unemployment allowances, monitoring that these requirements are complied with and applying the sanctions provided for by law in the event of non-compliance.	Performance of the tasks associated with the implementation of the programme <i>Increasing the Supply of Qualified Workforce 2007-2012</i> .
Introducing the rights and obligations associated with participation in services, and the conditions on which benefits are paid.	Creating and maintaining a cooperation network of employers, local authorities and other service providers, and stakeholders in order to promote the employment of their clients.
Performance of the tasks associated with the implementation of the programme <i>Increasing the Supply of Qualified Workforce 2007-2012</i> .	Cultivating a positive attitude towards the employment opportunities and employment of disabled persons and other persons excluded from the labour market among employers and in the community.
Entering data and making entries in the information system(s).	Entering data and making entries in the information system(s).
Participating in the work of the expert groups and/or committees formed in the Fund and the work of projects or workgroups that are compatible with the work of the Fund.	Participating in the work of the expert groups and/or committees formed in the Fund and the work of projects or workgroups that are compatible with the work of the Fund.
Performing the work-related orders and one-off tasks given by the Senior Consultant and Head of Department, the performance of which does not arise from the job description.	Performing the work-related orders and one-off tasks given by the Senior Consultant and Head of Department the performance of which does not arise from their duties.
Other duties are determined in the employment contract, the statutes of the structural unit, the guidelines applicable in the Fund, directives, and the orders given by managers within the scope of their competency. The main difference between the two profiles is that case managers are expected to have more proficient counselling as well as networking skills and experience in working with people with multiple problems. The main differences between the profile for counsellors for jobseekers and counsellors for employers are in the tasks to be performed as well as the skills and previous experience required to perform the job.	

In the **Netherlands**, apart from the existing job profiles (in form of the job descriptions covering purpose of the position, behavioural competences, results areas, key activities and expected results – see Annex for details), the UWV Werkberijf adopted a **role-portfolio approach**.

The role-portfolio approach provides a high level of flexibility, as the roles usually do not prescribe in detail the tasks to be carried out in achieving outcomes. A role refers to the part people play in their work – the emphasis is on the outcomes of what they do, the technical competencies required to do it (what they need to know and be able to do) and, often, the behaviours expected of them (behavioural competencies)⁴⁷.

For example, the role portfolio of an employer services (senior) adviser (AWGD), covers three main areas of attention: **People** (directly focused on the employer and the colleagues), **Market & WORK** (indirectly focused on the job-seeker and directly on the results of the AWGD and WERKbedrijf) and **Resources** (resources available to the AWGD to bring together People, Market&WORK). In these 3 areas 11 broadly understood roles have been designed:

Area	Role	Description
People	Partner	Builds on relations with employers in which an atmosphere arises where the employer does not begrudge the adviser his successes. Is partner of preferred and non-preferred employers and catalogues their needs. Transforms these needs into opportunities and options and links these to own objectives and own supply of job-seekers. Forges ties on the basis of <i>trust</i> and <i>interest in the business</i> of the employer. Forms an unbreakable one-two with the role of <i>Salesman</i> .
	Relation builder	Like a chameleon, builds and maintains relations within and outside UWV that are necessary to attain the joint objectives. Invests intensively in this relation (these relations) to bring about a sense of cooperation and co-ownership.
	Enforcer	Where appropriate ⁴⁸ , monitors the agreements that have been made with an employer on the efforts he is required to make to keep a job-seeker sustainably in employment. Identifies contraventions and misuse of legislation and regulations. Cooperates with the roles of <i>Partner</i> , <i>Relation builder</i> and <i>Connector</i> .
	Developer	The senior adviser who contrasts the functioning of the individual adviser with the applicable professional and quality standards to help the adviser grow and develop.
Market & WORK	Networker	Creates on the basis of the willingness employers and third parties to take the plunge with UWV and one another. Initiates and utilises options in the people-work-income triangle. Knows where (potential) employers 'are', where the labour market is for job-seekers and which parties play a role in providing job-seekers with a place in the labour market.
	Connector	Recognises and achieves cooperation between the various executive and support internal and external parties. Connects these parties proactively in order to bring job-seekers and employers together.
	Salesman	Inspirational entrepreneur who places difficult or very difficult to place job-seekers sustainably in vacancies, whether or not on the basis of cooperative agreements or as part of an arrangement. Adjusts the employer's initial demand in order to be able to fill places from among the available supply. Acts in close cooperation with the <i>Partner</i> .
Resources	Information manager	Gathers and assesses internal and external information. Uses this information to make the most of opportunities and options to set up and implement cooperative agreements and arrangements and assess them for feasibility. Provides insight into own efforts in and contributions to attaining the objectives.
	Work preparer	Builds with employers and other parties on agreements and procedures with mutual (financial) dependence. Considers with parties how to make agreements attractive. As financial engineer, deploys schemes and pathways in such a way that the interests of

⁴⁷ Armstrong M., Cummins A., *Valuing roles. How to establish relative worth*, Kogan Page, London-Philadelphia, 2008, p. 10.

⁴⁸ For example, part-time unemployment, use of wage cost subsidy, adaptations at the workplace (special measures), etc.

		employers and other parties are served as well as possible.
	Quality manager	The senior employer services adviser who monitors the quality of provision of employer services in the people-work-income triangle. Tests, evaluates and initiates activities to ensure quality within own employer service point or own labour market region. Has a clear overview of the quality and quantity of results of the advisers, particularly in complex arrangements.
<p>In all of the roles, the professional development of the AWGD has been described in the form of 'steps on the growth ladder', namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Beginner</u>, (knowing) is not (yet) broadly deployable but the required knowledge is present. Deploys this with the support and reflection of others. Obtains support from structures and procedures. We are not talking of a beginner AWGD, but of an adviser who is starting in a particular role. Implementing and learning on the basis of basic knowledge of the subject is the benchmark. • <u>Advanced</u>, (applying) applies the basic knowledge in an effective and targeted manner. Operates (still) under supervision and reflects own insights against images of colleagues and the senior AWGD. • <u>Competent</u>, (reflecting) anticipates on the basis of criteria regarding effectiveness and efficiency. The benchmark is that flexibility has arisen in the work that makes it possible to anticipate developments and respond with suitable alternatives. • <u>Proficient</u>, (developing) masters the subject matter and is capable of evaluating and adjusting existing ways of thinking and acting and adapting them to changing demands. In addition, capable of guiding less experienced colleagues in a role and transferring and developing knowledge. 		
Source: Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund; and UWV WERKberdijf Netherlands.		

Generally speaking, a **high level of standardisation of employment counsellors' profiles for jobseekers** can be observed in the analysed countries. In a majority of PES (Belgium FOREM, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia) these job profiles are standardised, and at the others (Cyprus, Belgium VDAB, Austria, United Kingdom), they are partly standardised. Only in the case of Sprain, the profiles for employment counsellors for jobseekers are not standardised at all, as they can be regionally differentiated. Also in France, the fiche for the profiles is similar at the national level for all the service, while the regions remain responsible for the definition of the profiles.

There is **slightly less standardisation in terms of employment counsellors for employers**; 13 countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia) report standardised profiles, 7 PES (Hungary, Cyprus, Croatia, Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Austria, United Kingdom) – have partly standardised profiles, while 2 (Romania, Spain – due to regionalisation of the service) – are not standardised at all (again in Spain – due to the high regional differentiation).

The diversification of job profiles according to two major client groups (counsellors for employers vs. counsellors for jobseekers) is not prevalent in the analysed countries, although it does exist. This is also in line with the previous research by de Koning and Gravesteyn, who explicitly note: *'In some countries there are teams dedicated both to jobseekers and employers, and in other countries there are separate*

professional teams dedicated to each category of clients. It seems that neither type of organisation is clearly prevailing’.

A number of PES use specialised forms of support for different groups of clients, which requires differentiation of the job profiles as well. Clearly visible is the specialisation of the **employment counsellors for the unemployed with more complex problems**, followed by the diversification of the job profiles. Eleven countries report having the job profiles for this group of counsellors (Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Croatia, France, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, United Kingdom and Austria). Examples of approaches to employment counselling for the unemployed with more complex problems are provided below.

COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY: EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS FOR UNEMPLOYED WITH MORE COMPLEX PROBLEMS

Even in relation to specific target groups, like unemployed with more complex problems, the diversification of the job profiles of employment advisors seems to be driven both by 'top-down' (resulting from PES strategies regarding segmentation and targeting which supports the diversification of job profiles) as well as 'bottom-up' (from traditional specialisation of employment counsellors to the general strategy of PES) approaches in European PES.

For example in **Malta**, a specialised unit helping people with more complex problems (including disabled individuals, ex-convicts, ex-substance abusers, long-term unemployed and other individuals with complex social problems) has been created. The main difference in the profiles of employment counsellors in this unit stem from the need for more closer cooperation with employers, NGO's and government entities who also provide support to this client group.

On the other hand in **Croatia**, this specialisation seems to be driven by 'bottom-up' factors, as the diversification of the job profiles seems to stem from the target group specialisation of some of the PES counsellors, rather than the general strategy of the organisation. For example, in **Croatia**, some of the diversification of job profiles has quite a long tradition, especially in relation to people with more complex problems and the disabled. Even in socialist times (before 1990), some of the counsellors have been specialised in assisting this group, and this tradition is on-going. In Croatia, the diversification of the job profiles can also be attributed to the pre-accession projects aimed at different target groups: young people, older individuals and women. Counsellors who were to work with these groups were offered dedicated training. In this respect, the diversification of job profiles may seem incidental, but in the opinion of PES representatives the above mentioned approach is in line with the general strategy taken in the service. This seems to be similar in the case of **Lithuania**, where employment counsellors also specialise in working with unemployed individuals with more complex problems (mainly the disabled and ex-prisoners) and **Portugal**, where formally the tasks of employment counsellors for unemployed individuals with more complex problems are performed by vocational/career guidance counsellors.

Employment counselling for individuals with more complex problems is also provided in countries, which do not report having specific job profiles for this group of advisors. Interesting in this respect is the case of **Hungary**. In Hungary all of the counsellors, as well as placement officers perform highly complex and multi-faceted tasks including client registration, recording vacancies, job placement, keeping contact with clients, cooperation with employers, etc. However, disability employment counsellors, who work in job centres, provide specialised assistance to the people with reduced work capacities. In the counselling interview, the counsellor explores health factors preventing the disabled person from entering into employment and performing work. Together they identify the client's expectations, value orientation and opportunities based on his/her residual capabilities. They also take into account the expert opinion of the occupational health care provider or the National Rehabilitation and Social Office. In the counselling process they work out an action plan taking into account services and subsidies that can help the jobseeker with reduced work capacity to engage in employment, also taking into consideration his/her work experience, education and age.

Irrespective of the reason and form of diversification, the high value added of such an approach is clearly visible in analysed countries. This value predominantly stems from the ability to more effectively address the problems of the target groups by using specialised counsellors. As the **Croatian** PES representative stated: *'If a counsellor is working with the elderly s/he has to know the specific issues facing this population. With the elderly there is no long tradition in Croatia, as before 1990 there was no problem with this category of unemployed, but after a lot of bankruptcies now around 30 % of total unemployed are elderly. This requires specific skills and training of counsellors that deal with this target group'*.

Less common is the diversification of the job profiles of employment counsellors for: young jobseekers, long-term unemployed and older jobseekers.

Few PES (Belgium VDAB, Croatia, Germany, Lithuania, United Kingdom) report having **job profiles of employment counsellors for young jobseekers**. The role of

PES in the labour market integration of young people seems to be crucial, as it often works as a moderator between training institutions, companies and young people, alongside the development of their own integration strategies⁴⁹. Thus, as stated by Duell and Vogler-Ludwig,⁵⁰ '*many countries have opted for providing specialised services for young people*'. The rationale for this are the problems in reaching this target group as well as the highly specific content of the services for this target group. Duell and Vogler-Ludwig also provide examples in Germany with specialised integration services in the Federal Labour Agency built around the 'new integration approach' combining the efforts of federal and local services.

The survey responses provide additional examples in Lithuania, where youth employment counsellors working at the Youth Job Centres help to write/update resumes and cover letters, give information about job search methods, organise group counselling seminars, etc.; and Belgium FOREM, where an internal network of social assistants has been set up to serve as employment counsellors for young jobseekers. Nevertheless, these examples (as well as specific job profiles) are scarce, and there seems to be more need in relation to the focus of employment counsellors on this client group, especially in times of significantly growing youth unemployment in Europe. One reason for a low differentiation of job profiles of employment counsellors for young unemployed within the PES, may be the use of outsourcing for the services for this target group to private contractors, which is the case in Ireland⁵¹, for example. In such case, the need for internal specialised services for young unemployed is limited.

The diversification of the **job profiles of employment counsellors for long-term unemployed** (Belgium VDAB, Croatia and Slovenia) and **for older jobseekers** (Belgium VDAB and Croatia) is the least common. This observation is quite surprising, especially in relation to the latter group. As noted by the European Commission⁵², there is a growing number of PES in which interventions are organised to address certain target groups including older workers (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, Finland, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom), as well as special guidance and tailor-made support to find a job dedicated to the groups of 45+ and 50+ on a project basis (Austria, France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden). In addition, the European Commission notes, that this tailor-made approach requires the employment counsellors (especially case managers) to have knowledge and skills on the specific characteristics of older jobseekers. Thus, if the counsellors do not receive relevant training, it may restrict positive placement outcomes for older unemployed⁵³. From this perspective, a need arises for more focus on this target group in relation to the job profiles and competency requirements of employment advisors.

⁴⁹ European Commission *The Role of Public Employment Services in Youth Integration. A Review of European Good Practice*, The European Commission Mutual Learning Programme for Public Employment Services, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Analytical Paper, April 2011, Authors: Nicola Duell and Kurt Vogler-Ludwig

⁵⁰ Ibidem.

⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁵² European Commission *The Role of Public Employment Services in Extending Working Lives. Sustainable Employability for Older Workers*, The European Commission Mutual Learning Programme for Public Employment Services, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Analytical Paper, September 2011, Author: Barry J. Hake

⁵³ Ibidem.

2.5 The analysis of the common elements of job profiles, as well as relative importance of tasks can help to identify the core tasks of employment counsellors

A number of **tasks performed by employment counsellors** have been identified during the desk research, in two major work areas of employment counsellors: (1) services for unemployed and (2) services for employers (as presented in Tables 5 and 6 accordingly). Tasks have been divided into three categories, based on their occurrence ('most common', 'common' and 'less common'), following the analysis of how often the task/responsibility is included in the job profile of employment counsellor in analysed countries.

Table 5. Tasks of employment counsellors relating to services for unemployed by country

Most common tasks	
Providing information on available job offers	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, UK
Job search assistance	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, CY, EE, BG, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, UK
Information about ALMP measures	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, UK
Maintaining contact with registered jobseekers through telephone/e-mail	BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, UK
Providing and up-keeping on-site and on-line information on available job openings	BE VDAB, BL, PL, PT, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, AT
Individual initial interviewing of jobseekers	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, UK
Assessment of the jobseeker's strengths/weaknesses and the adequate need for support	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, UK
Preparation of an individual action plan	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, FI, DE, FR, HU, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, UK
Referral to appropriate ALMP measure/ provider	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, UK
Maintaining direct, in- person contact with registered jobseekers	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, AT, UK
Common tasks	
Providing telephone/on-line job information and assistance	BE VDAB, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, AT, SI
Group sessions for jobseekers	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK
Providing and up-keeping on site and on-line information on available trainings/ALMPs	BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE
Monitoring of implementation of IAP	BE FOREM, BG, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, SE, SI, AT, UK
Monitoring in case of referral to another provider/ training	BE FOREM, BG, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, SE, SI, AT, UK
Less common tasks	
Registering unemployed (formal registration process)	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, EE, FI, FR, LV, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, SI
Use of specialised IT and other tools for assessment	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, FI, DE, HU, LT, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, UK
Guidance on career planning/ development	BE FOREM, BG, CY, FI, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, RO, SE, SI
Planning of ALMPs	BE FOREM, HR, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI
Networking with other stakeholders, providers	BE FOREM, BG, CY, FI, DE, HU, LV, MT, NL, PT, SE, SI, AT, UK

Table 6. Tasks of employment counsellors relating to services for employers by country

Most common tasks	
Organisation of speed dating/ job fairs	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, AT, SI, UK
Filling of vacancies- selection of candidates	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, AT, SI, UK
Informing employers about ALMP/ support	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, AT, SI, UK
Group sessions for employers	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, AT, SI
Common tasks	
Vacancy intake/registration	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, AT, UK
Actively searching for new job offers at employers (networking with employers)	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PT, RO, SE, AT, SI, UK
Follow- up of placement	BE VDAB, HR, CY, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, AT, SI
Less common tasks	
Filling of place for apprenticeship or work placement	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, CY, EE, FI, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PT, SE, AT, UK
Consulting about age management, human resources, gender issues, etc.	BE VDAB, HR, CY, HU, NL, SE, AT, UK

To identify the core tasks/responsibilities of employment counsellors the **perceived relative importance of the tasks**⁵⁴ have been analysed. It is based on the analysis of how often the task/responsibility has been regarded ‘very important’, ‘important’ and ‘not relevant’ in relation to the job profile of employment counsellor in analysed country (Table 7).

