



Meeting of the Advisers for European PES Affairs (AFEPAs)

Conference Centre Albert Borschette

13-14 October 2022

Outcomes

Participants: BE_Actiris, BE_Le Forem, BE_VDAB, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EL, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LI, LT, LU LV, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, COM, PES SECRETARIAT

Absent: AT, BE_ADG

ITEM 1: Introduction

New AFEPAs from IE, IT, LV, LI, SI and SE were welcomed. The agenda of the meeting was adopted. The minutes from the AFEPA meeting on 13 May 2022 were adopted and will be published.

ITEM 2: Update from the European Commission

COM presented the headlines from the State of the Union address on 14 September 2022, with a focus on the proposal of the 2023 the European Year of Skills. The Commission proposal, adopted on 12 October, sets four objectives: i) promoting increased, more effective and inclusive investment in training and upskilling; ii) strengthening skills relevance, iii) matching people's aspirations and skills-set with labour market opportunities; iv) attracting people from third countries with the skills needed by the Union. It was highlighted that the European Year 2023 is an opportunity to give visibility to PES strategies and activities, and for the PES Network to voice its opinion. An update was provided on the European Care Strategy (presented on 7 September), the proposal for a Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income (adopted on 28 September), as well as the Directive on adequate minimum wages (adopted by the Council on 4 October).

COM then presented activities from the European Year of Youth. Examples of flagship initiatives include the ALMA programme, the review of the Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships, the reinforced Youth Guarantee, the European Child Guarantee, the Youth Entrepreneurship Policy Academy, the European Apprentices Network and support to the development of the Youth Guarantee for the Western Balkans. Youth policy is also mainstreamed across relevant policy fields.

In the exchange following these presentations, Afepas welcomed the European Year of Skills, as well as the focus on recognition of skills of third country nationals. Some Afepas mentioned their involvement in the working group (led by DG HOME) preparing the EU Talent Pool Pilot, and that existing relationships at a national level needs to be taken into account in new EU initiatives. Regarding the ALMA programme, it was suggested that providing an overview of participating countries would facilitate further contacts: the PES Secretariat will share the information as soon as it is available.



ITEM 3: The situation in Ukraine

EMCO-SPC survey

COM presented the main results from the EMCO-SPC survey regarding the labour market integration and social inclusion of displaced people from Ukraine. Overall, the survey highlights that many countries are facing similar challenges (such as recognition and certification of skills and access to housing - with difficulties to match available housing and jobs). Employment outcomes appear to be heterogeneous across Member States, with overall few self-employed, and a high share of women. The help received from migration authorities to contact PES most often consist in information. Some migration authorities also help setting up an appointment or refer to a contact person in PES. PES outreach activities is primarily concentrated on printed and online information. Some countries have taken steps to speed up recognition of skills and qualifications. Language courses are predominant, taking place via newly, specifically developed programmes. In some Member States, the beneficiaries of temporary protection participated mainly in counselling projects. The number of participants in training is currently low (in absolute terms). The discussions highlighted the rather limited information on remote work from Ukraine.

PES Network activities

The PES Secretariat thanked PES for their valuable responses to the last update of the Network questionnaire. Gradually, displaced people from Ukraine have started to register at PES and are available on the labour market. Jobs are mostly found in sectors with general labour shortages. According to PES, most concerns by employers to hire displaced people from Ukraine relate to the language barrier.

The next update of the survey is scheduled before the Board meeting in December. AFEPAs were encouraged to put a particular emphasis on new practices and latest figures (on employment and registration at PES) and ensuring quality data. A new question could be added on those with temporary proection status that are neither working, participating in training nor registered at the PES. Further frequency and potential changes to the questionnaire will be reconsidered after the Board. The PES Secretariat presented a proposed set of guidelines for sharing of the survey information (in particular data and good practices). The guidelines were approved by the Afepas.

DE reported back from the PES Network staff exchange on support to displaced people from Ukraine which took place in Berlin on 5 October, with active participation from SE. NO will be hosting the new dedicated Working Group, starting in November.

Talent Pool Pilot

COM introduced the Talent Pool Pilot, and the points of main interest for PES. It was stressed that the Pilot can contribute to identify and support persons who are not registered. The Pilot is hosted on EURES infrastructure, but not part of the EURES service offer. Representatives from the European Labour Authority presented the Talent Pool Pilot launched on 10 October 2022. Country participation in the pilot is voluntary, involving currently ES, FI, HR, LT and PL. Functionalities and conditions were presented. The difference between the planned EU Talent Pool (coordinated by DG HOME) and the Talent Pool Pilot was



emphasized, namely that pilot is designed to support the implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive. In the following discussion, questions were raised about evaluation of the initiative as well as the further development from this pilot to a complete Talent Pool. Afepas underlined the need to take existing PES needs and tools into account in the development of future initiatives.

ITEM 4: Work Programme 2022

FR reported from the PES Network Board meeting in Lille in June and EL reported highlights from the Thematic Review Workshop which took place 5-6 July 2022 in Athens on new forms of service delivery. The PES Secretariat presented an overview of upcoming activities for the rest of 2022, including Mutual assistance to LV, a Thematic Review Workshop on greening as well as meetings in the Working Groups on Digitalisation, on Integration of displaced people and refugees and on Communication. Afepas gave consent to use the PES Capacity data to the staff management survey.

