



European Network of Public Employment Services

Trends in PES Assessment report on PES Capacity

2023



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Assessment Report on PES Capacity

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Trends in PES

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2023

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADEM	National Employment Agency of Luxembourg
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ALMA	Aim Learn Master Achieve initiative
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policy
AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
BEA	Belgium Actiris
BEF	Belgium Forem
BEV	Belgium VDAB
BG	Bulgaria
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSW	Centres of Social Welfare in Slovenia
CVET	Continuing Vocational Education and Training
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czechia
DE	Germany
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science in Ireland
DK	Denmark
DYPA	Greek Public Employment Service
EE	Estonia
EGFSN	Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
EL	Greece
EMAS	Eco-Management and Audit Scheme
EPAS	Apprenticeship Vocational Schools in Greece
ES	Spain
ESCO	European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations
ESF+	European Social Fund Plus
FI	Finland
FR	France
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HR	Croatia
HU	Hungary
IB	Intermediate Body
ICT	Information and communications technology
IE	Ireland
IEK	Vocational Training Institutes in Greece

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IS	Iceland
IT	Italy
JTF	Just Transition Fund
KEK	Vocational Training Centres in Greece
KPA2	Employment Promotion Centres in Greece
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LI	Lichtenstein
LMP	labour market policies
LT	Lithuania
LTU	Long-Term Unemployed
LU	Luxembourg
LV	Latvia
MA	Managing Authority
MT	Malta
NEBA	Occupational Assistance Network in Austria
NFSZ	National Employment Service of Hungary
NL	Netherlands
NO	Norway
PES Network	European Network of Public Employment Services
PES	Public Employment Services
PL	Poland
PrES	Private Employment agencies
PT	Portugal
REACT-EU	Recovery assistance for cohesion and the territories of Europe
RO	Romania
RRF	Recovery and Resilience Facility
SE	Sweden
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
SOLAS	Agency for Further Education and Training in Ireland
STAR	Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment
TSI	Technical Support Instrument
UB	Unemployment Benefit
VLAIO	Flemish Agency for innovation and entrepreneurship
YG	Youth Guarantee

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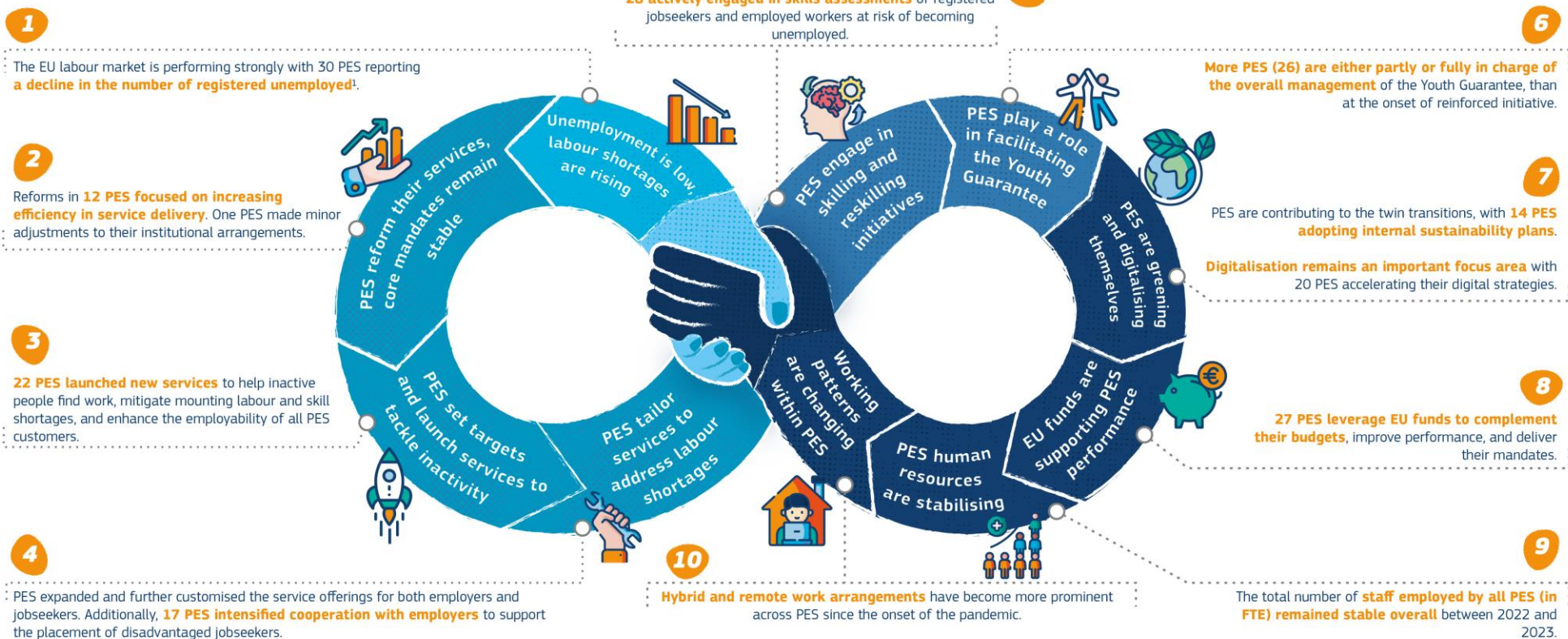
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PES capacity in 2023: 10 Key take-aways



¹ The PES Network brings together PES from 27 EU Member States plus Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway. The 2023 PES Capacity Questionnaire includes responses from 31 PES on general administrative features and 28 PES on the reinforced Youth Guarantee.

10 KEY TAKE-AWAYS

1	<p>UNEMPLOYMENT HAS NEVER BEEN LOWER</p> <p>The EU labour market is performing strongly with 30 PES reporting a decline in the number of registered unemployed¹. Among key target groups for PES, the youth cohort experienced the largest drop in registered unemployment (-18.3% reduction).</p>
2	<p>PES REFORM THEIR SERVICES, CORE MANDATES REMAIN STABLE</p> <p>Reforms in 12 PES focused on increasing efficiency in service delivery. One PES made minor adjustments to their institutional arrangements. Mandates remain largely unaltered, with only seven PES reporting updates to key tasks and activities.</p>
3	<p>NEW ACTIVATION MEASURES</p> <p>In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic recovery, 22 PES launched new services to help inactive people find work, mitigate mounting labour and skill shortages, and enhance the employability of all PES customers. Moreover, 31 PES set strategies and targets to ease labour market access for the most vulnerable groups to ensure that they are prepared for, and join, the workforce.</p>
4	<p>TAILORED SERVICES TO ADDRESS LABOUR SHORTAGES</p> <p>To meet the evolving needs of PES customers, PES expanded and further customised the service offerings for both employers and jobseekers (25 and 19 PES, respectively). Additionally, 17 PES intensified cooperation with employers to support the placement of disadvantaged jobseekers who are furthest from the labour market.</p>
5	<p>PES SUPPORTING SKILLING AND RESKILLING</p> <p>PES are taking on more responsibility in the area of skills, with 28 actively engaged in skills assessments of registered jobseekers and employed workers at risk of becoming unemployed. Collaborating with partners from the PES ecosystem plays a pivotal role, with 22 PES working with partners to deliver professional, language, and digital skill assessments.</p>
6	<p>FACILITATORS OF THE YOUTH GUARANTEE</p> <p>More PES (26) are either partly or fully in charge of the overall management of the Youth Guarantee, than at the onset of reinforced initiative. 25 PES are involved in mapping and outreach, while 28 PES participate in the preparation and offer. This shows the important role of PES in facilitating the education-to-employment transition of young people.</p>
7	<p>GREENING AND DIGITALISING THE ORGANISATIONS</p> <p>PES are contributing to the twin transitions, with 14 PES adopting internal sustainability plans, and 10 PES setting specific goals to reduce the carbon footprint of their activities. Greening practices also influenced digitalisation</p>

¹ In total, 32 PES organisations are currently part of the PES Network. The 2023 PES Capacity Questionnaire collected data from 31 PES on general administrative features and 28 PES on the reinforced Youth Guarantee.

processes in 12 PES. Digitalisation remains an important focus area with 20 PES accelerating their digital strategies and 11 PES initiating developments.

8

EU FUNDS SUPPORT PES PERFORMANCE

27 PES leverage EU funds to complement their budgets, improve performance, and deliver their mandates. Among various EU financing sources, ESF+ and REACT-EU emerge as the most popular options for PES to support their activity.

9

PES HUMAN RESOURCES ARE STABILISING

The total number of staff employed by all PES (in FTE) remained stable overall between 2022 and 2023. The average proportion of front-line staff also remained stable across PES at 65.3% in 2023, compared to 67.9% in 2022.

10

WORKING PATTERNS ARE CHANGING

Hybrid and remote work arrangements have become more prominent across PES since the onset of the pandemic. While not all PES were able to provide data, 12 PES reported that most of their current staff now work in a remote and hybrid way. This trend is more acute in head offices than in local offices.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The annual PES Capacity Report forms an integral part of the Work Programme of the European Network of Public Employment Services (PES Network). It provides an overview and analysis of the main trends in the development of Public Employment Services (PES).²

The Capacity Report provides a unique and comparable insight into the set-up and activities of the PES year on year. It examines how PES respond to labour market changes and organisational challenges, as well as PES's strategic goals, innovative digitalisation approaches, and changes in their internal resources. This year, a specific emphasis was also placed on the reinforced Youth Guarantee, the green transition, digitalisation, and skills development.

This report builds on the 2023 PES Capacity Questionnaire, which collected data from 31 PES organisations on questions over general features³ and 28 PES on questions on the reinforced Youth Guarantee (YG). Additionally, the report incorporates data for 2022 from the PES Benchmarking Data Collection process.

PES CONTEXT AND THE ECOSYSTEM

Mounting labour shortages with significant drops in long-term unemployment

Labour markets perform strongly, as the registered unemployment decreased for 97% of PES. Compared to the previous year the total number of registered unemployed dropped by -9.8% and the unweighted average change was -16.4%. The number of customers in Long-Term Unemployment (LTU) also saw an unprecedented 17.3% decrease between 2021 and 2022, reversing the upward trend of the past two years. Job vacancies kept growing in 2022, with an overall increase of 25.9% across 28 PES. The young benefited the most from this growth (18.3% reduction in the number of registered youth unemployed).

Stable mandates and structures across PES

Most PES operate as independent public agencies. In 2023, only one PES (HU) reported adjustments in their institutional arrangements.

Reforms and upgrades to improve services and benefits

Several PES introduced reforms to their operations and service delivery models and tools, with 12 PES (39%) having implemented reforms. Reforms that were introduced concern the service model of PES in two PES, with one PES adopting a new multi-annual strategy and defining associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

² [The European Network of Public Employment Services](#) gathers PES organisations from all 27 Member States as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the European Commission. It was created in 2014 to formalise the long-standing co-operation between PES in Europe, following a decision of the European Council and the European Parliament, amended in 2020: Decision No 573/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on enhanced cooperation between Public Employment Services (PES). Its objective is to reinforce PES capacity, effectiveness and efficiency.

³ The Capacity Questionnaire is completed by PES mid-year. Consequently, it includes questions about the current situation or trends for 2023, as well as requests for 2022 data e.g. regarding staff numbers or turnover. This approach facilitates comparison with previous survey iterations and updates information from the last survey wave. Please refer to Annex 1 in this report for further details on the data sources and year of reporting.

PES ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

Response to labour shortages

In response to labour shortages, PES strategic objectives focus on improving labour market access for disadvantaged groups (mainly long-term unemployed, those farthest away from the labour market, people with disabilities, and young people).

PES continue to connect employers with qualified workers by enhancing labour intermediation efficiency and addressing the matching skills offered by jobseekers to those in demand by employers. PES also intensified efforts to reach out to employers, improve counselling tools and implement sector-specific activities (i.e. transport, health-social services, hospitality and catering, industry).

Active labour market services and measures used by PES

PES further adapted customised offers of labour market services., 22 PES launched 82 new services in total, and 12 PES revised 47 existing services, indicating a drive to renew the service offer. New services focused on general client services, information service, and training-related measures, while revised services centred on improving client services and case management. Moving on from the previous year's focus on the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, this year's new or revised interventions shifted to addressing the needs of inactive people, especially young jobseekers, and supporting workers at risk of losing their jobs. PES interventions also promoted digital and green skills to increase employability in the changing labour market. This shows how PES responded to the new dynamic labour market conditions in a post-COVID-19 context.

The report underscores the active involvement of PES in the area of skills, with 90% having full or partial responsibility for skills assessments of registered jobseekers and employed workers at risk of becoming unemployed. 71% of PES collaborate with partners in implementing and delivering professional, language, and digital skills assessments.

Higher level of PES engagement in the reinforced Youth Guarantee

The report highlights the progress made by PES in supporting the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee (YG), with more PES taking responsibility for the different phases of YG delivery. It shows that more PES offer support services in the preparatory phase, such as career guidance, counselling, and short-term training. It also shows that 71% of PES provide post-placement support services. Moreover, 64% or 18 PES set specific targets in 2023 to measure the impact of YG schemes, using monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. PES also reported efforts to raise awareness of the green transition among young people by offering green skills training. However, some challenges remain in the set-up of YG schemes: securing sufficient funding, coordinating efforts among different stakeholders, and developing the necessary infrastructure. Another challenge is the decrease in the number of dedicated YG staff due to the transition between EU funds programming periods. PES also reported efforts to raise awareness of the green transition among young people by offering green skills training.

GREENING AND DIGITALISING THE PES

PES support starts to target green jobs

Support for green jobs is developing: 61% of PES cooperate with employers to adapt to the green transition by, for instance, identifying skills needs for green jobs, supporting steps in industrial restructuring, and implementing employment subsidies for green jobs set in law. Skills is the most pressing area for PES in the process of adapting to the green transition, with three-quarters of them providing training opportunities to up- and re-skill workers. PES also stressed the need to define green jobs as a crucial step for designing and developing specific green strategies, with 11 out of 31 PES involved in such activities.

PES adapt to support the green transition. 45% of PES adopted internal sustainability strategies that cover various aspects, such as improving building efficiency, reducing

waste, and promoting sustainable mobility. Furthermore, 32% of PES set specific objectives or key performance indicators to monitor and reduce environmental impacts, while 39% reported that their sustainability plans influenced their digitalisation processes.

The digital transformation of PES

The digital transformation of PES' work processes and employment services continued to accelerate in 2023: 11 PES initiated, and 20 PES accelerated their digital strategies. In 2023, 21 out of 31 PES offered digital services to job-seeking customers, and 25 out of 31 PES offered digitalised services to employers. The digitalisation level of employment services for job-seeking customers varies across different PES, with satisfaction surveys being the most digitalised PES activity. Matching vacancies to jobseekers and jobseeker registration were the services that most often use a combination of in-person and digital formats (65% and 61% of PES, respectively). Finally, PES continued to digitalise services to employers, with vacancy registration by employers being the most digitalised process across PES (58%).

PES RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE

Spending focused on quality service delivery; EU funds used to test new services

PES expenditure data in 2022 shows a balanced distribution of increases and decreases in spending across PES. Notably, Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) and staff costs remain the primary areas of expenditure, indicating a continued priority on delivering quality services and assisting jobseekers in their search, training, and transition between jobs. The report also explores how PES use various EU funding opportunities to support structural reforms, system modernisation, youth-oriented measures, training, and digital transformation.⁴ The ESF+ is one of the EU funding programmes most used by PES.

Stable levels of Human Resources

PES staff numbers did not change much between April 2022 and April 2023. However, the turnover rate increased to 9.3% across PES. The share of front-line staff remained stable, and hybrid and remote work arrangements are becoming more prominent. Changing unemployment rates, the ending of the EU funds programming cycle 2014-2020, and the internal reorganisation had some effects on PES staff deployments.

PES adapting to new ways of working

Remote and hybrid work arrangements became a common feature of staff management practices in PES. The development of remote and hybrid work is correlated to new work practices introduced during the pandemic, which become permanent features, including the digitalisation of part of the PES services, the development of online services and guidance for jobseekers and employers, and the use of online platforms for staff meetings, training, and internal communication. Not all PES surveyed were able to report detailed data on different types of remote and hybrid work within their organisation, either due to the high level of decentralisation and/or a lack of reporting mechanisms. Overall, fully remote positions are not prevalent across PES staff; only 10 out of 31 PES report that such an option is possible in their organisation. Hybrid positions where staff combine working at the office and outside the office on a regular basis, are found more commonly across PES today. In PES where remote and hybrid work is in place, most of them reported that such new forms of work organisation are more prevalent in their head office than in local offices.

⁴ The EU funds used by PES include the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the Recovery assistance for cohesion and the territories of Europe (REACT-EU), the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) and the Just Transition Fund (JTF).

1 INTRODUCTION

This report is an annual report published on PES Capacity. As an integral part of the Work Programme of the European Network of PES⁵, it provides an overview and analysis of the main trends in the development of Public Employment Services (PES).

The PES Capacity Report brings direct and unique insights from PES for policymakers, stakeholders, and researchers to understand the current institutional setting of the PES, the active labour market policies and services they offer, as well as their strategic objectives, targets, and internal resources. In addition, the report focuses on two themes of specific relevance in 2023: the role played by PES in supporting the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee (YG) in the context of the YG multilateral surveillance review, and the development of PES strategies and measures linked to the greening of the labour market. These themes appear throughout the report, alongside dedicated sections which are highlighted in the 'thematic foci' box at the beginning of each section.

The primary source of information for this report is the answers provided by PES in response to the 2023 PES Capacity Questionnaires, collected between July and September 2023. Part I of the questionnaire focused on general features of PES operations and 31 answers were submitted by PES organisations, covering all members of the European Network of PES. The only exception was Czechia, who did not participate in the survey. This report includes the answers from PES of 26 EU countries (three PES for Belgium)⁶, as well as from PES in Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway. Part II of the questionnaire focused on PES support to the reinforced Youth Guarantee, with responses submitted by 28 PES organisations from 25 EU countries (including three PES for Belgium)⁷, covering all EU Member States (except Czechia and Latvia), as well as the PES from Norway. In addition, data from the annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection exercise is used in this report's analysis, complemented by data from PES Capacity Questionnaires in previous years to explore longitudinal trends. Generally, the volume and detail of information provided by individual PES in the PES Capacity Questionnaires and PES Benchlearning Data Collection varies.

For some questions, depending on the answer provided, respondents were asked to answer sub-questions, or were redirected to another question. The base for some percentages varies according to the respondents' pathway through the survey. Consequently, percentages are representative of the respondents who encountered each question or set of sub-questions, rather than the entire survey population. This approach ensures a tailored analysis but requires careful interpretation of the results to understand the context of each percentage reported.

This report begins with an analysis of the labour market dynamics in which PES operate (Section 2). Section 3 then examines the evolving landscape of PES with recent and ongoing reforms affecting their status, PES responsibilities in relation to skills development and recognition (in the context of the 2023 European Year of Skills), strategic objectives and responsibilities, while Section 4 focuses on the PES's response to labour shortage.

⁵ [The European Network of Public Employment Services](#) gathers PES organisations from all 28 Member States as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the European Commission. It was created in 2014 to formalise the long-standing co-operation between PES in Europe, following a decision of the European Council and the European Parliament, amended in 2020: Decision No 573/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on enhanced cooperation between Public Employment Services (PES). Its objective is to reinforce PES capacity, effectiveness and efficiency.

⁶ AT, BE (three PES), BG, HR, CY, DK, EE, FI, FR, DE, EL, HU, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI, ES and SE.

⁷ AT, BE (three PES), BG, HR, CY, DK, EE, FI, FR, DE, EL, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI, ES and SE.

Special focus is given to the role of PES in the green transition in Section 5, looking at strategies and specific activities of PES to promote sustainability and the greening of the labour market and the economy. Section 6 describes types of active labour market policies implemented by PES, illustrating their ability to serve customers effectively and including new developments and measures for specific client groups. Section 7 explores PES responsibilities and measures provided to young people as part of the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee.

The final sections of this report summarise findings on the evolution of PES internal resources. Here, section 8 provides an overview of PES financial resources and insights into the use of EU funds by PES, and Section 9 explores the latest trends affecting PES human resources.

2 LABOUR MARKET DYNAMICS AFFECTING PES

This section provides insights into the trends and characteristics of registered unemployed individuals actively seeking employment through the PES.⁸ It presents data for 2022 collected during the annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection process, focusing on the annual average of the 'stock' of registered customers with PES, excluding those who are currently taking part in any Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP). The section includes an analysis of the trends affecting different cohorts of unemployed registered with PES, such as youth (aged 24 or below), older unemployed (aged 55 and above) and LTU.

