Nature of the meeting: The Board is the governing body of the Network, established by Decision No 573/2014/EU. It is composed of one nominated member for each Member State, from the senior management of their respective PES, and for the European Commission. The meeting is not open to the public. The adopted outcomes are published on the EMPL Europa website.

Absent: CY

Day 1 – Thursday 6 June 2019

Welcome
The Chair of the PES Network and the President of the Romanian PES welcomed the Board members. The Chair then introduced the Romanian Minister of Labour.
The Minister recalled the importance for Romania of the first Presidency of the Council. He insisted on the citizen focused approach. He focused on the labour market issues: the important challenges faced by the EU Members (demographic change, ageing, migration), the shortage of qualified workers (notably in the health sector), the brain drain (encourage return). He added that ALMPs in Romania are focused on disadvantaged people, young workers and LTU.
The Romanian Head of PES praised the PES Network as a great EU initiative, that supports modernisation of PES services. He emphasized that Romanian PES has very much benefitted from participating in the activities (such as segmentation of Jobseekers) and that this must continue after 2020.
The new German Board Member Daniel Terzenbach introduced himself.

ITEM 1 - Adoption of the outcomes of the last meeting and agenda

The Board adopted the draft agenda.

The draft outcomes of the December 2018 Board Meeting were adopted without comments and will be uploaded on the EMPL Europa website.

ITEM 2 - Benchlearning current state of play

COM presented the current state of play of the Benchlearning and explained what is going on in order to reviewing the excellence model of enablers and the procedure of the assessments, to meeting conflictive expectations, to keep comparability of results and to simplifying the procedure and the model. A discussion on Benchlearning with AFEPAs has started and will go on in the coming months. The concept will be presented to the Board in December 2019. COM also presented the revised concept of the learning dialogues and the experience after 4 Thematic Learning Dialogues (TLDs) and stressed the role of PES management as a key factor for success when defining expectations on outcome, nominating participants and providing peer-coaches. The new learning format is appreciated but it is a big challenge for all involved PES (after 4 TLDs with about 20 PES involved). TLDs should have an impact on every participating PES: from Benchlearning to benchacting.
ES reported on the informal Head of PES meeting held on 13 May in Madrid and stressed the role of PES in a fast changing environment to ensure the equal access of all citizens to information. and to accompany people on a lifelong perspective.
The outcomes of the group discussions on round tables are the following:

- **Benchacting concept**: Benchlearning remains the most important Network tool; the potential of learning dialogues and assessment (peer-PES exercise) are highly appreciated. Benchacting – implementing change (acting) is necessary and the consequence of learning activities, when and how to be decided at national level; flexibility in time and scope needs to be given.

- **Frequency of next cycles**
  A 3-year-cycle of assessments including learning dialogue is agreed upon. A majority would prefer assessments and learning dialogues over 3 years (in parallel) instead of 2 years assessment and 1 year of learning dialogues. The Secretariat, together with the contractor, will develop a concept including advantages and disadvantages of this option. AFEPAs and BL WG will be consulted.

- **Potential of Network resources**
  To better use the potential of Network resources, PES need to make a better use of the dashboard; to further improve data; to continue strengthening communication between PES and results should be easy to understand.

- **Strengthening and improving PES visibility and communication**:
  - PES themselves at national and EU policy level – using the Network logo, join up EU initiatives
  - PES within their organisation, involving staff, engage more peer-PES to join Network activities, backed by management
  - Show the impact on citizens, clear messages to be developed, draw link to strategic topics close to citizens e.g. climate change
  - Possibly introduce a traffic light system to make performance result better visible (to be discussed in AFEPA / BL WG meetings); possibly use case studies for communication
  - Commission to further support the visibility at EU Level.

The Chair concluded on TLDs, being an useful new format, a powerful and complementary tool under mutual learning activities. TLDs should enable PES to act and implement change inspired by peer learning. The Chair further concluded that PES have to systematically define their needs (involving management). He highlighted the importance of communication, visibility and transparency (PES must make visible their maturity level). The Chair highlighted the need to translate the ideas developed in learning activities into action, an investment in LDs will pay off.