⁵⁴ Please note that, no single task has been regarded as unimportant by survey respondents. Thus, the term ‘relative’ and not ‘absolute’ importance is used. It should also be noted that the respondents were asked to provide the information on the importance of tasks/responsibilities, even if some of them were not included in the job profiles of employment counsellors in their countries.

Table 7. Perceived relative importance of tasks relating to services for unemployed and services for employers in job profiles of employment counsellors

	Services for unemployed	Services for employers
Most important tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual initial interviewing of jobseekers • Assessment (profiling) of the jobseeker's strengths/weaknesses and the adequate need for support • Preparation of an individual action plan • Providing information on available job offers • Job search assistance • Information about ALMP measures • Referral to appropriate ALMP measure/provider (e.g. specialist assessment, training) • Monitoring of implementation of IAP • Maintaining direct, in- person contact with registered jobseekers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively searching for new job offers at employers (networking with employers) • Filling of vacancies- selection of candidates • Filling of place for apprenticeship or work placement • Informing employers about ALMP/ support (e.g. subsidies, support to integrate disabled)
Important tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on career planning/ development • Group sessions for jobseekers • Networking with other stakeholders and providers • Maintaining contact with registered jobseekers through telephone/e-mail • Providing telephone/on-line job information and assistance • Providing and up-keeping on-site and on-line information on available job openings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow- up of placement • Group sessions for employers • Organisation of speed dating/ job fairs
Less important tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registering unemployed (formal registration process) • Use of specialised IT and other tools for assessment • Monitoring in case of referral to another provider/ training • Planning of ALMPs • Providing and up-keeping on site and on-line information on available trainings/ALMPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacancy intake/registration • Consulting about age management, human resources, gender issues, etc.

As can be seen in Table 7, the perceived importance of tasks of employment counsellors does not differ to a large extent from those most commonly found on the job profiles. In relation to the services for unemployed, only the task of 'Monitoring of implementation of IAP', which was deemed very important by the majority of respondents, is not so commonly found in the job profiles of employment counsellors. On the other hand, tasks like 'Maintaining contact with registered jobseekers through telephone/e-mail' and 'Providing and up-keeping on-site and on-line on available job openings', although often found on counsellors profiles, are not regarded as most important. Much less consensus can be observed in relation to less common/important job tasks. Only tasks like 'Registering unemployed (formal registration process)', 'Use of specialised IT and other tools for assessment', and 'Planning of ALMPs' can be regarded as generally less significant in employment counsellors' daily work.

In relation to the tasks relating to the services for employers, there is much less consensus between the tasks most often found in the job profiles and those, which are deemed as most important by the PES representatives in the survey. Only two tasks can be found on both lists (most common and perceived as most important):

- Filling of vacancies - selection of candidates,
- Informing employers about ALMP/ support.

One of the tasks, which is regarded both as less important and less commonly found in the job profile, is consulting about age management, human resources, gender issues, etc.

2.6 The analysis of the common elements of competence profiles, as well as the relative importance of competencies can help to identify the core competences of employment counsellors

A number of **competences required from employment counsellors** have been identified during the desk research and have been included in the surveys (as presented in Table 8). For the purpose of defining the core competences, they have been divided into three categories, based on their occurrence ('most common', 'common' and 'less common'), following the analysis of how often the competence is included in the competency profile of employment counsellors in the analysed countries.

Table 8. Competences included in the competence profiles for employment counsellors by country*

Most common	
Knowledge of current labour market situation and trends	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK
Knowledge of disadvantaged groups on the labour market	SE, RO, PT, PL, NL, MT, LT, LV, HU, DE, FR, FI, BE VDAB, BG, CY, EE, HR, SI, UK
Teamwork/cooperation	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK
Flexibility	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, FI, SI, UK
IT skills	SE, RO, PT, PL, MT, NL, LT, LV, HU, DE, FR, FI, CY, HR, BG, BE FOREM, BE VDAB, AT
Problem recognition and solving skills	SE, RO, PT, PL, NL, MT, LT, LV, HU, DE, FR, EE, CY, HR, BG, BE FOREM, BE VDAB, SI, UK
Assessment and matching skills	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FR, FIDE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, UK
Communication and interviewing/counselling skills	SE, PT, PL, NL, MT, LV, LT, HU, DE, FR, FI, EE, CY, HR, BG, BE FOREM, BE VDAB, SI, UK
Ability to motivate and inspire clients	SE, RO, PT, PL, NL, MT, LT, LV, HU, DE, FI, EE, CY, HR, BG, BE VDAB, BE FOREM, SI, UK
Client orientation	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE
Stress resistance	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI
Patience, understanding and the ability	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FR, DE, HU, LV,

to listen non-judgmentally	LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK
Ability to work independently	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI
Common	
Knowledge of service-specific tools/ activation practice	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI
Information finding and analysis skills	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, EE, FR, DE, HU, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK
Knowledge of the gender aspects	BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, FI, FR, HU, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, AT, SI, UK
Trust building ability/ reliability	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, UK
Knowledge of vocational structure and vocational classifications	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, FI, DE, HU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI
Planning and organising skills	BG, HR, CY, EE, FR, DE, HU, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, UK
Negotiation skills	BG, HR, CY, EE, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI
Less common	
Innovativeness/creativity	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, EE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, UK
Group facilitation skills	RO, PT, PL, NL, MT, LT, LV, HU, FR, HR, BG, BE FOREM, SI, UK
Knowledge of ALMP measures/concepts	BE FOREM, BG, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, MT, NL, SI
Skills relating to employer services	BG, HR, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PT, RO, SI, UK
Knowledge of human resources management	BG, HR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE
Knowledge of social case management problems	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, EE, DE, LV, MT, NL, PL
Knowledge of hard and soft skills assessment tools	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, EE, LT, LV, NL, UK
Knowledge of performance measurement/ controlling	BG, FI, LV, NL, RO, SE, SI, UK
Knowledge of labour law	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, HU, SI
Assessment of psychological and social profiles	NL, LT, LV, CY, HR, SI

* In Lithuania a number of competencies, other than those included in the survey, have been enumerated: a thorough understanding of the counselling process, motivational and re-orientation skills.

To identify the core competences of employment counsellors the **perceived relative importance of the competences**⁵⁵ have been analysed. It is based on the analysis of how often the competence has been regarded as 'very important', 'important' and 'not relevant' in relation to the competence profile of the employment counsellors in the analysed countries (Table 9).

⁵⁵ Please note, that as for the tasks analysis, no single competence has been regarded as unimportant. Thus, the term 'relative' and not 'absolute' importance is used.

Table 9. Perceived relative importance of competences in the competence profiles of employment counsellors

Relative importance:	Competences:
Most important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of current labour market situation and trends • Knowledge of ALMP measures/concepts • Assessment and matching skills • Communication and interviewing/ counselling skills • Ability to motivate and inspire clients • Teamwork/cooperation • Client orientation • Stress resistance • Patience, understanding and the ability to listen non-judgmentally • Flexibility
Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of service- specific tools/ activation practice • Knowledge of disadvantaged groups on the labour market • IT skills • Planning and organising skills • Problem recognition and solving skills • Negotiation skills • Trust building ability/ reliability • Information finding and analysis skills
Less important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of vocational structure and vocational classifications • Knowledge of labour law • Knowledge of human resources management • Knowledge of performance measurement/ controlling • Knowledge of the gender aspects • Knowledge of hard and soft skills assessment tools • Knowledge of social case management problems • Assessment of psychological and social profiles • Skills relating to employer services • Group facilitation skills • Ability to work independently • Innovativeness/creativity

As can be seen in Table 6, the perceived importance of the competences of employment counsellors does not differ to a large extent from those most commonly found in the competence profiles. Only the competence 'Knowledge of ALMP measures/concepts', which was regarded as very important in a majority of the cases, is less commonly found in the competency profiles. On the other hand, competencies like 'Knowledge of disadvantaged groups on the labour market', 'IT skills', 'Problem recognition and solving skills' and 'Ability to work independently', although often found in the competency profiles, are not so much valued in terms of relative importance. What is interesting though, is that the list of competences of highest relative importance is mainly constituted by 'soft' skills and interpersonal competences.

Consensus is also noticeable in relation to less common and less important competences, where a high share of knowledge-related competences is visible. However, the analysis of responses to other questions shows, that there is not a clear cut distribution in relation to the prevalence of knowledge vs. 'soft' skills in the

job and competency profiles of the employment counsellors. Although some of the countries (e.g. Germany, Bulgaria) strongly emphasise that it is vital to balance the practical and theoretical skills in the profiles, with 50 % of profiles emphasising theoretical and 50 % emphasising practical skills.

2.7 Availability, transparency and the use of job and competency profiles in the assessment of counsellors' work can help to increase the effectiveness of this approach

In the majority of analysed countries the job and competency profiles of employment counsellors are clearly defined. In most of cases (Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Romania, Slovenia, Austria) **competency profiles have been specifically designed for employment counsellors' positions.**

A majority of the countries report a **clear linkage between job and competency profiles to the assessment system**, including the identification of the need for further training. However in five cases, (Sweden, Lithuania, Hungary, Belgium VDAB, Austria) this link is not so clear or does not exist. It is worth noting however, that in Lithuania, *the assessment system, including the identification of the need for further training, is currently not linked with job and competency profiles. There are no standardised criteria on which to base a determination of further training needs.*

Competency profiles for employment counsellors are in main not related to EU and Member State regulations in the area of the qualifications (Belgium FOREM, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, United Kingdom). A connection with European Qualifications Framework is made in five cases (Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland) and a partial connection exists in four countries (Estonia, France, Malta, Romania). While in some Member States (Poland, Romania), the National Qualifications Frameworks are still under development, and only some countries (e.g. Lithuania) strongly report the relation of competency profiles of employment counsellors to the NQF.

There seems to be different practices regarding the **availability of job and competency profiles** in the analysed group of countries. Generally speaking, the job and competency profiles are available to everyone in the service. In some cases (e.g. Belgium FOREM), these profiles are available to team managers (also available at anyone's specific request), while in others (like Lithuania), they are readily available online on the intranet.

3 TRAINING OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS

3.1 Entry requirements for employment counsellors: level of education, education disciplines and additional qualifications differentiate the country approaches

Available current research⁵⁶ indicates a high level of differentiation of approaches to initial entry requirements for employment counsellor positions in European PES. As can be seen in Table 10, entry-level education required from employment counsellors varies.

Table 10. Entry-level education required from employment counsellors

Entry level education:	Essential	Desirable	Not required
Secondary education (or equivalent at ISCED lvls 3-4)	BE VDAB, CY, LT, MT, PL, RO	BE FOREM, FI, FR	UK
Bachelor's degree (or equivalent at ISCED lv 5)	SE, PT, NL, LV, HU, DE, SI	PL, MT, FR, FI, EE, CY, HR, BG, BE VDAB, ES	UK
Master's degree (or equivalent at ISCED lv 6)	HU	CY, FR, LV, LT, LT, MT, PL	BE FOREM, HR, FI, DE, PT, AT, UK
Postgraduate studies degree	EE	LV, MT, PL	BE FOREM, HR, CY, FI, FR, DE, LT, PT, AT, UK

The relatively lowest entry level education requirements can be observed in Belgium FOREM, Finland, and France – where secondary education is desirable and in Belgium VDAB, Cyprus, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, where secondary education is essential. There is also a group of countries that clearly do not require education levels higher than a bachelor's degree (either master's degree or postgraduate studies degree), such as Belgium FOREM, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Portugal and Austria. However, the majority of these countries focus rather on the continuous learning of employment counsellors, with a philosophy of developing the required competencies in-house. The relatively **highest entry-level education requirements** are observed in Estonia (a postgraduate degree is essential), Hungary (a master's degree is essential) and a number of countries, where a bachelor's degree is essential (Sweden, Portugal, Netherlands, Latvia, Hungary, Germany, Slovenia). In the United Kingdom online testing is being used in the recruitment of employment counsellors.

Apart from the required level of education, the majority of analysed countries use some form of **additional entry requirements**, like certified qualifications, specialised training, foreign language certificates or previous work-related professional experience (Table 11).

⁵⁶ European Commission (Sultana & Watts), *Career Guidance in Europe's Public Employment Services. Trends and Challenges*, p. 79.

Table 11. Other entry requirements/qualifications requested from employment counsellors

Entry requirement:	Essential	Desirable	Not required
Certified qualifications	BE VDAB, BG, HR, HU, LT, MT, PT, RO, ES	EE, FI, FR, NL	BE FOREM, CY, DE, LV, SE, AT, UK
Specialised training	HR	BE VDAB, BG, EE, FI, FR, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, ES	BE FOREM, CY, DE, LT, SE, HU, AT, UK
Foreign language certificates	FI, HR	EE, RO, PT, PL, BG, LT, LV, CY, ES	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, DE, NL, MT, HU, FR, EE, AT, UK
Previous work related professional experience	EE	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, FI, NL, PL, HU, LV, LT, MT, SE, ES	CY, FR, DE, PT, RO, AT, UK

In some countries certified qualifications are essential (Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Spain) and in Croatia – specialised training is also essential. Foreign language certificates are essential in Croatia and Finland. In a number of countries (Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, Netherlands, Poland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Sweden, Spain), previous work-related professional experience is desirable, but is only essential in Estonia. As already described by Sultana and Watt: *‘Estonia (...) requires experience over and above formal qualifications, and will only recruit candidates who, besides having a university degree or a higher-level professional qualification, have spent one year doing counselling⁵⁷’*. Also in Malta, relevant experience is also considered. In Slovenia, an internal exam, which must be taken within first 12 months of employment with the service, is required, although formally there are no additional requirements. Additionally in Bulgaria, references from previous employers are considered and in Lithuania, IT certificates are desirable. In the United Kingdom other entry requirements, such as additional qualifications, training or experience, are not required, but are encouraged.

Clearly **certain education and study disciplines are preferred** for the position of employment counsellors in analysed PES (Table 12). As can be seen in more than half of cases, the disciplines of psychology, sociology and social work are preferred, while law, economics and management are also considered to be an asset in a more limited number of countries. This observation is in line with other research findings:

‘What is considered to be a ‘relevant’ qualification again varies from country to country, but the degrees that feature most in survey responses are in psychology, education, sociology, social work, and economics— and to a lesser extent in public administration, law and HRD studies, as well as political science⁵⁸’.

⁵⁷ Ibidem.

⁵⁸ Ibidem.

Table 12. Preferred education/study disciplines for the openings in the positions of employment counsellors

Study discipline:	Country:
General education (unspecified)	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, FR, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE
Psychology	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, CY, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PT, ES
Pedagogy	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, NL, ES
Sociology	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, CY, DE, HU, LV, MT, NL, RO, PT, SI, ES
Social work	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, CY, BG, EE, FR, DE, HU, LV, RO, PT, NL, LT, MT SK, ES
Law	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HU, LT, NL, PT, RO
Economics	BE FOREM, LT, NL, PT, RO
Management (including Human Resource Management)	BE FOREM, EE, HU, MT, NL, PT

Some additional information has been provided by respondents indicating that there are additional disciplines preferred to enter positions as employment counsellors (social pedagogy and andragogy, e.g. specialisation in adult learning in Slovenia), and preferred specialised postgraduate studies (in Poland postgraduate studies in the area of job placement is preferred). In Belgium FOREM, there has been a degree of deregulation in recent years (as from January 2010), with the position of employment counsellor becoming available to individuals with all kinds of educational profiles. In the United Kingdom there is no preference for any specific study disciplines.