Key findings:

- According to the Benchlearning data, in 2022 the number of registered unemployed decreased in almost all PES (97%, 30 out of 31).
- In 2022 the total number of registered unemployed across 31 PES fell by -9.8%, while the unweighted average change of registered unemployed for each PES was -16.4%⁹.
- A positive trend is the unprecedented decline by 17.3% in the number of LTU between 2021 and 2022. This comes after two years of rising numbers.
- The post-pandemic situation caused a surge in job vacancies registered with almost all PES between 2020 and 2021 (97%, 29 out of 30). In 2022, this trend continued for 18 out of 29 PES (64%), while 11 out of 29 PES (34%) saw a slight drop in vacancies.
- However, the overall increase of vacancies across 29 PES was still 25.9% in 2022 (only 5.2 percentage points lower than the previous year's rate of 31.1%).

Thematic foci:

- The Benchlearning data breakdown by target groups reveals that the youth cohort (aged 24 or below) experienced the largest drop in unemployment (-18.3%) among the 23 PES analysed over 2021-2022, compared to the older unemployed group (aged 55 or above) who saw a -7.2% change.

2.1 Registered unemployed

Figure 1 below shows developments in the overall number of registered unemployed or job-seeking customers of PES between 2014 and 2022, according to the Benchlearning Data Collection results. Figures for registered unemployed show the annual average of the 'stock' of unemployed persons registered with the PES at the end of each month in that year. This concerns registered persons who are available for the labour market and who are, or should be looking for a job, excluding those on active labour market measures¹⁰.

Except for Belgium Forem, all other PES (97%, 30 out of 31)¹¹ experience a decline in the number of registered unemployed in 2022. This situation suggests that countries are progressively bouncing back from the COVID-19 pandemic with less registered

⁸ The findings are based on the annual Benchlearning data for 31 of the 32 PES Network members in 2022. No information is available for LI. No data are available from RO regarding unemployed youth, older unemployed or LTU. No data on LTU are available for NO.

⁹ Unweighted average of the individual PES changes. All averages in this report are unweighted averages.

¹⁰ This definition differs slightly from the one for job-seeking customer used in the data in reports before 2019. Before 2019, data were collected through the PES Capacity survey. In the questionnaire, the definition of job-seeking customer included participants in ALMPs (except Eurostat LMP categories 5-7) and the figures in principle reflected the situation at the end of April. Furthermore, the number of PES responding to this question in the annual Benchlearning Data Collection tends to be somewhat higher than the number of PES responding to the survey.

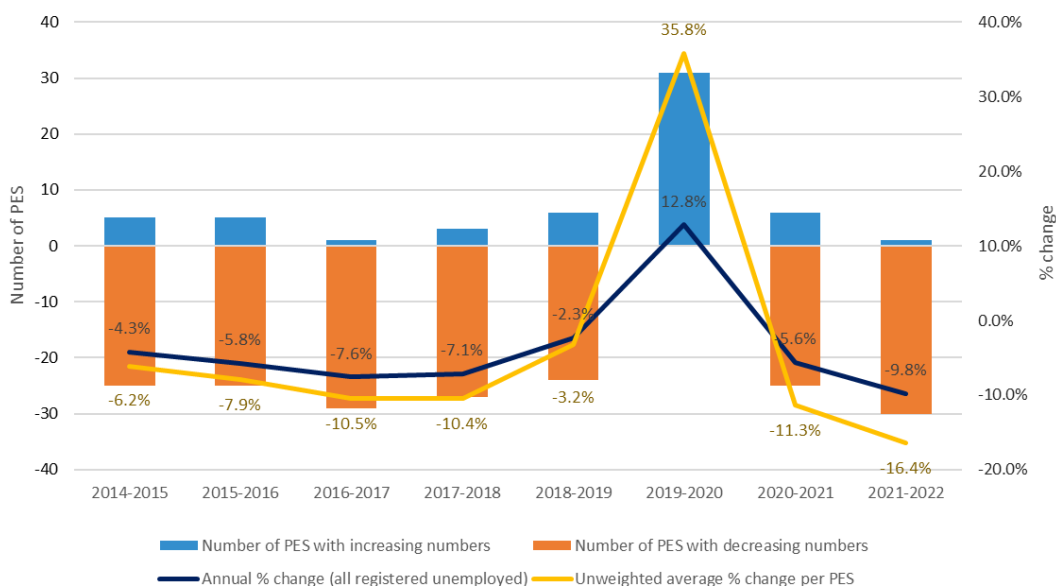
¹¹ No information is available for LI.

unemployed. Compared to 2021, the overall decrease in the number of registered unemployed across all 31 PES was -9.8%, while the unweighted average change of registered unemployed for each PES was -16.4%.

The *unweighted* average decrease is more pronounced than the *overall* decrease in registered unemployed.¹² This is because the overall decrease is mainly driven by developments in larger countries that have comparably more unemployed people registered with PES.

The unweighted average, on the other hand, is influenced to the same extent by each country. Therefore, sharp drops in smaller countries like IS (-53.4%), MT (-45.0%), NO (-32.1%), LT (-31.9%), as well as DK and SI (-26.1% and -24.2%, respectively), affect the unweighted average more.

Figure 1. Developments in the number of registered unemployed, 2014-2022



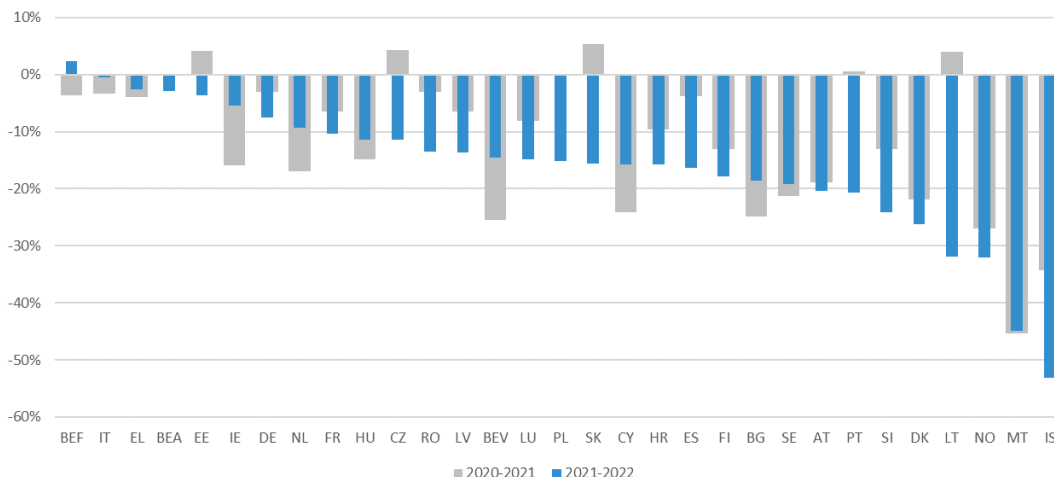
Source: Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection.

Note: Average monthly 'stock' of registered unemployed compared on an annual basis, who are available for the labour market and who are looking or should be looking for a job across PES. Registered unemployed taking part in ALMP are excluded, except in BEA, BEF and EL where participants of some ALMP are included. No data is available for LI. Data for IT is only available from 2018. For 2014-2018 both the overall and average percentage change is over the base of 30 PES (excluding IT and LI). 2018-2022, the base is 31 PES (including IT).

Figure 2 presents the Benchlearning data on the changes in the number of registered unemployed for different PES. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of unemployed registered decreased between 2020 and 2021 in most PES (81%, 25 out of 31). This trend expanded to all PES in 2022 except for BE Forem, which experienced a 2.3% increase. Interestingly, the three PES with the largest drops in registered unemployed in 2020-2021 (IS, MT and NO) also experienced the sharpest growth rates in the number of registered unemployed in 2021-2022, along with LT.

¹² The overall decrease measures the total number of all PES unemployed customers in those countries where the PES provided data while the unweighted average indicates the individual PES changes.

Figure 2. Percentage change in the number of registered unemployed, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022

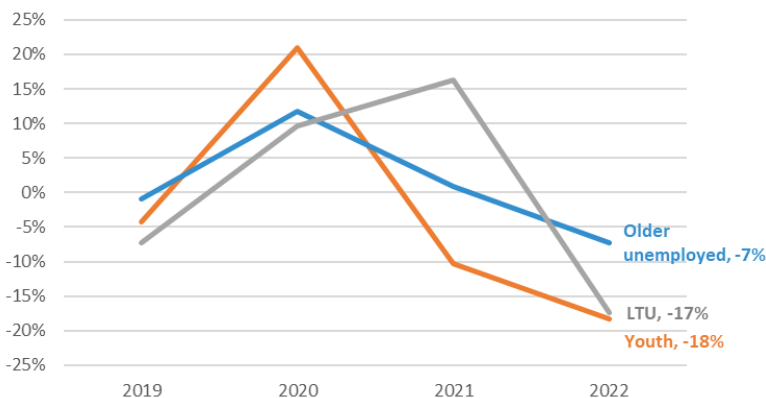


Source: Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection, n=31.

Note: Average monthly 'stock' of registered unemployed compared on an annual basis, who are available for the labour market and who are, or should be looking for a job, excluding those on active labour market measures. No information is available for LI. Registered unemployed taking part in ALMPs are excluded, except in BEA, BEF and EL where participants of some ALMPs are included.

The number of registered unemployed youth rose by 20.9% between 2019 and 2020, while the number of registered older unemployed increased by 11.7%. The data breakdown by target groups as shown in Figure 3 reveals that the youth cohort (aged 24 or below) experienced the largest drop in registered unemployment (-18.3%) among the 23 PES analysed in 2021-2022, compared to the older unemployed group (aged 55 or above) who saw a -7.2% change in the same years. Another positive trend is the unprecedented decline by 17.3% in the number of LTU between 2021 and 2022 after two years of rising numbers.

Figure 3. Annual change of registered unemployed by target groups, 2019-2022



Source: Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection, n=23.

Note: No or insufficient information is available for CY, EL, IS, IE, IT, LI, NL, NO and RO.

2.2 Available registered vacancies

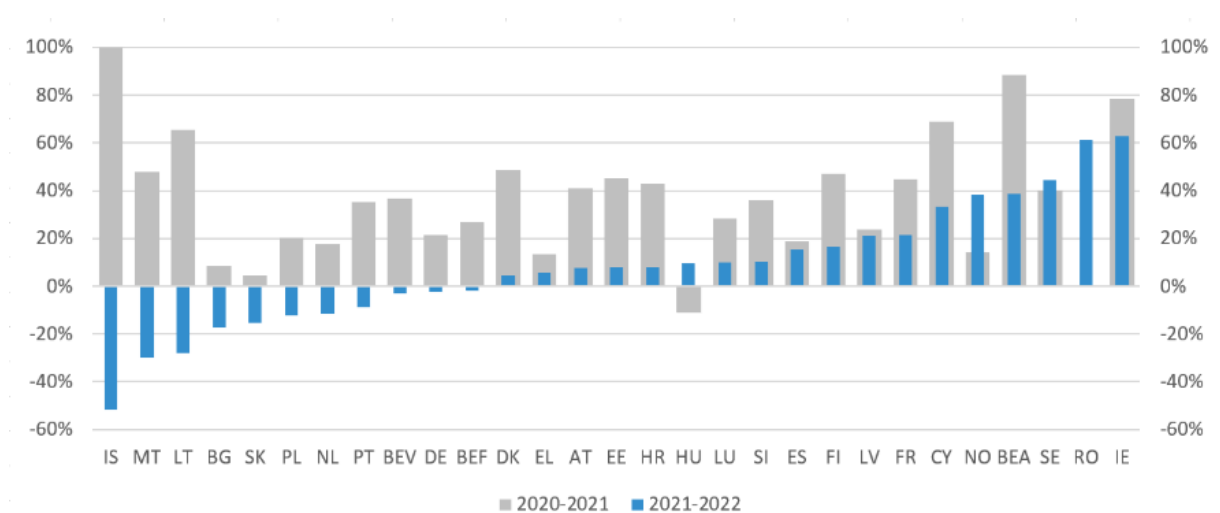
The post-COVID-19 pandemic situation caused a surge in the average number of job vacancies reported by PES each month, with almost all PES (97%, 29 out of 30) reporting an increase between 2020 and 2021. In 2022, this trend continued for 18 out of 29¹³ PES (64%), while 11 out of 29 PES (34%) saw a slight drop in vacancies (between -3% and -

¹³ No or insufficient information for CZ, IT and LI.

15%)¹⁴. At the same time, a lower number of registered unemployed or jobseeking customers with PES is observed in that period. The result is a smaller workforce on offer to fill vacancies. The overall increase of job vacancies across 29 PES was still 25.9% in 2022 (only 5.2 percentage points lower than the previous year’s rate of 31.1%)¹⁵.

Figure 4 illustrates how the number of vacancies changed from 2020 to 2022. The sharpest declines in vacancies were experienced in three PES (IS, MT and LT) in 2021-2022 after experiencing extreme increases (between 47.8% and 569.6%) in the 2020-2021 period. Other notable increases in vacancies (between 69% and 88.4% yearly change) occurred in Belgium Actiris, Cyprus, and Ireland in 2020-2021, but their rates did not fall in the following period (2021-2022). In general, the vacancy increases were moderate for most PES in 2022.

Figure 4. Percentage change in the number of registered vacancies, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022



Source: Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection, n=29.

Note: No or insufficient information for CZ, IT and LI. The bar with an extreme outlier value (IS) has been capped at 100%.

¹⁴ For 29 PES, no or insufficient information was available for CZ, IT and LI.

¹⁵ For 29 PES (excluding CZ) to establish comparisons between both periods.

3 THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF PES: STATUS UPDATES, REFORMS, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROCESSES IN FOCUS

This section explores PES's strategic objectives,¹⁶ how PES are structured and operate and how they deliver their work and services. It begins with a description of the main changes in the legal or organisational status of the PES, followed by an overview of recent reforms aimed at improving PES performance to cope with major challenges. The following three sub-sections focus on the evolving mandate of PES, covering their core tasks and activities, their strategic objectives and targets set for 2023, and their responsibilities in relation to skills, including their support services for the inactive and those who are still in employment. The last sub-section analyses new trends in PES work processes, notably how digitalisation is transforming the internal and external work dynamics of the PES.

Key findings:

- In 2023, most PES did not report any significant changes in their organisational structures or legal statuses. However, since May 2022, one third (39%, 12 out of 31) of PES reported that they had introduced reforms to their service delivery models and tools.
- As for PES mandates, only 7 out of 31 PES (23%) reported changes or updates in relation to key tasks and activities compared to the previous year. In most cases, these related to upgrades in services or benefits provided by the PES. The core mandate of these PES however remains unchanged.
- Strategic objectives and targets continued to be formulated to improve labour market access for some of the disadvantaged groups (mainly LTU, those furthest away from the labour market, people with disabilities, and youth).
- Most PES did not formulate specific objectives to reduce gender inequalities in particular, although these inequalities persist.

Thematic foci:

- With 2023 being the European Year of Skills, the PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 gathered information on how PES are involved in skills development and recognition. Skills assessments are a key task for most PES, with 28 out of 31 PES (90%) having full or partial responsibility for these.
- In 2023, the number of PES that reported offering digital services to jobseeking customers (either 'fully digital', 'mostly digital (e.g., online or via mobile app)' or 'mix between in-person and digital') was 21 out of 31 (68%), while the number of PES that reported offering any type of digitalised services to employer customers was 25 out of 31 (81%).

3.1 PES structure and updates in legal status

PES have different legal statuses depending on how they are organised, the laws that regulate them, how independent they are from the government, and how PES tasks are distributed among different levels of administration. Some PES are part of the public sector, while others have their own legal personality, such as public agencies, foundations, or associations. The legal status of PES determines their governance, operational autonomy, accountability, and funding sources or capacity.

In 2023, most PES did not report any significant changes in their organisational structures or legal statuses. Here we note that PES may not have reported on ongoing reforms or

¹⁶ The PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, which was completed by 31 PES, provides the basis for this section. No information is available for CZ.

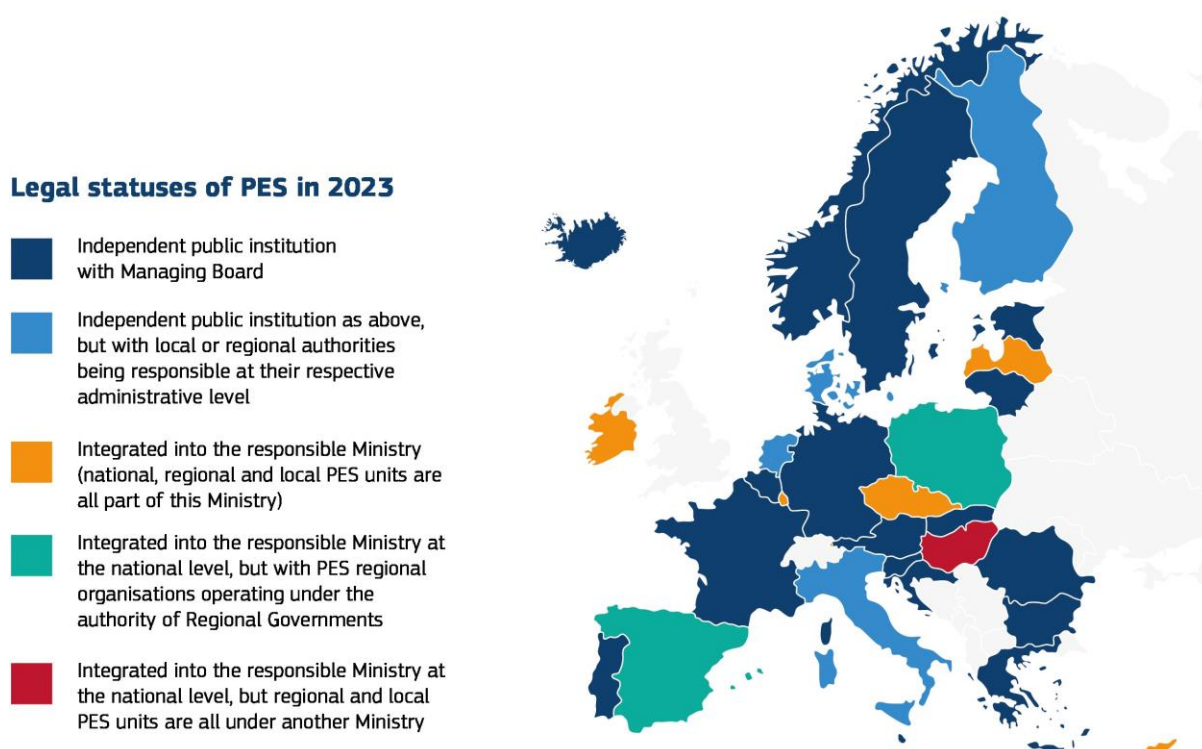
changes, which may be reported on once reforms are completed in the future. The only exception was HU, who reported minor adjustments in their institutional arrangements. EL maintained its legal status from the previous year but reported updates on local arrangements.¹⁷ As shown in Map 1 below, the legal statuses of PES in 2023 can be grouped as follows:

- Independent public institution (possibly with members in the managing board appointed by, or with, representatives of social partners, government, etc.): most PES (61%, 19 out of 31 PES) belong to this category. PES are independent public institutions, which means they may be overseen by a ministry but are not formally part of it. Other important aspects of this status include the PES having its own director or governing board, and not being a department or Directorate-General of a Ministry.
- Independent public institution as above, but with local or regional authorities being responsible at their respective administrative level: this category includes three PES. They are independent institutions, but local or regional authorities manage PES at their level in these countries.
- Integrated into the responsible ministry (national, regional, and local PES units are all part of this ministry): six PES (CY, FI, IE, LI, LV and LU) fall into this category. In these cases, the PES is fully integrated into the ministry responsible for employment policies at various levels.
- Integrated into the responsible ministry at the national level, but with PES regional organisations operating under the authority of regional governments. Two countries (ES and PL) fall into this category.
- Other, i.e. integrated into the responsible ministry at the national level, but regional and local PES units are all under another ministry: this unique category applies to HU, where the national PES is part of the ministry responsible for labour policy, but regional and local PES units operate under the Ministry of Finance¹⁸.

¹⁷ The PES in Greece operates 116 local employment offices, or Employment Promotion Centres (PES/KPA2), that offer information, guidance, and placement services. It also runs 50 Apprenticeship Vocational Schools (EPAS), 30 Vocational Training Institutes (IEK), 6 Vocational Training Centres (KEK), 2 Vocational Training Centres for People with Disabilities, and 25 Day Nurseries.