**ITEM 3 - European Employers’ Day in the frame of the Vocational Skills Week**

COM presented activities relevant to PES during the Vocational Skills Week. The Employers’ Days will take place on 14-18 October 2019. Some PES have a national level framework/coordination in place, setting specific objectives while their organisation of events was untrusted to the local level; most of the past activities organised under Employer’s Days focused on:

- promoting training;
- detecting vacancies;
- offering business services to employers;
- attracting people to traineeships for jobs in shortage, career days, etc;
- in a few occasions, PES cooperated with training providers to organise events;
- events dealing with digital transformation and what it means for businesses/employees seemed to attract employers.

PES have been encouraged to organise Employer’s Days and to inform stakeholders; to promote and encourage PES and relevant stakeholder to apply for the VET Excellence Awards.

A FI PES representative will be invited to the closing of the European events (18 October) to promote the work of employment services in the field of skills development and Employers’ Days; 10 PES representatives will be invited to the European events in Helsinki (in cooperation with FI). A common approach is necessary to improve visibility. An e-mail will be sent to the AFEPAS.
ITEM 4 - Work Programme 2019 – current state of play

The Chair gave a short feedback on the work programme. It encompasses the right mix of learning activities, but it remains a challenge in terms of PES capacity. Sending the right participants is key for success and for making use of outputs. Recent and upcoming activities from the Chair, PES and the COM were presented.

4 PES representatives presented feedback on different activities implemented this year:

- NL reported main points discussed by the Working Group Evidence-based service delivery. The WG has explored some of the institutional pre-conditions of good practices and discussed future work to establish a roadmap of common approaches covering different levels of sophistication. As one element, the WG recommends to develop a toolkit based on concrete practices that have worked, which could be part of next year’s work programme. The Board approved.
- CZ on the ongoing MAP, their objectives to reform the performance management system and establish a vision document and an internal benchmarking.
- Positive feedback by NO on the TLD leadership on change management linked to leadership and FR on the TLD on eServices and channel management.

COM briefly presented the ongoing and upcoming events focusing on the 2 Thematic Review Workshops (Vienna-June: Internal benchmarking and Stockholm-September: co-creation of services) and on the October conference about Prevention in Brussels.

COM focused on Knowledge Management: a webinar took place with the good example of BE-Le Forem and DK. A toolkit will be published and will include some good examples of PES managing knowledge in their PES.

ITEM 5 - PES Network evaluation

COM informed about the follow up of the PES Network evaluation that is coming to an end. The document will be published on the Europea website: https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=701&langId=en. Based on the positive evaluation findings and strong call from the Network and stakeholders, COM plans to propose the prolongation of the Network. The prolongation of Decision No 573/2014/EU implies a continuation of the existing framework and initiatives. This proposal would be limited to prolonging the period of the establishment of the Network and some technical updates, such as references to the European Pillar of Social Rights and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, European Labour Authority, and Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027.

National PES could get involved through their ministries when the proposal is negotiated in the Council.

ITEM 6 - Election of the Chair of the Network

The Board elected a new Chair, in line with the PES Network Rules of Procedure (Article 4). Candidates were Evita Simson from Latvia and Johannes Kopf from Austria.

Johannes Kopf was elected and will be the next Chair of the Network from 1st July 2019 to 30 June 2021. His focus will be branding of the PES Network, prolonging the PES Decision, taking up the possibilities of political advice/influence, and learning from each other.

COM welcomed the new Chair and thanked the current Chair for his excellent work over the past years, stressing his knowledge and his personal capacity to bring people together.

ITEM 7 - Non-paper: Matching services for PES via EURES

The Chair presented the non-paper, prepared by BE-VDAB in cooperation with the EURES Coordination Office (ECO). The European mobility is a right, PES have an important role to play. They have national or regional matching systems but they should talk together. A European Matching System should be more effective. He called upon the importance of collaboration and using synergies. The chair reported that EURES is starting to introduce the skills-based matching. He proposed that all PES could make use of the system.
DE asked for some precisions regarding technical issues. The Chair proposed to introduce this topic in the agenda of the next AFEPA meeting in order to choose the best technical options. Competence based matching is used in BE-VDAB.