CASE STUDY:

STUDY COURSES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED LABOUR STUDIES OF THE FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT AGENCY IN GERMANY

The University of Applied Labour Studies of the Federal Employment Agency (Hochschule der BA – HdBA) was founded in 2006. Since then it has offered two degrees at both of its campus locations in Mannheim and Schwerin:

1. Labour Market Management, Bachelor of Arts
2. Career Guidance and Case Management, Bachelor of Arts (only in Mannheim)

The main financier of the university is the Federal Employment Agency, which offers interested students the opportunity to attain a bachelor's degree at the agency-run university. Each year approximately 300 students are accepted onto the programme, of which about 240 study labour market management while approximately 60 join the Career Guidance Programme. Both degrees take three years to complete.

In 2006 the University of Applied Labour Studies of the Federal Employment Agency received accreditation from the German Science Council based on the favourable evaluation of its academic model. Therefore, it is one of the few universities in the country to have been given special certification by the Council. With these degree programmes the university offers internationally recognised academic degrees (Bachelor of Arts, in the future also Master of Arts) with an academic structure oriented on current European standards.

In the undergraduate programme the students can attain expertise through a unique combination of courses in economics, social sciences and law, and qualify themselves for professional work related to labour market policy. This also includes training for skills in accordance with Book II of the German Social Code (SGB II), which is administered by the Federal Employment Agency in cooperation with the municipalities.

The Labour Market Management programme prepares students for work in employment agencies in the areas of placement and integration, maintenance of benefits and management of resources. The Career Guidance and Case Management programme prepares students for work in career guidance and orientation, as well as work concerning career-related case management.

Specific emphasis is placed on the Federal Employment Agency as a public service provider within the framework of the social security system of the Federal Republic of Germany. The degree programmes are characterised by modular structures, flexible study approaches, short periods of study and, in particular, by a consistent practice-based orientation. This is ensured through internships that are integrated into the curriculum.

The degree programmes are designed so that acquired skills are also applicable outside of the Federal Employment Agency. Similar expert knowledge is also needed particularly by municipalities, non-profit and private funders, which play a central role in implementing labour market policies, as well as staffing agencies.

Both courses entail three years of study (nine terms), which are broken down into:

- five contact terms, each of four months' duration, attending university classes, and
- four practical placement terms, each of which also lasts four months.

In the last placement term (placement term D), the bachelor's dissertation is written.

Five modules have to be completed in each contact term. Each module covers a thematically coherent subject matter with coordinated performance targets and learning outcomes. Each module concludes with an examination. In placement term A, students work on two modules focused on practical tasks; placement term B has four such

modules, and term C has three.

The various modules relate to the following five fields of study:

- public management
- employer-focused work promotion
- counselling
- employee integration
- social security.

In the first contact term the modules are identical for both courses. Differentiation begins thereafter. In contact term 3, a main subject is selected for contact terms 4 and 5. On the Labour Market Management course, the options are

- placement and integration,
- management of resources and
- maintenance of benefits.

On the Career Guidance and Case Management course, the options are:

- career guidance, and
- case management.

Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit

The requirements specified above are usually laid down in binding regulations/legislation, although in a majority of cases they are focused on education level requirements. Education level requirements are regulated in 14 PES (Belgium VDAB, Belgium FOREM, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain), and education/study disciplines in 4 (Cyprus, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands), while other entry qualifications are subject to regulation in 5 PES (Cyprus, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Spain). Other countries do not report to have any regulation in these areas.

3.2 Specialised inception training is provided to employment counsellors in all countries, but the duration and content varies

In all of the analysed PES, new employees in employment counsellors' positions are provided with specialised inception/adaptation training. The length of this training varies and amounts to: 2-5 days (Romania, Lithuania), 6- 10 days (Belgium VDAB, Estonia, Netherlands), 11- 15 days (Malta, Finland, Slovenia), 16- 20 days (Belgium FOREM, Croatia, France, Sweden, Spain) to more than 20 days (Cyprus – 30 days, Germany – 80 days, Austria – 205 days, Poland – one year). In some of the cases (Portugal, Latvia, Bulgaria), the duration of training is variable depending on the individual preconditions (Table 13). In the United Kingdom the inception training is variable depending on the individual preconditions, but is usually between 16-20 days.

Table 13. Duration of the inception/adaptation training by country

Duration of the inception/adaptation training:	Countries:
2-5 days	RO, LT
6-10 days	BE VDAB, EE, NL
11-15 days	MT, FI, SI
16-20 days	BE FOREM, HR, FR, SE, ES, UK
More than 20 days	CY, DE, AT, PL
Variable	PT, LV, BG, UK

A number of **training methods used for employment counsellors during inception/adaptation training** have been identified during desk research, with three possible modes of provision: (1) in-house by internal trainers/experienced employees, (2) externally by individual trainers, and (3) externally by specialised training companies (Table 14). Analysis indicated that the training of employment counsellors during inception/adaptation training is performed mainly in-house by internal trainers and/or experienced employees.

Table 14. Training methods used for employment counsellors during inception/adaptation training by provider.

Training method:	Provider:		
	Provided in-house by internal trainers/ experienced employees	Provided externally by individual trainers	Provided externally by specialised training companies
Individual on-the-job training	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, ES, UK	-	CY
Individual off-the-job training	NL, MT, LV, FR, FI, CY, HR, UK	LV, CY	NL, BE FOREM
Dual training combining theoretical and practical units	BE FOREM, BG, CY, FR, DE, HU, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, AT, ES, UK	HR, CY, LV	NL, BE FOREM
Conferences/seminars	SE, RO, PT, NL, LT, DE, FR, FI, ES, UK	FR, CY	PT, NL, LV, HU, FR
In-class learning (lectures, presentations)	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LT, NL, PL, PT, AT, SI, ES, UK	CY, FR, RO, SI	BE VDAB, LV, NL, SI
Work simulations/workshops	SE, PT, PL, NL, LT, LV, HU, FI, FR, DE, EE, HR, SI, UK	RO, CY	PT, NL
Case study analysis	BE FOREM, BG, HR, FI, FR, LV, NL, PL, PT, SI, ES, UK	CY, PT	FR
Self-studying	SE, PL, NL, MT, LV, DE, FI, FR, CY, BG, BE FOREM, SI, AT, ES, UK	CY	-
E-learning	BE VDAB, BG, FI, FR, DE, NL, PL, SE, SI, ES, UK	-	LV, NL
Blended learning (e-learning + traditional methods)	SE, PL, NL, DE, FR, FI, BE VDAB, SI, ES, UK	-	NL, LV
Coaching/mentoring	BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FR, DE, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, AT, UK	CY, FR, RO	-
Supervised project-based learning	NL, MT, LV, FR, HR, BG, UK	RO	-

The most commonly used training methods provided in-house by internal trainers/experienced employees are: individual on the job training (22 cases), in class training (17 cases), coaching/ mentoring (17 cases), dual training combining theoretical and practical units (15 cases), self- studying (15 cases), and work simulations (14 cases).

The **most commonly used training methods provided externally by individual trainers** are: in class training (4 cases), coaching/ mentoring (3 cases), dual training combining theoretical and practical units (3 cases).

The **most commonly used training methods provided externally by specialised training companies** are: conferences/ seminars (5 cases) and in class training (4 cases).

For example:

- In Belgium FOREM, the off-the job training is provided externally by a specialised training company, while dual training combining theoretical and practical units is provided by internal and external trainers.
- In Estonia, new employees receive three days training on the PES organisation, services, guidelines, procedures, etc. and three days training/workshop on work-focussed counselling approaches, skills and techniques. An individual inception plan is drawn up for each new employee (responsibility of his/her supervisor) that includes appointing a staff member who is responsible for coaching/mentoring in the workplace.
- In France, some of the training is provided in-house by external trainers, following a tender procedure (e.g. modules like: managing difficult situations including telephone reception; service relationships).
- In Slovenia, supervised project based learning is in the preparation phase and will be provided internally and externally.

COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY: DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO INITIAL TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS
<p>In Ireland, before a substantial organisational change, which relocated employment services and employment programmes from the Training and Employment Authority (FÁS) to the Department of Social Protection, employment service officers took part in a counselling skills course at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.</p> <p>The course seeks to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an understanding of the notion of counselling skills and be able to differentiate it from the activity of counselling, • the capacity to identify and to demonstrate key listening skills within appropriate models and frameworks, • an understanding of the role of personal development within a counselling skills approach to interpersonal communication, • a deeper appreciation of how you function, behave and reflect in relationships in a group setting, • an understanding of the key principles of the ethical use of counselling skills in non-professional settings. <p>Content of the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 1: Skills and modules of counselling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Definitions of counselling skills and counselling ○ Difference between the exercise of counselling skills, counselling and related activities ○ Principles of counselling and core conditions ○ Communication skills and blocks to communication

- Module 2: A framework for counselling:
 - Basic models of counselling
 - Interviews involving counselling skills: setting boundaries, confidentiality, contracts
 - Using counselling skills in non-therapeutic settings
 - Ethical issues in the use of counselling skills
- Module 3: Special issues in counselling:
 - Bereavement
 - Depression
 - Loss
 - Addiction
- Module 4: Personal development:
 - Awareness of self and listening skills
 - Values clarification
 - Prejudices
 - On-going negotiation of the impact of the course
- Module 5: Group work:
 - Patterns in groups
 - Group dynamics and process
 - Individual autonomy and collective responsibility
 - Awareness of oneself in groups
 - Encouraging 'here and now' dialogue.

The course is 100-hours over one academic year. It consists of 25 x 3-hour sessions together with 4 Saturdays, or 20 x 3-hour sessions together with 6 Saturdays. The course leads to receiving NUI Certificate in Counselling Skills, but does not offer a professional qualification in counselling.

The initial training of employment counsellors in **Portugal** has been internally designed by the Directorate of Internal Training Services of the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (*Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional - IEFP*).

The initial training is designed to facilitate the integration of the trainee and to equip him with a body of knowledge required for carrying out the tasks entrusted to the IEFP. The general objective of the initiative is clearly formulated as *'to provide the participants with the knowledge/competences required to carry out the role of Employment Advisor'*.

Content of the course:

- Integration into the IEFP
- Integration into the Regional Delegation
- Intervention methodology
- Functional relationship between Job Centres and applicants
- Interviewing for employment advisors
- Group dynamics
- Practical training in the work environment
- Functional relationship between Job Centres and organisations
- The job supply
- The Management and Information System for the Employment Area (SIGAE)
- Practical training in the work environment
- Labour legislation
- Unemployment benefit
- Employment-related measures and programmes
- The Professional Rehabilitation System
- The Employment Information System (SIEF)
- Programmes and measures for disadvantaged social groups
- Study visits
- Functional analysis methods
- Job-seeking techniques
- Practical training in the work environment
- The EURES network
- The employment market
- The Code of Administrative Procedure

- Practical training in the work environment.

The programme includes classroom technical training sessions (Human Resources - Internal Training and the Coordination Services of the Regional Delegations) and practical training in the work environment (Job Centres). The course is staffed with both internal (IEFP) and external instructors. A Certificate of Professional Training (*Certificado de Formação Profissional*) is awarded to successful trainees. The course lasts 6 months and covers 828 hours of training.

Source: National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

<http://adulthoodeducation.nuim.ie/courses/CounsellingSkills.shtml>

and Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (*Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional - IEFP*), Portugal.

3.3 Training needs analysis is found to be more important than formal obligations as the factor determining further training of employment counsellors

Employment counsellors are **formally/legally obliged to undertake on-going training on a regular basis in:** Germany (80 days), Bulgaria (20 days per year), Finland (10 days), Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal (5 days per year), Sweden, Slovenia (4-6 days). In some cases, such continuous training is required by law, but intervals are not regular (Spain, Sweden, Poland, Latvia). In Austria, it is not required, but recommended to take up seven days of training a year on average (see 'Comparative Case Study' below).

**COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY:
DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO FURTHER TRAINING OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS**

Analysed countries are highly differentiated in terms of their approach to the further (on-going) training of employment counsellors.

In **Austria**, the employment counsellors - after over 30 weeks of detailed initial training (focused on combined theoretical knowledge and practical skills training) - are not formally or legally obliged to undertake training on a regular basis. They are recommended to take up seven days of training a year on the average. While this training is not obligatory for all, it seems to be well structured. Employment counsellors are offered a wide choice of training themes and courses; however, the decision to send the counsellor to the given training is vested in the direct supervisor. The manager assesses whether an employee needs training in a given field. Thus, the manager is obliged to act as a type of personal development coach.

The rationale for this has been explicitly formulated by a PES representative: *'We go this way on a purpose. We have a huge training system and we have the impression that it is not necessary to offer large seminars to everybody. We don't want counsellors to take a [high] number of seminars, as we want to be more focused'*.

Surely the need for more focus stems also from the budgetary limitations, as the service (similar to PES in other countries) cannot provide training to everybody. However, the limiting of costs seems not to be the 'benefit' of this approach. The role of leaders in sharing responsibility for personal development requires them to be much more sensitive to the individual needs of the team members. In this way, the function of the manager also changes, as they must also be more aware of the outcomes of the training. Thus, generally, the implemented approach has already shown some positive outcomes and is to be continued in the Austrian PES.

In **Poland** there is definitely a different solution for the continuous development of career counsellors and employment counsellors, which is characterised by a high degree of formalisation.

As defined by the Act of 20 April 2004 on promotion of employment and labour market institutions, in order to obtain a professional license and the ability to practice the profession, the career counsellor must have a university degree, perform tasks in the field of career counselling for at least 12 months in PES or complete preparation training for the profession. Obtaining the position of career counsellor level I, requires an additional 24 month placement as a counsellor in PES combined with a master's degree or 12 month placement combined with a master's degree in psychology or counselling. For career counsellor level II, the conditions of 36 months' work as a counsellor and a postgraduate degree in counselling must be fulfilled.

Slightly lower are the requirements for employment counsellors. The work of an employment counsellor can be performed by a person with a professional license, who has at least a secondary education, and performed counselling tasks for at least 12 months in the PES. Employment counsellor level I, must have a university degree and 24 month seniority working as a PES counsellor. Employment counsellor level II must have a master's degree, completed post-graduate studies in the field of job placement and a 36 month seniority as a counsellor in PES.

Despite such a formalised system, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs noted the lack of standardisation of the training offer and ways of obtaining qualifications by PES workers (excluding postgraduate studies for career counsellors, which are strongly developed in Poland and offered by a number of academic institutions). In order to fill this gap, the Ministry decided to develop modular training programs for key positions in the service: employment counsellors, career counsellors, professional development specialists, job club leaders, and programmes professionals. As part of the 'Modular training programs for the staff of public employment services' project, financed by the EFS, 20 modular training programmes have been developed, and since 2008 more than 2 300 PES employees participated in the training (see Annex).

However, different models for the **training needs analysis** can be observed in analysed countries. Generally speaking, in the needs assessment phase, the requirements of the organisation and job are compared to the skills available in the

potential trainees to make training effective and efficient⁵⁹. In the majority of PES (Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia, Austria, United Kingdom) **competencies and further skill requirements of employment counsellors are analysed and scrutinised on a regular basis**. As stated by respondents, **training needs are defined on the basis of competence gap analysis**, except in some cases (Cyprus, Finland). The most commonly used method to analyse competencies and further skills requirements of employment counsellors is the **analysis of performance appraisals/other formal periodic reviews of work** (used in: Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia, Austria, United Kingdom), followed by **internal surveys including employee opinion surveys and training needs surveys** (used in: Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Lithuania, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Slovenia, Austria, United Kingdom). **Interviews/information from direct supervisors** are somewhat less widespread in PES practice (used in: Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom). The most rarely used methods are **tests** (used in Hungary, Latvia, Netherlands), **360-degree feedback** (used in: Latvia, Netherlands) and **assessment centres/development centres** (used in Malta). A majority of the representatives of analysed countries agree that succession planning of employment counsellors takes into account their competences and effectiveness.

For example:

- In Lithuania, employment counsellors are either civil servants or persons working under contracts governed by the general labour code. Civil servants must attend initial training, i.e. the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills of public servants admitted to a position of a career public servant. For those who work under general contracts learning is not required by law.
- In Belgium FOREM, according to the collective labour agreement signed by social partners, each joint committee (responsible for a particular sector) should allocate at least 0.10,% of the wage bill to training and employment measures regarding 'most vulnerable' groups. Moreover, the agreements of the National Conference for employment, signed in 2003, encourages the professional sectors to continue to invest (financially) in continuous vocational training, aiming at reaching a level of 1.9 % of the wage bill. These are strong suggestions (guidelines), but not legally speaking compulsory.
- In Estonia, twice a year employment counsellors' work is reviewed and the results are assessed by direct supervisors (performance interviews). All employment counsellors also have to pass the knowledge-based test and (soft skills based) competence models are used to assess and discuss their performance.
- In France, assessment is primarily through the Annual Professional Interviews (*Entretiens Professionnels Annuels*).

