



European  
Commission

ACTIVATING ALL INDIVIDUALS  
AGED 16-29 WITHIN THREE  
MONTHS OF REGISTERED  
UNEMPLOYMENT

# Youth to Action

Information review: October 2015

## ICELAND

The unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds more than doubled from 8.2% in the autumn of 2008 to 21% in the spring of 2009. Therefore, the Icelandic Government decided to launch a targeted programme for young unemployed people.

Name of the PES

Vinnumálastofnun  
Directorate of Labour

When was the practice implemented?

2010 – on-going

Which organisation was involved in its implementation?

Secondary schools and adult/continuous education centres provided information on study opportunities. Employers in the public and private sector provided information on employment/traineeship possibilities. NGOs and government offices provided information on volunteer work opportunities. The practice was fully funded by the Directorate of Labour.

Which social groups were targeted by the practice?

- ▶ Unemployed young people (16-24, later increased to 16-29)
- ▶ Long-term unemployed

What were the practice's main objectives?

The programme aims to activate all individuals aged 16-29 within three months of registering as unemployed, in order to avoid the negative consequences that inactivity can have on their life and health.

What activities were carried out?

Individuals registered as unemployed are offered the help of a counsellor. The activities offered are either educational or vocational, but in some cases recreational and/or for rehabilitation purposes. Educational activities include the development of new and short opportunities in secondary schools with the aim of reducing the dropout rate. Adult/continuous-education centres offer employment-related courses that aim to strengthen the position of individuals in the labour market, as well as general courses that aim to prepare the individual for further studies within the formal school system. The vocational component consists of volunteer work in the third sector (Red Cross, youth and sports related activities), trainee/ apprenticeship at workshops or companies (public and private), as well as temporary hires in the private and public sector. Recreational activities as well as rehabilitation are mostly outsourced to private and public actors.

What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?

Face-to-face counselling at individual or group level at the Reykjavik headquarters of the Directorate of Labour (DOL) and other DOL offices. During the practice implementation ten new counsellors were hired.

Source(s) of funding

National budget

What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?

**People reached:**

The aim of the programme was to provide an opportunity to 1 150 individuals aged 16-29 to further their education in secondary schools or other centres of learning. Furthermore, up to 400 new volunteer work opportunities were created, as well as up to 450 trainee/apprenticeships or temporary positions and 400 workshop opportunities, vocational rehabilitation and other assistance activities.

**Products:**

One public report and one internal report.

What outcomes have been identified?

The Directorate of Labour published an internal report on the programme. The report stresses that the main objective of the programme was to activate young people within three months after they were registered as unemployed. The outcome was achieved.

The counsellors believe the increased skills and ability obtained by taking part in the measures will make the participants more likely to find employment. The measures can also help those who are unemployed to establish contacts with prospective employers and other actors in the labour market. Finally, the counsellors claim that participation will increase their job search skills.

The positive results of the practice were mainstreamed into day-to-day PES management.

What are the lessons learnt and success factors?

Positively, the evaluation found that the practice was mainstreamed into everyday management activities for the PES. Moreover, as a consequence of the evaluation the age of the beneficiaries was increased from 16-24 to 16-29 years old.

The Directorate of Labour has analysed how many of those taking advantage of the practices were still unemployed some months later. This was done by simply comparing the number of individuals who had registered with the number of those who had de-registered, and analysing how many of those had found a job.

The Social Science Research Institute at the University of Iceland has conducted a survey among those taking advantage of the practice, as well as the counsellors providing the practice.

An electronic survey was conducted among all those registered as unemployed in February and March 2010. Out of 3 958 individuals, 2 772 replied, representing a reply rate of 70% (gross, 76% net). Thorough group interviews were conducted with six counsellors in the capital regions and two regions in the south west. Telephone interviews were also conducted with a counsellor in the north east and three counsellors located in the east of Iceland.

More information on the practice

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/empl\\_portal/weesp/IS-1.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/empl_portal/weesp/IS-1.pdf)



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