¹⁸ The National Employment Service of Hungary (NFSZ) is governed by the Minister responsible for employment policy. However, the local and regional PES units are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance. More details about the PES governance structure in Hungary can be found at https://www.cpesec.org/info_hu.php (last checked on 17 November 2023).

Map 1. Legal statuses of PES in 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q1.2 [...] If anything has changed, please indicate current status of your PES, n=31.

Note: CZ did not respond to PES Capacity Questionnaire in 2023. The data used corresponds to previous years.

Corrigendum: this figure was corrected since first publication of this report on 06 May 2024.

3.2 Evolving PES mandate

This section analyses the evolving mandate of PES in relation to their core tasks and activities, including their level of responsibility associated with these tasks and activities (namely, 'fully', 'partly' and 'not responsible'). Results are presented visually in Figure 5 below. Box 1 underneath the figure provides a comprehensive description of the main PES duties, as per PES Capacity Questionnaire categories, which is needed to fully understand the figure.

Around a quarter of PES (23%, 7 out of 31)¹⁹ reported changes or updates in relation to key tasks and activities compared to the previous year. In most cases, these were upgrades to services or benefits provided by the PES. The responsibility levels associated with tasks and activities for each PES remain unchanged.

Box 1. Key changes across PES since 2022

Greece underwent substantial PES reforms with the enactment of Law No. 4921/2022 in April 2022. Renaming PES to DYPA, their reforms include the establishment of the National Council for Workforce Skills, the reform of the Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) system, and the introduction of Individual Skills Accounts. The governance system also saw changes, incorporating new roles and responsibilities for the PES Management Board, including the creation of the Social Partners Council for enhanced collaboration. Noteworthy digital transformations include the PES Digital Register and Digital Individual Action Plan, enabling online registration and personalised

¹⁹ These PES provided additional information in 2023 are AT, CY, EL, IS, IE, PL, and SE.

support for jobseekers. These comprehensive changes align the Greek PES with evolving labour market needs and foster a more effective and responsive employment ecosystem. In addition, Greece reported updates in the following areas:

- Unemployment benefit: a recent innovation in the national unemployment benefit scheme is the work benefit, introduced by Law No. 4921/2022 art. 25. This benefit extends the unemployment benefit by half of the eligible amount for jobseekers who find a full-time job before the end of their benefit entitlement period, up to the maximum duration of 12 months.
- Social allowances: the parental leave benefit (Law No. 4808/2021 art. 28) grants an absence from work for up to four months (the first two months paid by DYPA at a flat rate) to biological, adoptive, and foster parents.

The Ministries of Labour of Cyprus and Austria signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to build a Performance Management System by the end of 2024, as part of a project under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). Under this cooperation framework, a new IT core system and matching tool is also being developed.

In July 2022, the Icelandic Directorate of Labour took over the responsibility of providing services to individuals seeking international protection from the Directorate of Immigration.

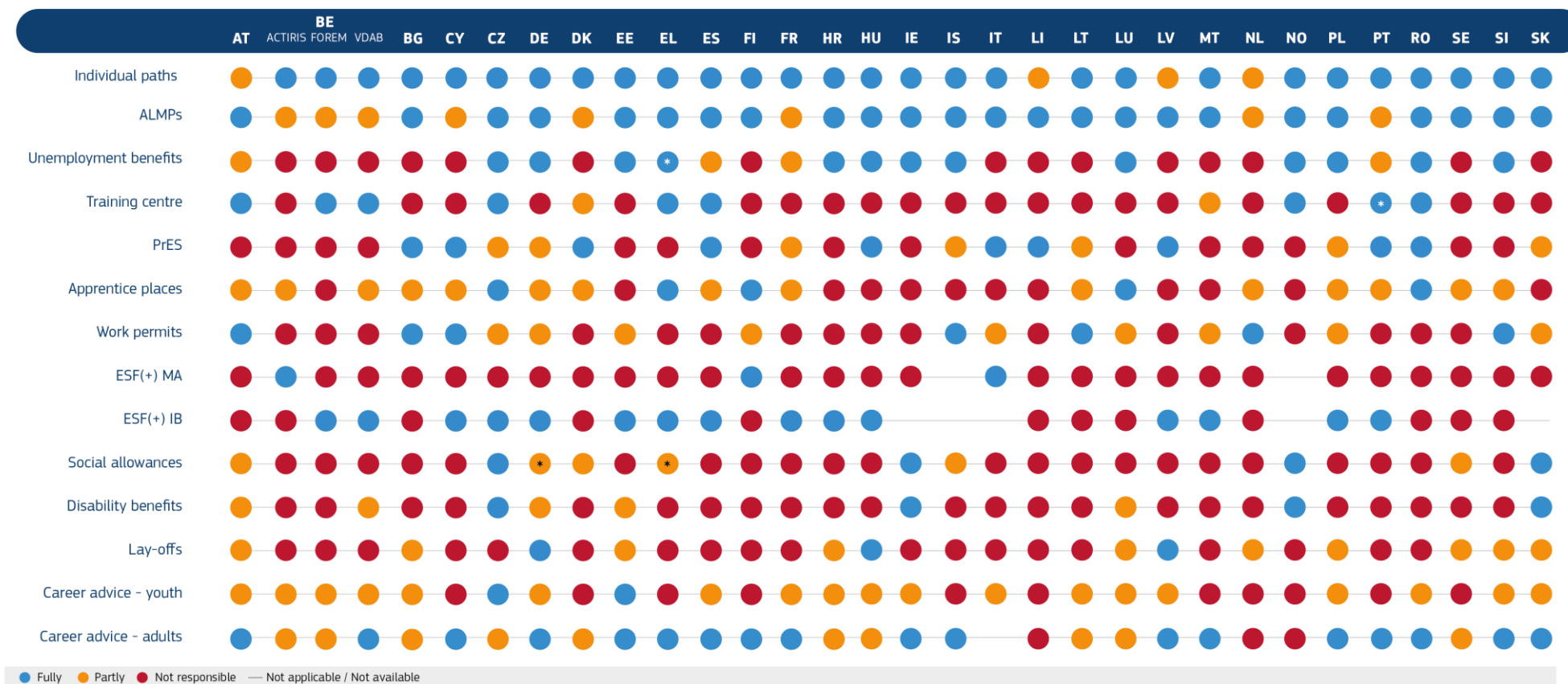
In Ireland, the PES implemented some reforms, such as a new management structure from January 2022. Their IT systems were upgraded in April 2022 to include customers under 30 years (following the YG scheme). The Employment Services Management Tool was launched in Q1 2022 to monitor performance and assess client service quality.

The main changes in Poland aim to enhance labour market access, language proficiency, vocational skills, and integration for foreign workers, particularly Ukrainians.

In Sweden, the PES created a National Coordination Function in 2022 to support skills supply in green industries. It works with a special office for the northern regions of Sweden, where skills needs are high, and demographics are challenging.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 Part I.

Figure 5. PES responsibility by tasks and activities in 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q1.1 Changes in PES specific activities and tasks in 2022, n=31.

Note: CZ did not provide any information in 2023. The data used corresponds to previous years.

(*) DE: the PES is partly responsible for this task, namely when classified as an allowance in accordance with §149 No. 1 SGB III (concerning UB). In this case, customers with children receive a higher unemployment benefit. An increased benefit for customers with children is also provided for short-time work allowance.

(*) EL: The PES reported new additions in the area of unemployment benefit (extension of the entitlement period for full-time employees) and social allowances (extension of parental leave benefit). However, the responsibility statuses for both categories remain unchanged.

(*) PT: The PES also holds joint responsibility for managing a network of 24 jointly managed Vocational Training Centres established under protocol agreements concluded between the PES and the social partners.

Box 2. Classification of PES tasks and activities presented in Figure 5

Individual paths: the implementation of services that offer tailored/individual assistance (e.g. intensive counselling and guidance, and job-search assistance) and follow-up for unemployed people as part of a planned path towards sustainable (re)employment (cf. services as in Eurostat LMP database Category 1.1.2).

ALMPs: the implementation of ALMP measures (any measures within Eurostat LMP database categories 2-7) financed by national funds or co-funding from the European Social Fund (Plus) (ESF/+).

Unemployment benefits: the administration of the national unemployment benefit (UB) scheme (the handling of UB claims, payments, financial planning, and reporting, etc.).

Training centre: managing training centre(s) for jobseekers (training centres that are an integral part of the PES).

Licensing and supervising private employment agencies (PrES).

Apprenticeship places: the notification of apprenticeship places and the placement of apprenticeship candidates.

Work permits: issuing work permits for third-country nationals (for example approving and issuing applications, keeping records, reporting, etc.).

Acting as the managing authority (MA) for ESF or ESF+.

Acting as intermediate body (IB) for ESF or ESF+.

Social allowances: the administration of social types of allowances (for example child allowances for unemployment benefit recipients).

Disability benefits: the administration of benefits for people with disabilities or handicaps.

The approval of layoffs made by employers.

Career advice and guidance for young people still in education.

Career advice and guidance to adult benefit recipients, vulnerable groups, jobseekers, customers, or adults in general.

3.3 Recent reforms to respond to current challenges

PES have been concerned with further increasing their efficiency and performance in recent years, well into 2023. Since May 2022, several PES introduced reforms to their service delivery models and tools, with 12 out of 31 PES (39%) having implemented reforms. Reforms that were introduced concern the service model of PES in two PES (EL and ES), with one PES (LU) adopting a new multi-annual strategy and defining associated Key Performance Indicators (KPI). In most cases, reforms centered on a specific capacity area or the organisational structure of the PES. Table 1 provides a summary of recent reforms to respond to challenges related to the performance and efficiency of PES services.

Table 1. Overview of reforms in PES services introduced since May 2022

Reform category	Description
Institutional / Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening regional levels (EL, NL), partnership approaches (NL), new organisational regulations (BG) - New mechanism for labour market diagnosis (EL)
Digitalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase of a new IT core system – ‘Candidate Placement System’ (CY), wider use of digital meetings (DK) - Modernisation of the one-stop employment portal using artificial intelligence and other tools (ES)
Service delivery processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simplified case handling of insured unemployed and administrative simplification (DK) - Multiannual strategy ‘ADEM 2025’ to digitalise and improve the quality and efficiency of the PES services (LU)
Service delivery for disadvantaged groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incentives to integrate people with disabilities into mainstream education, employment, and rehabilitation programmes (DK) - Refocusing employment services and the VET system after the introduction of the revised minimum income benefit (DE) - New mutual obligation scheme for jobseekers and PES (EL) - New PES status for activating people with specific employment barriers (LT)
Project and performance management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introducing a performance management system based on user requirements (CY) - Implementing key performance indicators in 2023-2024 (LV) - 2022 Strategic Project Management to enhance work planning and increasing efficiency (DE) - Defining KPI and impact measurements related to the ‘ADEM 2025’ strategy (LU)
Skills assessment and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job matching system based on competences (AT) - Refining an advanced skills matching tool (CY) - Strengthening counselling for employers on job training (DK) - Establishing a National Council for Workforce Skills and an Individual Skills Accounts scheme (EL) - Establishing regional career centres for career guidance (LT) - Expanding guidance services for unemployed people to provide high-quality personalised guidance (ES)

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I, Q5.1 Please provide details on any major reforms that have been implemented at your PES since May 2022.

Box 3. Examples of PES reforms introduced since May 2022

Multi-annual strategy 'ADEM 2025' to reform PES in Luxembourg

The multiannual strategy 'ADEM 2025' outlines the vision, mission, values, and strategic objectives of the National Employment Agency (ADEM) of Luxembourg for 2021-2025. The strategy is based on four key pillars: (1) client centricity, (2) operational and organisational excellence, (3) digitalisation and (4) social responsibility. It aims to transform ADEM into a modern, agile and innovative organisation that uses data-driven methods, digital service improvements, and personalised guidance to enhance service quality, and meet the changing needs of a dynamic labour market. 'ADEM 2025' is aligned with national and European policies and prepares ADEM to face challenges such as the pandemic, digital transitions, and skills mismatches, ensuring resilience and responsiveness in a complex environment. Through continuous evaluation and stakeholder engagement, ADEM seeks to improve and adjust its initiatives, creating a sustainable and impactful role in the employment ecosystem²⁰.

Source: Desk research and PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

3.4 Strategic objectives and targets for 2023

Strategic targets and objectives for 2022/23 were set in a context of comparatively low unemployment rates and tight labour markets and labour shortages. Nevertheless, PES continued to formulate objectives for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups:

- Several PES formulated objectives in relation to LTU (e.g. AT, BE Actiris, BG, CY, HR, FR, RO, SI), for people at a distance from the labour market (e.g. SE), for unemployed without benefit receipt (BE VDAB), and for jobseekers receiving minimum income (e.g. DE).
- Several PES formulated objectives to serve people with disabilities (e.g. BG, BE Forem for long-term sick, DK, NL, LV, LT, MT, SK).
- Reducing youth unemployment is a specific target for several PES (e.g. DE, EE, HR, LU, MT, PL, RO).
- Increasing employment of low-skilled and older workers was only rarely named as a specific target (SK). This is astonishing given demographic developments over recent years.
- Some PES follow a strategy of individualised and person-centred service provision and do intentionally not set objectives for target groups²¹.
- Integrating displaced people from Ukraine featured among reported objectives for PES (e.g. in BG, DE, RO), and other PES formulated a general objective to increase economic autonomy of refugees and other migrants (DK). However, it is surprising that the integration into the labour market of other groups of migrants is named only rarely.

Only few PES formulated the objective to promote the access of women to employment and overcome employment barriers (e.g. AT, DE, PL, ES), despite persisting gender inequalities in the EU27²². Further information on PES objectives and the operationalisation of targets through quantification is given in Annex 2.

²⁰ ADEM (2022). [Multiannual Strategy ADEM 2025](#), (accessed on 8 November 2023).

²¹ Duell, N. (2023). [New forms of active labour market programmes](#), European Network of Public Employment Services, European Commission.

²² See European Commission '[Women's situation in the labour market](#)' for more information about some of the gender inequalities experienced by women.

3.5 PES responsibilities in relation to skills

The PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 gathered information on how PES are involved in skills development and recognition, which are key topics for the European Year of Skills 2023²³. Skills assessments are a key task for most PES, with 90% (28 out of 31) of PES having full or partial responsibility for them. Similarly, 87% (27 out of 31) of PES are fully or partly in charge of providing training to the unemployed. However, PES rarely have sole responsibility for the implementation and management of these tasks, as they are often shared with partners. For example, only 19% (6 out of 31) of PES are fully responsible for skill assessments. The only task where PES have a more prominent role ('fully responsible') is the 'provision of training to the unemployed', with 39% (12 out of 31) of PES. Figure 6 shows the distribution of PES responsibilities in relation to skills. Additional information on individual PES is detailed in Box 4.

Figure 6. Overview of PES responsibilities in relation to skills, 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q4. What are the responsibilities of your PES in relation to skills? n=31.

Box 4. Examples of PES responsibilities in relation to skills

In Denmark, the PES job centres are responsible for assessing whether a skill assessment is needed, and they cover the costs for the service. The actual assessment is performed by educational institutions. The job centre decides when to use training, while the PES sets the rules and monitors results.

Pôle emploi (France) offers a test for basic digital skills, and the PES funds assessments carried out by external providers or partners. The Regional Councils play a primary role in training jobseekers. Jobseekers can also access Professional Development Consulting through PES, which is one of the providers of this service. PES also provide Validation of Acquired Experience, a service that recognises workers' skills.

In Estonia, the PES conducts self-reported skills assessment to identify the skills gaps that hinder jobseekers from finding and keeping their desired jobs. In NL, municipalities or trade unions can participate in skill assessments, depending on the needs of

²³ European Commission. European Year of Skills 2023 official website, available at: https://year-of-skills.europa.eu/index_en (accessed on 9 November 2023).

jobseekers. The Croatian PES is fully responsible for skill assessments of registered jobseekers and employed workers who use the mobile teams service²⁴.

In Lithuania, PES specialists use special questionnaires for skills recognition. When the client fills out the tests and questionnaires, both the client and the PES employee receive a list of professions and activities which the client could do, considering unique characteristics and ability assessments.

Within the National Employment Action Plan, PES in Bulgaria offers funded training programmes for unemployed people and employees of small and medium enterprises. The programmes aim to match the skills of the trainees with the needs of the employers, who agree to hire them after the training. The training and the employers' costs are co-financed by the state budget for active labour market policy.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

3.6 Main trends in digitalisation of PES work processes

The digital transformation of PES' work processes and employment services is a key area of the PES Capacity Questionnaire in 2023. Last year, 11 out of 31 (35%) PES initiated and 20 out of 31 (65%) PES accelerated their digital strategies. In 2023, the number of PES that reported offering digital services to job-seeking customers (either 'fully digital', 'mostly digital (e.g., online or via mobile app)' or 'mix between in-person and digital') was 21 out of 31 (68%), while the number of PES that reported offering any type of digitalised services (including a mix of in-person and digital) to employers was 25 out of 31 (81%).

The degree of digitalisation of employment services for customers varies across PES. For all types of services reported on, the most common approach among all PES (ranging from 26% to 65% of PES) is to combine in-person and digital formats. However, more than half of the PES (16 out of 31) indicated that the individual action plans for jobseekers are mainly delivered either 'completely in-person' or 'mostly in-person', with some 'mix between in-person and digital' services (32%, 10 out of 31). The matching of vacancies and jobseeker registration are the services that most often use a combination of in-person and digital formats (65%, 20 out of 31 and 61%, 19 out of 31, respectively).

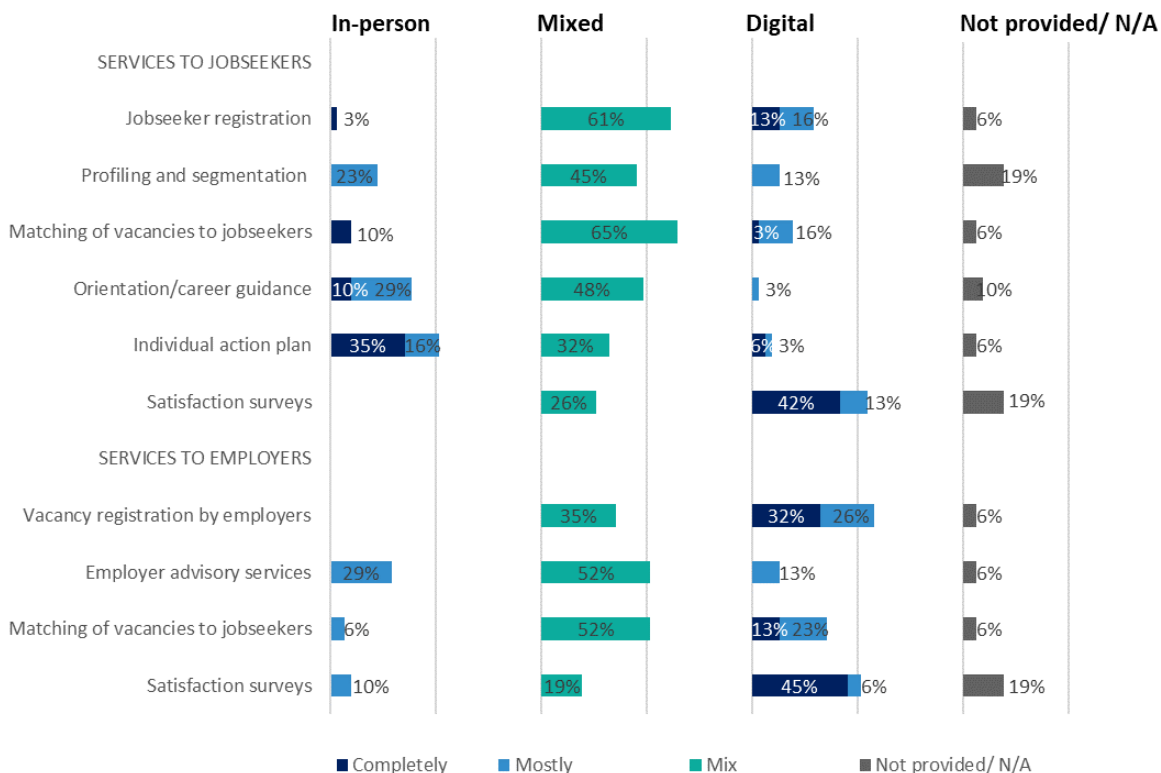
Satisfaction surveys are widely digitalised, with 55% of PES (17 out of 31) offering them either 'completely digital' or 'mostly digital' (based on the usage rate of PES customers).

To improve labour market diagnosis, some PES also increasingly made use of new technologies such as i) artificial intelligence (ES, using artificial intelligence techniques for real-time job offer data through the *Empléate* portal) and ii) new digital tools for matching supply and demand (IT through the 'My ANPAL' platform).