⁵⁹ Brannick M.T., Levine E.L., Morgeson F.P., *Job and Work Analysis*, SAGE Publications, 2007, p. 255.

- In Malta, the training needs analysis is on-going and is the basis for the training provision for employment counsellors. In addition to this regular training, PES staff are also allowed to attend training related to personal development.

3.4 Diversified methods, providers and content of training characterise the further training of employment counsellors

A number of **training methods used for employment counsellors during on-going training** have been identified through desk research, with three possible modes of provision: (1) in-house by internal trainers/experienced employees, (2) externally by individual trainers, and (3) externally by specialised training companies (Table 15).

Table 15. Training methods used for employment counsellors during on-going training by provider*

Training method:	Provider:		
	Provided in-house by internal trainers/ experienced employees	Provided externally by individual trainers	Provided externally by specialised training companies
Individual on-the-job training	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LT, LV, MT, NL, SE, AT, SI, ES, UK	HR, AT	-
Individual off-the-job training	SE, NL, MT, LV, FR, HR, UK	FR, CY, HR	NL, LT, BG, BE FOREM
Dual training combining theoretical and practical units	BE FOREM, BG, HR, FR, DE, HU, LV, NL, PT, SE, SI, AT, ES, UK	HR, CY	BE FOREM, CY, FR, LT, NL, PL, PT
Conferences/seminars	SE, PL, NL, MT, LT, LV, DE, EE, FI, HR, AT, SI, ES, UK	CY, HR, SI	PT, NL, LV, FR, HR, BG, BE FOREM, BE VDAB, SI
In-class learning (lectures, presentations)	BE FOREM, HR, BG, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PT, SE, AT, SI, ES, UK	BE VDAB, HR, CY, FR, SI	BE VDAB, LV, NL, PT, SI
Work simulations/workshops	SE, PT, NL, LV, LT, FI, FR, DE, EE, HR, BG, SI, ES, UK	CY, HR, BG, BE VDAB	PT, NL, AT
Case study analysis	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, FI, FR, LV, NL, PT, SE, SI, ES, UK	BE VDAB, HR, CY	PT
Self-studying	SE, LV, NL, DE, FI, CY, BG, SI, ES, UK	-	PL
E-learning	BE VDAB, BG, FI, FR, DE, LV, NL, PL, SE, SI, ES, UK	-	LV, NL
Blended learning (e-learning + traditional methods)	E, NL, LV, FI, FR, DE, BG, SI, ES, UK	BE VDAB	NL, LV
Coaching/mentoring	BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, SE, AT, UK	BE VDAB, HR	-
Supervised project-based learning	RO, MT, NL, LV, FR, HR, BG, UK	DE	-

* Additionally in France, tutoring is also used.

The **most commonly used training methods provided in-house by internal trainers/experienced employees** are: individual on the job training (18 cases), in class training (18 cases), dual training combining theoretical and practical units (14 cases), conferences/ seminars (14 cases), and work simulations (14 cases).

The **most commonly used training methods provided externally by individual trainers** are: in class training (5 cases), work simulations (4 cases), individual off the job training (3 cases), and conferences/ seminars (3 cases).

The **most commonly used training methods provided externally by specialised training companies** are: conferences/ seminars (9 cases), dual training combining theoretical and practical units (7 cases), in class training (5 cases), and individual off the job training (4 cases).

A number of **training content themes** have been identified during desk research, provided to: (1) newly employed counsellors during inception training, (2) experienced counsellors during on-going training, and (3) other PES employees (Table 16).

Table 16. Key content of the training provided to employment counsellors (both new and experienced) and other PES employees

Content of training:	Target group:		
	Inception training for newly employed counsellors	On-going training for experienced employment counsellors	Other PES employees
Basic training on PES services	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, AT, SI, ES, UK	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, CY, EE, LV, NL, PL, UK	BE VDAB, BG, CY, EE, LV, NL, PL, SI
Current labour market situation and trends, current economic trends	SE, PT, PL, NL, LT, LV, HU, DE, FR, EE, FI, CY BE FOREM, HR, AT, SI, ES, UK	RO, PT PL, NL, MT, LT, LV, HU, FR, EE, FI, HR, SI, ES, UK	PT, PL, NL, LT, LV, HU, EE, FI, HR, AT, SI, ES
Employment and training in EU (EURES, Ploteus, Europass, etc.)	BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, DE, LV, LT, NL, PL, PT, SE, AT, SI, ES	BG, HR, EE, FI, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI, UK	BE FOREM, BG, EE, FR, LV, LT, PL, PT, RO, SI
Support of jobseekers in effective job search methods (use of online job search tools, CV and application documents writing, interviewing, etc.)	SE, RO. PT, PL, NL, LT, LV, HU, DE, FR, FI, EE, HR, BE VDAB, BE FOREM, AT, SI, ES, UK	PT, PL, NL, MT, DE, FR, FI, EE, CY, HR, BG, BE VDAB, BE FOREM, SI, UK	PT, PL, NL, LV, EE, BE VDAB, SI
Use of modern IT tools in counselling process	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, LT, LV, NL, SE, PT, AT, SI, ES	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, MT, NL, PT, AT, SI, ES	EE, FR, LT, LV, NL, PT, SI
Social and Labour law in PES services (work arrangements, including flexible, support of unemployed in basic labour law issues, etc.)	SE, NL, PL, PT, MT, LT, LV, DE, CY, EE, HR, BE FOREM, BE VDAB, AT, SI, ES	NL, PL, PT, LT, LV, DE, EE, HR, BG, BE VDAB, SI, UK	NL, PL, PT, LT, FI, EE, SI

Content of training:	Target group:		
	Inception training for newly employed counsellors	On-going training for experienced employment counsellors	Other PES employees
Key competencies on the labour market (employers' needs analysis, EU key competencies, etc.)	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, CY, FI, FR, MTDE, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, AT	BE VDAB, BG, HR, FI, FR, LV, NL, PL, RO, SI, ES, UK	BG, HR, FI, FR, LV, NL, PL, SI
External cooperation and networking (with employers organisations, trade unions, private employment services, NGOs, etc.)	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, FI, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, AT	BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FI, DE, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, AT, SI, ES, UK	BG, EE, PL, NL, PT, AT, SI
Customer orientation	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, FI, FR, DE, LV, LT, NL, PL, PT, SE, AT, SI	BE FOREM, BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, DE, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, AT, SI, UK	BG, EE, FI, LV, LT, NL, PL, PT, RO, AT, SI
Disadvantaged groups on the labour market (50+, youth, low skilled, long term unemployed, etc.)	BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, FI, FR, DE, LT, NL, PT, RO, SE, AT, SI, ES	BE VDAB, BG, HR, FI, FR, DE, LT, MT, NL, PT, AT, SI, ES, UK	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, FI, FR, LV, LT, NL, PT, AT, SI
Demand and supply on the labour market – vocational and competency perspective	SE, NL, PL, PT, LV, DE, FR, FI, CY, HR, BG, BE FOREM, AT, ES	RO, NL, PL, PT, MT, LT, FR, FI, EE, HR, BG, BE FOREM	NL, PL, PT, LT, LV, FR, FI, EE, HR, BG, SI
Effective activation / motivation techniques of unemployed and inactive	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, CY, FI, EE, FR, DE, LV, NL, PL, PT, AT, SI, ES, UK	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FR, DE, LT, MT, LV, NL, PT, PL, SI, ES, UK	EE, FR, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, SI
Career planning (including individual action plans)	SE, PT, PL, MT, NL, LV, DE, FR, CY, HR, BG, BE FOREM, SI, ES	PT, PL, NL, LT, LV, DE, FR, EE, HR, BG, BE FOREM, AT, SI, UK	PT, PL, NL, LV, FR, FI, EE, BE VDAB, SI
Vocational and educational information	BE FOREM, BG, HR, CY, FI, FR, DE, LV, NL, PL, SE, SI, AT, ES	BG, HR, FI, FR, DE, TV, MT, LT, NL, PL, SI, AT	BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, LV, NL, PL, PT
Occupational and vocational knowledge and legislation (e.g. classifications of occupations, regulated vocations, etc.)	SE, PT, PL, MT, NL, LV, FI, FR, CY, BG, BE FOREM, AT, SI, ES, UK	PT, PL, NL, LT, FI, FR, HR, BG, SI, UK	PT, PL, NL, LT, FI, FR, HR, SI
Legal framework of PES functioning	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, AT, ES	BG, HR, EE, LV, PL, SI, ES	BG, HR, EE, LV, LT, PL, SI

Content of training:	Target group:		
	Inception training for newly employed counsellors	On-going training for experienced employment counsellors	Other PES employees
Active labour market policies / effective concepts	SE, PT, NL, PL, LV, LT, DE, FR, FI, CY, HR, BG, BE FOREM, AT, SI, ES	MT, NL, PL, LV, LT, FR, EE, FI, HR, BG, FOREM, SI, UK	NL, PL, LT, LV, FR, FI, HR, BG, SI
Communication and negotiations in the counselling process	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, CY, EE, FI, FR, DE, HU, MT, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, AT, ES	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FR, DE, LT, NL, PL, PT, SI, AT, UK	BE VDAB, EE, LV, LT, NL, PT, PL, SI
Psychological tools in the process of competence diagnosis and development	NL, CY, AT, ES	NL, BE VDAB, BE FOREM, UK	SE, PT, NL, LV, FI, HR, BE VDAB, SI
Psychological tools in counselling/advisory process	CY, NL, DE, BE VADAB, AT, ES	BE VDAB, NL, UK	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, FI, LV, NL, PT, SE, SI
Special working methods for unemployed with more complex problems (e.g. case management)	BE VDAB, HR, CY, DE, LV, NL, SE, AT, ES	BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FR, DE, LT, MT, NL, AT, SI, UK	BE FOREM, FI, FR, NL, PT, SI
Prevention of discrimination on the labour market (including gender issues)	SE, RO, NL, LV, FR, FI, CY, HR, BG, BE FOREM, BE VDAB, SI, AT, ES, UK	PT, NL, MT, LT, LV, DE, FR, HR, BG, BE VDAB, AT, SI, UK	NL, LV, BG, SI
Working with difficult clients	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, CY, FI, FR, DE, LV, NL, SE, AT, SI, ES, UK	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, BG, HR, EE, FR, DE, LV, LT, MT, NL, PT, AT, SI, UK	BE FOREM, BE VDAB, HR, EE, LV, NL, PT, SI
Stress management training	NL, LV, DE, FR, CY, HR, BG, BE FOREM, SI, ES	NL, MT, LV, DE, FR, FI, HR, BG, BE FOREM, AT, SI	PT, NL LV, HR, SI
Design of the training/learning process	CY, NL, PL, ES	FI, FR, DE, LT, NL, PL	BG, FI, FR, LV, NL, PL, PT, SI
Project and time management	PL, NL, LV, CY, HR, BE FOREM, ES	RO, PL, NL, LV, DE, FI, FR, HR, BE VDAB, AT	PT, PL, NL, MT, LV, LT, HR, BG, BE VDAB, SI
Public procurement law	BE FOREM, CY, LV, NL, PL, AT, ES	FR, NL, PL, AT	BG, HR, FR, DE, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI
Knowledge of human resources management	PL, NL, LV, CY, ES	PL, NL, MT, LV, BE VDAB, AT, SI	PT, PL, NL, LV, FR, HR, BG, BE VDAB, BE FOREM, SI
Knowledge of performance measurement	LV, NL, PL, SE, ES	LV, NL, PL, AT, SI, UK	BE FOREM, BG, HR, FR, LT, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI
Knowledge of controlling	FR, DE, LV, SE	FR, DE, LV, NL, AT	BE FOREM, BG, HR, FR, LV, LT, MT, NL, PT, SI

In relation to **inception training for newly employed counsellors**, the most popular **content of training** is: basic training on PES (21 cases), legal framework of PES functioning (19 cases), communication and negotiations in the counselling process

(18 cases), support of jobseekers in effective job search methods (18 cases) and, current labour market situation and trends, current economic trends (18 cases).

In relation to **on-going training for experienced employment counsellors**, the most popular **content of training** is: effective activation/ motivation techniques of unemployed and inactive individuals (16 cases), current labour market situation and trends, current economic trends (15 cases), support of jobseekers in effective job search methods (15 cases), use of modern IT tools in the counselling process (14 cases), external cooperation and networking (15 cases), customer orientation (15 cases) and working with difficult clients (15 cases).

In relation to **training for other PES employees**, the most popular **content of training** is: disadvantaged groups on the labour market (12 cases), demand and supply on the labour market- vocational and competency prospective (11 cases), current labour market situation and trends, current economic trends (11 cases), customer orientation (11 cases), employment and training in the EU (10 cases), project and time management (10 cases), public procurement law (10 cases), knowledge of human resources management (10 cases), knowledge of performance measurement (10 cases), and knowledge of controlling (10 cases).

For example:

- In Estonia, since 2011, the PES is developing and implementing work-focused counselling. In-house trainers were trained and training programme developed in cooperation with the UK partner Vocational Rehabilitation Consultants Ltd. As a result, a 3 day training programme was delivered in 2011-2012 to all employment counsellors (around 300 staff members were enrolled). The next planned stage (in 2013-2014) is to train coaches who support the daily use of work-focussed counselling skills at the work place, develop and establish a national employment counsellor qualification (by adjusting European Employment Practitioner Certificate) and train assessors to assess skills in practice and award qualifications.
- In Lithuania, the training of public servants is financed by the state. Due to financial constraints, currently there are limited financial possibilities to increase staff competences in the fields of psychological counselling aspects, stress management, human resources, and especially performance measurement and controlling. However in Lithuania, the counsellor's own personal development and growth is very important. The counsellors are expected to demonstrate an interest in self-awareness, work/life balance, focus, goal setting and other complementary areas of self-knowledge which are out of the scope of the competence profile. In Spain, the on-going training for experienced counsellors and other PES Employees varies a great deal from region to region.

3.5 Quality of training is not only achieved through formal quality assurance procedures, but also through internal informal support

A number of methods help to **ensure the quality of the training that is provided to employment counsellors**. First of all, the vast majority of respondents agree, that the **aims of training are clearly defined and connected to the needs of the service provided by PES**. Formal **quality assurance procedures** are in place with regard to the training provided for employment counsellors, except in some cases (Cyprus, Croatia, Malta). Also in a majority of the countries, **the effectiveness of the training provided to employment counsellors is regularly analysed**, except in some cases (Malta, Finland, Cyprus, Estonia, Spain).

For example in Croatia, PES counsellors in employment gain their competences through 'on the job training' and mentorships which aim to provide practical knowledge in the work place. The training programme grants counsellors their professional licence in accordance with professional chambers. All counsellors have an MA in humanities and social sciences, and are obliged to pursue continuous professional development (in order to obtain their professional licence). The Croatian Employment Service Labour Market Training Centre aims to support the establishment of staff training based upon training needs analysis. The trainer skills programme targets trainers from the PES and other key labour market institutions in basic orientation training for PES staff, core business processes of PES, supporting business processes and market-related knowledge and skills. At the same time, PES develops internal quality standards. For example, Quality Standards for the Vocational Guidance and Selection at PES secure services quality standardisation and more visible and transparent career guidance activities. The Quality Standards define career guidance processes, activities, flow of activities, methodology, target groups, outputs, etc.

Training offers and programmes for employment counsellors are regularly updated in the following PES: Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Latvia, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom (more than once a year), Croatia, Finland, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Spain, Slovenia (once a year), and Romania (every 2-3 years).

For example:

- In France, the training offer is regularly reviewed by the Skills Development Department of the General Direction, in conjunction with the correspondents in the different directorates, interregional centres for skills development (CIDC), responsible for regional training, and their trainers. Monthly meetings are held between CIDC trainers and the Skills Development Department.
- In Lithuania, training programmes for civil servants (some employment counsellors are civil servants) are developed according to the requirements for the content of training programmes set by the Minister of the Interior.

All of the respondents agree, that **informal learning** (support from colleagues, supervisors, learning-by-doing, etc.) **plays a crucial role in the process of**

competences development for employment counsellors. Generally, **employment counsellors' own training initiatives are supported by PES** (e.g. by co-financing training, post-graduate studies, allowing for off-work time for learning, etc.), except in one case (Belgium FOREM) and **training programmes/curricula are in line with the individual needs of employees**, except in some cases (Cyprus, Lithuania).

