

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

**22 March 2021, 10:00 – 12:00**

Final outcomes

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

Partially: PES Network Chair

Absent: CY and IT.

## **ITEM 1: Introduction**

The agenda was adopted. The minutes from the Afepa meeting on 11 February 2021 were adopted and will be published on the website:

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23796&langId=en>

## **ITEM 2: European Commission updates**

COM presented the Action Plan on the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, with focus on the most relevant points for PES (including the COM recommendation on Effective Active Support to Employment - EASE). For the PES, in particular principle 4 “Active support to employment” and 5 “Secure and adaptable employment” of the Action Plan are important. COM presented the three new EU-level 2030 headline targets: At least 78% of the population aged 20 to 64 should be in employment, at least 60% of all adults should participate in training every year<sup>1</sup>, the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion should be reduced by at least 15 million. COM also mentioned the key role of co-operation with the social partners. The three blocks of EASE were presented, hiring and transition incentives, upskilling and reskilling as well as enhanced support by employment services.

COM also presented the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Relevant for the PES Network is in particular the flagship initiative 5: *“In 2022, the Commission will present a package to improve labour market outcomes of persons with disabilities, seeking cooperation with the European Network of Public Employment Services, social partners and organisations of persons with disabilities.”*

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<sup>1</sup> The indicator measures the share of adults aged 25-64 who report to have participated in at least one formal or non-formal education and training activity over the last 12 months. The target will be monitored on the basis of the LFS.

### **ITEM 3: 2021 PES Network Mutual Learning Work Programme, incl. Benchlearning assessments**

PES Secretariat gave an overview of the state of implementation of the Work Programme. FR reported on the Thematic Review Workshop on Youth Employment Support they hosted on 18 and 19 March with 20 PES participants. PES Secretariat reported on the status of the update of the PES Network Strategy (Working Group attended by AT (chair), BG, DE, ES, FR, HR, IT, LV, NL, NO, SE and SI); a draft will be presented at the Afepa meeting on 6 May. SE reported on the status and plans of the Taxonomies Working Group. 12 PES participate now, and SE invites additional PES to join.

The PES Secretariat informed about the upcoming Jour Fixe on “PES challenges in meeting the Directive on GDPR”, scheduled on 29 April and hosted by NO. DE announced that they would like to host the following Jour Fixe in May on the topic of “ambidextrous leadership”; an invitation will be sent by the PES Secretariat in due time. The PES Secretariat further updated on: the state of play of the Working Group on PES Visibility (EE/Chair, AT, BE-Le Forem, BG, DK, ES, IT, LT, LV and NL), the programme of the PES Stakeholders Conference “The power of PES partnerships” which will take place on 20-22 April, and the recent Benchlearning activities. Those comprise: the BL assessors training (23 February), the BL Statisticians meeting (10 March), the BL Working Group and Steering Group (16 March) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle assessments, continuing with HR, AT and HU in the first semester. An additional training is planned in May or June targeted on PES without any, or only one, assessor in the current pool. To address the different needs across PES regarding the visualisation of PES maturity after the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle assessments, the dashboard will make the latest results most visible, while maintaining access to results from previous cycles.

Finally, the PES Secretariat highlighted the timeline for the upcoming PES Capacity data collections, and signalled that a new PES Network video was published on Europa on 11 March <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1100&furtherNews=yes&newsId=9929> .

### **ITEM 4: Preparation of the PES Board meeting on 24-25 June**

The PES Network Chair Johannes Kopf appraised the quick adaptation of the Network activities to the travel restrictions and to the new needs for support in the wake of the pandemic. As priorities of the 2021 Work Programme he stressed digitalisation, including AI, greening of the economy and the needs to prevent unemployment. He mentioned the need to use PES experience to give input to discussions at the political level, both on measures and regulation as well as on the need of PES resources to implement policies and measures.

Furthermore, he reported on recent Chair activities: He had participated in the ‘Future of Jobs’ conference in February in Latvia. He shared his experiences of the last PES Jour Fixe on Artificial Intelligence and highlighted some outcomes from the discussions. He reported from recent co-operation with the EU Social Partners and emphasised the need of further exchange. Representatives from the EU Social Partners will be invited to the Board meeting in June. He also mentioned the experiences with the recording of the two first podcast episodes, shared his ideas for the future of the podcast and called on Afepas to promote it. The so-called “PESPod” can be listened and subscribed to via this link: <https://www.pesnetwork.eu/podcast/>

The PES Secretariat and PT presented the draft agenda of the PES Board in June for discussion. Main topics are exchange with the EU Social Partners, the Green Deal and its impact on the PES, the PT labour market, impact of digital services on PES, followed by a market place, as well as an exchange on recovery measures. PT invited Afepas to flag possible practices to be presented at the market place. NL suggested that an input paper to structure the discussion on recovery measures would be useful. There will be a Chair election at the next Board.

#### **Follow up:**

- Afepas are invited to promote the PESPod within their PES and among interested stakeholders.
- Afepas are invited to send possible practices for the suggested market place during the PES Board to the PES Secretariat and PT.
- The PES Secretariat will send out an e-mail to the Board members about the upcoming Chair election (call for expression of interest).

#### **AOB and closure of the meeting**

FR informed about updates from WAPES. The biggest upcoming event is the WAPES World Congress. EE presented the plans for the WAPES World Congress 29 November-2 December. The title of the Congress is “PES In(novative) Action”, reflecting on the structural changes and innovations facing PES, as globalisation, demographic change, climatic change, labour relations and the pandemic. The objective is to strengthen PES in their efforts to deal with these challenges. EE invited PES to reflect, once an invitation letter is sent, on practices to share with other participants at the Congress within the topics of organisational resilience, technologic change, strengthening of PES image, client oriented services and support to vulnerable groups.

BE-Actiris and BE-Le Forem briefly presented their Structural Reform Support Programme projects. BE-Actiris will develop a platform for labour market integration of newcomers (less than 5 years residence). The project involves the International Organisation of Migration (IOM). Consultation of stakeholders is ongoing and a benchmarking of other platforms is done. The platform will be launched in about one year.

The BE-Le Forem project is part of the “Zero long-term unemployment territory” approach. The project is extended to also include innovative approaches to fight long term unemployment. European good practices will be analysed, including exchange across countries. Legal aspects will be analysed. The project will be supported by the OECD, and many stakeholders involved, including local authorities. The work will start mid-June 2021 and end January/February 2023.

The PES Secretariat presented a request from universities (Helsinki University, Copenhagen Business School, University of Birmingham, and Central European Labour Study Institute CELSI, Slovakia) to participate in a new research funding call about the role of Artificial Intelligence in PES. The PES Secretariat proposed to appoint one person from the Network to follow the project. FR expressed their interest, and will discuss further with the Secretariat.

PES Secretariat reminded that the date of the next Afepa meeting is **Thursday 6 May (10h00-12h00)**.