Figure 7 below shows how PES digitalise their services to employers. Most of the PES (81%, 25 out of 31) use digital settings (either 'completely digital', 'mostly digital' or mixed) to conduct employer satisfaction surveys. The most digitalised process among the categories is the vacancy registration by employers (58%, 18 out of 31), while the matching of vacancies to jobseekers often involves blended services (52%, 16 out of 31).

²⁴ More information about the mobile teams service provided by the Croatian PES is available at: https://static.eurofound.europa.eu/covid19db/cases/HR-2001-1_2590.html (accessed on 15 February 2024)

Figure 7. Status of digitalisation of PES services to jobseekers and employers



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I, Q1.4. Below we outline the most important parts of the processes that most PES deploy. Please indicate how these services are currently being used by PES customers, n=31.

Conclusions on the evolving landscape of PES

The PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 reveals that most PES’ legal and organisational statuses remain unchanged in 2023. Changes in mandates were often upgrades to existing services rather than shifts in responsibilities. Other wider reforms are also ongoing by the PES but were not reflected in the PES Capacity Questionnaire responses.

The findings show that the PES landscape is continuously evolving with a strong focus on digital transformation to ensure that PES services remain relevant and use the opportunities available in newer technologies, such as AI, to provide high quality services. Advancements in skills development also reflect the shifting role of PES and emerging needs for jobseekers and workers to re-skill and upskill for the needs of the future labour market.

4 PES ACTIVITIES TO COPE WITH LABOUR SHORTAGES

This section presents responses to the PES Capacity Questionnaire on the activities of PES against the background of the rising pressure coming from skills and labour shortages. The section also looks into how PES are developing further their relationship with employers and the type of services they offer.

Key findings:

- In the context of current labour and skills shortages, the focus of PES activities shifted increasingly to helping companies find the right candidates and this is among the key strategic objectives of PES.
- New measures, strategies, approaches or enhanced activities to address skills shortages implemented by PES encompass a wide range of activities, including improvements mainly relating to employer services as well as, to a lesser extent, jobseeker services.
- PES improved tools for counselling and guiding employers on HR related issues. PES increased activities to reach out to employers to place vulnerable groups.
- Cooperation with social partners, employers and sectoral associations was strengthened to improve the information base and to design new services and activities.

Thematic foci:

- Increasingly, sector-related activities were implemented to tailor training for jobseekers to the skills that are needed by employers, in particular in sectors with labour and skills shortages.

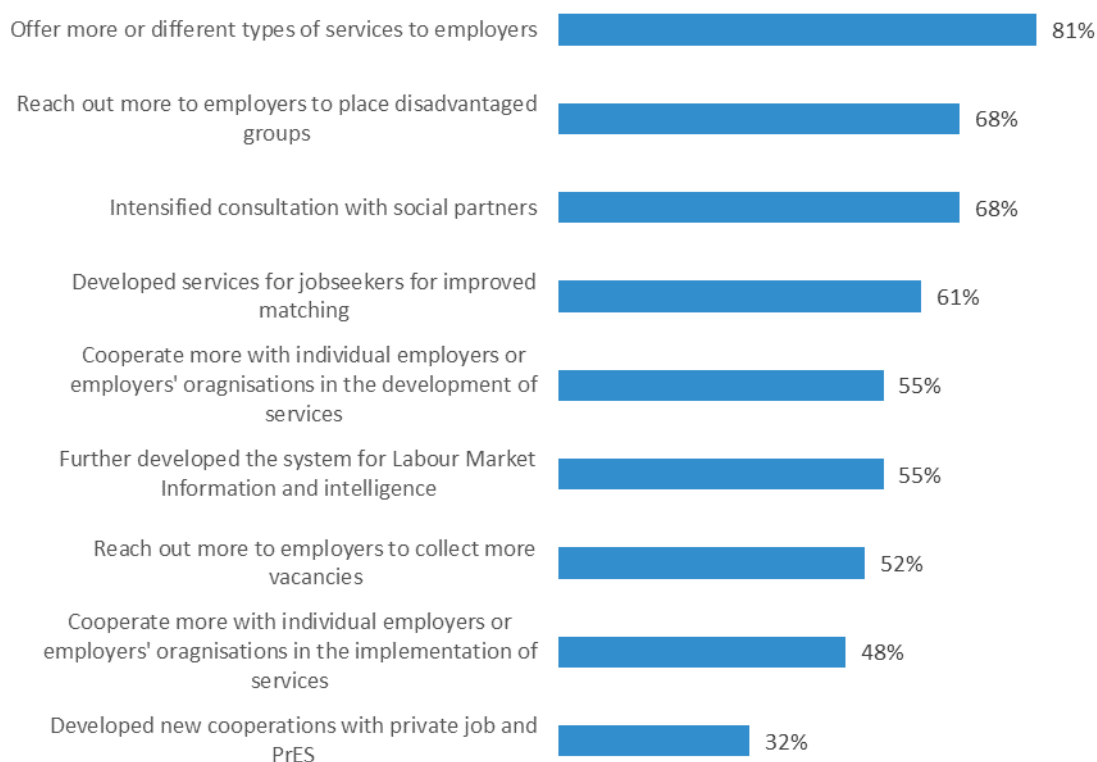
4.1 Support to recovery and overcoming labour and skills shortage

New measures, strategies, approaches or enhanced activities by the PES to address skills shortages encompass a wide range of activities, with improvements mainly in employer services and, to a lesser extent, jobseeker services. It is to be noted that many such activities and approaches may have already been in place in some PES²⁵, and may therefore not have been listed in the responses to the 2023 PES Capacity Questionnaire (focusing on more recently introduced activities).

Nearly all (81%, 25 out of 31) of PES recently offered more services to employers or expanded the range of services they offer, 68% (21 out of 31) intensified consultations with social partners or cooperate more with individual employers or employers' organisations in the development of services. PES also increased their activities to place jobseekers: 61% (19 out of 31) of PES developed services for jobseekers to improve matching and 52% (16 out of 31) reach out more often to employers to collect vacancies. Given the labour market context, PES reached out more to employers to place disadvantaged groups. This shows how PES are taking advantage of the current context of labour shortages to focus renewed attention on placing workers who are at greater distance from the labour market.

²⁵ See for more details: ICON Institute (2023). [Trends in PES - Assessment Report on PES Capacity 2022](#), European Network of Public Employment Services, European Commission.

Figure 8. Share of PES that introduced activities to cope with labour shortages



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Have PES developed this strategy?, n=31.

Note: The percentages for this figure add up to more than 100% because PES activities can fall to more than one category.

4.2 PES offer more / different types of services to employers to overcome labour and skills shortages

Several PES undertook internal actions to raise their offer of employer-related and labour intermediation services:

- Raising internal capacities to provide information and counselling and placement activities (BG, DK).
- Setting up specialised units (the High-Quality Qualification Selection Competence Centre in Lithuania aims to provide a high-quality intermediary service for highly skilled professionals).
- Ongoing digitalisation of services offered to employers (CY), including online job fairs, online recruitment (LV).
- Finding specific profiles of candidates (in France, with the help of employers' professional federations in four sectors facing high shortages - transport, health-social services, hospitality and catering, industry - each local PES office identified pools of candidates in specific occupations).

PES reported improvements to offer comprehensive counselling and guidance for employers both to hire and retain workers (AT, BE VDAB, DE, NL, ES). On-the-job counselling when hiring disadvantaged groups can increase retention prospects, especially when a gap exists between the personal skills required for a job and an employee's profile. In these cases, a job coach can focus on very broad areas (including soft skills, language, health problems, etc.).

In the current labour market context, PES carried out activities to meet the skills needs of specific sectors facing labour shortages (FR), notably for specific occupations (BE Forem). This includes new initiatives in skills adaptation and upskilling to fill vacancies (BE Actiris, BE Forem, FR, LU, MT).

Lastly, several PES initiated activities to attract foreign workers and manage labour migration. The objective is to increase the size of the workforce, reduce recruitment difficulties in specific sectors and overcome labour shortages (SI, HR, DK, LU, MT, PT, SI). The practices include communication with social partners, notably focused on managing international migration (PT, SI, SK).

Box 5. Examples of more or different types of services to employers

Improved counselling and guidance for employers

In Austria, in addition to the counselling programme '[Impulsberatung](#)', the PES emphasised the importance of effective job advertisements. This includes using a competence-based approach to fill vacancies; looking at employer branding; onboarding and pre-boarding; career sites; and broadening hiring strategies to include additional target groups.

In Germany, holistic guidance is coming into focus due to an increasing demand to meet employers' expectations. To support this, emphasis is placed on the professionalisation of labour market guidance, development and expansion of networking, and demand-oriented integration of internal and external partners.

In the Netherlands, the PES offers a selection of 34 solutions that employers can use to combat or overcome a reduction in staff shortages, which are divided into three strategies: tapping into new talent; working differently; and organising, retaining and captivating staff.

New activities to address skills needs of employers

The Belgian-Wallonia PES, Forem, set up a programme to address labour shortages ([Coup de poing pénuries](#)). This programme allows companies that are looking to hire at least eight workers in the same occupation to call on the PES to offer them a tailored training programme – both through a selection of candidates and a flexible training plan. Trainees are covered by a training contract. Trainees can acquire the required skills and the companies will hire them if they successfully complete their training. Employers can participate in the selection of trainees. There is no intervention in the financing of training activities, and they do not have to pay any compensation. Lastly, Forem implemented training sessions – adapted both in content and form – to meet the emerging needs resulting from the health crisis.

Belgium Actiris promotes and develops pathways training to jobs ([Trajets formation emploi](#)) with Bruxelles Formation (and/or VDAB) when an employer cannot find adequate profiles for at least 10 positions. In the future, the PES is planning to further encourage employers to use 'on-the-job' training when they cannot find a profile that matches what they are looking for.

In France, pre-recruitment training schemes to help workers adapt to their new job were increasingly used. In this context, [AFEST \(Training Action in a Work Situation\)](#) was created as a new form of pre-recruitment training.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

4.3 Advancing PES systems with labour market information and intelligence

Several PES made improvements in labour market diagnosis in cooperation with other stakeholders (EL, ES, MT, PT with the introduction of [ESCO](#)). Progress was also made in providing information for PES staff on occupations, sectors (LU), regional labour markets and single companies for PES staff (FR). Improving the knowledge base was helped by involving, for example, sectoral groups and committees (BE Forem, FI) and sharing information on occupational and regional labour markets with employers (FR).

Several PES intensified their consultations with employers' and workers' organisations to identify skills needs (AT, BE Forem, FI, IE, LT, LU, SI, SE). Other PES did so only with employers' organisations (EE, MT, RO, SK), or with a broader group of stakeholders including individual employers, chambers and sectoral associations for example (BE Actiris, FR, DE, PT, ES).

More specifically cooperation was intensified around specific skills areas such as those required for the digital transition (AT, see the 'AMS New Skills' service), designing and implementing skills programmes (such as the PT programme UPSkill – digital skills), or programmes with high added value competences such as IT skills, engineering competencies or specific finance-based knowledge (LT).

Some PES made progress in labour market forecasting (IT, SI).

A few PES improved their systems to monitor vacancies and the filling of vacancies, i.e. by introducing a list of shortage occupations (BE VDAB, LU shortage occupations for hiring third-country nationals). A number of countries already operated such lists for some time now (e.g. DE, FR). This is an important step to identify labour shortages, and identifying labour and skills shortages forms an important information base to specify remedial activities.

Box 6. Examples of improvements in labour market information and intelligence

Improvements in labour market diagnosis

In Finland, employers' organisations were involved in the Labour Market Roadmap project. During the project, employers and employees met in sectoral groups to consider proposals that would improve the situation. In 2022, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment led the preparation of the labour market roadmaps for nine sectors.

In France, the PES is cooperating with business federations for the development and updates over 30 'sector portraits'. These are used by counsellors to enhance their expertise on sectors and their knowledge of occupations, and how these are changing.

The French PES cooperates with 11 Skills Operators (OPCO Opérateurs de Compétences i.e. the joint organisations bringing together employers' and employees' federations from the branches) to coordinate the purchase of training courses to develop skills in the regions according to companies' skills needs. This is done at national and regional level, with the Regional Councils.

In Wallonia (Belgium) to identify sector-specific skills needs, strategic committees were set up in the following sectors: chemicals and biotechnology, transport and logistics, technological industries (incl. ICT and aeronautics), the food industry, construction, HORECA.

Improvements in the identification of shortages and bottleneck occupations

Belgium VDAB introduced automatic estimation of vacancies to identify 'bottleneck' vacancies and a monitoring model for outstanding vacancies (which are not bottleneck vacancies). This serves to target activities.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

4.4 Intensified employer engagement

Reaching out to more employers to collect vacancies

A range of methods were newly introduced, or more extensively used, by PES to reach out to employers. These include:

- New digital tools which increased the use of services by employers (BE Forem, EL, LV, PT, SI). BE Forem introduced new online tools job vacancy posting, matching, online search for candidates. PT is organising webinars between PES and employers.
- Direct outreach to more employers (BE Forem, BE VDAB, LT, SI). BE Forem and BE VDAB are implementing a proactive account management to propose concrete solutions to employers with a focus on on-the-job training and skills enhancement. SI established an annual employer visit plan in which a quarter of contacts with employers must be with companies that are not yet using PES services.
- The use of mobile teams (BG).
- Organising group activities with employers (HR) and organising direct meetings with employers and jobseekers (FR, LV).
- Increasing the organisation of career days (EL).

Reaching out to employers to place vulnerable groups

With increased labour demand in some sectors, some PES reach out more to employers with the objective to place vulnerable groups:

- A number of PES pro-actively promoted job applications of vulnerable groups to companies or new companies identified for this purpose (BE Forem). Others use regular visits to companies to raise awareness of recruiting disadvantaged groups (HR, LT, SI, SK), carry out activities to convince employers to formulate their job requirements accordingly (BE VDAB), and increasingly prospect companies which could employ vulnerable groups, in cooperation with local partners (FR).
- Increased staff capacities aim to reinforce the collaboration between employer services and employment counsellors in charge of disadvantaged groups (LU).
- Job fairs are organised to place vulnerable groups, for example refugees (SI) and people with disabilities (SI).
- PES run activities to place and support employment of people with disabilities (AT, FI, LV, MT).
- And PES in general continued to run employment incentive programmes to support the recruitment of vulnerable groups.

Box 7. Example of practices to place vulnerable groups

Belgium VDAB specified that in the redesigned face-to-face services for employers, VDAB consultants take on an awareness-raising role towards employers to be more open – especially in the context of the tight labour market – to a broader spectrum of potential candidates. In cooperation with the employer, the consultant may adjust the vacancy if the requirements are too high or too specific. VDAB also uses media campaigns to convince employers to be open to a diversity of profiles, and to provide on-the-job training to candidates who do not yet have the right skills.

The Austrian PES cooperates with the occupational assistance network (NEBA) which provides vocational training assistance, work assistance, job coaching, youth coaching and employer counselling services.

In Finland, as part of the Workability programme, coordinators help employers to recruit people with disabilities.

In Malta, the service provider focused on meeting the needs of persons with disability (Lino Spiteri Foundation) reaches out to employers to promote the employment of persons with a disability. Job coaches provide support for both jobseekers and employers.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

Increased cooperation with individual employers or employers' organisations in the development of services

More than half of the PES intensified their cooperation with employers for the development of services (55%, 17 out of 31). This took different formats, including informal ways of cooperating (such as 'listening to employers', expression of needs and advice), the intensified search of individualised solutions, and programme implementation for individual employers (notably in the area of training). In addition, several PES used specific instruments to grasp employers' demand for services and adapt services to their needs:

- Conducting satisfaction surveys among employers (AT, FR).
- Carrying out company barometers on service needs. The French PES conducts a barometer survey once a year to identify companies' needs and expectations in recruitment consultancy services; companies' perceptions of existing services offered by *Pôle emploi*; new and unmet needs.
- Organising consultations for the introduction of new services or tools (BE Actiris) and organising focus groups with employers on specific services (FR) or service models (EL).
- Involving employers in testing new websites and portals (FR, SI).

4.5 Enhanced services for jobseekers to meet employers needs

61% (19 out of 31) of PES enhanced services for jobseekers for improved matching. This concerns the preparation of a new customers service model (SI) and developing a unified PES service model (ES) which includes profiling, individual guidance and personalised advice, and developing a personalised pathway (among other aspects).

Some of the employer-related services to improve labour market information (Section 4.3) also enhance the services provided to jobseekers. This applies notably to all services relating to information on local, sectoral, and occupational labour markets; advancement in the digitalisation of job matching systems; organising meetings between employers and jobseekers; as well as offering trainings to tackle skills shortages. In addition, PES either recently introduced or enhanced their activities to improve jobseeker services, through the following activities:

- Moving towards matching on the basis of competences (AT, FR).
- New measures to detect potentials and competences (FR).
- Upskilling and reskilling programmes developed for high-demand sectors (EL); continuing a training programme set up in 2018 providing a training bonus for shortage occupations (BE Forem).

- Improving communication with training and education institutions on skills in shortage (CY).
- Introducing mandatory language skills assessment and intensive language courses for jobseekers who have an interesting professional background but lack language skills (i.e. refugees) (LU); assessment of language (BE Forem) and assessment of young jobseekers' digital skills (BE Actiris).
- Increased activities for job matching for seasonal employment (MT).

Finally, PES continued to develop and use counselling services targeted at jobseekers in vulnerable situation (DE), increasing the number of jobseekers receiving intensified counselling and in-depth career guidance (SI), or providing on-the-job support through job coaching (BE VADB).

4.6 New cooperations with private job portals and private employment services

Different approaches apply in the cooperation and partnerships between public and private employment services²⁶. As a general trend, cooperation between public and private employment services has been evolving over the past years. One third of PES (32%, 10 out of 31) reported that they recently broadened and reinforced their cooperation with private job portals and private employment agencies, or plan to do so. The partnerships between public and private employment services are also used in the implementation of ALMPs, and to cooperate in carrying out labour market analysis.²⁷

Box 8. Examples of increased cooperation between PES and ...

...private job portals

The Austrian PES broadened cooperation with private job portals so that it can obtain data to feed directly into a relatively new PES job search engine [ALLEJOBS](#).

In 2022, the Belgian PES Forem, introduced Application Programming Interface (API) to identify job vacancies from private partners who post job vacancies. It enables Forem's partners to automatically upload numerous job vacancies onto leforem.be. Every vacancy added is subjected to an automatic quality assurance process.

All vacancies published on the French PES website, pole-emploi.fr, are made available to any producer as open data (via their API). There are 150 partnerships for web scraping (or crawling) for vacancies from job-boards or private job portals or from professional business federations, enabling them to publish 800 000 additional vacancies every day on the portal pole-emploi.fr.

The Slovak PES concluded agreements with three private job portals to publish their vacancies on the PES job portal (sluzbyzamestnanosti.gov.sk).

The Slovenian PES has a written cooperation agreement with the association of employment agencies. Job vacancies, published at the PES, are also posted on private job portals. In addition, the PES partners with the largest private job portal to organise some of the largest job fairs in Slovenia.

...private employment services

²⁶ OECD (2022). [Public private partnerships in employment and related services](#); Output 4 – Innovative policy design of active labour market policies (ALMPs), with funding from the European Union.

²⁷ OECD (2022). [Public private partnerships in employment and related services](#); Output 4 – Innovative policy design of active labour market policies (ALMPs), with funding from the European Union.

The French PES concluded five national agreements transposed at regional level with the main temporary work agencies. The objective is to ease local cooperation to jointly meet companies' recruitment needs, and to work together to mobilise public and private schemes providing financial support for the recruitment of jobseekers and training before they start a temporary work contract.

In Slovenia, private employment services cooperate with the PES when preparing labour market forecasts. Private employment agencies cooperate in the execution of the Occupational Barometer – a source of data on short-term labour market needs, which forecasts shortage and surplus occupations to meet the needs of different stakeholders in the labour market.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

Conclusions on PES activities to cope with labour shortages

Labour shortages were challenging for some PES prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. While a shift in labour demand across sectors took place during the pandemic, such changes continued augmenting after the pandemic ended. The PES Capacity Report 2023 shows that overcoming labour shortages had an impact on the services PES offer to employers and the way PES cooperate with employers, in order to overcome recruitment difficulties and reduce labour and skills shortages.

Cooperation with private employment services and job portals helps to increase the number of vacancies and to establish cooperations for the labour market integration of specific (disadvantaged, or vulnerable) groups. By working with NGOs and specialised private service providers, PES can capitalise on the expertise, knowledge and partnerships to provide high quality support for those who are hardest to place in the labour market.