ITEM 8 - PES strategies in support of an ageing workforce

COM presented the main outcomes of the draft analytical paper. Romania presented the strategies to address an ageing workforce and Eurofound presented an input on ageing workforce. The Chair introduced the topics and stressed the pressure on the LM due to the baby boom leavers and the ageing as major theme for PES in the EU.

Eurofound presented the background and key concepts. Because of demographic change old age dependency ratio is increasing and there are potential labour shortages. Public policy has shifted from early exit to extending working lives. To be successful in labour market integration of older people, we need to address the following areas:

- Older workers as vulnerable group, especially in cases of redundancies
- Large differences across Member States, sectors and occupations
- Types of employment relationships
- Unemployment versus alternative exit routes

An expert from RO on ageing workforce presented the Romanian state of play regarding the ageing workforce and policies and measures to encourage employment at an older age.

The Board Members were invited to reflect and discuss at round tables. COM summarized main points from the discussions. Many points are interesting for the next WP. It is difficult to bring older unemployed workers back to work although there are big differences across countries and groups of workers. An individual approach is necessary. Successful and important is a preventive approach in order to avoid older people becoming unemployed. Biggest challenge is the motivation of older employees to remain in employment after the legal possibility to retire. Working conditions should be adapted to different needs. Employers are responsible for continuous upskilling of their workforce and working conditions that allows older workers to stay. It is a task of PES to develop services which support employers in doing so. It is important to avoid that unemployment benefit is a pathway out. There is clearly a need of cooperation with other stakeholders, institutions or authorities like employers, health, education, adult training.

Day 2 – Friday 7 June 2019

ITEM 9 - Romanian Labour Market and the role of the Romanian PES

RO highlighted the main figures of the labour market situation: 69% employment rate (with improvement of women employment rate), 4,2% unemployment rate (important rate of 40+ and LTU); and a still high level of youth unemployment and serious number of NEETs.

RO presented the key components of the strategic framework, namely

- National Employment Strategy
- Youth guarantee implementation plan
- Roma population integration
- Differents laws for apprenticeship, integration high education graduates through internship, unemployment insurance,
  while Referring to key features of the National Employment Agency (NEA).

ITEM 10 - Results of the evaluation of the LTU recommendation

COM presented the recently adopted Commission Report on the implementation of the Council recommendation on LTU. 2016 recommendation on LTU are:

- Increase registration in PES
- In-depth individual assessment + Job Integration Agreement within 18M
- SPOC (single point of contact)
- Engagement of employers (Job Integration Agreement)

COM insisted on the important role played by the PES and the PES Network in monitoring the implementation and mutual learning. PES Network contributed with Quality standards and a dedicated survey. Evaluation showed that stronger policy changes took place in countries with previously less developed support systems. The Job-carving in Malta was mentioned as a best practice. The evaluation shows progress in implementation across the different areas and points to where there is room for improvement: for instance PES need to improve the quality of assessments, the range of services offered to LTU. Targeted outreach, post-placement services and multi stakeholder partnerships could be strengthened. There is also a need to improve quality of services, to increase capacities and to focus on prevention, as well as to improve monitoring of qualitative aspects.

COM presented suggestions how to better implement the recommendation. The Members discussed the areas of future work interest in smaller groups. It was decided that more in-depth discussions on how the PES can contribute to monitoring and mutual learning next year would take place at the next AFEPAs or Benchlearning working group meeting.

The Chair informed about the upcoming Commission Conference on LTU (27 June in Brussels) with Commissioner Thyssen, to which AFEPAs have been invited.

