

Online meeting of the Advisers for European PES Affairs (AFEPAs)

11 February 2021, 10:00 – 12:00

Final outcomes

Participants: AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, IS, LU, LT, LV, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, COM, PES SECRETARIAT, ICON contractor (as observer)

10.00 ITEM 1: Introduction

PES Secretariat welcomed newly appointed Afepas, Nijolė Dilbienė from the Lithuanian PES, Silvia Gatciová from the Slovakian PES, Janice Schmidt-Altmeier from the German PES and Martina Rosato from the Italian PES. The Secretariat also introduced Bernd Becking from the German PES who joined the team as Seconded National Expert mid-January and Yasmin Salem also from the German PES who will join in April.

The minutes from the Afepa meeting on 12 November 2020 were adopted and will be published on the website: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23613&langId=en>

10.05 ITEM 2: European Commission updates for 2021

COM presented the 2021 Commission Work Programme of relevance to employment policies. This included the Social Partners consultation on the working conditions, the Action Plan on Social Pillar, the strategy on the rights of persons with disabilities, a new industrial strategy, the European Child Guarantee, follow-up to the updated skills agenda, an Action Plan on Social Economy as well as the initiatives on remote work.

PES Secretariat initiated an exchange among the Afepas on the impact of remote work. The exchange attended by AT, BE-Actiris, BE-Forem, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, LU, LT, LV, NL, PL, SI demonstrated that the topic is high on the agenda in many countries. A broad range of topics as expenditures, working conditions, data security, taxation, work accident insurance, etc are discussed. The social partners are key actors. National and sectoral variations in potentials and needs have implications for legislation and collective agreements in this field. For some PES, it is still too early to identify new opportunities on the labour market for jobseekers, however, it is crucial to monitor developments closely in order to play a role for customer support when necessary.

Follow up: Afepas can share further information on this topic by e-mail with the PES Secretariat. A further exchange within the Network can be of interest on the question of consequences for PES by this new business transformation.

10.30 ITEM 3: 2021 PES Network Mutual Learning Work Programme

PES Secretariat presented the state of play of the 2021 Mutual Learning Work Programme¹ after the expressions of interest from the PES. The dates of the next events can be found in the regularly updated PES Network Work Programme² and in the events section of the website³. PES Secretariat also informed on planning for the new communication format (Podcasts etc.). In addition, the next events of the PES Network Benchlearning programme were presented.

Follow up: ICON will take contact with PES to confirm the (mostly pre-agreed) dates of the 3rd cycle BL assessments. Confirmed dates will be published by end of February.

11.00 ITEM 4: PES Network cooperation with stakeholders

PES Secretariat presented the state of play and outline of the organisation of the PES Network stakeholders' conference that will take place online on three half-days 20, 21 and 22 April. Afepas gave feedback on the outline and proposals of possible presentations

PES Secretariat informed about the meeting between the Chair, PES Secretariat and the EU Social Partners that took place on 29 January (BusinessEurope, SMEsUnited, SGI Europe, ETUC). Common fields of interest were identified, and the EU Social Partners invited to the webinars, stakeholder conference and to a discussion with the PES Network Board.

Follow up: Afepas are invited to send feedback and/or additional proposals of speakers for the conference by e-mail to the PES Network Secretariat until Monday 15 February.

11:30 ITEM 5: 2021 Research programme and monthly update of PES responses to COVID- 19

The PES Secretariat presented the planned studies and surveys for 2021, including a study on supporting PES in better understanding the impact of the Green Deal, a survey on the fight against discriminations, the PES capacity survey part I (general operations) and part II (youth employment), a study on PES service delivery in the wake of the crisis (follow-up of 2020 study), and an ad-hoc request on traineeship remuneration.

Several Afepas, represented by DE, FR and NL, expressed that the monthly updates on PES responses to COVID-19 continue to be valuable. The format can be lightened, by only including recent changes. NL, DE and EE supported update of the 2020 study on PES measures and activities responded to

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23320&langId=en>

² <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23352&langId=en>

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1100&furtherEvents=yes>

COVID-19, even as a long-term study. Ideally the study would include impacts/effectiveness of emergency measures.

Follow up: PES Secretariat will continue the monthly update of the PES responses to COVID-19 measures in the next 6 months. The format will be simplified.

11.55 AOB and closure of the meeting

PT informed on the main priorities of the PT presidency. The headline will be support of the European recovery, focusing on a green, social and global resilience. The PES Network Board meeting hosted by PT will be held on 24/25 June 2021. A preliminary idea of a topic to be discussed in the meeting were Virtual Job Centers/digitalisation of PES. **Follow up:** PT welcomes further ideas and proposals. An advanced draft agenda will be presented for discussion at the next Afepa meeting.

LV invited to an online conference on Future of Jobs on 17 February, see <https://www.futureofjobs.lv/>

FR informed about upcoming events from WAPES. The WAPES World Congress will take place in Estonia 29 November – 2 December 2021. Challenges and innovative actions for Public Employment Services in a rapidly evolving labour market will be the key topic. For the European region, DE will organise an event on the role of PES and forms of bilateral collaboration in the management of transnational migration (Second semester 2021). Furthermore, BE-VDAB is planning an event on Strengthening Local Labour Market Opportunities for Migrants together with the OECD (date to be confirmed).

ES, HU and SE briefly presented their SRSS projects. ES presented the project “promoting and monitoring the implementation of the action plan 2019-2020 for youth employment and the three-year plan 2019-2021 to prevent and reduce long term unemployed, implemented with technical assistance from the World Bank. For 2021, the project improvement of the services of the common services portfolio is preselected. HU has received support to reform their ICT systems. The present systems are more than one decade old and need renewal. As part of the reform of the SE PES, SE explained a project with an aim to explore the pathways of the reform. The project will be supported by the OECD focusing on local presence, access to data and compensation models.

The next Afepa meetings is proposed to take place online on Monday **22 March** and **Thursday 6 May**.