PES further developed their system for labour market information and intelligence, often including employer-voiced needs. This is to improve counselling, vocational orientation, support for skills development, identification of bottleneck occupations and matching efficiency. This illustrates the development of the PES role within the skills arena and how PES are capitalising on their unique position to offer insights on the current and future situation of the labour market.

5 IN THE SPOTLIGHT: GREEN TRANSITION

This section summarises the insights collected in the PES Capacity Questionnaire on PES' response to the challenges of the green transition. The first part looks at the internal strategies and measures put in place for PES to gradually become climate-neutral and more sustainable organisations. The second part gives an overview of PES support to individuals and employers for the green transition, to equip individuals with the required skills and to mitigate the negative impacts of the green transition in affected companies, sectors and local areas.

Key findings:

- PES started to apply objectives to move towards climate neutrality and become environmentally sustainable in their own organisation. 45% (14 out of 31) PES have an internal sustainability strategy or 'green transition agenda' in place or are developing concrete activities to that effect. Such activities include optimising building efficiency, waste reduction, promoting sustainable mobility, adopting energy-efficient IT practices, eco-friendly procurement policies, and awareness-raising initiatives.
- 32% (10 out of 31) PES set specific goals or KPIs to reduce the environmental impact of the PES (e.g. on carbon emissions or energy efficiency). Some PES also adopted management or monitoring systems to enhance their sustainability performance.
- To support the greening of the economy, 61% (19 out of 31) PES cooperate with employers to identify skills needs and provide workplace-based training, manage industrial restructuring, and implement employment subsidies for green jobs.
- PES have longstanding experience in mitigating the negative impacts of industrial restructuring that lead to dismissals. For the green transition, 35% (11 out of 31) PES have such activities and measures in place.
- Defining green jobs is an important step for designing, developing, and implementing specific strategies, programmes, and activities. 35% (11 out of 31) PES undertook work to define green jobs.

Thematic foci:

- 39% (12 out of 31) PES state that their environmental sustainability objectives had an impact on PES' own digitalisation processes. Named examples relate to reducing paper consumption and limiting the travel of staff and PES customers.
- Workers with different skill levels will need to adapt to the green transition. That is why 65% of PES (20 out of 31) have training measures in place to cope with up- and re-skilling of workers. Moreover, half (48%, 15 out of 31) PES are concerned with identifying skills relevant to the green economy.

5.1 Promoting sustainability internally within PES

PES started to apply objectives to move towards climate neutrality and become environmentally sustainable in their own organisation. They did so by developing or implementing specific strategies. These strategies often follow the general objectives of their (regional) governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and which require public administrations to act in a sustainable manner – see DE and IE examples in Box 9.

In total, 14 out of 31 PES (45%) have an internal sustainability strategy or 'green transition agenda' in place, or indicate that they are developing concrete activities for such a strategy (AT, BE Actiris, BE Forem, BE VDAB, FI, FR, DE, EL, IS, IE, LT, MT, NL, SE). Some PES

implement concrete activities to become more sustainable internally, without elaborating a strategy (e.g. LT).

Box 9. Examples of objectives to become climate-neutral organisations

PES objectives follow governments' goals to cut greenhouse gas emissions

The Climate Protection Law in Germany sets that all federal authorities are to be organised in a climate-neutral manner by 2030. A [coordinating body](#) was established at the Federal Ministry of the Economy and Climate Protection to support the implementation of the law. A Sustainability Council, mandated by the Executive Board, is therefore developing a binding implementation programme with clearly defined targets based on the Federal Sustainability Strategy and existing initiatives of the German PES.

In Ireland, the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate requires public sector bodies to show leadership in climate action by taking, and reporting on, the actions of the Mandate. The Department of Social Protection formally adopted this Mandate in November 2022 and developed a Climate Action Roadmap. This is the pathway through which public sector organisations implement the Climate Action Mandate.

Elaborating PES' own sustainability strategies

The Management Committee of Belgium Forem introduced its first sustainable development policy in November 2021. It was built around five strategic challenges associated with five fundamental values and broken down into specific (but not limiting) commitments directly linked to the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. In September 2022, the Walloon Government and the PES signed Forem's new management contract for the next five years. Through this new management contract, Forem will amplify and promote the sustainable development policy that it adopted in 2021.

The Austrian PES is elaborating a sustainability plan in 2023. It formed a strategy team on sustainability and ecology as part of their quality management programme. Activities include topical assessments, exchange of good practices with five companies and carrying out a survey among interest groups.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

32% (10 out of 31) of PES set specific goals or KPIs aiming to reduce the environmental impact of the PES (e.g. on carbon emissions or energy efficiency). Annex 2 details examples of specific targets defined by PES to promote sustainability.

Monitoring and sustainability management systems, which demonstrate progress towards achieving sustainability objectives, are either established or being implemented in a few PES, as detailed in Box 10.

Box 10. Examples of monitoring and sustainability management systems

The German PES is striving to introduce a sustainability management system and certification according to the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS). In the second quarter of 2024, an external audit of the PES' readiness for EMAS certification will be carried out. From 2026 onwards, a follow-up audit of the PES' overall organisation will be done. In addition, the accounting serves as a basis for reporting to the UN Global Compact.








Since 2011, the French PES conducted an annual carbon audit to measure progress against three targets. The results show a 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions from 2012 to 2020. In 2022, the PES' carbon footprint will be 4.68 tonnes of CO₂ equivalents per full-time employee, with total emissions reaching 245 789 tonnes of CO₂ equivalents.

Since the baseline measurement in 2017, the Dutch (NL) PES has cut its emissions by over 62%. The goal for the coming years is to reduce the remaining 38% to achieve climate-neutral operations.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

39% (12 out of 31) of PES state that their environmental sustainability objectives had an impact on PES' own digitalisation, which is one of the activities PES apply to promote sustainability internally.

Table 2. PES activities promoting sustainability internally

	<p>Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reducing energy consumption of buildings - reducing space consumption (e.g. creative and collaborative space concepts; flexible use of offices and telework) - energetic real estate refurbishment (DE) - planned installation of solar panels (MT)
	<p>Waste management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - waste segregation (MT) - reduction of waste - reuse of declassified furniture and office equipment via sale or donation (BEA)
	<p>Mobility and transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - piloting e-mobility (DE) - mobility plans for locations with 50 or more employees (FR) - introduction of a sustainable mobility package (FR) - installation of bicycle safe zones and electric/hybrid vehicle charging stations (FR) - replacement of service vehicles by hybrid or electric engines (FR, SI)
	<p>IT equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - optimising IT power use from data centres to end devices (DE, FR) - using less energy consuming IT equipment (DE, FR) - adopting eco-design in development, incorporating environmental criteria in IT contracts, introducing no-code/low-code, and educating project managers on their requirements' environmental impact (FR) - cooperation with other stakeholders (e.g. BEF signed a charter on sustainable IT in the region)
	<p>Digitalisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reducing paper consumption (DE, EL) - limiting travel of staff and PES customers (DE, MT)
	<p>Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - applying sustainability rules to procurement and purchasing (e.g. BEA, FR, LT, NL)
	<p>Defining green indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduction of indicators and monitoring their achievement, monitoring energy consumption (BEA, DE, FR).



Awareness raising on sustainability activities

- 'eco-teams' (BEF, FR)
- advice on storing emails and files (FR)
- training for cleaning servers and other staff (FR)

5.2 Supporting the greening of the economy

Studies assessing the impact of the green transition on the labour market suggest that employment effects in absolute numbers are likely to be low, although this may vary quite significantly across regions and sectors. In particular, employment in fossil energy production and energy intensive sectors is likely to fall in the longer term. On average, shifts in employment across sectors and occupations will be sizeable. The transition to a greener economy will have an impact on workers at all skill levels. The impact on skills is assessed to be manifold, and to concern: small adaptation of skills within existing occupations; substantial skills adaptation; the emergence of new occupations; the growth of green occupations and thus increasing demand for specific skills related to these occupations; and a decline of occupations with skills that will no longer be in demand²⁸.

5.2.1 PES measures to support the greening economy

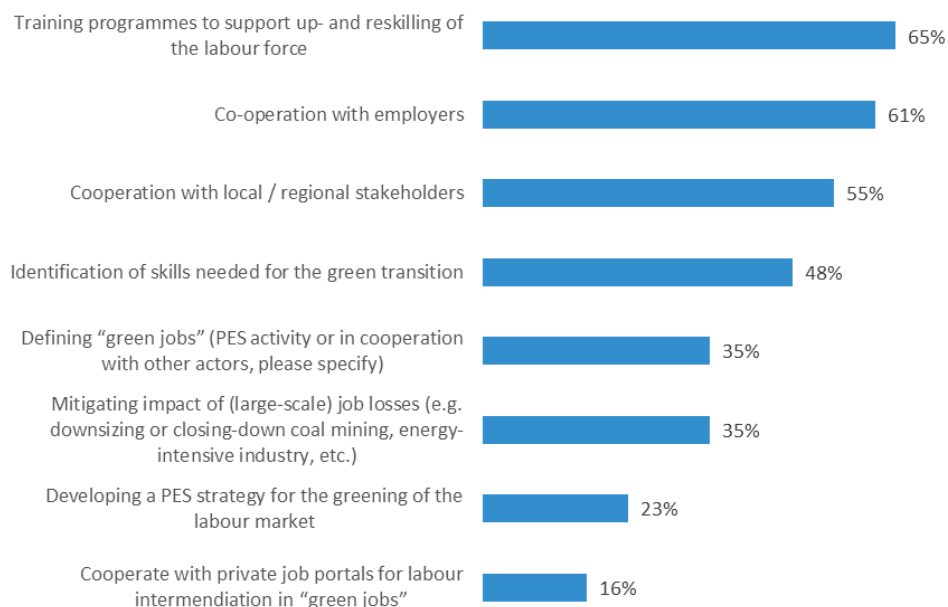
Several PES implemented measures and activities to support the greening of the economy for many years now. Most PES extended, widened or newly introduced such measures and activities in the past few years, as shown in two recent European PES Network studies²⁹.

In 2023, 65% of PES (20 out of 31) have training measures in place to cope with up- and reskilling. Half (48%, 15 out of 31) of PES are concerned with identifying skills relevant for the green economy. Cooperation with employers and other local actors is also mentioned as a key approach by an important share of PES (see the next sub-section for more details).

²⁸ Cambridge Econometrics, Trinomics, and ICF (2018). Impacts of circular economy policies on the labour market, European Commission; Cedefop et al. (2022). [Work-based learning and the green transition](#), Luxembourg: Publications Office; Eurofound and EEA (2023). The transition to a climate-neutral economy: Exploring the socioeconomic impacts, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg; Eurofound (2019). Energy scenario: Employment implications of the Paris Climate Agreement, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg; European Commission (2019). Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2019. Sustainable growth for all: choices for the future of Social Europe; OECD (2023). [Job Creation and Local Economic Development 2023: Bridging the Great Green Divide](#), OECD Publishing, Paris.

²⁹ Duell, N. et al. (2021). Greening of the labour market – impacts for the Public Employment Services. Small scale study June 2021, European Network of Public Employment Services, Icon Institute, European Commission; Duell, N. (2023). [PES support to greening of the labour market](#). Thematic paper. European Network of Public Employment Services, European Commission.

Figure 9. Share of PES with strategies, measures, and activities to support the greening of the economy



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part 1, Q5.5 What strategies, measures, and activities are in place at your PES specifically to support the greening of the economy?, n=31. Note: The percentages for this question add up to more than 100% because respondents were allowed to select more than one answer option.

PES have longstanding experience in mitigating the negative impacts of industrial restructuring that lead to dismissals. For the green transition, 35% (11 out of 31) of PES had such activities and measures in place.

Although most PES implemented concrete activities to manage employment and skills issues linked to the green transition, a smaller number of PES stated that they developed or were in the process of developing a strategy (or implementing specific programmes) for the greening of the labour market (23%, 7 out of 31 PES). Other PES set the support for the green transition on their agenda or were mainstreaming the green transition into their activities as they perceive the greening of the economy to be a transversal issue³⁰.

An important step is the clear definition of green jobs when designing a specific strategy or developing and implementing specific programmes and activities. 35% (11 out of 31) of PES undertook work to define green jobs. For example, Bulgaria established a list of economic activities approved by the Minister of Environment and Water and the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. Belgium-Actiris launched in 2023 a study on green jobs potential and skills needs. In some cases, other actors worked on identifying green jobs (e.g. in FI, comprehensive work was undertaken using the occupational and task classification of the US O*NET database). The LT uses the ILO definition. In the NL, the PES Bureau for labour market statistics published a report in October 2022 in cooperation with a vocational education organisation on 'climate' occupations.

Other PES have been classifying green jobs, even though they have not proposed a clear definition. In AT, a recent study distinguishes between three groups of green professions: existing professions for which there is an increased demand due to greening; those for which the requirements change significantly; and those which are completely new, the

³⁰ Duell, N. (2023). [PES support to greening of the labour market](#). Thematic paper. European Network of Public Employment Services, European Commission.

latter being the largest group. In addition, there is an occupational list of 'climate-relevant occupations'. 'Green jobs' are a subset of 'climate-relevant' occupations.

5.2.2 Identification of skills needs and training measures

The identification of skills needs is done through studies, employer surveys (FR³¹, IE) and forecasting (PL). Stakeholders may play a role in identifying skills needs for the green transition – see IE example in Box 11 (below). Specific skills needs are also identified in the context of training provision, depending on the responsibility of the PES (FI, IE). In EL where the PES has responsibilities for vocational education and training, the PES introduced new fields of study/specialties in DYPA's Apprenticeship Vocational Schools.

Box 11. Identifying skills needs for the green transition in Ireland by involving a variety of actors

In order to deliver on climate goals, Ireland's workforce development agency (Skillnet), helps businesses identify 'green' skills needs on an ongoing basis through their business networks. There are three 'green' business networks across the country, bringing together companies of all sizes to discuss and identify skills needs, and develop flexible training programmes tailored to the needs of each sector.

The Regional Skills Fora play an important role in identifying future skills needs emerging from a greener economy. Each forum provides for ongoing regional engagement between the employment, enterprise, education, and skills sectors. The information gathered is key for the skills development activities of the Irish PES and its main partners.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

Within existing programmes, most PES offer training for the skills needed in the green transition for:

- Certain sectors (e.g. construction, tourism, financial services). In FI, training was provided in several sectors, including logistics, construction, earthworks, maritime industry, bioeconomy, tourism and catering, and energy production. Training was planned together with employers and training providers.
- Specific target groups (e.g. NEET). The EEA and Norway Grants' project [INTERCEPT](#) is addressed to youth. Also, some youth entrepreneurship programmes include content on the green transition (EL).

In FR, as part of the recovery plan, training linked to the ecological transition is monitored by a vocational training dashboard. A few PES introduced specific training programmes for the development of green skills (see Box 12 for further examples).

Box 12 Examples of specific training programmes for developing skills in the context of the green transition

The Austrian PES's 'Environmental Foundation' programme provides training and internships in the environmental sector for 1 000 individuals. Participants can acquire apprenticeship diplomas in a shortened training period, or higher qualifications if they already have apprenticeship diploma or university entrance qualification. Training covers waste and resource management, green mobility, energy and building technology, agriculture and forestry. In addition, research, education and counselling are offered.

³¹ Source: *Pôle emploi* Explanations and Summaries – Eclairage et synthèse on the Green transition, June 2022.

'Forem Environment' is a skills centre of BE Forem. It offers training for professions in the environmental, waste and energy management sectors, as well as in rational use of energy and renewable energies. Other training activities concern the construction sector, as the construction sector is short of skilled labour. 41 trades in this sector were identified as critical functions or as shortages. The large number of construction sites in Wallonia's investment and recovery plans are further increasing the need for skilled workers. In addition, the damage caused by the floods in summer 2022 in Wallonia also amplified the need for labour.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

5.2.3 Implementing green transition activities in partnerships

For 61% (19 out of 31) of PES (see Figure 9 above), cooperation with employers is organised around skills needs identification and implementing workplace-based training, managing industrial restructuring, implementing employment subsidies for green jobs (EL, HR, SI), and providing counselling on HR topics to manage the green transition (DE).

Social partners may be involved in skills development and industrial restructuring issues. Other partners include municipalities (in the context of implementing training in AT), sector associations and local stakeholders when designing and implementing training (see example of IE in Box 11).

Only 16% (5 out of 31) of PES (AT, FI, FR, PL, SK) indicated that they cooperate with private job portals for placing jobseekers into green jobs. For example, the French PES has a partnership with 153 employment websites to publish their vacancies, some of which specialise in green jobs.

Box 13. Examples of working in partnership with local stakeholders

Actiris in Belgium is cooperating with various stakeholders through plans of the Brussels government, such as 'Renolution' 'Good Food' and 'Shifting economy'. Local level cooperation with NGOs and social services concerns topics like the circular economy and urban agriculture.

'RENO+' in Belgium Forem aims to mobilise the construction sector to achieve a renovation rate of 2% by 2024, aiming for 3% subsequently. It seeks to leverage existing initiatives and provide a stimulating, coordinated framework for scaling-up actions related to the entire building energy renovation process.

The Bulgarian PES is part of a working group established by the Minister of Energy. The working group aims to create a roadmap for identifying the skills and development potential of individuals impacted by the shift towards climate neutrality. This effort is linked to the just transition plans for the Stara Zagora, Kyustendil, and Pernik districts and their surrounding areas. The roadmap outlines activities, timelines, responsible parties, potential funding sources, and integrates these with the territorial just transition plans.

In FR, the PES is involving companies in the recruitment of people distant from the labour market, notably in the area of green jobs. The club 'Companies are committed' (*Les entreprises s'engagent*) initiated by the High Commission for Corporate Commitment (*Haut-Commissariat à l'Emploi et l'Engagement des Entreprises*) brings together companies in 200 local clubs to share best practices, develop tools and communicate on their commitments.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

Conclusions on the green transition

The PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 shows that PES are advancing in their approaches and activities to support the green transition. This is both internally for their own organisation, as well as for the PES' core activities to promote efficient labour transitions and mitigate the negative impact of economic restructuring on employment.

Nearly half the PES started to apply objectives to move towards climate neutrality and become environmentally sustainable in their own organisation. Most had an internal sustainability strategy or 'green transition agenda' in place and started to define key performance indicators. Activities include optimising building efficiency, waste reduction, promoting sustainable mobility, adopting energy-efficient IT practices, eco-friendly procurement policies, and awareness-raising initiatives. This can be inspiring for other PES which have not yet developed such strategies and objectives.

The impact of the green transition on the labour market is expected to affect transitions between jobs, companies and sectors and skills requirements. Therefore, most PES activities focused on skills needs identification in close cooperation with employers and sector organisations, promoted needs-based and workplace-based skills development, and steered the offer of other training formats for skills adaptation, upskilling and re-skilling. Job destruction and job creation are expected to be smaller in volume, however this may differ across sectors and regions. A third of PES indicated that they have programmes in place to mitigate the negative impact of the green transition on employment and to promote the development of green jobs. PES can build here on previous experiences on managing the economic restructuring and develop them further (e.g. in relation to the downsizing and closure of coal mining).

Examples provided by PES show the importance of working closely with local stakeholders as well as with employers, sector organisations, social partners and training institutions. To date, the cooperation with private employment services is less well developed.

The identification and classification of green jobs and related skills requirements remain challenging. The green transition will remain an important driver for small-scale and large-scale structural change. PES will benefit from continuing their work on sharing experience on activities to address the green transition and to work together on a shared understanding of what green jobs and related skills needs are.

6 ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET SERVICES AND MEASURES USED BY PES

This section summarises the insights collected in the PES Capacity Questionnaire. The section starts by analysing the most frequently used types of ALMPs and labour market policy services (LMP) per specific target group, followed by updates on the developments of new, modified, interrupted or cancelled ALMPs and LMP services in 2022. This section concludes by summarising the latest outreach activities carried out by PES. More specifically, it covers findings in activities for inactive individuals and activities for at-risk employed workers or vulnerable groups.