The analysis of the **types of regular support provided to help employment counsellors deal with difficult cases is interesting.** In all PES the employment counsellors can count on direct help from more experienced colleagues or team meetings, and in the majority of other cases: direct help from supervisors (Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Austria, Spain, United Kingdom), manuals/instructions – online and printed (Cyprus, Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Croatia, Finland, France, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia, Spain, United Kingdom), coaching/mentoring (Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, Austria, United Kingdom), support group sessions – peer learning (Sweden, Netherlands, Malta, Lithuania, Latvia, France, Finland, Estonia, Cyprus, Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Austria, Slovenia, Spain, United Kingdom) and formal training (Portugal, Poland, Netherlands, Malta, Latvia, Hungary, France, Finland, Estonia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Belgium FOREM, Belgium VDAB, Slovenia, United Kingdom).

3.6 More focus on the career development opportunities for PES employment counsellors is needed as the career paths are found to be short

One of the areas of concern seems to be the **clear definition of career paths for employment counsellors.** Only some of the representatives of the analysed countries agree that career paths for employment counsellors are clearly defined (Hungary, Sweden, Croatia, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Austria, Slovenia). Other countries clearly mark this item as a problematic area. Examples of the occupational career paths available to employment counsellors within the PES are presented in Table 17.

Table 17. Examples of occupational career paths available to employment counsellors within the PES

Country	Career path 1	Career path 2
Bulgaria	Gradually taking up higher positions through competitive selection under the Civil Service Law. The necessary pre-requisites have to be fulfilled - work experience, assessment grade and acquired rank.	Improving vocational skills and knowledge through enrolment in suitable training.
Croatia	An employee progresses vertically upward in the organisation from one specific job to the next, using mentoring and though in-house training	
Cyprus	Counsellors > District Labour Managers > Policy Makers	
Estonia	Occupational career paths are not fixed in PES; staff have a mixed background and everybody has an opportunity to apply for vacancies and move between the jobs, if they meet the requirements. The most common path in practice is: Job mediation counsellor> Case manager> Senior counsellor/Team leader> Service manager or other team member in the Head Office	
France	Become a business expert at the General Direction for a fixed term	Leave the network and operational structure to go to regional or national territorial level, sometimes with a promotion. Moving from a traditional agency to a specialised agency.
Germany	Employment counsellor> Team leader> Area manager> Higher leading positions	Employment counsellor> Employment counsellor for academic professions> Higher expert positions
Hungary	Consultancy work> Internal trainers	Consultancy work > Service area manager
Lithuania	Employment counsellor> Head of division> Deputy Director> Director	
Netherlands	Work coach> Senior work coach > Manager of employment services > Regional manager	Employers services consultant > Senior employers services consultant > Employer services manager > Regional manager
Poland	Placement agent-apprentice > Placement agent > Placement agent I level > Placement agent II level	

Some of the countries also report some possibilities of external placements and career opportunities available to employment counsellors. For example:

- In Bulgaria, there is a possibility of temporary or permanent placement in another administration (under the opportunities the law provides), or placement on the free labour market.
- In Croatia, PES employees attend seminars, conferences and other training events in order to improve their competences. In some cases, counsellors are invited to give lectures in their field of expertise (LMI, employment preparation, vocational rehabilitation, active measures, etc.). Many of the counsellors are involved in various projects at the national level and participate in many working groups in order to provide their knowledge or gain knowledge through cooperation with labour market stakeholders. For their participation, counsellors are awarded with a certificate. The certificates are gathered in our database of employees and they enable the recognition of informal learning.
- In Cyprus, there is a possible career path in private employment agencies (from Private Counsellors > Employment Agency Managers > Job Brokers).

- In Hungary, there is a possible career path in private employment agencies (from Counsellor > Senior Counsellor).

Even in the cases when career paths of employment counsellors are defined, they are rather short, both internally (within the service) and externally (outside of PES, e.g. in private employment agencies). Thus, there seems to be a need for greater internal, on-the-job development opportunities provided for this occupational group in order to not only retain them in the service, but also to have a highly motivated and flexible workforce, able to adapt to changing service requirements.

3.7 Changes in job profiles, competence profiles and training of employment counsellors can be attributed mostly to service digitalisation

Some of the analysed countries **have recently introduced changes** in the area of job profiles (Belgium FOREM, France, Lithuania, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom), competency profiles (Belgium FOREM, France, Lithuania, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom) and training (Belgium FOREM, France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom) for employment counsellors.

Furthermore, changes are being planned in job profiles (Croatia, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, Spain), competency profiles (Croatia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Austria, Spain) and training for employment counsellors (Croatia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal, Austria, Spain).

Generally speaking, **the increasing use of on-line tools had a strong impact on job and competency profiles of employment counsellors** (in terms of new/different skill requirements) in the majority of analysed countries (see 'Comparative Case Study' below for examples).

COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY:

SIGNIFICANT RECENT CHANGES OF JOB AND COMPETENCY PROFILES AND TRAINING OF EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS

In 2011 in the **Netherlands**, the development of new job and role-portfolios for management staff and employees was initiated. Some of the profiles (profiles for counsellors for employers) are ready and are already in use, others (new profiles for counsellors for jobseekers) are being developed and still have to be implemented. Also, new learning activities and training facilities have been developed. The rationale for changes was the redesign of the PES organisation due to political decisions and changes in society, which began in 2010. The new design is based on a new way of providing services to PES clients. The service is focused on the group of clients with more distance to the labour market, because of physical and mental incapability (intensive face-to-face service) and on E-service (basic service) for the other clients. It is worth mentioning that according to the plan, the Netherlands PES aims to provide 90 % of services as e-services with only 10 % being provided as face to face services (intensive services) by 2015. As a part of the redesign a new strategic HRM plan for management, staff and other employees has been prepared, and is focused on answering the following questions:

- What kind of professional does the PES need in the future?
- What are the necessary changes in demands (knowledge, approach and skills of PES employees)?
- How can better results be achieved with less employees?
- What kind of quality and quantity results does the PES want to achieve?
- Where does the PES focus on in the following years?
- How does the PES implement the development and change process?
- What does the PES need on learning activities for management, staff and employees?

In terms of the added value of the approach, PES representatives mention the better possibility to have 'the right people at the right place' through the development of all employees in both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. They also believe that new job profiles and role-portfolios give the organisation the opportunity to be more comprehensive between professionals in the same working department. In terms of the measurable outcomes, an evaluation of the profiles of management and counsellors for employers is planned in the coming months. As for now, the PES representatives see that they '*have more focus on the quality of the professionals, but this can be improved in the coming months*'.

In **Sweden**, changes in job profiles, competency profiles and training for employment counsellors have been recently introduced. Since the 1st January 2012 a new on-line tool for the identification of the needs of jobseekers has been made available to the counsellors in the service. The new system is intended to shorten the time of job seeking through delivering the service faster, as well as improving the quality of the service in terms of better identification of the jobseekers' skills and needs. However, the introduction of the new system is challenging in terms of job and competency requirements for employment counsellors, which have to be accordingly adjusted. As stated by a PES representative: '*You can say, that the use of the new tool is developing for the counsellors, as they have to be sure the best strategy for the jobseeker is chosen*'. Thus, some important changes to the training system had to be introduced. The training system for employment counsellors is focused on providing standardised initial training for every employment counsellor, as well as a more needs-based internal on-the-job training. The provision of the training of the skills needed to work under the new system has been decentralised. A key role in training is played by local office managers, who were made responsible for delivering training to their office staff.

In **Lithuania**, as from the 1st June 2012, a new client service model based on result-oriented management principles has been introduced; the job profiles have been adequately adjusted, focusing on the specification of the tasks that employees are responsible for. These changes also

spanned competency profiles, which have been adjusted to the changing tasks. Also, the area of training has been affected, and the Lithuanian PES plans to pay more attention to improving the job-related organisational skills of employment counsellors, focusing on the achievement of planned placement results.

Additionally:

- In **Slovenia**, new competency profiles for employment counsellors were implemented in 2011; existing job profiles are planned to be revised in the future, and the internal (PES own) Training Centre has been operating since 2010.
- **Croatia** is in the process of defining new job profiles by September 2012. Also, the competency profiles will have to be revised in line with the new job profiles. Changes will also be implemented in the area of training, namely the new training curricula are in the pilot phase in the framework of an EU funded project.
- In **Finland** the core competencies of employment counsellors will be re-designed during autumn 2012 as part of the new service model of the Finnish PES. It is planned that three separate service lines will be introduced and there will be different types of core competencies in each line. The implementation of the new service model will also be supported by training.
- In **France** the validation of the Strategic Plan of Pôle emploi 2015, should lead to an increase in the skills of counsellors in the area of maintenance and customisation of the relationships of employers and jobseekers.
- In **Germany** adjustments are planned to competency profiles in the context of the advancement of the competency model, although they have not yet been specified. In terms of training, the adjustments take place continuously, both through updating and adapting existing concepts as well creating new concepts.
- In **Latvia** the major change in job and competence profiles as well as training is envisaged due to the planned changes of career counselling shifting from an outsourced service to PES-provided service.
- In **Malta**, there are planned changes in the job profiles to re-evaluate the current minimum qualifications required for the role of the employment counsellor. It is also envisaged, that the standard competency profiles and assessment methods of competencies will be developed. In training, there will be the development of formal internal training for employment advisors on two levels (general guidance and for specific target groups considered to require supported employment).
- In **Portugal** a new role of career manager is planned, and changes in training are envisaged to prepare employment counsellors for the new ALMP and measures related to the re-launching of PES.
- In **Austria**, a new project focused on the preparation of competency profiles has begun and in terms of training – further training of employment counsellors is adapted yearly according to demand.
- In **Spain**, job and competency profiles will be one of the specific points of a new Guidance System, and training will be in line with the requirements of the both profiles.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Generally speaking, the process of job and competence profiling of employment counsellors is well structured and regarded as important in shaping the quality of the service by meeting increasing job requirements in the analysed countries. However, international comparisons are difficult, as a significant differentiation in relation to the tasks and competencies of employment counsellors as well as to the features of the profiling process, has been observed. **Diversification of the job profiles is to a large extent dependent on the PES model and activation approach used in the country.** European countries differ in terms of service model changes, with one being more active in the implementation of new service models, while others prefer a more traditional approach. For example in Belgium (VDAB), Croatia, Slovenia and Lithuania, separate job profiles for employment counsellors for different client groups exist, while in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Latvia, Poland, Sweden, Romania, Hungary and Spain, only a generic job profile for employment counsellors is used. Therefore, very different approaches to how the job and competence profiles are defined and used in different countries, may well serve the ultimate goal of meeting the job specifications of employment counsellors, which ultimately focus on the successful (re-) integration of job seekers.

However, the countries in the analysed group do point to some of the key competencies and professional tasks, which are repeated in the job and competence profiles of employment counsellors, and can be deemed 'key' tasks and competences. As can be seen in Table 18, one can note a high level of consensus integrity in regards to the key tasks and competences of employment counsellors. Thus, **it is possible to generate a common profile for employment counsellors on the basis of the analysis of key job tasks and required competences.**

From this perspective, it is important to note, that when adopting an 'occupational' perspective one can see the clear signs of the **employment counsellors' role as an emerging occupation.** Although not fully fledged at the moment as an occupation, it is characterised by distinctive features in terms of tasks and required competences. The literature analysis and survey that were undertaken lead to the conclusion that the key tasks of employment counsellors comprise, in addition to a significant area of placement tasks, mixed tasks of guidance character, elements of social work and administrative tasks. As shown in Table 15, the key administrative tasks are tasks in the area of monitoring and providing information (etc. about regulations for sanctioning, mutual obligations, regulations to apply for subsidies - both to jobseekers and employers). Direct client-oriented tasks, requiring strong counselling skills, include both interviewing, assessment (profiling) of jobseekers and IAP preparation / follow-up. Thus, the mix of tasks requires adequate 'soft' and 'hard' skills, and might resemble to some extent requirements characteristic for the social workers. Nevertheless, **the core tasks of employment counsellors require a more balanced approach when it comes to key administrative and customer service competences,** especially in relation to the latter.

As found out during the analysis, the changing service requirements observed in many European PES do pose new challenges to the work of employment counsellors, requiring them to focus more on those client groups in need of more support, other than broadly understood 'jobseekers' (like young unemployed, long-term unemployed, unemployed with more complex problems, etc.). At the same time, increasing attention is given to building up relationships with employers. As the tasks of the employment counsellors change, so do the competency requirements in general. **Some of the specific observed needs in terms of competences are the 'soft' skills, which are becoming increasingly important due to the growing intensity of external contacts of employment counsellors**, such as flexibility, teamwork, stress resistance or 'sales' skills when working with employers. Networking and coordination skills are required as it is important to cooperate with private and non-profit providers, (temporary work agencies, external service providers like career guidance or training providers) as well as other actors that are important to the labour market integration of PES clients (like schools, universities, NGOs, etc.).

The large number of professional tasks deemed important or very important in relation to employment counsellors' work may be a major problem. A wide range of requirements, not only can be a big challenge for counsellors themselves (as job holders), but may also hinder the design process of their training (both at the level of the teams within which they work, and the entire PES). **It seems that it would be appropriate to better define the scope of the key tasks and their corresponding competences.** Employment counsellors need the relevant competences and time to be able to fulfil these tasks. This would allow counsellors to focus on the tasks most important from the point of view of the value creation process within the framework of their work (in PES) and to develop competencies necessary for their effective performance.

In relation to **the core tasks for employment counsellors specialising in employer services in Europe**, the adequate job profile should include:

1. Tasks focused on **placement** – both in terms of filling of vacancies and places for apprenticeships/work placement, as well as monitoring (follow-up of placement) which requires a mix of assessment and human resources management knowledge and administrative skills.
2. Tasks focused on **networking and sales** – with a more active approach to searching for new job offers at employers and informing employers about ALMPs/other forms of support, which requires strong communication and cooperation skills, as well as service specific knowledge (e.g. on ALMPs).
3. Tasks focused on **organising** – with emphasis on the organisation of group sessions for employers as well as speed dating/job fairs, which require a high level of organisational knowledge and skills.

In relation to **the core tasks for employment counsellors specialising in services for jobseekers in Europe**, the adequate job profile should include:

- Tasks focused on **placement** (e.g. individual initial interviewing of jobseekers; job search assistance) – which require communication and interviewing skills, as well as client orientation.
- Tasks focused on **counselling** (e.g. assessment/profiling of the jobseeker's strengths/weaknesses and the adequate need for support; preparation of an individual action plan; group sessions; and referral to appropriate ALMP measures/ provider /e.g. specialist assessment, training/) – which require counselling, assessment and matching skills, ability to motivate and inspire clients, stress resistance, patience, understanding and the ability to listen non-judgmentally.
- Tasks focused on **information provision** (e.g. providing information on available job offers; Information about ALMP measures) – which require knowledge of the current labour market situation and trends, communication skills and client orientation.
- Tasks focused on **administration and monitoring** (e.g. monitoring of the implementation of IAP; maintaining direct, in- person contact with registered jobseekers) – which require communication and cooperation skills, and service-specific knowledge.

The diversity of job and competence profiles does also have an impact on the differentiation of the initial and further training of employment counsellors. As observed in the survey, generally respondents agree, that **training programmes/curricula are in line with requirements** set in the job and competency profiles of employment counsellors. If job and competency profiles are adapted to the existing model of the PES in the country and vary considerably between countries, the approach to training can be characterised by great diversity, which again does not imply 'better' and 'worse' solutions: **here remains the question on the ways to ensure adequate staffing as part of quality assurance.**

One - theoretically obvious - solution is the recruitment from the market. As demonstrated by the analyses, the EU countries vary considerably, both in regard to the required level and educational profile of those employed in positions of employment counsellors. Secondary level educational attainment, required in some countries, seems to be too low, especially in relation to the growing importance of the counselling tasks. This job therefore requires a much deeper understanding and knowledge not only of the counselling process itself, but more interdisciplinary knowledge - with elements of psychology, social work, human resources management, etc. As shown above, the **role of the employment counsellor calls for a more specialised training in terms of interviewing and counselling competences.** With regard to the **profile of education** (educational field of study) - despite the lack of unanimity again - there is a clear **preference for the social sciences** (psychology, sociology, social work), which seems to be correct from the point of view of prevalence of non-administrative, advisory tasks - that require a wide range of 'soft' skills, and social competences. The problem is that the educational programmes in the fields of social sciences, in most cases, do not include issues

related closely to counselling. Also, the highly important labour market and occupational knowledge required from employment counsellors is not usually provided by general courses.