The PES Secretariat reported on the state of play of the BL assessments, with only one assessment (IT) left under the third cycle. A survey on experiences from the third cycle assessments will be sent out to gather feedback and prepare for the fourth cycle. Thematic learning dialogues will start in the autumn, possibly with three dialogues in 2022. AFEPA's were invited to prioritise thematic learning dialogues they would like to take part in (until April 2023) and inform the secretariat by 28 October.

ITEM 5: Labour Barometer

Professor Enzo Weber, IAB, presented the European Labour Barometer. Published monthly since June 2018, the Barometer is a survey among regional units of PES, assessing the local labour market developments in the short term. 18 PES are currently participating. PL, as one of the participating PES, presented their experience using the Barometer. Survey data are published via a dedicated webpage, and distributed to the local PES experts. BG explained how they include the data in their package of monthly labour market information, and use the information as background in the design of new initiatives. Additional PES that consider joining the Barometer were invited to contact the PES Secretariat.

ITEM 6: Preparation of 18th PES Board Meeting, 15-16 December 2022, Czech Republic

The Czech PES and the PES Secretariat presented the draft agenda of the PES Board. The meeting will take place online 15-16 December. Integration of people fleeing the war in Ukraine in the labour market, lessons learnt from the third cycle of benchmarking, as well as PES staff management challenges in the 'new normal' will be discussed. There will also be a presentation of the Czech labour market. The Board will be invited to discuss gender equality in the PES Network (a discussion carried over from the June Board).

AFEPA's were invited to discuss the main topics for preparation and it was suggested to add a focus on the 'great resignation'. Proposals will be integrated in the final agenda.

A proposal related to modalities of PES Network activities in the context of the green transition was discussed. Participants highlighted the key role of in-person meetings for the Network and called for keeping a strong emphasis on face-to-face interactions. The discussion confirmed that the strengths of



on-line and on-site meetings should be optimised to fully benefit from either format. A particular focus could be placed on the preparation and methodology of the on-line meetings to raise value added of the event, benefit from inviting broader range of participants and speakers who would not be able to participate in person and ensure/ facilitate participant engagement and contribution. On-site events should offer sufficient time for in-depth discussions and social interaction moments, the possibility to allow grouping on-site meetings could also be considered. The participants noted the importance to preserve work/private life balance and optimise time spent away from the office that may result in a work backlog back at home.

A revised document will be shared with AFEPA.

ITEM 7: Information Points

COM presented a work on indicators on early support to jobseekers. EMCO started discussions in 2016 on the developments of a benchmarking framework on unemployment benefits and active labour market policies. EMCO has agreed on most aspects of the framework, but indicators for the early activation strand remain. The EMCO Indicators' Group has identified relevant features of early support services by PES to job-seekers, and a set of potential indicators attached to them. These features and potential indicators were discussed at the meeting of the PES Network Statisticians on 8 March 2022. Based on their feedback, the indicators were revised, presented to and agreed by the EMCO IG in June 2022, and submitted to volunteer PES for a pilot data collection exercise. In the autumn of 2022, the results will be assessed and integration of the data collection in Labour Market Policy Database will be explored.

PL gave an overview of activities during the Employers' Days which took place 16 - 20 May 2022 in connection with the European Vocational Skills Week. PL observed wide co-operation among labour market partners and enhancing the visibility of the labour offices and employment services. 226 regional and local labour offices participated with in total 666 events. 307 events were targeted on Ukraine citizens. The aim was to familiarize Ukrainian citizens with the Polish labour market, job or internship offers and opportunities to increase or change professional qualifications. There was the possibility of using the support of career counsellors, job offers with the possibility of participating in Polish language training were presented as well as organisation of information meetings for employers intending to employ Ukrainian citizens.

ITEM 8: Work Programme 2023 and working together in the years ahead

PES Secretariat and members of the Ad Hoc Working Group presented results from the AFEPA survey to collect proposals and priorities for the 2023 Work Programme, the planning of the Work Programme and proposals for working together in years ahead. A novelty of the WP is a tentative 2 years programme, where the second year is indicative and flexible at this stage. AFEPA discussed the proposals under each strand in groups. Following reporting from groups, it was agreed that the Draft Work Programme will be tabled to the Board for adoption.



Furthermore, AFEPAs discussed the following topics identified in the Ad Hoc Working Group report 1) Getting all on board and ensuring diverse contributions, 2) Reflecting upon PES Network partnerships, 3) Review the current approach to PES surveys, 4) Ensuring the right balance between in-person and online events. Reporting from the discussions will feed into the finalisation and implementation of the Work Programme next year.

AOB and closure of the meeting

FR updated on the WAPES Europe region meeting which took place 12-13 September. The WAPES Board will meet in Bern, Switzerland, on 28-29 November 2022.

The next Afepa meeting is planned to take place in Brussels on **9 and 10 March 2023**. Afepas are encouraged to attend in person.