Key findings

- PES use tailored labour market policy services targeting specific customer groups, such as young people, long-term unemployed, older workers, people with disabilities, and refugees. For instance, training services are used often for young people and refugees, as they facilitate access and integration into the labour market for those who may lack work experience or specific knowledge of a sector in a particular country/region. Individual case management is frequently used by PES to support LTU and people with disabilities. Employment incentives are the most popular ALMP used by PES to support older workers, where employers may need additional encouragement to recruit.
- In 2022, 22 PES introduced 82 new ALMPs or LMP services, and 12 PES modified, interrupted, or cancelled 47 existing services. There is a significant increase in the number of newly introduced policies, 21 more than in 2021. However, the number of amended services decreased by 26 compared to the previous year.
- New interventions in 2022 bring new trends around specific target groups. While 2022 saw a shift away from recipients recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic impact, new interventions now target a broader group of vulnerable people, including refugees fleeing the war against Ukraine and PES staff.
- New interventions in the previous year focused primarily on general customer services (44%), information services (43%) and training-related interventions (39%), while amended interventions emphasised customer services, information services, and individual case management (each representing 19% of the modified ALMP and LMP services). This signals a shift from the focus on training and employment incentives observed in 2021, where measures were developed or amended in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thematic foci

- Most PES (81%, 25 out of 31) conduct outreach activities for at-risk workers or vulnerable groups of workers. This was done through guidance and mediation, but also through assistance for upskilling and re-skilling of workers, which helps minimise any unemployment period, with an emphasis on digital and green skills to become more competitive.
- Half of the PES (52% 16 out of 31) reach out to inactive individuals not registered yet at their PES, mainly young jobseekers.

6.1 Types of ALMP services and measures for specific customer groups

PES reported on most frequently used ALMPs³² and LMP services³³ for groups such as: young people, LTU, older workers, people with disabilities, and refugees³⁴. Among the target groups, the four most commonly utilised ALMPs and LMP services include (see Table 3):

- Training – indicated by 87% (27 out of 31) of PES as a frequently offered support for youth, and by 77% (24 out of 31) PES as a common support for refugees, who may require additional training to adjust to their new circumstances.
- Individual case management – widely used by PES to support LTU (90%, 28 out of 31 PES) and people with disabilities (84%, 26 out of 31 PES).
- Employment incentives – identified by 90% (28 out of 31) PES as the frequent method for supporting older workers, where additional motivation for employers to hire an older worker is often necessary.
- Information services are commonly provided alongside aforementioned services, especially to support young people and individuals with disabilities.

Sheltered and supported employment and rehabilitation services are indicated by over half of PES (55%, 17 out of 31) as frequently used for people with disabilities, where additional support may be required and employer premises may need to be adapted, or working hours may need to be adapted (for example) for successful placement. Less than a third of PES indicated other types of ALMPs and LMP services as frequently offered to particular target groups (see Annex 3).

Table 3. Ranking of top four LMP services or ALMPs most frequently used by PES for customer group

	Young people	LTU	Older workers	People with disabilities	Refugees
1.1.1 Information services	2 3	4	2 3	2	2 3
1.1.2 Individual case management	2 3	1	2 3	1	2 3
2: Training	1	2 3	4	3 4	1
4: Employment incentives	4	2 3	1	3 4	4

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q3.2a Please indicate the four types of LMP services or ALMPs that your PES most frequently uses for each of the customer sub-groups, n=31.
Corrigendum: this figure was corrected since first publication of this report on 06 May 2024.

³² Labour market interventions aimed at helping jobseekers find employment and to improve the balance between the supply and demand for labour. [The classification of ALMPs from the EU LMP database](#) is as follows: 2: Training, 4: Employment incentives, 5: Sheltered and supported employment and rehabilitation, 6: Direct job creation, 7: Start-up incentives (the former category '3: Job rotation and job sharing' has been integrated in category 4).

³³ All services and activities undertaken by the PES together with services provided by other public agencies or any other bodies contracted under public finance, which facilitate the integration of unemployed and other jobseekers in the labour market or which assist employers in recruiting and selecting staff. The relevant categories from the classification of LMP Services from the EU LMP database for this questionnaire are: 1.1. Client services, including 1.1.1. Information services, 1.1.2. Individual case management.

³⁴ With a temporary or permanent residence permit (status).

6.2 New developments in ALMP services and measures

In line with past years, 71% (22 out of 31) of PES reported the introduction of 82 new LMP services or ALMPs during 2022. Compared to 2021, two more PES report new LMP services or ALMPs, while the number of reported new services and measures increased by 21.

Additionally, 39% (12 out of 31) of PES reported modifying, interrupting, or cancelling 47 existing LMP services or ALMPs. During 2020 and 2021, PES adapted and amended their ongoing services to limit the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the level of reported amended services reached 73 interventions in 2021³⁵. During 2022, this number dropped to 47, mirroring a wider decrease of pandemic-related adaptations more broadly.

23% (7 out of 31) of PES did not make any changes in LMP services or ALMPs (CY, DE, IS, LI, NO, RO, SK). 39% (12 out of 31) of PES introduced new ALMP and LMP services as well as modified them (AT, BEA, BG, EE, EL, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, PT) – see Figure 10.

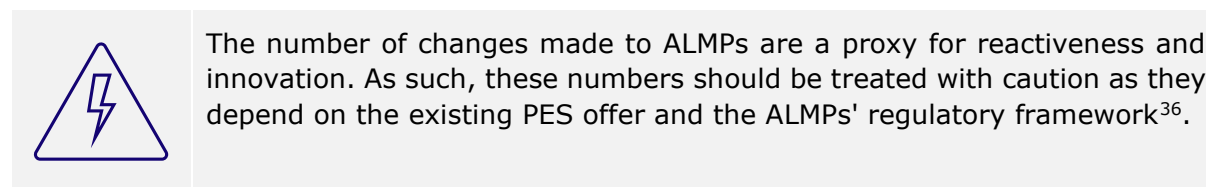


Figure 10. Number of new LMP services or ALMP introduced, and existing interventions which have been modified, cancelled, or interrupted in 2022

	LU	BEF	BEV	FI	NL	SI	AT	BG	EE	SE	IT	HR	PL	HU	BEA	IE	PT	DK	ES	LV	MT	FR	LT	EL	Total
New LMP services or ALMP			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	4	4	4	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	14	82
Modified, cancelled, or interrupted	3	5					1	1	1		1	6			4	4	6			1	2	3	6	3	47

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q3.1a Were new LMP services or ALMPs introduced in 2022? and Q3.1b Where existing LMP services or ALMPs have been modified, interrupted, or cancelled? n=31.

The 82 new interventions the survey recorded revolve around general customer services (44%), followed by information services (43%) and training related interventions (39%).

Out of 47 interventions which PES report to have modified, interrupted, or cancelled, 36 brought modification to existing interventions. The amended interventions in 2022 focused on customer services, information services, individual case management, and start-up incentives (each representing 19% of all 36 modified interventions). In addition to the overview provided in Figure 11, open text responses distinguish the following categories of modifications:

- Aid amount adjusted or increased (AT, BEF, HR, FR, IE, LT);
- Criteria amendment (EL, IT, LU, PT);
- Increased service options offered (BEA, FR);
- Target group was widened (BEA, BEF, LT);
- Service is now offered in other languages (BE-A);
- Digital support introduced (BEF);
- Simplification of the counselling offered (EE).

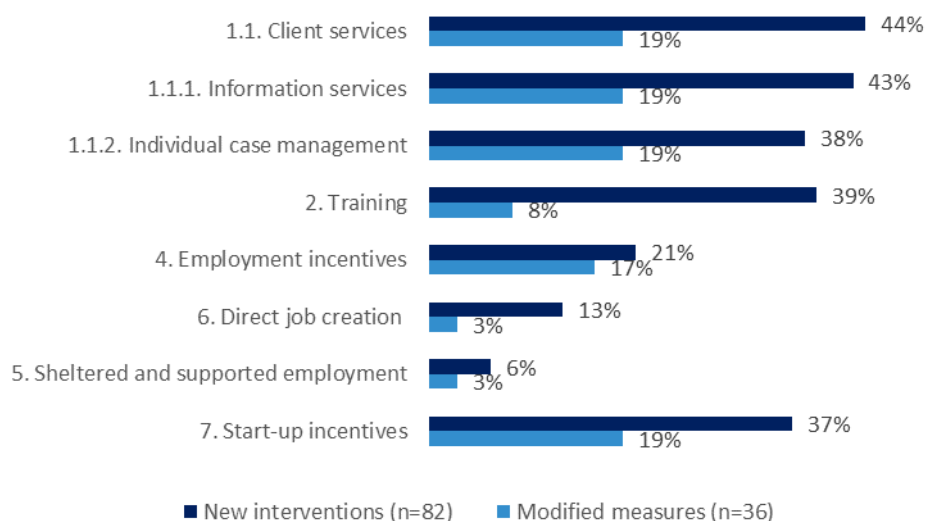
³⁵ The data gathered for 2021 only covers 'modified' interventions, not specifically interventions that have been 'modified, cancelled, or interrupted'

³⁶ ICON, Duell N. (2023), New forms of active labour market policy programmes. European Network of Public Employment Services.

Four initiatives came to an end in 2022 in BG, FR, and MT due to ending of a EU funds programming period. Only one of these services (BG) directly targeted employers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, seven remaining initiatives which PES reported to have modified were in fact cancelled or interrupted in 2022. In IE and PT, three services targeted at employers or jobseekers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic were cancelled. These services were pandemic responses and therefore temporary in nature. Other services were cancelled due to the introduction of a new replacement service (IE, LV) or the termination of a specific programme (PT). Finally, one hiring incentive service in PT was interrupted as more favourable provisions were introduced.

Figure 11.Types of new or modified LMP services or ALMPs in 2022



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q3.1b Where existing LMP services or ALMPs have been modified, interrupted or cancelled please provide details. Note: The percentages for this question add up to more than 100% because respondents were allowed to select more than one answer option.

In relation to target groups, interventions introduced in 2022 focused on vulnerable groups including refugees (BE Actiris, DK, EL), people with disabilities (EL, LV), women (EL, ES), migrants (BE VDAB, MT), the Roma community (EL) and ex-convicts (EL). The unemployed in general and young jobseekers were also among recipients of new ALMP and LMP services. PES staff was among target groups of new interventions in IT (a skills gap analysis initiative) and in MT (staff training and study visits on the principles of the green economy).

An interesting change is that new interventions no longer target recipients who are recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the interventions targeting those recovering from the impacts of the pandemic, were either finished or cancelled (BG, IE, PT). Other amended interventions focused on the general group of 'unemployed', in particular short term unemployment, followed by vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities (HR, IE, LV, LT, LU, IT) and LTUs (BE Forem, HR, IE, LU).

6.3 Outreach activities for inactive individuals and for at-risk workers or vulnerable groups of employed workers

The analysis of outreach³⁷ activities conducted by PES reveals a comprehensive approach to engaging with employed workers at risk of becoming unemployed or specific vulnerable groups of employed workers. Most PES (81%, 25 out to 31) reach out to at-risk employed workers or employed workers in a vulnerable situation.

Five main trends can be identified across PES.

First, there are PES who directly support employees at risk of layoff (BE VDAB, HR, LI, LT, NO, PL, RO) through guidance, mediation, and preparation to re-enter the labour market, as well as providing information on the topic of unemployment benefits. This support includes assistance and guidance for upskilling or re-skilling (BE Forem, DK, EL, IT) to help minimise any unemployment period, with a particular emphasis on digital and green skills to become more competitive in the labour market. Additionally, EE also supports the training of employees whose skills are outdated or who suffered health problems.

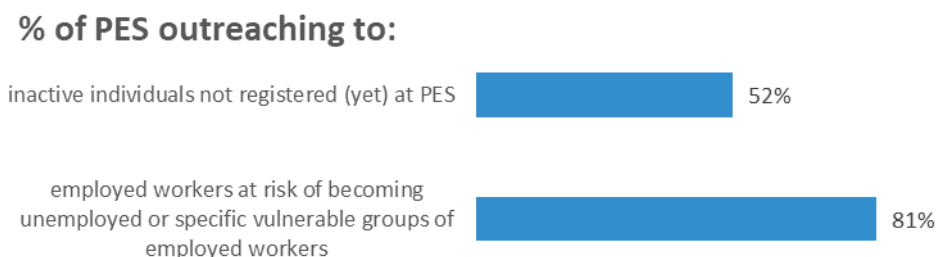
Second, other PES are supporting employees whose sectors are transitioning (FR, DE, IE, IT). This includes measures such as counselling sessions and support to ensure their career paths or assisting employees with administrative procedures to help make changes in their professional projects. In the specific IT context, workers who may potentially transition to another job are offered collective re-allocation solutions through the PES' early intervention in the company.

Third, initiatives are also in place for vulnerable groups in the labour market (BG, LU, MT, NL), with measures focused on ensuring continued employment retention and prevention when a vulnerable situation worsens.

Fourth, three PES reported supporting companies in their outreach activities to prevent unemployment. For instance, AT supports micro-enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises in the development of options in human resources management issues, PT developed partnership projects with companies to reach out to employees at risk or vulnerable groups, and ES is focused on companies to orient them towards results and assist them in keeping up with innovative practices.

Finally, other PES offer general information on their websites or develop media campaigns with the aim of preventing unemployment (LI, SI).

Figure 12. PES outreach activities



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, 3.2b Does your PES conduct activities to outreach to inactive individuals not registered (yet) at PES? 3.2c Does your PES conduct activities to reach out to employed workers at risk of becoming unemployed or specific vulnerable groups of employed workers?, n=31.

³⁷ Outreach work, for the purpose of this report, is understood as reaching out to and encouraging registration of potential customers to benefit from timely support.

Half (16 out of 31) of PES conduct outreach activities to inactive individuals who were not registered yet with their PES. Most of these PES focus on reaching out to unemployed young people (BE Actiris, BE VDAB, HR, CY, IT, PT). These activities focus on collaborating with partners, promoting coaching services and training, or actively contacting non-registered young people. Two PES (FR, IE) focus their outreach activities on inactive individuals, who live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and are LTU, receive social welfare, benefit from employment obligations or are disabled. Seven PES reported on context-specific outreach activities, including career days (EL), outreach to NEETs (HU), using media campaigns and social networks (LV, SI, SE), or collaborating with stakeholders (MT) and vocational guidance centres (PL).

Conclusions on Active Labour Market Services and measures used by PES

The information gathered on new or modified policies in 2022 shows a shift from pandemic-related customer groups, as PES move away from pandemic recovery services towards a broader spectrum of vulnerable groups, including refugees affected by the war in Ukraine. This has implications for the types of measures PES use, the partners that PES need to work with (including specialist providers) and importance of strengthening links with vocational training providers and the education sector (particularly relating to services for young people and refugees).

Some outreach activities targeting at-risk workers or vulnerable groups of workers focused on upskilling and re-skilling, with an emphasis on improving workers' digital and green skills. The focus on supporting at-risk workers demonstrates the importance of PES proactively supporting workers to take control of their own careers, and supporting work-to-work transitions, now and in the future as the labour market becomes more fragmented.

7 IN THE SPOTLIGHT: YOUTH GUARANTEE

The [Youth Guarantee \(YG\)](#) Council Recommendation (reinforced in 2020) specifically mentions the PES Network’s role in awareness-raising and dissemination of results and good practice examples among Member States³⁸. It also assigns important tasks to PES in delivering the YG schemes, such as registering young people as NEETs, offering counselling services, follow-up and post-placement support, as well as monitoring and evaluation of YG schemes.

This section covers several aspects of PES involvement in the YG scheme. The findings are based on responses from 28³⁹ of the 32⁴⁰ PES Network members surveyed from July to September 2023. Please note that for some questions, depending on the answer provided, respondents were asked to answer sub-questions, or be redirected to another question. The base for percentage varies according to the respondents' pathway through the survey.

Part II of the PES Capacity Questionnaire served as an update and expansion of the information gathered from PES in 2021⁴¹. The aim of the 2023 survey is therefore to analyse the administrative capacity of PES in implementing the YG scheme at the date of reporting and its evolution over time.

This section of the report is organised around the four distinct phases of YG implementation, which aligns with the structure of PES Capacity Questionnaire Part II:

● Mapping	● Outreach	● Preparation	● Offer
identifying the target group, available services and skills needs	raising awareness and targeting communication	organising tailored services and offers and ensuring quality standards	providing individualised support and ensuring timely and quality offers

Key findings:

- There was notable progress in building an operational model for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee (YG), including increased responsibility and delivery of the phases of the YG scheme. Most PES either fully manage or collaborate with partners in managing the reinforced YG, with an increase in PES taking responsibility compared to 2021.
- PES are actively involved in all the YG phases. They often collaborate with partners, who have expertise that PES do not have, in order to identify target groups, reach out to them and deliver services by specialists.
- Compared to 2021, a larger number of PES provide support services during the preparatory phase. Over three-quarters of PES provide (alone, or in cooperation with partners) career guidance/advice, motivational sessions, counselling, outreach activities and information on PES services, short-term training, bridging programmes to (re)enter mainstream education or the VET system.

³⁸ Council of the European Union (2020). Council Recommendation of 30 October 2020 on A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee and replacing the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee 2020/C 372/01, Official Journal of the European Union, C 372, 30 October.

³⁹ 25 EU Member States, including AT, BE (represented by Actiris (BEA), Forem (BEF), and VDAB (BEV) separately), BG, CY, HR, DK, EE, FI, FR, DE, EL, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI, ES, and SE, participated in the survey. NO also responded.

⁴⁰ The PES in LV, not being responsible for YG, did not participate. CZ, LI, and IS also did not respond to the survey.

⁴¹ ICON Institute (2021). European Network of Public Employment Services: 2021 PES Capacity Questionnaire Part II: Monitoring of PES support of the reinforced Youth Guarantee, European Commission. The Youth Guarantee was not covered in focus in the 2022 PES Capacity Report.

- In 2023, post-placement support services were in place in almost three-quarters of PES (71%, 20 out of 28), which is a 21-pp increase in the number of PES compared to the previous reporting period (50%, 15 out of 30 PES).
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms continue to be important to assess the impact of YG schemes. 64% (18 out of 28) PES established specific targets in 2023 combining diverse monitoring and follow-up methods for young people once they have completed the preparatory phase.

Thematic foci:

- PES use EU funds to implement YG phases, pilot new approaches or improve youth policies. Hence, the end of one programming period and the slow start of the new perspective (2021-2027) may have an impact on the observed decrease in the number of dedicated YG staff.
- A third of PES offer green skills training; two PES developed green skills profiling tools and they map young people's awareness of the green transition.

7.1 Evolution of Youth Guarantee management: insights and trends

PES play a pivotal role in reinforced YG schemes, facilitating access to training and job opportunities for young people, and driving structural reforms to enhance and expand their services. It is important to note that the mandate and available resources to implement and coordinate the YG scheme differ considerably from one PES to another.

7.1.1 PES mandate

Almost all the PES surveyed (93%, 26 out of 28) either have full responsibility for the reinforced YG (36%, 10 out of 28), or they more frequently share management responsibilities with other partners (57%, 16 out of 28). EL and NL do not have any management and coordination responsibilities of the national or regional YG scheme.

Compared to 2021, there was a 40-pp increase in the number of PES responsible for managing and coordinating national/regional YG schemes. In 2021, just over half of the PES (53%, 16 out of 30) had responsibilities for overall scheme management and coordination⁴². Among the PES that participated in both surveys, nine additional PES (AT, HR, EE, FR, DE, LT, LU, RO, SI) indicated having YG scheme management and coordination responsibilities in 2023, despite not having had such responsibilities before.

Management methods are different across the EU, including: national coordination by an ESF/ESF+ body (ES) or a ministry (AT); regionalised coordination with national oversight (BE); PES-led coordination with partners (PT) and municipalities (NO); and a revamped multi-stakeholder partnership known as the 'Alliance for Education and Training' (DE).

7.1.2 PES responsibilities

Most PES are either entirely responsible or collaborate with partners in executing core tasks related to the four phases of the YG: mapping, outreach (89%, 25 out of 28, respectively), preparation and offer (100%, 28 out of 28, respectively). Figure 13 provides details on the main areas of responsibility within each YG phase⁴³ and indicates the role of PES.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ The listed areas of responsibility are aligned with [the 2020 Council Recommendation on reinforcing the Youth Guarantee](#).