Therefore, the **possibility of obtaining the people well prepared to play the role of employment counsellors from the market in Europe seems to be very limited**. Few countries (e.g. Germany, Austria) have developed institutions and programs at the university level preparing employment counsellors to perform effectively from the first day of work.

As result, on the one hand, **policymakers should be encouraged to strengthen institutional and legal provisions towards the development of employment counsellors' education at the tertiary level**. This would improve the quality of counsellors' education through the standardisation of educational programs, which would improve the level of services provided and increase the professional identity of this professional group: as a consequence – it would lead to the professionalisation of public employment services. However, in many countries, such solutions seem to be impossible to implement, due to the limited scope (small total number of counsellors in some EU countries) and limited resources (especially in times of crisis).

A big role is to be played by internally developed, PES-specific inception and on-going training for employment counsellors. These two should be treated as an inseparable whole, designed to continuously improve their skills and update their knowledge. **The training activities cannot be prepared ad hoc, should be planned and tailored to the needs of the specific country's service, as well as the individual training needs of the counsellors**. Twelve out of 21 analysed countries confirm that training is the same for every employment counsellor. With the increasing need for the flexibility of approach as well as differentiated training needs of every employee, further diversification of training according to the individual needs of employment counsellors would be recommended.

The proper selection of the training content plays a crucial role in the process. Key training topics should be clearly linked to the tasks performed by employment counsellors. The current practice in relation to the **key inception training contents** (basic training on PES; legal framework of PES functioning; communication and negotiations in the counselling process; support of jobseekers in effective job search methods; current labour market situation and trends, current economic trends) **and key on-going training contents** (effective activation/ motivation techniques of unemployed and inactive; current labour market situation and trends, current economic trends; support of jobseekers in effective job search methods; use of modern IT tools in the counselling process; external cooperation and networking; working with difficult clients) is of complex character. However, inception and on-going training will meet the challenges of employment counsellors' work only when treated as an entity. Therefore, **it should not be considered that inception training can replace on-going training (and vice versa), but more efforts should be made to link these two elements into one coherent training system**.

It would also be **advisable to prepare the training in closer co-operation with external knowledge providers**. As shown by previous studies, and as confirmed by the survey, the majority of training programs are based on internal expertise, which may lead to the limitation of the training content to knowledge currently available within an organisational context. Such knowledge 'autarky' limits the possibility of expertise acquisition from other sources, and can negatively affect the service development, particularly in relation to the 'broad theoretical knowledge base' required from counsellors to perform diversified tasks. **More efforts should be made to establish and keep up the cooperation and partnerships with external knowledge providers, especially within academic institutions, that could provide professional expertise that may be lacking inside the PES.**

The training should be well balanced, comprising of the theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Transferring the burden of the preparation of training programmes to completely outside the PES does not seem to be a good solution either. This may lead to a highly theoretical nature of the proposed content of training, and omission of the important elements of training related to the placement, administrative and monitoring tasks. Cooperation should therefore assume joint development of training programs and the delivery of the training by internal experts (within the PES) and external experts (from the cooperating institutions).

As noticeable, **the employment counsellors' work becomes more and more highly contact-intensive work, although the channels of contact do change from direct to indirect (electronic)**. The changes observed in job and competence profiles in relation to use of modern technology, both in general daily contact-based tasks, as well as specialised counselling services (see Netherlands as an example), are visible and can significantly influence the work of employment consultants. They may also influence the requirements and training provided to this group of PES employees. As already stated, **the use of ICT technologies in the work of employment counsellors is overwhelming**, which becomes evident in the job profiles, competence profiles and training. However, as found in the survey, the ICT training (especially in relation to the use of modern IT tools in the counselling process) is not usually covered as a part of the inception training for newly employed counsellors. It is a vital element of on-going training, but it should be focused more on the first phases of employment counsellors' work in the service.

Additionally, **one element of the broadly understood development system should be further developed: career paths of employment counsellors**. Not only are these paths short (which may be a consequence of the nature of the job or the organisation of the service in respective countries), but they do not seem to be sufficiently structured. This may limit the possibility of development planning individuals' careers as employment counsellors, both short-term (in relation to the 'next career step' training needs) and long-term (in the broadly understood development and self-realisation of employment counsellors, keeping in line with the future service requirements).

Table 18. Correspondence of key tasks, competences and training contents

Key tasks	Key competencies	Key inception training contents	Key on-going training contents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual initial interviewing of jobseekers • Assessment (profiling) of the jobseekers' strengths/weaknesses and the adequate need for support • Preparation of an individual action plan • Providing information on available job offers • Job search assistance • Information about ALMP measures • Referral to appropriate ALMP measure/provider (e.g. specialist assessment, training) • Monitoring of implementation of IAP • Maintaining direct, in-person contact with registered jobseekers • Filling of vacancies - selection of candidates • Informing employers about ALMP/ support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of current labour market situation and trends • Assessment and matching skills • Communication and interviewing/ counselling skills • Ability to motivate and inspire clients • Teamwork/cooperation • Client orientation • Stress resistance • Patience, understanding and the ability to listen non-judgmentally • Flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic training on PES • Legal framework of PES functioning • Communication and negotiations in the counselling process • Support of jobseekers in effective job search methods • Current labour market situation and trends, current economic trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective activation/ motivation techniques of unemployed and inactive • Current labour market situation and trends, current economic trends • Support of jobseekers in effective job search methods • Use of modern IT tools in counselling process • External cooperation and networking • Working with difficult clients

5 ANNEXES

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5.2 Examples of job and competence profiles of employment counsellors

EXAMPLE: CROATIA
<p>In Croatia all counsellors must have competencies such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication competencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written communication, • Verbal communication, • Presentation skills, • Counselling competence, • Communication in English. 2. Interpersonal and personal competences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation and networking - teamwork, • Social awareness, • Expertise, • Stress resistance, • Managing conflict situations. 3. Planning and organising work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquiring and applying new knowledge and skills, • Art of efficient business process management, • Time and resource management. 4. Entrepreneurship competences. 5. Digital competences. 6. Analytical competences. <p>Among the competences enumerated above, there are differences in the required level of competences components.</p>
<p>Source: Survey on 'Job profiles and training for employment counsellors'.</p>

EXAMPLE: PORTUGAL
<p>LIST OF COMPETENCES Senior Advisor and Advisor</p>
<p>NOTE: The competences marked in green are those which at the present time are most highly valued in the case of employment advisors and senior employment advisors.</p>
Description of competence
<p>RESULTS ORIENTATION: The ability to give effective and efficient form to the objectives of the service and the tasks assigned to him. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He establishes priorities for his actions and generally succeeds in concentrating on activities which are of most value to the service (key activities). • As a general rule, he sets himself demanding but realistic objectives and shows determination in pursuing the defined goals. • He carries out tasks assigned to him assiduously and promptly. • He manages his work time appropriately, taking care to meet the deadlines set for his various activities.
<p>PUBLIC SERVICE ORIENTATION: The ability to integrate into his activities the ethical and moral values of public service and of the specific sector in which he is engaged, providing a high quality public-oriented service. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He demonstrates a personal commitment to the values and ethical principles of public service through his actions. • He clearly identifies the users of the service and their needs and provides an appropriate service, in keeping with the values of transparency, integrity and impartiality. • He makes himself accessible to the users of the service (internal and external) and endeavours to respond to their requests.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the conduct of his activities he treats all citizens in a fair and impartial manner, in keeping with the principles of neutrality and equality.
<p>PLANNING AND ORGANISATION: The ability to plan, organise and monitor his own activity and his various projects, defining objectives, setting deadlines and determining priorities. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a general rule he is systematic and careful in the preparation and planning of his tasks and activities. • He plans and organises the activities and projects assigned to him according to the resources at his disposal. • He conducts his activities in accordance with the defined priorities and within the specified deadlines. • He frequently re-assesses his work schedule and makes adjustments for unexpected changes by making the corrections he feels necessary.
<p>ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION AND CRITICAL AWARENESS: The ability to identify, interpret and assess different kinds of data and to relate them to each other in a logical manner and with critical awareness. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He analyses in a critical and logical manner the information which is required for carrying out his activity or as a basis for decision-making. • Faced with a problem, he analyses the data, considers the various response options and proposes solutions in a timely manner. • He prepares himself in advance when he has to deal with situations or tasks of unusual technical complexity, seeking out information and studying the relevant aspects. • He bases his ideas and views on the basis of gathering information, comparing data from different sources and identifying information which is relevant to his own activities and those of other people.
<p>SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE: The set of knowledge, technical information and professional experience required to carry out his functions effectively. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He displays the technical knowledge necessary for the requirements of his post and applies it effectively. • He has the professional experience to enable him to resolve complex professional questions. • He shows a willingness to expand his knowledge and experience in order to develop a broader perspective on problems. • He uses information and communication technologies in his professional practice in order to produce better quality work.
<p>CONTINUOUS ADAPTATION AND IMPROVEMENT: The ability to adjust to change and to new professional challenges and to show a commitment to developing and updating his technical knowledge. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He reacts positively to change, adapting to new professional contexts while maintaining effective performance. • He views a diversity of tasks as an opportunity for professional development and progress. • He regularly acknowledges his own weak points and his development needs, and takes action to improve himself. • He keeps himself up to date through information-seeking and undertaking training of recognised value to the service.
<p>INITIATIVE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY: The ability to act independently and proactively in his day-to-day professional life, to take the initiative when faced with problems and to commit to resolving them. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He maintains an active and dynamic approach in response to professional demands and challenges. • He carries out the duties assigned to him in an independent and diligent manner. • He takes the initiative in resolving problems arising in the course of his activity. • He looks for alternative solutions for resolving professional problems.
<p>INNOVATION AND QUALITY: The ability to devise new solutions to deal with professional problems and demands and to develop new procedures of significant value to the service. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He resolves unexpected problems in a creative manner.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He proposes innovative solutions in relation to internal planning systems and working methods and procedures. • He shows his interest in and willingness to contribute to research projects which are of value to the organisation and which will have an external impact. • He embraces innovations and technologies of significant benefit to the operation of his service and to his personal performance.
<p>OPTIMAL USE OF RESOURCES: The ability to use resources and working instruments effectively and to propose or implement measures to optimise operations and reduce costs. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is concerned, as a matter of course, with implementing procedures and routines which will make better use of the resources available. • He implements procedures, in the context of his own activity, aimed at reducing waste and unnecessary costs. • He proposes measures for rationalising, simplifying and automating processes and procedures with the aim of improving the productivity of services and reducing costs. • He makes effective use of the resources, material and equipment required for carrying out his duties, ensuring they are properly maintained and following the safety instructions.
<p>RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMITMENT TO THE SERVICE: The ability to understand and internalise the contribution which his activity makes to the operation of the service, and to carry out that activity in a willing and diligent manner. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He recognises his role in pursuing the mission and realising the objectives of the service and responds to the demands placed on him in the course of his work. • He consistently responds promptly and willingly to professional demands. • He complies with the rules and regulations relating to the operation of the service, including those relating to working hours and meetings. • He treats the confidential information to which he has access in accordance with the legal, moral and ethical rules of the service.
<p>INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS: The ability to interact appropriately with persons of different types and in different social and professional contexts, displaying an attitude which facilitates relationships and dealing with any difficulties or conflicts in an appropriate manner. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is cordial and polite in dealing with colleagues, superiors and the various users of the service. • He can work with persons with different personal characteristics. • He resolves potential conflicts in a correct manner, using strategies which show good sense and a respect for others. • He shows self-confidence in his relationships and can integrate successfully into different social and professional situations.
<p>COMMUNICATION: The ability to express himself clearly and precisely, to adapt his language when talking to different types of people, to be assertive in expounding and defending his ideas and to show respect and consideration for the ideas of others. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He expresses himself clearly, fluently and precisely both orally and in writing. • He adapts his language and discourse to the types of people he is talking to. • He is normally assertive in expressing his ideas and has the ability to hold the attention of others. • He shows respect for the opinions of others, listening to them carefully and assessing them.
<p>TEAMWORKING AND COOPERATION: The ability to integrate into mixed working teams and generate synergies through active participation. This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He integrates well with mixed teams, both within and outside his normal working environment. • He habitually plays an active and cooperative role in the teams and working groups in which he participates. • He shares knowledge and information with colleagues and makes himself available to support them when asked. • He contributes to developing or maintaining a good working environment and strengthening team spirit.

<p>COORDINATION: The ability to coordinate, direct and dynamise teams and working groups for the purpose of developing projects and achieving objectives.</p> <p>This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He sometimes takes on the role of orienting and animating teams and working groups, making a decisive contribution to the achievement of objectives. • He assumes responsibility for dealing with demanding objectives. • He readily takes decisions and takes responsibility for them. • He is listened to and well regarded by his work colleagues.
<p>NEGOTIATION AND PERSUASION: The ability to defend ideas and views in a convincing manner and to achieve agreement and consensus, through the use of well-structured and consistent arguments.</p> <p>This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He establishes consensus and agreement through negotiation, showing determination and flexibility. • He comes up with arguments and structures them in a logical fashion. • He is expressive in communication and has an impact on others. • He readily appreciates the other person's point of view and his responses are consistent and appropriate.
<p>REPRESENTING THE ORGANISATION AND COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS: The ability to represent the service or the organisation in national or international working groups, meetings or events.</p> <p>This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is willing to participate in projects or activities involving external exposure and visibility. • He has the ability to communicate with a large audience. • He represents the service in working groups, meetings and other events and projects an air of credibility. • He proposes the adoption of approaches derived from external sources and commits himself to pursuing them.
<p>DEALING WITH PRESSURE AND SETBACKS: The ability to deal with pressure situations and setbacks in an efficient and professional manner.</p> <p>This will be specifically demonstrated by the following types of behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He will, as a matter of course, remain productive in a pressurised environment. • When faced with difficult situations he will normally maintain his emotional control and professional judgement. • He handles professional and personal demands in a balanced fashion. • He accepts criticism and setbacks.
<p>Source: (Ministerial Order 1633/2007 of 31 December 2007 - Annex VI)</p>

EXAMPLE: THE NETHERLANDS										
Competencies in a role portfolio of Employer Services Adviser and Senior Adviser (AWGD)										
	PEOPLE				MARKET & WORK			RESOURCES		
	Partner	Relation builder	Enforcer	Developer	Networker	Connector	Salesman	Information manager	Work preparer	Quality manager
Business competencies:										
Client orientation	●		●				●		●	●
Cooperation		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	
Results orientation		●	●		●		●	●	●	●
Job competencies of (senior) adviser:										
Motivating/encouraging		●		●		●				●
Flexible behaviour	●	●	●			●	●		●	
Networking				●	●	●				
Market orientation					●	●		●	●	●
Source: UWV WERKbedrijf										

EXAMPLE: GERMANY

Placement officer with consultancy tasks in the employment agency

1. Core tasks/ area of responsibilities:
 - a. Placement service, employment counselling and integration of job-seeker clients;
 - b. Focus on support for job-seekers: assign job-seeker clients to a program for action and its implementation/ update, motivating job-seeker clients (e.g. integration agreement);
 - c. Focus on support for employers:
 - i. Advising employer customers
 - ii. Acquisition and matching of vacancies and apprenticeship places
 - iii. Take care of employer customers (especially developing and maintaining relationships with employer customers according to the program for action).
2. Technical and methodological requirements:
 - a. Profound knowledge of the products, programs and procedures, including the relevant legal bases in the area of responsibility;
 - b. Profound knowledge of vocations;
 - c. Profound knowledge of the target group-specific labour market and market for vocational training;
 - d. Profound knowledge of corporate human resources management;
 - e. Basic knowledge of marketing of services;
 - f. Profound knowledge of relevant Microsoft Office and further IT-applications.
3. Education and training/experience:
 - a. College degree or equivalent qualification,
 - b. or equivalent profile.
4. Competency requirements:
 - a. Professional competence / methodological skills : accurateness/conscientiousness (++) , problem solving (+);
 - b. Social-communicative competence: customer focus (++) , ability to work in a team (++) , personal advise (++);
 - c. Personal competence: ability to work under pressure (+), learning ability and ability to accept criticism (+).

