



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

7 March 2022– 09:30 – 12:30

Draft outcomes

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

Absent: BE-ADG ,EL, LI

### ITEM 1: Introduction

The agenda of the meeting was adopted. The minutes from the AFEPA meeting on 28 October 2021 were adopted and will be published.

The PES Secretariat welcomed Anna-Karin Palm-Olsson as new interim Afepa from the Swedish PES, Karolin Kõrreveski, back as Afepa from the Estonian PES, as well as Sandra Offesson from the Swedish PES as National Expert in Professional Training in the Secretariat for 3 months.

### ITEM 2a: Update from the European Commission

COM presented an update on a number of Skills Agenda items. There was a particular focus on the Individual learning accounts (ILA), the Pact for Skills, the Upskilling Pathways and the European Qualifications Framework evaluations. COM also addressed their skills profile tool for 3<sup>rd</sup> country nationals. The tool will soon be available in Ukrainian (expected to be ready in April). In addition, main policy developments relevant for the PES were highlighted: the Commission proposal on a Council Recommendation on Micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability and recent developments in skills for the digital and green transitions, where there are several strands of work in the Commission. It was also informed about the European Vocational Skills Week that will take place 16-20 May. It was mentioned that some PES have signed the Pact for Skills. Some PES have already contributed to the evaluation of the Upskilling Pathways through their participation in the consultation that recently took place. The Secretariat will share information about the skills profile tool for 3<sup>rd</sup> country nations and the new version when it is available. <sup>1</sup>

### ITEM 2b: The situation in Ukraine

PL, RO, HU and SK informed about the present situation and impacts for the PES. A large number of displaced people have arrived to all these countries, in particular Poland. Part of them are in transit, and want to proceed to other countries. So far, immediate needs, as food, transport, housing, information etc. have priority. Some of the PES reported about preparation of integration into work, for example meetings

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<sup>1</sup> [\\_ EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europea.eu\)](https://europea.eu)  
[EU Skills Profile Tool for third country nationals](#)



with employers, identification of jobs that can be relevant for the refugees etc. Implementation of the temporary protection mechanism will be important, although some of the countries have simplified procedures for workers from Ukraine. Language and recognition of skills and diplomas were mentioned as challenges.

SK thanked everyone who contacted them in connection with the situation of displaced persons from Ukraine and who expressed their support, solidarity, willingness to share their experience and provide related assistance, especially to the German colleagues. SK also thanked the PES Network Secretariat for their initiative and prompt adjustment of the PES Network activities to this new reality.

COM presented an update on the proposed application of the temporary protection mechanism, adopted by the Council on 4 March<sup>2</sup>, with an overview of the main elements of the mechanism. Possibilities of adaptation of access to EU funds, for example the ESF +, to finance new measures were mentioned.

The AFEPA's exchanged on the impact of the international context. Proposals for possible Network support were discussed, for example a survey to get an overview of relevant PES tasks and practices, and a possible update of the 2018 key considerations, a Working Group, a repository with useful pamphlets, leaflets etc, or a thematic review workshop.

It was proposed that a survey is conducted as soon as possible. Additional adaptations of the work programme will be proposed to support PES in the actual situation, after discussion with the Chair

### **ITEM 3: Follow-up to the Board meeting in Slovenia and overview of Work Programme 2022**

The PES Secretariat and SI shared the main outcomes of the Board meeting and the key priorities for 2022. Some key decisions taken included the re-election of Spiros Protopsaltis for a second mandate as First Vice Chair 2022-2023, adoption of the benchlearning Manual, the Annual Report, the Work Programme 2022 and the position paper on Greening.

The PES Secretariat also presented an overview of the 2022 Work Programme after the expressions of interest. With a few exceptions, events will continue online until the summer. Additional PES willing to be hosts or chairs are still very welcome. It was informed that a call for tender will be launched this year. A vacancy for a position as Seconded National Expert in the PES Secretariat is published with deadline 25 April via the Permanent Representations.

### **ITEM 4: Work Programme implementation and future of benchlearning**

AT gave an update from the Working Group on Quality Management. PES Secretariat reported from the PES Network seminar on "Future skills, career guidance and lifelong learning". A thematic paper on the topic will be published later this spring.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L\\_.2022.071.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2022%3A071%3ATOC](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2022.071.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2022%3A071%3ATOC)



The PES Secretariat informed on the upcoming PES Capacity data collections and the survey on PES staff management. PES Capacity II is this year on collection of information on the implementation of the Council Recommendation on long-term unemployment, with a focus on labour market training. The PES Capacity questionnaires will be launched about 20 April. The Afepas were invited to come with proposals to feed the upcoming survey of PES staff management and the study on ALMP measures, as well as topics for the open slots in the Network research programme.

Aiming at preparing a PES Board agreement in June on modalities for Thematic Learning Dialogues and a broad concept for the 4th Benchlearning cycle, the PES Secretariat introduced the discussion on how to proceed. The proposed calendar was agreed. Group discussions were organised to provide guidance for discussions of the Benchlearning Working Group and Steering Group on 24 March. Suggestions will then be discussed at the AFEPA meeting in May and forwarded as recommendations to the Board meeting in June. AFEPA members were invited to discuss with their WG members their positions beforehand and to send additional questions and ideas for the BL WG to PES Secretariat until end of the week.

#### **ITEM 5: Preparation of June PES Board Meeting, and Addressing nominations of Board members and contact details**

FR and the PES Secretariat presented the draft agenda for the meeting that will take place in Lille 23-24 June. A leadership dinner for the HoPES is planned 23 June (timing tbc). Labour market integration of youth and of persons with disabilities, PES performance and modernisation, the future of benchlearning and use of artificial intelligence will be discussed. In the present situation, it is important to be open for adaptation and the participants were invited to comments on how to frame the discussion and highlight where their Head of PES might want to intervene. The agenda will be finalised at the AFEPA meeting in May. Invitations will be sent in the coming weeks.

The Board meeting under the Czech Presidency will take place 15-16 December. It is planned as an online meeting.

The PES Secretariat proposed to streamline the procedure for nomination to the Board, and facilitate internal exchange of contact information. The recommended procedure for notification of Board members was supported as a reference. The PES Secretariat will send a consent form for both Board members and AFEPA members to allow for contact information to be shared within the Network at the internal communication platform (CIRCABC).

#### **ITEM 6: PES Network Stakeholder Conference**

PES Secretariat presented state of play of the organisation of the PES Network Stakeholder Conference (7-8 April). This year, the objective of the Stakeholder Conference is to increase understanding of the positions, concerns and strategies of key labour market actors with regards to labour and skills shortages. The programme includes a mixture of plenary discussions and presentations and parallel sessions. A final agenda and invitation to register will be shared very soon.



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

- FR and EE updated on WAPES activities. A WAPES managing board meeting has been dedicated to the result of a survey on PES strategies for 2022, which also was discussed in a Workshop for European PES. The 12th WAPES World Congress (25-29 April in Tallinn, Estonia) will focus on challenges and innovative actions for Public Employment Services in a rapidly evolving labour market.
- FR informed about relevant events under the French Presidency.
- The next Afepa meeting is planned to take place in Brussels on **13 May 2022**. It will be possible to connect online.