**ITEM 11 - Labour and skills shortages**

BE- Le Forem presented main results of the questionnaire results. All PES experience skills-shortages, different methods on how PES identify new and emerging skills needs. However 50% of PES do not attract people from outside the labour force. The results will be important input to the Working Group on Skills shortages (chaired by BE-Le Forem). The WG will present its results at the Board meeting in Helsinki in December 2019.

**ITEM 12 - Recalculated Index on ALMP Quality**

COM presented the recalculated ALMP Quality index. The aim is to establish an indicator for PES to identify best practices. The work started with a questionnaire in 2017, and has been discussed in AFEPAs meetings and with the Reference Group for the project. Through testing and revision of the original concept, an indicator mainly using BL information is now established. The indicator was recalculated in April 2019. Since available data are a bit old, a new calculation is needed when data from the 3rd cycle of BL will be available (2021). A proposal for recalculation of the indicator will be discussed at the AFEPAs meeting in March 2021, and be part of the 2021 Work Programme. The Board agreed to base further work on the presented framework and to take a proposal for an update and revision into the 2021 Work Programme.

**ITEM 13 - EU PES Innovation Lab**

COM and MT presented the current state of play of the WG on building a EU innovation lab. As the method of design thinking is used, WG members are still discovering and identifying possibilities of a EU innovation lab that fits best in its shape and purpose for the PES Network. A lab could enable:

- Opening the institutional borders to allow new ideas
- Using observation of reality and prototyping to draw conclusions
- Embracing a culture of trial-error-learning
- Out of the box thinking, when old solutions are not fitting new challenges


The Chair and COM presented the PES Network book. Copies can be ordered from https://www.diekeure.be/nl-professional/9704/public-employment-services-policies-and-practices

The book includes a foreword by Commissioner Thyssen, celebrating the first 5 years of the formal PES Network, and articles from 32 authors from PES across Europe, and others, strongly connected with the Network.

AOB

1) Next 12th Board Meeting will be held on 12 and 13 December 2019 in Finlandia Hall, Helsinki. A leadership dinner will take place on 11 December.

FI HoPES introduced the priorities of the Finnish presidency:
- Single market interlinked with dynamic digital economy
- Driving European innovation economy
- AI
- Upskilling, reskilling for digital Europe

FI proposed possible topics for the next Board:
- Growth and skills
- Continuous learning
- Work in the age of digitalisation and AI.

2) Croatia informed that the 13th Board Meeting will take place in Zagreb on 4 and 5 June 2020.

3) FR updated on recent developments of WAPES:
- Electronic general assembly is ongoing (financial and administrative issues etc.)
- Previous and programmed activities:
  - 16-17 April in Nouakchott, Mauritania: "Role of PES in Professional migration"
  - 15-17 May in Paris: Lab in Pôle emploi with 15 countries (PES Communication correspondants : “Let’s build together an effective communication to promote Wapes”)
  - 11-12 June in Stockholm: European meeting
  - 5-6 December in Stockholm: “Organisational learning - a way to improve Performance”
  - Soft BL approach and project: BE-VDAB to reinforce WAPES Secretariat
  - 5-8 November in Washington: International week for employment (Conference on The Role of Technology in the Delivery of Services for PES; Managing Board Meeting).

4) COM suggested to the Network to address platform work and the role and contribution of PES, as the topic could become a priority on the EC agenda.

   COM informed on Skills forecast and recent work by CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational training-EU Agency)and the new Real time labour market intelligence (RTLMI). RTLMI could therefore clearly be a useful additional tool for PES in helping them to provide up-to-date and granular data on the demand for skills in their country of interest or at regional level (down to NUTS 2 level).

   CEDEFOP has just released first findings from its “real time” labour market information project, web crawling millions of job vacancies to look into the skills that employers are asking for. Transversal skills, like Adapting to change and working well in a team come out at the top.

   The first data release focuses on analysis of over 30 million online job vacancies across seven Member States (CZ, ES, DE, FR, IE, IT, UK) representing 60% of the EU labour market.

   The fully operational system, working across all EU Member States, will be available by the end of 2020.

Further information https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/indicators/skills-online-vacancies