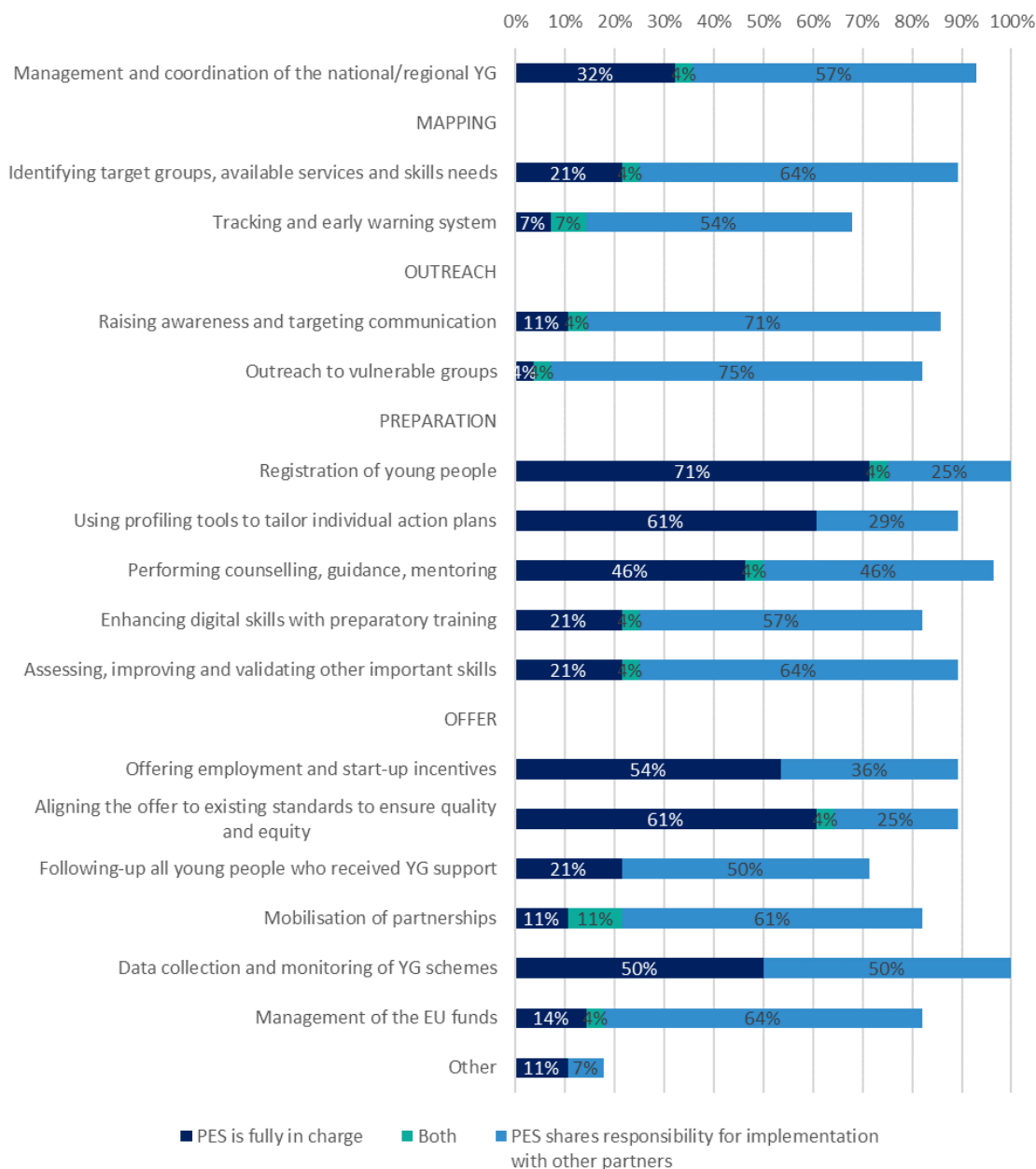
PES typically take full charge of:

- Registering young people (75%, 21 out of 28).
- Aligning the offer to existing standards to ensure quality and equity (64%, 18 out of 28).
- Using profiling tools to tailor individual action plans (IAP) (61%, 17 out of 28).

PES often collaborate with partners for:

- Outreach to vulnerable groups (79%, 22 out of 28).
- Raising awareness (75%, 21 out of 28).
- Managing EU funds (68%, 19 out of 28)
- Identifying target groups, available services and skills needs (68%, 19 out of 28).

Figure 13. Main areas⁴⁴ for which PES are responsible within the Youth Guarantee scheme in 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part II, Q1. What are the main areas for which your PES is responsible within the Youth Guarantee scheme?, n=28.

⁴⁴ The listed areas of responsibility are aligned with [the 2020 Council Recommendation on reinforcing the Youth Guarantee](#).

Note: VDAB, BG, LU, NO, and PT indicated that they are both fully in charge and share the responsibility for certain aspects of the YG scheme.

7.1.3 PES staff and the reinforced Youth Guarantee

Sharing responsibility with other partners is crucial, especially since only a third of PES (32%, 9 out of 28) have staff solely dedicated to YG management and implementation. Partners may bring specific expertise and/or good access to youth through different channels. The number of PES with dedicated YG staff has decreased since 2021 when 40% (12 out of 30 PES) reported having such employees back then. Four PES which had dedicated YG staff (BE Actiris, HU, LT, MT) and provided information in both 2021 and 2023, saw a decrease in the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) dedicated to YG (Table 4). Comments provided by PES suggest that the changes in staff numbers over the years are influenced by whether the PES is currently initiating (FR) or closing (MT, SI) a YG project. Some of these projects are co-financed by the EU Funds (e.g. ESF+), therefore the transition between the end of one programming period and the start of a new one (2021-2027) may have an impact on the observed decrease in the number of dedicated YG staff. This situation could change in upcoming year; for example, Bulgaria, which was one of the first EU countries to adopt its ESF+ programmes, is reporting an increase in PES staff exclusively dedicated to implementing the YG.

The Council Recommendation⁴⁵ calls on Member States to ensure that YG providers possess sufficient staffing resources, including adequately trained personnel, to deliver targeted interventions with a 'person-centred' approach. In that context, between 33% (HU) and 100% (FI, FR) of the FTEs reported by seven countries in 2023 consist of employment counsellors directly assisting young customers within the YG. YG-dedicated customer-facing staff constitutes between 2% (FI) to 51% (BG) of all PES frontline employees.

Table 4. PES staff exclusively dedicated to the implementation of the YG in 2021 and 2023 (FTE)

		BEA	BG	FI	FR	DE	HU	LT	LU	MT	NO	SI
YG-dedicated PES staff	2021	53	511	100	:	3 780	551	191	29.5	8	1 300	46
	2023	44	643	100	2578.3	:	521	86	32	3	:	:
	Trend	▼	▲	◄			▼	▼	▲	▼		
Of which, client-facing staff	2021	37 (70%)	511 (100%)	100 (100%)	:	3 780	511 (93%)	172 (90%)	26.5 (90%)	3 (38%)	:	45 (98%)
	2023	30 (68%)	544 (88%)	100 (100%)	2 578.3 (100%)	:	170 (33%)	78 (91%)	30 (94%)	:	:	
	Trend	▼	▲	◄			▼	▼	▲	▼		
% of YG-dedicated PES staff among all PES staff in 2023		3%	26%	2%	5%	:	13%	7%	5%	1%	:	:
% of YG-dedicated PES client-facing staff among all PES frontline staff in 2023		4%	51%	2%	6%	:	6%	8%	8%	:	:	:

- ▲ Increase
- ◄ No change
- ▼ Decrease

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part II, Q2. Are there PES staff members exclusively dedicated to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee?, n=11.

Note: (:) No reported data.

⁴⁵ Council of the European Union (2020). Council Recommendation of 30 October 2020 on A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee and replacing the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee 2020/C 372/01, Official Journal of the European Union, C 372, 30 October.

Among the 68% PES (19 out of 28) who do not have FTEs dedicated to the YG, YG activities are integrated into the regular functions and roles of PES staff for 14 PES (AT, CY, DE, EE, EL, HR, IE, IT, PL, PT, RO, SK, ES, SE). Continuity of services for young people is ensured by providing them with uninterrupted access to career counselling and support in job search through counsellors. Few PES have specialised youth counsellors, advisers, mentors and/or job coaches working with young people as well as other customers (BE VDAB, EE, HR, SI, SE). Poland is piloting one-stop shop advisory points, as exemplified in Box 14.

Box 14. Staff arrangements for YG activities within general PES roles

In 2023, the PES in Poland launched a pilot programme to establish one-stop advisory points. These points will provide comprehensive support to individuals up to 30 years of age, including vocational activation, information on available social assistance, education, psychological support, information on housing, legal and financial counselling.

In 2022, Estonia established a network of around 25 specialists in each region who act as contact points for local YG partners. These specialists dedicate significant efforts to working with young people and receive additional information and training to enhance their capacity to provide services to youth.

Until 2022, Slovenia employed specialised youth counsellors (20 for early activation and 25 for long-term unemployed youth) under the 'Counsellors for Young Unemployed' project. When the project concluded, several of them transferred to other roles in the PES. Of the counsellors still currently providing services to unemployed youth, many were originally hired through the project and possess the training, knowledge, skills, and years of experience required to offer high-quality support to young jobseekers.

In Sweden, a number of PES staff are trained in youth services and communicating with young people. Within the ESF (2014-2020), projects financed dedicated PES staff to work on the YG.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part II.

7.2 Mapping Youth Guarantee target groups

PES frequently collaborate with partners for tasks in the YG initial mapping phase, which includes:

- identifying target groups, available services and skills needs (68%, 19 out of 28 PES), and
- tracking and early warning system (61%, 17 out of 28 PES).

PES share YG target group identification responsibilities with education institutions (MT⁴⁶) and networks of local partners (BE Forem, BE VDAB⁴⁷). Further education institutions (IE⁴⁸)

⁴⁶ Partnership with Schools' Psychosocial Teams.

⁴⁷ Different tools are used to identify the target groups and skills in demand (models, analyses, labour force survey, studies, statistics, etc.).

⁴⁸ SOLAS tracks outcomes of all learners, including young people. SOLAS uses data held by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) to track Further Education and Training (FTE) graduate outcomes.

and municipalities (EE⁴⁹) are involved in tracking. Laws (FR⁵⁰) and data exchange (BE VDAB⁵¹, DE⁵²) support tracking and early warning systems.

Box 15. Key changes since 2021: the YG mapping phase

Identification of target groups, available services and skills needs

Ireland updated their IT system identifying jobseekers from under 25 to under 30 years old. The IT system uses income support data to identify eligible customers based on their current benefit entitlements, such as Disability Allowance, Lone Parents payments, and Qualified Adults linked to Jobseekers claims. The new system increased the frequency of engagement for this age group to fortnightly. The engagement patterns are kept under review to ensure that the PES is delivering the most effective service to each client cohort. Changes are influenced and dependent on socio-economic factors and commitments made in the government’s ‘Pathways to Work’ strategy.

Malta initiated its second NEETs Census, building on the 2015 edition. It aims to assess the target groups’ skills, encompassing digital skills; awareness of the green transition; interest in entrepreneurship; and willingness to participate in work placements abroad through the Aim Learn Master Achieve (ALMA) initiative.

Tracking and early warning system

In Estonia, more municipalities now engage in the YG, fostering systematic cooperation with PES.

The Slovenian PES took part in an EU funded project (Preseneeti.se), in which a marketing campaign was launched to motivate young NEET to join the project.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part II.

7.3 Outreach to youth

Nearly all surveyed PES (86%, 24 out of 28) actively engage with vulnerable groups, often in collaboration with partners, as some PES cannot reach out to unregistered individuals under their mandates (Section 6.3). In comparison to 2021, there was a 25-pp increase in PES taking on responsibilities for outreach to vulnerable groups. Indeed in 2021, only 57% (17 out of 30) PES reached out to youth.

Seven countries mentioned changes in their outreach activities since 2021 (BE VDAB, EE, IE, MT, PL, PT, SI). These enhanced the use of social media channels (EE, MT), partnered with influencers (MT), hosted youth events (IE), launched project-based communication (BE VDAB, EE, and SI) and updated/developed communication campaigns, strategies, and plans (IE, PL, PT). Additionally, IE and PL now allow PES officers to reach out to unregistered inactive persons including youth and vulnerable groups.

Specifically, PES prefer to use social media channels (61%, 17 out of 28) to connect with unregistered NEETs, followed by conventional media channels (TV, radio, etc., 50%, 14 out of 28 PES) and dedicated campaigns (43%, 12 out of 28 PES). BE VDAB, PL and PT use all six channels listed in Figure 14 below to reach out to young people. Changes in data

⁴⁹ Local municipalities track and compile lists of NEET youth.

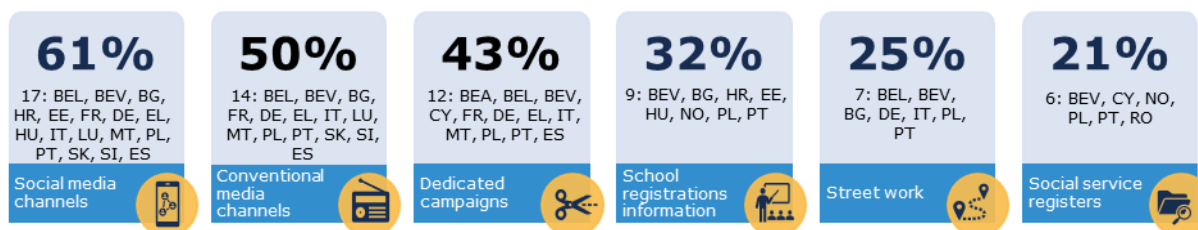
⁵⁰ Law on compulsory training (responsibility of the State for 16-18 year olds).

⁵¹ Early warning: The education sector tries to reduce unqualified dropouts with early school leaving action plan. Tracking: VDAB operates a contact strategy whereby every young person who registers with VDAB as a jobseeker is instructed to contact the VDAB contact centre. If the young person does not contact the PES themselves, VDAB will proactively contact them after one week.

⁵² Successive implementation of § 31a SGB III on the exchange of data between the BA and the Länder on young people without concrete prospects for a career after school.

protection law limits information exchanges with schools about early leavers (SI). Selected PES practices are showcased in Box 16.

Figure 14. Outreach measures applied to contact unregistered NEETs in 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part II, Q3. What outreach measures do you apply to get in contact with unregistered NEETs? n=28.

Box 16. Selected YG outreach activities

Belgium Actiris launched a call for projects 'Support for young people in NEET situations' for 2024-2027, building on a prior EU-funded initiative. The aim of the new call is to foster the trust of NEETs towards the institutions that can offer them guidance, training, and employment opportunities.

Slovenia uses EU funds to target NEETs, e.g. via marketing campaigns, in a previously mentioned Preseneeti.se project. The Slovenian PES cooperates with school counsellors and Centres of Social Welfare (CSW) to reach out to them. The PES informs schools about its services for jobseekers and provides them with leaflets, posters, and web addresses. PES counsellors also present information directly to pupils in schools. Due to data protection law, schools cannot share data on who drops out or finishes education with the PES. Socially disadvantaged youth can apply for Financial Social Aid at CSW. They must be registered as unemployed at PES and actively seek work. If approved, they become customers of both institutions. PES and CSW exchange data on them via e-services.

France is piloting the 'Avenir Pro' programme in vocational high schools and related associations in order to provide information on school registrations to youth. The '1young person, 1solution' (1jeune1solution) initiative brings together multiple stakeholders, including military services and regional councils to provide access to a qualification scheme⁵³.

Many youth employment agencies in Germany – including social service providers under SGB II, SGB III, SGB VIII,⁵⁴ and increasingly schools – offer socially oriented, low-threshold counselling and support services.

In Ireland, in addition to cooperation with schools, links also exist with parents' forums. Since 2022, the PES has been contacting young people who receive disability allowance. They receive a specially designed letter, created in collaboration with disability advocacy organisations, and they are offered an appointment with an Employment Personal Advisor.

Finally, 'Neighbourhood Havens' are mobile information points in one Polish region that inform residents, including unregistered young people, about available support and opportunities via the PES.

⁵³ In the wake of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the French Government initiated the programme in August 2020 to provide job seekers under 30 years of age with a job, an apprenticeship, training, or another pathway into professional integration.

⁵⁴ Social Code II – Minimum Income Scheme (SGB II); Social Code III – Unemployment Benefit Scheme (SGB III); Social Code VIII – Children and Youth Aid (SGB VIII).

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part II.

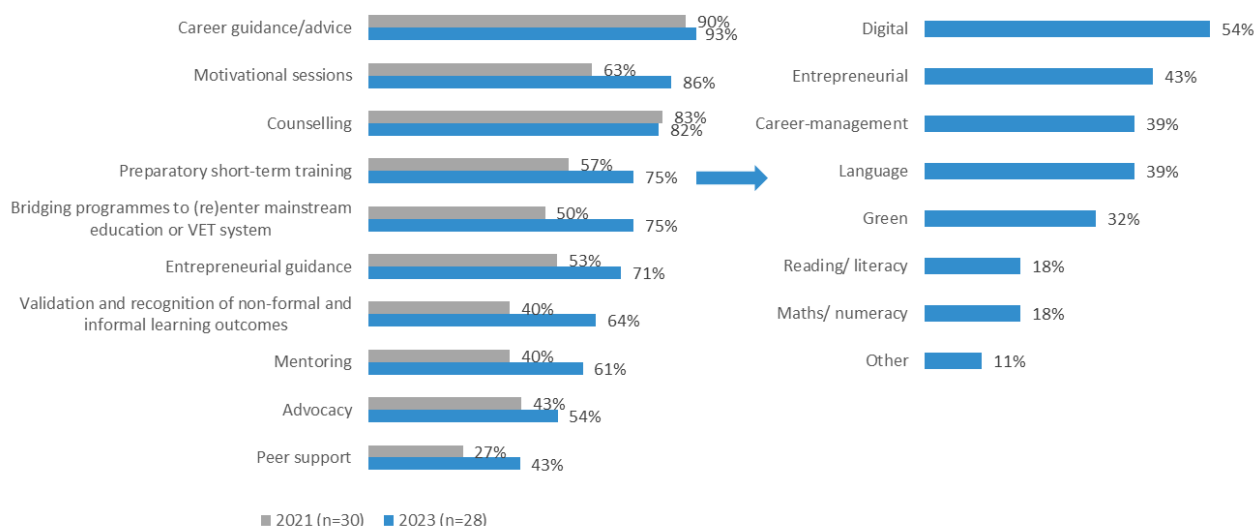
7.4 Preparation phase

Compared to 2021, a larger number of PES provide support services during the preparatory phase. Over 20-pp increases were recorded for:

- Bridging programmes⁵⁵ to prepare young people in vulnerable situations to (re)enter mainstream education or VET system.
- Validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes (including learning outcomes of the preparatory short-term training).
- Motivational sessions.
- Mentoring.

Over three-quarters of PES provide (alone, or in cooperation with partners) standard services such as career guidance/advice, motivational sessions, counselling, outreach activities and information on PES services, preparatory short-term training, bridging programmes to (re)enter mainstream education or the VET system (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Support services provided to NEETs during the preparatory phase in 2021 and 2023 and topics of preparatory short-term training in 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part II, Q4. What support services are provided to the NEETs, during the preparatory phase, either by PES alone or in cooperation with other partners/external providers⁵⁶?

Eight PES reported positive developments in the preparation phase and their support services (BE Actiris, BE VDAB, DE, IE, IT, MT, PL, SI) – see Box 17 for examples.

Box 17. Key changes since 2021: YG preparation phase

In 2022, Ireland launched a blended employment service, offering immediate access to the PES. The *Digital Pathway to Work* is available to all short-term unemployed jobseekers who are verified on My Welfare.ie. In the same year, Ireland added an activity step for jobseekers to log their efforts towards meeting the agreed actions in their personal plan.

⁵⁵ Bridging programmes – programmes targeting those young people who are not ready to enter (re) enter in the education/VET systems, consisting in a combination of different support services/ measures.

⁵⁶ The maximum four-month preparatory phase before taking up an offer.

Profiling tools are developed in Belgium Actiris, tested in Malta and recalibrated in Ireland.

In efforts to enhance digital skills, PES initiated various strategies ranging from digital skills validation tools in Poland to updating pre-vocational training in Germany, recording digital skill barriers in Ireland, and planning systematic assessments of digital and linguistic skills in Belgium Actiris.

Within the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), Belgium Actiris plans to open four additional 'Children Houses'. Concrete steps are ongoing for the opening of one extra office and should be completed by the end of 2023. These 'Children Houses' welcome the children (0-3 years old) of parents who are starting a new work contract or who are looking for a job.

Belgium VDAB uses ESF/ESF+ to outreach and activate NEETs. The ESF+ project will start in 2024 to build capacity of local partnerships.

Finally, from April 2022 the Polish PES can use finance from national fund activities to reach out to inactive persons, including youth.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part II.

The number of PES providing short-term preparatory training, whether operating alone or in cooperation with other partners, increased by 18-pp since 2021, with 75% (21 out of 28) PES offering this type of support service in 2023.

Among PES providing preparatory short-term training, the most highly sought-after courses are digital (54%, 15 out of 28), entrepreneurial (43%, 12 out of 28), followed by career-management and language (39%, 11 out of 28 PES respectively). MT, EE, and NO provide six to seven types of training, and therefore have the most diverse training offer (Figure 15).