Source: Bundesagentur fuer Arbeit

EXAMPLE: ESTONIA		
Competence profiles of:		
EMPLOYMENT MEDIATION CONSULTANT:	CASE MANAGER:	SERVICE CONSULTANT (employer services):
Client servicing skills	Client servicing skills	Client servicing skills
Creates a relationship of trust with the client (eye contact, friendly, greets the client)	Creates a relationship of trust with the client (eye contact, friendly, greets the client)	Creates a relationship of trust with the client
Identifies the client's needs (understands the client's needs)	Identifies the client's needs (understands the client's needs)	Identifies the client's needs (understands the client's needs, knows how to ask questions and listen)
Treats the client with respect (avoids being overly familiar, does not deal with their private issues in the presence of the client)	Treats the client with respect (avoids being overly familiar, does not deal with their private issues in the presence of the client)	Treats the client with respect (avoids being overly familiar, does not deal with their private issues in the presence of the client)
Is free of prejudice when communicating with a client	Is free of prejudice when communicating with a client	Is free of prejudice when communicating with a client
Expresses himself in a manner that the client understands	Expresses himself in a manner that the client understands	Expresses himself in a manner that the client understands
Knows how to say 'no' when justified (enforcement skills)	Knows how to say 'no' when justified (enforcement skills)	Knows how to say 'no' when justified (enforcement skills)
Avoids giving promises that cannot be kept	Avoids giving promises that cannot be kept	Avoids giving promises that cannot be kept
Quickly transitions from one client to another	Quickly transitions from one client to another	Quickly transitions from one client to another
Controls his behaviour in critical situations	Controls his behaviour in critical situations	Controls his behaviour in critical situations
Does not betray the trust of clients	Does not betray the trust of clients	Does not betray the trust of clients
Guides the conversation in an appropriate direction (knows how to ask questions and listen)	Guides the conversation in an appropriate direction (knows how to ask questions and listen)	
Is tactful when communicating with a client	Is tactful when communicating with a client	
Checks the performance of the tasks set to a client	Instructs the client appropriately (acts as a personal trainer who pushes the client to find a job)	
Increases the client's self-confidence in looking for a job	Increases the client's self-confidence	
Gives the client feedback that he can understand	Gives the client feedback that they can understand	
Convinces clients successfully (negotiation skills, explanation skills)	Convinces clients successfully (negotiation skills, explanation skills)	
Organisational skills	Organisational skills	Organisational skills
Adheres to the confidentiality principles of the Unemployment Insurance Fund (including not discussing the internal matters of the organisation, not sending internal documents to third parties, not discussing the problems of clients in public)	Adheres to the confidentiality principles of the Unemployment Insurance Fund (including not discussing the internal matters of the organisation, not sending internal documents to third parties, not discussing the problems of clients in public)	Adheres to the confidentiality principles of the Unemployment Insurance Fund (including not discussing the internal matters of the organisation, not sending internal documents to third parties, not discussing the problems of clients in public)
Finds suitable solutions in his work (solutions that are based on the client's needs, comply with the service provision principles, and are lawful)	Finds suitable solutions in his work (solutions that are based on the client's needs, comply with the service provision principles, and are lawful)	Finds suitable solutions in his work (solutions that are based on the client's needs, comply with the service provision principles, and are lawful)
Completes his tasks when due	Completes his tasks when due	Completes his tasks when due
Plans his daily work with skill	Plans his daily work with skill	Plans his daily work with skill
Uses the working time	Uses the working time	Uses the working time

properly/efficiently	properly/efficiently	properly/efficiently
Makes justified decisions within the scope of their position	Makes justified decisions within the scope of their position	Makes justified decisions within the scope of his position
Takes responsibility for his conduct	Takes responsibility for his conduct	Takes responsibility for his conduct
Quickly finds the information he needs for work	Quickly finds the information he needs for work	Quickly finds the information he needs for work
Differentiates between important and unimportant information (including understanding information and being able to interpret it)	Differentiates between important and unimportant information (including understanding information and being able to interpret it)	Differentiates between important and unimportant information (including understanding information and being able to interpret it)
Passes important information on in a timely manner	Passes important information on in a timely manner	Passes important information on in a timely manner
Makes suggestions on better organisation of work (initiative)	Makes suggestions on better organisation of work (initiative)	Makes suggestions on better organisation of work (initiative)
Quickly adapts to change (including applying innovation in their work)	Quickly adapts to change (including applying innovation in his work)	Quickly adapts to change (including applying innovation in their work)
Keeps up-to-date with developments in the Fund's area of activity	Keeps up-to-date with developments in the Fund's area of activity	Keeps up-to-date with developments in the Fund's area of activity
		Speaks fluently and with impact
Cooperation	Cooperation	Cooperation
Cooperates actively with colleagues (understands roles and knows how to use the assistance of others in the interests of clients)	Cooperates actively with colleagues (understands roles and knows how to use the assistance of others in the interests of clients)	Cooperates actively with colleagues (understands roles and knows how to use the assistance of others in the interests of clients)
Represents the Fund respectably, including defending the Fund's values and strategic decisions (loyalty)	Represents the Fund respectably, incl. defends the Fund's values and strategic decisions (loyalty)	Represents the Fund respectably, incl. defends the Fund's values and strategic decisions (loyalty)
Conducts themselves as a trustworthy partner (both on the job and outside it)	Conducts themselves as a trustworthy partner (both on the job and outside it)	Conducts himself as a trustworthy partner (both on the job and outside it)
	Maintains cooperation relationships with partners	Maintains cooperation relationships with partners
	Actively creates cooperation relationships with partners	Actively creates cooperation relationships with partners
Source: Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund		

EXAMPLE: NETHERLANDS		
Job profile of Employer services adviser		
Results area	Core activity	Results
Client	<p>Acts as link between the employer service point regionally and the site, and is also a contact point for internal and external clients in relation to detailing of arrangements.</p> <p>Identifies and analyses client demand and translates this independently into actions that can be carried out in practice</p>	Degree of client satisfaction with the relationship and action carried out
Communication	N/A	
Production	<p>Designs arrangements and translates arrangements into matching criteria and competencies so that high-quality selection is possible</p> <p>Supplies candidates to fill the arrangements, firstly by filtering from the files in WERK.nl and secondly by instructing the work coaches to select suitable candidates from their case loads</p> <p>On the basis of labour market and case load analyses, presents proposals for customised agreements on set targets with regard to achieving outflow from the case load, and explores new opportunities for placement</p> <p>Recognises, negotiates and invests in sustainable partnerships (associations/partnerships) with other public and private partners in the labour market</p> <p>Advising and providing information to medium-sized and small businesses and everyone involved in the labour market, such as industry and sector organisations, government and educational institutions and (commercial) labour-market intermediaries: in particular, mobility services 'From Work To Work' (where there is a threat of redundancy/bankruptcy)</p> <p>Is a discussion partner in the field of human resources as a whole (indicators, inflow, throughflow and outflow) and consequently sees new opportunities for his clients. Encourages his clients by utilising these opportunities.</p> <p>Makes a correct cost/benefit analysis through business economics knowledge</p>	<p>Arrangements and matching criteria based on arrangements</p> <p>Filled arrangements, targets attained</p> <p>Proposals for customised agreements Proposals for new (placement) opportunities Acquisitions for placements and attained placement targets</p> <p>Effective partnerships Rapidly deployable network</p> <p>Employers and others involved in the labour market (employees/ employers/special target groups) are well informed about the services of the <i>Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen</i> (UWV) [Employees' Insurance Implementation Institute] and applicable legislation and regulations, for example through information meetings and 'speed-dating' sessions</p> <p>New opportunities for clients Improved position in client/supplier relationship New business</p> <p>Good assessments of arrangements through correct analysis of costs and</p>

	<p>and knowledge of subsidy schemes</p> <p>Estimates whether the arrangements will really lead to placements and targets these</p> <p>Monitors the attainability of the agreements entered into (and the results) and intervenes tactically when results threaten to be disappointing in a way that is advantageous for his own organisation and the client (employer)</p>	<p>benefits</p> <p>High placement rate from the completed arrangements</p> <p>Disappointing results at an early stage turned into a win-win situation</p> <p>Progress monitoring of arrangements/cooperation agreements</p>
HRM	<p>The employee ensures that he keeps up to standard in terms of specialist knowledge and skills</p> <p>The employee keeps himself healthy and motivated</p> <p>The employee takes responsibility for his own performance</p>	Fulfilled agreements in HRM cycle
Security and privacy	N/A	

EXAMPLE: ENGLAND

In England the competency model has been developed for advisors (AA - admin, AO - caseworker and EO- manages AOs). Skills and behaviours required from the counsellors working with action plans include:

- Good listening and communication skills;
- Questions that make the customer think;
- Allowing time to respond;
- Ensuring a balance of communication between the customer and adviser;
- Reflecting back information provided by the customer;
- Regular summaries;
- Focusing on positive aspects;
- Regularly seek the customers suggestions and ideas;
- Starting with the customers initial comments and building on this constructively;
- Responding positively to the customer's needs or concerns; and
- Ensuring the action plan is focused on progress, based on the customer's perspective and identifies their job goal, options and next steps.

Competences required from AA/AO:

- Delivering a Professional Service:
 - ✓ Demonstrating professionalism;
 - ✓ Promoting a positive image of the organisation;
 - ✓ Demonstrating job related knowledge;
 - ✓ Dealing with customers face to face.
- Delivering a Customer Focused Service:
 - ✓ Responding to customer needs;
 - ✓ Providing excellent customer service.
- Analysing, Improving and Changing:
 - ✓ Analysing and using evidence;
 - ✓ Improving performance continuously;
 - ✓ Engaging with change.
- Managing People and Performance:
 - ✓ Deploying people and resources effectively;
 - ✓ Delivering results;
 - ✓ Managing finance.
- Building Capability:
 - ✓ Developing knowledge and skills;
 - ✓ Working collaboratively;
 - ✓ Communicating with impact.
- Leading:
 - ✓ Demonstrating integrity;
 - ✓ Providing direction;
 - ✓ Motivating and inspiring.

Source:

- <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/opdelcompetencymatrix1-t619183.pdf>
- Individual Action Planning (IAP): Resolving tensions and maximising impact in European PES?

5.3 Examples of training of employment counsellors

EXAMPLE: POLAND

In 2008 Poland started to implement 20 modular training programs for PES staff. It consists of 58 modular units with teaching packages. This training directly prepares the participants to carry out tasks in positions, such as job brokers, career guidance counsellors, career development specialists, job club leaders, and activation program specialists.

For the 'Job broker' position the training consists of three modular units and seven teaching packages.

The three modular units include:

- Establishing and maintaining cooperation with employers;
- Working with the unemployed;
- Acquisition and implementation of the job offers.

The seven teaching packages include:

- Preparing for contacts with employers;
- Establishing cooperation with local employers;
- Maintain contacts with employers;
- Acquisition of job offers;
- Implementation of job offers;
- Diagnosis of the unemployed individual's needs;
- Providing support to the unemployed.

The trainings for the 'Career guidance counsellor' position include 3 modular units and 11 teaching packages.

The three modular units include:

- Implementation of the tasks by public employment services;
- The quality of the work of public employment services;
- Application of law for the public employment service's employee at work inside the office and customer service jobs.

The 11 teaching packages include:

- The role of public employment services;
- Public employment services;
- The tasks of the public employment services workers;
- Sources of law;
- Selected aspects of civil law;
- Selected aspects of labour law;
- The structure and tasks of the elected authorities of public administration;
- Administrative proceedings in the work of official employment services;
- Legal protection of personal data;
- The importance of quality in the implementation of labour market services;
- The use of service standards in the labour market by the PES.

The training for the 'Job club leader' position consist of three modular units and five teaching packages.

The three modular units include:

- Planning and organising services for assistance in active job search;
- Support documentation for the provision of service support in active job search;
- The study of quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services for assistance in active job search.

The five teaching packages include:

- Identification of activation services for the unemployed;
- Study of the unemployed and job seekers needs in job searching;
- Analysis and documentation used to develop the job club leader;
- The use of the records held by the leader of the work club;
- Examination services for assistance in active job search.

The modular training programmes are designed and implemented under the Human Capital Operational Programme of ESF (01.06.2008-31.12.2013) and are supposed to cover 3355 PES institution workers (2355 in 2008-2010 period and 1000 in 2011-2013 period).

Source:

<http://www.standardyzkolenia.praca.gov.pl/>

EXAMPLE: GERMANY

Key training content for placement and integration specialists recruited in the market:

1. Training for new **Employer Services placement specialists** covers:

- Counselling and integration – organisational structure and legal basis
- Basic knowledge – organisational structure of the Federal Employment Agency
- General technical regulations
- Self-study programme on IT security
- Business processes in a joint-stock company
- Careers and education
- Course-related IT instruction
- Self-study on integration benefits and services
- Rudiments of benefits legislation
- Focus on marketing.

2. Training for **new placement specialists for teams focused on employees over the age of 25** covers:

- Counselling and integration – organisational structure and legal basis
- Basic knowledge - organisational structure of the Federal Employment Agency
- Psychological foundations of counselling and integration work for over-25s (24 hours)
- Counselling over-25s: duties
- Briefing on the general technical regulations
- Self-study programme on IT security
- Self-study programme on communication practice
- Four-phased model for integration work
- Careers and education
- Course-related IT instruction
- Self-study on integration benefits and services
- Social communication skills
- Rudiments of benefits legislation
- Federal Employment Agency counselling principles
- Counselling principles: winter semester I
- Self-study programme on counselling principles with regard to guidance and decision-making
- Counselling principles: winter semester II – guidance and decision-making
- Self-study programme on counselling principles with regard to integration-related counselling
- Counselling principles: winter semester III – integration-related counselling.

3. Training for **new integration specialists for employee-focused teams** (unemployment benefit II, means-tested, e.g. for long-term unemployed and jobseekers not entitled to insurance-based unemployment benefits) covers:

- Psychological foundations of counselling and integration work for over-25s
- Counselling over-25s: duties
- Employment-focused case management: overview
- Four-phased model for integration work
- Benefits and services for integration into the labour force
- Course-related IT instruction
- Benefits and services for employers
- Counselling principles I: Social communication skills in counselling
- Subsistence benefits
- Employment of foreign workers
- Basic training in specialised software A2LL
- Career and education for the over-25s.

Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit

EXAMPLE: FINLAND

In Finland trainings for PES staff are provided at three levels:

- national
- regional
- local.

All of these levels are under the supervision of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy. The national level training is carried out by Salmia, National Human Resources Training and Development Centre for regional and local administration. Around 2000 of the 8000 employees of the Finnish Employment and Economic Development Offices (T&E Offices) and Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres) participate in training by Salmia annually. Their training program is published for six months at a time and includes themes such as:

- uniform customer service,
- expertise areas,
- management training,
- regional labour markets,
- information systems,
- local labour market,
- practices,
- projects,
- updates.

During trainings the following teachings methods are used:

- classroom training,
- video conferences,
- web-based learning,
- learning on-the-job,
- combinations in longer training programs.

In addition, Salmia provides expert services in the following areas:

- development of blended training,
- e-learning platforms and platform development,
- electronic induction materials for officials working in Employment and Economic Development Offices (TE Offices),
- changes in TE Office operations,
- broadening the expertise of the Centres for Business and Industry, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres) and developing their customer operations.

Sources:

- <http://www.salmia.info/index.php?page=101&lang=2>
- Better results by diverse methods- P2P presentation

EXAMPLE: UKRAINE

Training for PES staff are conducted in the Personnel Training Institute (PTI), which includes six departments:

- Psychology,
- Sociology,
- Information system and Technology,
- Management,
- Economics and Personnel Management,
- Theoretical and Applied Economics.

All of these lectures are taught by doctors of science, professors, candidates of science and senior lectures. The training staff consists of 50 trainers. PES staff can take part in the PES personnel training system, which is part of PTI. It includes:

- Professional training- once in five years;
- Higher education ('bachelor's degree' – after leaving school, more than four to five years of study at universities on an external degree) ('specialists' – on the basis of full secondary education, more than two years of study at institutions of higher learning on an external degree);
- Scientific-methodological subjects are included in the training process.

PTI also uses experimental training methods:

- Stage I – primary education, conducted according to the PTI methodical treatment based on regional employment services centres,
- Stage II – training directly at the PTI. The study is directed at mastering the technologies, with an addition of specialised subjects (social policy, social security). It includes transition into distance learning (exams and written works on professional development).

