



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

6 May 2021– 10:00 – 12:30

Final outcomes

Participants: AT, BE – Actiris/Le Forem/VDAB, BG, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LU, LT, LV, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, COM, PES SECRETARIAT

Absent: CZ, LI

ITEM 1: Introduction

The agenda of the meeting was adopted. The minutes from the Afepa meeting on 22 March 2021 were adopted and will be published on the website: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23977&langId=en>

COM informed that LI has joined as member of the PES Network and appointed a Board/alternate Board member and AFEPA.

Yasmin Salem, new Seconded National Expert from the DE PES to the PES Secretariat, introduced herself.

ITEM 2: Draft PES Network Strategy

The Chair of the Working Group on the future of work, mandated to prepare a draft update of the PES Network Strategy, presented the draft, complemented by a proposal for an online presentation of the new strategy by COM. The Strategy will be submitted to the Board meeting in June for approval, before being published.

BE-Le Forem, FR, NL and SE gave comments in plenary. Written comments can be sent to the PES Secretariat until 13 May 2021.

ITEM 3: Individual learning accounts

COM presented main points of and informed about the state of planning for the Individual learning accounts (ILA). The objective of the initiative is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity and the motivation and incentives to keep building skills throughout their working life. The aim is complementing other actions of the European Skills Agenda, such as the Pact for Skills and the Council Recommendation on VET. The initiative is guided by a consultation and an impact assessment which will draw on the experiences in the Member States and around the world. A proposal of an initiative on individual learning accounts towards is expected end of 2021.

A number of PES took the floor after the presentation was followed, sharing experiences from national schemes and measures. Topics as financing, guidance, outreach, quality and recognition of learning were highlighted.

COM reminded about the Public Consultation on ILA open until 16 July, and encouraged PES to send their contributions: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12876->



[Individual-Learning-Accounts-A-possibility-to-empower-individuals-to-undertake-training/public-consultation_en](#)

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

PT and PES Secretariat presented the latest draft agenda of the PES Board. PT mentioned that the invitation has been sent out. COM explained that there will be a marketplace with 5 workshops around the topics of digital infrastructure for partnerships, digital strategy, video counselling and the use of Artificial Intelligence/algorithms.

Item 5: 2021 PES Network Mutual Learning Work Programme, including Benchmarking Assessments

COM and concerned Afepas presented the state of play of several mutual learning activities, Benchmarking activities and ongoing research.

In detail:

- Feedback from the PES Network stakeholders conference 20 - 22 April, and the Jour Fixe hosted by NO on 29 April was positive.
- DE announced the next Jour Fixe on ambidextrous leadership (20 May), and another one on videocounselling (12 July).
- In the 2nd semester of 2021, the Work Programme foresees two Thematic Review Workshops on recovery and vulnerable groups, respectively, and a Network Seminar on skills.
- 3 episodes of the PESPod are online, another 2 will follow before the Board meeting to take a decision on its continuation (4th episode published on 20 May).
- COM informed about two new activities in the Work Programme: a Working group on Quality Management and a toolkit on disability. The proposals will be presented to the Board for approval, along with a draft mandate for the Working Group

Benchmarking activities:

- The online assessment of HR and AT run smoothly, intense preparation paid off, no refinements are necessary so far, a reflection will take place after HU for the assessments starting after summer break.
- Invitations for online training (June 15) of designated team members in September assessments have been sent; training is dedicated to gain skills + capacities by doing some exercises.
- There is a need to make a call for nominating new assessors in order to increase the pool of available assessors. At least 12 candidates are needed to make the training economical. Member States who just provide one or even no assessor are kindly asked to acknowledge good arguments made in the meeting. Two dates for planning: nomination to the secretariat not later than **May 31**, training will take place: **June 21 + 22** (two half days). Due to tight schedules in autumn, the next training can not be expected before first quarter 2022. If there are questions AFEPA can approach Bernd Becking bilaterally.



Ongoing research

- The PES Secretariat reminded about the deadlines for the PES Capacity data collections, 15 June for PES Capacity I and 10 June for PES Capacity II. The study of labour market impacts for PES of the greening labour market is well on track. The report will be submitted to the PES Board in June. A questionnaire for the survey on anti-discrimination will be sent in June.
- A new format for the monthly update on the COVID-19 measures will be used as of May 2021.

AOB and closure of the meeting

- LU reported back from a brainstorming meeting on skills with BusinessEurope, Cedefop, OECD and CEPS.
- FR updated on WAPES activities (a new event in Azerbaijan, preparation of the World Congress in Estonia in November and organisation of the European Region members). LV informed that their application to rejoin WAPES will be submitted mid-May.
- EL briefly presented the Counselling Services Technical Assistance Programme which is part of the EU Structural Reform Support Programme. EL also shortly mentioned that the 1st Vice Chair of the Network, Spiros Protopsaltis, represented the PES Network and made a presentation at the disability forum organised by the Portuguese Presidency on 19 April.
- PES Secretariat informed the possibility to sign up to the Charter of the EU Pact for Skills of the Pact and its key principles. BE_VDAB and LU shared their experiences signing the Pact. More information and possibility to join the Pact:
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1517&langId=en>
- PES Secretariat informed about a request by a research consortium of European universities for one or several PES as partners on a future project on employment of disabled people. The theme is “Overcoming discrimination for an inclusive labour market”, with a focus on disabled people’s employment inclusion. The PES Secretariat will share the request by e-mail for PES to signal their interest to join directly (not representing the PES Network).
- PES Secretariat mentioned that the Chair of the Network, Johannes Kopf, will meet Mr Cosmin Boianuiu, ELA Executive Director, in the beginning of July.
- The next Afepa meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place online on **Thursday 30 September 2021**.