Source:

- Experience of staff training at the Ukrainian PES

EXAMPLE: DENMARK

Since 2004 employment officers can be educated in all levels of higher education. Basic diploma courses are delivered by six regional university colleges. Moreover, the Danish University of Education offers master and PhD trainings for career guidance counsellors. Master degree courses offer a four-module, 60 ECTS points course, over two years, which attracts mature students with substantial experience in career guidance and related fields: approximately 30-50 students per year. The four modules are:

- career guidance and career development theories;
- career guidance, society, and guidance policies;
- career guidance methods and;
- a master's thesis.

Finally, five or six career guidance students are studying for a PhD degree at the Guidance Research Unit of the Danish University of Education.

Source:

- Professionalising career guidance. Practitioner competences and qualification routes in Europe

EXAMPLE: HUNGARY

In February 2005 Hungary launched a two year postgraduate course for PES employees. The course leads to a degree in employment consulting. It is delivered through three-day seminars organised three times every term. Courses are led by the Department of Theoretical and Applied Psychology of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Szent István University, Gödöllő. The main topics covered include:

- theory and practice of job and career guidance,
- personality assessment,
- personality development,
- life-course planning,
- career knowledge and career planning,
- economics and labour market skills,
- pedagogy,
- sociology,
- sociology of various strata, and
- computer-aided and Internet-based guidance.

Source:

- R.G. Sultana, A.G. Watts, *Career Guidance in Europe's Public Employment Services*

EXAMPLE: GERMANY

Initial training and entry requirements for PES employees are divided into three levels:

- Assistant level. This is three year training program for counsellor candidates at age 16- 20. The training program is linked to the dual system- on-the-job training combined with college based study. Around 25 % of staff are promoted to professional level.
- Professional level. All the trainings at this level take place at the Federal Employment Agency's *Fachhochschule* in Mannheim. This consists of three-year courses leading to bachelor degrees in vocational counselling or public administration.
- Higher professional level. Candidates must have university degrees or professional qualifications to enter this level. The trainings include:
 - ✓ leadership roles,
 - ✓ professional psychological roles, and
 - ✓ medical roles.

Source:

- R.G. Sultana, A.G. Watts, *Career Guidance in Europe's Public Employment Services*

EXAMPLE: FRANCE

France has implemented a new method of training and staff competences development: helping to secure the new organisation. In this method a modular training programme has been created, which includes eight steps. During this programme PES staff take part in five seminars:

- Seminar 1 takes two days and consists of: activities and the advisor's role in the devise of training paths (CRP/CTP);
- Seminar 2 takes five days and consists of: the interview and the individual support of CRP/CTP members;
- Seminar 3 takes three days and consists of: deepening the support - collective action and follow up of employment.

After Seminar 3 there are three months of practice. At this time participants are able to make self-observations and follow up learning and action plans. All activities depend on the profile of the session advisors.

- Seminar 4 takes two days and the themes include: job, market, territories and enterprises;
- Seminar 5 takes three days and the themes include: project process.

Source:

- New method of training and staff competences development: helping to secure the new organisation. P2P presentation.

EXAMPLE: SLOVENIA

The most important tool in employment officers' work is the Individual Action Plan (IAP). Hence, all of the PES staff must be able to create this IAP for each of their clients. In the Slovenian PES a competency model has been development for all employees within the PES including:

- six basic competences for all employees:
 - ✓ professionalism,
 - ✓ flexibility,
 - ✓ reliability,
 - ✓ client orientation,
 - ✓ cooperation, and
 - ✓ communication.
- three additional competencies for career counsellors:
 - ✓ problem solving and problem recognition,
 - ✓ multidisciplinary, and
 - ✓ multicultural.

For each of these competencies, there are four levels with three behavioural descriptions aligned to each level. Currently, a matrix is being developed, to specify what competencies are required for different tasks.

Source:

- Individual Action Planning (IAP): Resolving tensions and maximising impact in European PES?

EXAMPLE: CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech PES are using blended learning in the training of their staff. Firstly, during the evaluation process the competency gaps are defined. After, the individual learning plans and individual modules for each employee are constructed. The process of competency development is mostly conducted by participants' self-study. Moreover, the tutor's role is limited to:

- introductory information,
- supervision of study,
- correction and comments,
- workshops,
- individual and/or joint consultation,
- personal/telephone/e-mail contact,
- monitoring.

Thanks to using a blended learning process, the staff development can be more effective and personalised.

Source:

- Further training for Czech Employment Services, P2P Presentation

EXAMPLE: IRELAND

In Ireland, all of the employment officers must follow the University Certificate of Adult Guidance as a minimum requirement. The course has been developed by the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, in collaboration with FÁS. The course aims to address the needs of those working in a guidance capacity with unemployed adults. After working for at least three years with FAS and obtaining the entry certificate, PES employees can take a higher level of qualifications, the University Diploma of the Adult Guidance and Counselling, which is provided by the same university as the previous course. The second level of employment officers' qualification provides participants with the skills and knowledge to understand, in particular, the effects of social exclusion and marginalisation on the individual and on groups, and helps them to become familiar with appropriate interventions and strategies. After obtaining these two certificates PES staff can develop their competency during another third level of qualification. Moreover, to ensure high quality in the services in each of the PES offices, there is an organised competency development programme. A core competency framework is created in consultancy with PES managers during:

- interim review and
- annual review.

After the completion of the above, a program can be implemented in the FAS offices. Core outputs include:

- career planning and development,
- training and development and
- performance related decision.

Source:

- FAS perspective. Training for Performance. P2P Presentation
- R.G. Sultana, A.G. Watts, *Career Guidance in Europe's Public Employment Services*, pp. 81

5.4 Previous research findings

Title:	Effective Services for Employers		
Territorial coverage/countries:	Belgium, France, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom		
Time frame:	November 2011 (France), December 2011 (other countries)		
Source:	PES to PES Peer review 'Effective Services for Employers'		
Aims/research problems:	Review of services for employers and PES quality requirements in order to increase the quality of services provided by the PES		
Research method:	Desk research		
Key findings:	Belgium	Core competences	Not applicable
		Training types	Initial training includes: enterprises oriented on commercial activities, business and social law. There is a lack of training which includes: training of PES staff and integration of the employer service in the whole of the structure of the PES.
	France	Core competences	No data
		Training types	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowing the Business's Socio-Economic Environment; 2. Knowing Pôle-Emploi's Service Offer; 3. Successful Telephone Canvassing; 4. Successful Company Interviews; 5. Capturing the Vacancy; 6. Managing and Driving the Major Account Relationship, which is aimed at 'major account' staff; 7. Managing a Canvassing Force (3 days), which is aimed at canvassing force managers.
	Bulgaria	Core competences	No data
		Training types	Teams that work with employers have an initial training and periodic upgrade and continually develop their skills. The most important areas which should be developed:

			PES organisation and staffing (What are the interrelationships of different levels - the central office and the local office?); Contacting and engaging with employers (What training is provided and with what frequency to labour intermediaries?); Recruitment and finding job opportunities for disadvantaged individuals (What is the amount of subsidy provided to employers, and under what conditions?); Monitoring and evaluation (What are the main criteria and indicators to measure the performance of job centres?).
	Germany	Core competences	No data
		Training types	Introduction of the business system along the business process model for the employers' service. Any need for further training must be determined by the responsible executive. At least once a year, during the yearly staff review, the topic of further training needs must be addressed in order to find individual solutions. The main challenges in relation to delivering effective services to employers (which should be developed): 1) Transition of a system dealing with a surplus on the supply side (job-seekers) to one on the demand side (vacancies), 2) Enhancement of the self-responsibility of employers to come up with an HR-policy and 3) Progress in own staff to get away from 'just placing people on vacancies' towards a professional HR-consultant approach.
	Hungary	Core competences	No specific competences, but soft skills, e.g. an open-minded, talkative and problem-solving oriented personality are listed
		Training types	No data
	Ireland	Core competences	No data
		Training types	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.
	Lithuania	Core competences	Knowledge of the labour market and business law
		Training types	Staff receive one to three days of training regarding counselling practices (adopting a proactive approach towards employers, clarifying the employers' needs, and making the relationship stronger with employers: better communication in a common language at the right moment using the appropriate tools, etc.).

	The Netherlands	Core competences	No data
		Training types	Labour law presenting skills; Social media and employers; Job-hunting; Knowing your target groups; Coaching for quality; Project management etc.
	Slovenia	Core competences	No data
		Training types	Marketing, negotiation, communication and recruitment methods
	Sweden	Core competences	The competence needed for professional work is mainly maintained by regular contacts with employers and work with matching services.
		Training types	Managing employer contacts
	United Kingdom	Core competences	No data
		Training types	All staff have access to web-based labour market information through a knowledge hub. The extent of use will depend on the role and individual learning preferences.
Good practices:	Not applicable		

Title:	OECD Review of career guidance policies		
Territorial coverage/countries:	Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Northern Ireland, Luxembourg, Spain		
Time frame:	2001-2003		
Source:	OECD analyses: <i>Career Information, Guidance and Counselling. Services, developments, policies. National report - Austria</i> , November 2001; <i>Policies for Information, Guidance and Counselling Services. National questionnaire - Czech Republic</i> , January 2003; <i>Policies for Information, Guidance and Counselling services. National questionnaire: Germany</i> , April 2001; <i>OECD Review of Career guidance policies. National questionnaire - Denmark</i> , March 2002; <i>OECD Review of Career guidance policies. National questionnaire - Finland</i> , March 2002; <i>OECD Review of Information, Guidance and Counselling Services: Northern Ireland</i> , November 2001; <i>OECD Review of Information, Guidance and Counselling Services: Luxembourg</i> , May 2002; <i>OECD Review of Career guidance policies. National questionnaire - Spain</i> , July 2002.		
Aims/research problems:	The objective is to get things straight concerning the status quo of career information, guidance and counselling at home and compare it to the developments of other countries. It also includes to evaluate one's own national structures as regards availability, accessibility and effectiveness.		
Research method:	National survey, which includes items such as: 1) overview of career information, guidance and counselling services; 2) key goals, influences, issues and initiatives; 3) policy instruments for steering services; 4) the roles of stakeholders; 5) targeting and access; 6) staffing; 7) delivery settings; 8) delivery methods; 9) career information; 10) financing; 11) ensuring quality; and 12) the evidence base.		
Key findings:	Austria	Core competences	Communication skills, group facilitation skills, individual and group assessment skills, labour market knowledge, and knowledge of career development theory
		Training types	New staff are provided with basic trainings, which include: conversation methods, client- oriented counselling methods, communication skills training, and time and self-management
	Czech Republic	Core competences	Communication skills, group facilitation skills, individual and group assessment skills, labour market knowledge, and knowledge of career development theory
		Training types	There should be more trainings including foreign language skills, and the labour market in EU countries.
	Denmark	Core competences	Communication skills, information management, group work, knowledge about educational and labour market issues, models and theories in the counselling area
		Training types	No data

	Finland	Core competences	Communication skills, group facilitation skills, individual and group assessment skills, labour market knowledge, knowledge of career development theory, knowledge of vocational rehabilitation and medicine, knowledge of how to find work, and the 'hidden labour market'
		Training types	No data
	Northern Ireland	Core competences	ICT skills, career development methods
		Training types	No data
	Luxembourg	Core competences	Knowledge of labour market, communication, group facilitation and assessment skills
		Training types	No data
	Germany	Core competences	Communication skills, group facilitation skills, individual and group assessment skills, labour market knowledge, knowledge of career development theory, ICT skills, and media skills
		Training types	There are no legal requirements for on-going trainings, but many counsellors take an ICT training
	Spain	Core competences	No data
		Training types	Structure, operation and methodology of information, guidance and counselling services; service network; educational legislation; formal and non-formal training offering; Spanish education system; techniques for diagnosing aptitudes, interests and attitudes; group and individual form mastering; labour legislation; labour market occupations and occupational profiles; pathways to careers and occupations; labour market and training analysis techniques; evaluation, selection, training and guidance techniques; active job-hunting and self-employment techniques; group dynamics, management and leadership; motivation techniques and individual counselling techniques.
Good practices:	Not applicable		

Title	Activation and integration: working with individual action plans	
Territorial coverage/country:	International	
Source:	PES to PES dialogue conference on 'Activation and integration: working with individual action plans', Discussion paper: European Commission (2012) ' <i>Individual Action Planning (IAP): Resolving tensions and maximising impact in European PES?</i> ', Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick, Author: Jenny Bimrose	
Time frame:	2012	
Aims/ research problems:	Role of IAPs in PES and presentation of the good practises	
Research method:	desk research	
Key findings:	Core competences	No data
	Training types	No data
Good practices:	Slovenia	Slovenia has recently developed a competency model for all of PES staff. It includes six core competences: professionalism; flexibility; reliability; client orientation; cooperation; and communication.
	England	Key skills and behaviours specified as required by advisers for action planning are as follows: good listening and communication skills; questions that make the customer think; allowing time to respond; ensuring a balance of communication between the customer and adviser; reflecting back information provided by the customer; regular summaries; focusing on positive aspects; regularly seeking the customers' suggestions and ideas; starting with the customers initial comments and building on this constructively; responding positively to the customers' needs or concerns; and ensuring the action plan is focused on progress, based on the customer's perspective and identifies their job goal, options and next steps.

Title	Developing youth-friendly online counselling services in the United Kingdom	
Territorial coverage/country:	United Kingdom	
Source:	Developing youth-friendly online counselling services in the United Kingdom: A small scale investigation into the views of practitioners, Educational Support and Inclusion, The University of Manchester	
Time frame:	No data	
Aims/ research problems:	The study explores the use of an online focus group to discuss the development of online counselling services for young people in the UK.	
Research method:	National survey	
Key findings:	Core competences	ITC skills, knowledge of the Family Law
	Training types	Trainings should development of computer and Internet skills and legal regulations
Good practices:	Not applicable	

Title	Education and training of Public Employment Services' staff	
Territorial coverage/country:	Poland	
Time frame:	February 2007- January 2008	
Source/Institution:	Education and training of Public Employment Services' staff, Research report, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy; Department of Labour Market	
Aims/research problems:	<p>Are the training needs of employees diagnosed? If so, is their knowledge used to provide qualifications to the employees? How?</p> <p>What are the most common trainings forms? Which are preferred? Why?</p> <p>How is the training programme constructed?</p> <p>What criteria are used to make a decision about choosing a training institution?</p> <p>Do PES determine the requirements of trainers' competences? How?</p> <p>What criteria are taken into account in qualifying employees for trainings?</p> <p>How do PES raise funds for the trainings? What are the sources of financing the trainings?</p> <p>Are the courses and results of the training monitored? Is an evaluation of training carried out?</p> <p>What are the subjects of trainings attended by employees?</p> <p>As a result of training do employees acquire new qualifications relevant to their profession?</p>	

Research method:	CAWI, CAPI	
Key findings:	Core competences	Not applicable
	Training types	The training is selected based on: the opinion of the managers of individual PES divisions, overview of the topics offered by training institutions, and the results of training needs. Themes should include: general issues, including work in the PES, the organisation of office work, legal issues regulating the PES, communication, local labour market, working with difficult clients, records and registration, and public assistance. The duration of training: 1-5 days, mainly provided by external institutions. Training methods: mainly lectures. Thirty six per cent of PES always prepare an assessment of the trainings by surveying participants. The price is the main criterion of the selection of a training institution.
Good practices:	WUP Kraków	To qualify the employees for training, an individual training card holding data on each employee is used. Each course is subject to monitoring consisting of three steps: during the training through inspections conducted by a team of human resource management; immediately after the completion of training an evaluation is carried out through a survey evaluation and a summary analysis is drawn for Voivodship Labour Office; and in the workplace - for training, which should result in a change in the work process or the need to exploit new professional competence.
	PUP Leżajsk	Training is based on a system of professional development, discussion of a manager with the employee, and the overall training plan by the director of the office. The criteria for selecting a training: review of the contractor training program, staff trainers, duration, place of training, and the cost of training. After each training employees fill out a training satisfaction survey.
	Urząd Pracy Powiatu Krakowskiego	The annual survey on training needs of employees determines the training plan for the year. Two types of training are conducted: the knowledge needed for proper functioning of the office and the expertise of key staff. While selecting a training provider, the price, experience and competence of staff and the training program are analysed. The trainings are monitored through the HR employee conversation regarding the results of the training.
	PUP Nysa	The training plan is created based on a personal training plan for individual employees, created by the directors of organisational units. Mainly the key employees are trained. The direction of the training is set by the labour office's director, the training needs are diagnosed by an HR specialist, and training is carried out by an external training company - if the curriculum and cost estimate will be accepted by the director of the office. The course and results of each training are monitored.