Other types of training include soft skills such as empowerment, self-esteem, working attitude, communication, employability, 'learning to learn', project-oriented behaviour (BE Actiris, FR, LU, SI). Further examples of training courses offered by PES are included in Box 18.

Box 18. Examples of training courses offered

In Estonia, specific labour market training programmes within the YG scheme aim to provide some qualifications or a competitive advantage when seeking employment in a particular field.

Within the YG-scheme, Education and Training Boards in Ireland provide a range of micro-qualifications and online courses for green skills.

The PES in Malta developed a new digital skills profiling tool which is being tested with target group and PES staff. Also, two pilot projects, Intercept and SMARTLY, introduced courses focusing on green skills and green placements. The outcomes of these initiatives will be integrated into the forthcoming EU funded YG project.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part II.

7.5 Youth Guarantee offer and post-placement support

The primary goal of the reinforced YG is to ensure that young people receive high-quality placement offers within four months of either becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. In 2023, over three-quarters of PES (79%, 22 out of 28) provided information on the timeframes for these offers. This represents a significant increase compared to 2021 when only 43% (13 out of 30 PES) reported such information.

Figure 16. The type of post-placement support provided to young people in 2021 and 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part II, Q6. Is there post-placement support for young people in place?

PES activities which focused on enhancing the YG offer include: BE VDAB's upcoming experimental vocational qualification pathway for young individuals, IE's expansion of the JobsPlus scheme to cater for diverse groups, MT and BE Actiris' efforts to align offers with quality and equity standards, and PL and BE Forem's management of EU funds. These sit among other initiatives aimed at mobilising partnerships and monitoring YG schemes. Box 19 includes examples of initiatives in the offer phase which have been introduced since 2021, including types of post placement support.

Box 19. Key changes since 2021: the YG offer phase and types of post placement support

The ESF-funded Belgium VDAB 'leerjobs' initiative will run as an experiment from 2024 to 2027. It aims to provide a vocational qualification pathway within a company. It is supported by a limited number of instructional hours for unqualified young people who have been out of secondary education for 2 years, or who are 21 years old.

In job coaching, Poland now informs young people about new employment and market trends.

Germany implemented a dual VET training programme that aims to help employers and in-company trainers, as well as young people who face challenges in their education and career development. The programme offers support for young people with learning disabilities, skills gaps, or psycho-social needs. Since 2021, it provides follow-up assistance for up to 12 months after completion.

In Ireland, a client on a Work Placement Experience Programme is required to complete 60 hours of job training, including 20 accredited and 40 unaccredited hours. This training can be delivered by the employer or through courses offered by the PES.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part II.

7.6 Monitoring and evaluation of the Youth Guarantee schemes

Since its launch in 2013, the YG has emphasised the need for robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of YG-oriented schemes. The results from monitoring and evaluation help PES to make informed decisions about what aspects of their YG scheme work, and which aspects do not.

64% (18 out of 28) of PES established specific targets in 2023, combining diverse monitoring and follow-up methods for young people once they have completed the preparatory phase. These methods include:

- Time-bound targets in 13 PES (AT, BE Actiris, BE VDAB, BG, HR, DK, EE, FI, FR, LT, LU, PL and SI).
- Proportionate targets in 7 PES (BG, HR, EE, FR, LT, MT and RO).
- Numerical targets in 9 PES (AT, BE Actiris, HR, EE, FR, IT, LT, LU and SI).
- Combined targets in 7 PES (AT, BE VDAB, HR, CY, IE, LU, and MT).

Box 20. Key changes since 2021: the YG monitoring and evaluation

Only Ireland reported updates in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The Irish PES is developing performance indicators to track employment outcomes, such as job retention or employment sustainability, and working to upgrade their data collection and reporting methods on PES outcomes, especially for youth.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part II.

The number of PES setting such targets in 2023 is close to 2021 levels, with 63% (19 out of 30) PES indicating they establish them.

Conclusions on Youth Guarantee

The second survey monitoring the PES administrative capacity to implement the reinforced YG showed a higher level of PES engagement in the YG scheme and its four phases. The survey found that most PES either manage on their own or collaborate with partners in coordinating the reinforced YG, with a clear increase in PES taking responsibility compared to 2021. Also, outreach activities were intensified, with social media channels becoming more popular among PES to reach out to unregistered NEETs. This increase in popularity demonstrates the way that NEETs are consuming information via social media, and the rising importance of digital outreach for PES. The survey revealed that many new initiatives have been introduced since 2021, which could be further discussed and disseminated by the PES Network. This is particularly important in the context of the delivery of the reinforced Youth Guarantee and addressing the longer-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people.

8 PES FINANCING

This section summarises the insights on PES financing, covering:

- 2022 expenditure in 22 PES collected in the Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection. To increase comparability across the PES, the expenditure on unemployment and other benefits or pro forma expenditure was excluded from the analysis;
- The use of European funding reported by 31 PES who responded in 2023 to the PES Capacity survey.

This section begins with trends in levels and patterns of expenditure across PES, analysing the most common areas of spending in 2022 (compared to prior years)⁵⁹. Thereafter, this section summarises PES Capacity survey results on the EU funding which PES receive or may tap into, looking at the types of measures PES undertake with this financial support.

Key findings:

- For 2022, an equal number of PES report levels of increases or decreases in expenditure (excluding expenditure on unemployment and other benefits or pro forma expenditure).
- After excluding benefits, most PES expenditure is devoted to ALMPs and to staff costs. The spending patterns across individual PES diverge, and they did not evolve significantly compared to previous year overall, although there are some sharp decreases in some PES.

Thematic foci:

- A new item of this PES Capacity Report is the use of EU funding by PES. The evidence collected confirms that EU funds play a significant role in bolstering the operations of PES.
- PES report that they use different sources of EU funding (more commonly, ESF+ and REACT-EU) and that they tap into such funds to implement different types of measures, from structural reforms and modernisation of their service to the deployment of a range of ALMPs. Some of these measures focus on youth, training and digitalisation of PES services.

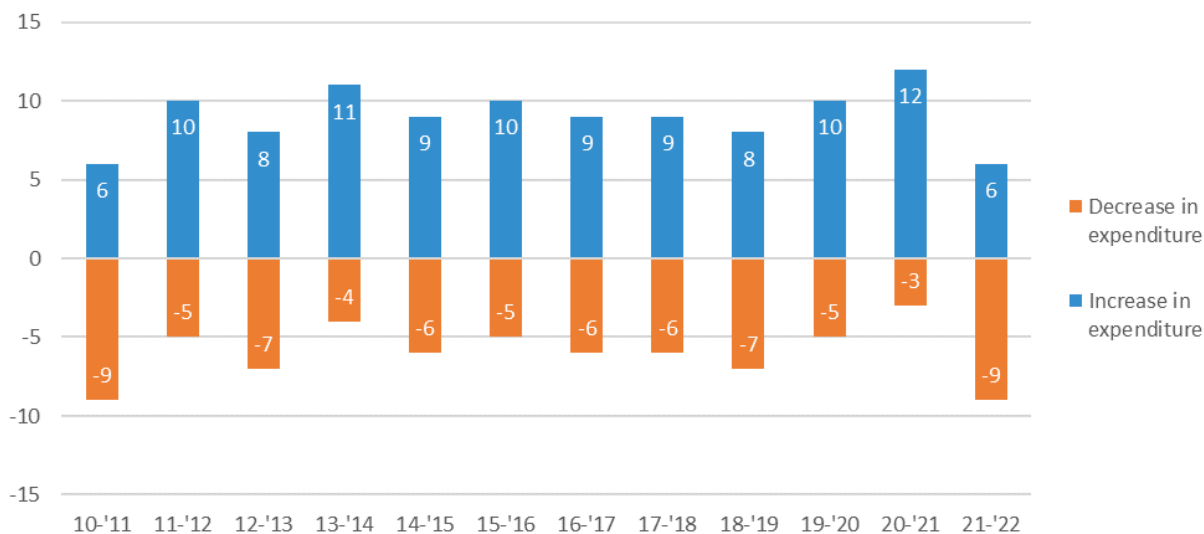
8.1 PES expenditure in 2022: contrasted trends

Between 2021 and 2022, an equal number of PES decreased or increased their expenditure (50%), which is equivalent to 11 out of 22 PES who provided expenditure information for 2022 in the PES Benchlearning Data Collection.

Trends in PES expenditure can be monitored since 2010 but only for 15 PES which provided, each year, expenditure information in the PES Benchlearning Data Collection. Among this group of 15 PES, the number of PES undergoing an increase and decrease in expenditure in 2022 is the same as it was between 2010 and 2011. The number of PES affected by a decrease in total expenditure for 2022 is the highest observed for the past ten years. Throughout the 2010-2022 period, none of the 15 PES experienced a year where their budget remained unchanged from the previous year; therefore in the figure below there is no category for 'no change'.

⁵⁹ Data from the 2022 Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection on categories of expenditure is available for 22 PES; the breakdown by type of expenditure is not available for BEA, CZ, CY, DE, HU, IE, IT, LI, PL and NO.

Figure 17. Number of PES reporting annual changes in total expenditure, excluding benefits paid and pro forma expenditure, 2010-2022



Source: Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection, n=15.

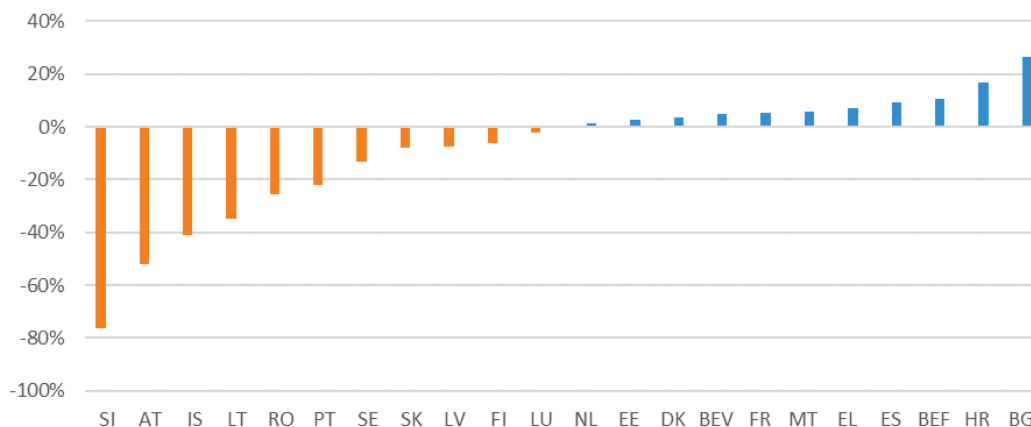
Note: Data each year from 2010 to 2022 is available only for AT, BG, HR, DK, EE, FI, FR, IS, LV, LT, LU, PT, SK, SI, and SE.

Figure 18 shows where individual PES stand in terms of annual percentage change in expenditure from 2021 to 2022. The differences between PES in this regard increased since the last report, as annual percentage changes range:

- from -76% in Slovenia, where expenditure for ALMPs declined as the number of jobseekers fell;
- to +26.5% for Bulgaria, where additional funding for ALMPs was assigned to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Six PES experienced a decrease in expenditure of more than 20% during this period, compared to two PES in the previous period.

Figure 18. Annual percentage change in PES expenditure, excluding unemployment benefits and pro forma expenditure, 2021-2022



Source: Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection, n=22.

No information or insufficient information available for BEA, CZ, CY, DE, HU, IE, IT, LI, PL, NO.

8.2 PES expenditure breakdown in 2022



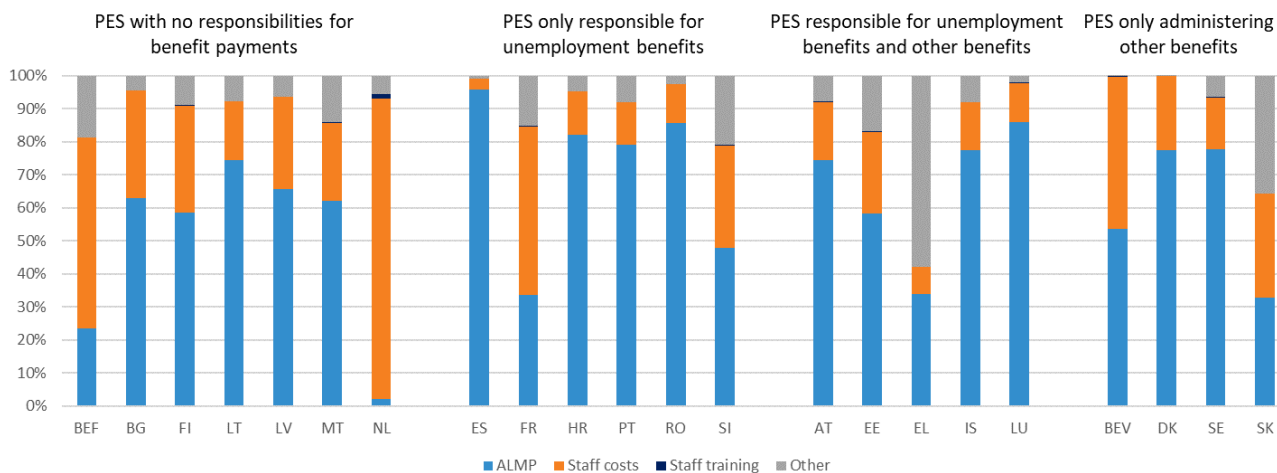
The expenditure data used from the Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection should be read with caution. Some PES cannot provide breakdowns of all expenditure types; therefore the distribution of expenditure is not fully comparable.

A breakdown of expenditure in PES by type of expenditure is available for 22 PES (ALMPs, staff costs, staff training and other costs). Overall, across these 22 PES, ALMPs account in average of 61% of their expenditure, staff costs account for 27% and other costs for 11%. Staff training represents a marginal fraction of expenditure overall (0.2%).

When examining expenditure of individual PES, significant variations remain across countries, as shown in Figure 19. This figure provides data expenditure split across various budget items for each PES, grouping PES according to their responsibility for the administration of unemployment and other benefits.

Even within the same grouping, there is significant variation in the shares of expenditure (excluding benefit payments and *pro forma* budget items) for each item. For instance, across PES which have no responsibility for administering benefits, spending on ALMPs varies from as little as 2% in the Netherlands to 74% in Lithuania. We note, however, that data for NL is more complex than presented here. Indeed, much of the spending in the NL derives from municipalities who have responsibility for activating people on social benefits. These figures need to be treated in their context.

Figure 19. Expenditure by item in 2022 as a percentage of total expenditure, excluding benefit payments and *pro forma* budget items, for PES with differing responsibilities in benefit administration




Source: Annual PES Benchlearning Data Collection, n=22.

Note: No information or insufficient information available for BEA, CZ, CY, DE, HU, IE, IT, LI, PL, NO.

The patterns observed in PES expenditure in individual PES remained generally unchanged since last year. The most noticeable changes include Slovenia, where expenditure on ALMP was significantly reduced, while spending on training increased in the context of the finalisation of ESF-funded projects. In Bulgaria, the share of expenditure in ALMPs went up against the share of staff costs; while an opposite trend is seen in Austria, Iceland and Latvia.

8.3 EU funds: catalysts for PES reform and support for ALMPs

The 2023 PES Capacity Survey introduced new questions on EU funding which PES receive, and the specific measures they undertake with this financial support. Nearly all of the PES (87%, 27 out of 31) which participated in the survey confirmed that they use EU funding to some extent. However, not all the PES⁶⁰ surveyed reported data on budget spent from such funds in 2022 and/or funding allocation between 2021 and 2027.



This section provides insights from PES survey responses. According to internal information available to European Commission services and examples featured at AFEPA board meetings, the responses do not provide a full picture of all EU funds used or available to PES. Central PES services may not have an overview of all EU funded projects implemented by local job centres in all regional programmes. Also, EU funds are not programmed by type of beneficiary, nor do programmes report in a systematic way whether funds are earmarked for a specific type of beneficiary (in this case PES). Therefore, the exact funding for PES in the 2021-2027 period is not available.

Table 7 below provides an overview of the measures which are supported by different EU funds, according to survey answers, such as the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the Recovery assistance for cohesion and the territories of Europe (REACT-EU), the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) and the Just Transition Fund (JTF).

When looking at the categories of measures supported, EU funds are used transversally and support many different areas, including training of PES staff, reform and transformation of the PES, digitalisation of PES services, services to employers, skills intelligence and forecasting, training of jobseekers, unemployed, training people at risk of losing their job, job-to-job and outplacement schemes, among others.

Table 6. Overview of use of EU funds by PES, by categories of measures supported

	ESF+	REACT-EU	RRF	TSI	JTF
Training of PES staff	7: HR, IT, LV, PL, PT, RO, SI	:	4: ES, HR, PL, RO		
Reform of the PES/ PES modernisation/ transformation	6: BEV, CY, EL, HR, PL, RO	:	7: CY, EL, ES, HR, LV, PL, PT	3: EL, LV, SE	1: RO
Digitalisation of PES services/digital transformation	9: BEF, BEV, CY, HR, IT, LV, PL, RO, SI	:	9: BEF, CY, EL, FI, HR, LT, LU, PL, RO	1: HU	
Services to employers	13: BEA, BG, CY, DE, ES, HR, IT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SI	2: EE, RO	1: EE		1: RO
Skills intelligence and forecasting	7: DE, HR, IT, LV, MT, PL, SI	:	:		

⁶⁰ NO, LI, AT and DK did not report the use of any EU funds. NO and LI answers are understandable considering that they are not eligible for the funding. The Danish STAR did not apply for funding as project lead or partner, however Danish job centers manage or take part in projects funded by ESF+.

	ESF+	REACT-EU	RRF	TSI	JTF
Training (upskilling/reskilling) of jobseekers/unemployed	14: BEF, BEV, BG, DE, ES, HR, LT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, SI, SE	5: EE, LT, LV, PT, SE	9: BEA, BEF, EL, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, PT	1: BEF	2: PT, RO
Training of people at risk of losing their job	5: BEA, BEV, HR, LV, MT	2: EE, LV	5: BEA, ES, HR, IT, LV		
Job-to-job/outplacement schemes	6: BEF, BEV, DE, HR, PT, RO	1: EE	3: BEA, EL, IE		
Other	13: BEA, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, PL, SK	6: BEA, ES, FR, HR, LT, SK	9: BEA, BEF, EL, ES, FI, HR, IT, LT, SI	3: BEF, EL, PL	

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I, Q1.3 Please indicate which funds are being used to finance your PES activities and programmes (including pilot projects, etc.), n=31.

Note: NO, LI, AT and DK⁶¹ have not reported the use of any EU funds.

The ESF+ finance a full range of initiatives to foster the PES overall capacity (via staff training, support to PES modernisation and transformation, digitalisation of services, developing skills intelligence and forecasting of labour market needs), as well as services to employers and ALMPs such as training of jobseekers, unemployed and/or people at risk of losing their job i.e., outplacement schemes. Part of the measures implemented by PES under ESF+ will focus on jobseekers from the most vulnerable groups and who are furthest from the labour market (DE, IE, HR, FR, PL), including immigrants (FI) and people with disabilities (EE, FR, IE). ESF+ funding will also support other objectives; for instance, some countries plan to use ESF+ to support cross-border partnerships and offer support to mobile job applicants (e.g. DE and SI).

Box 21. Example of PES measures funded under ESF+

In the Slovenian PES, where ESF+ expenditure in 2022 totalled EUR 4.3 million, almost half was used to improve the quality and accessibility of PES services to unemployed persons, other jobseekers (currently employed) and employers (48%). 20% of the ESF+ expenditure focused on services to facilitate transnational labour mobility through EURES, 15% to strengthen counselling services for young unemployed people and 10% to support lifelong career guidance services. Other measures included a platform for competency forecasting and the development of a methodology for identifying employers' short-term needs for skills and competences.

In Ireland, EUR 1.3 million of ESF+ funding in 2022 was spent on the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance. This measure targets long-term dependent on social welfare payments, including LTU, lone parents, people with disabilities and other social welfare recipients, to engage with self-employment. Another EUR 184 000 were spent on the JobsPlus employer incentive to hire long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged persons. Both measures targeted individuals under the age of 30. Another measure that will be supported by ESF+ in coming years is the People with Disabilities Employment Programme, with EUR 15.2 million ESF+ budget allocated for 2021-2027.

In Malta, the Investing in Skills Scheme disbursed EUR 1.38 million in 2022 (out of a budget of EUR 5 million) to promote training of persons active on the labour market. This scheme supports training costs, wage costs and air travel costs during the training period; employers receive a cash grant when providing training to employees. Other

⁶¹ STAR did not apply for funding as project lead or partner, however Danish job centers manage or take part in projects funded by ESF+.

measures include the Access to Employment scheme with EUR 4.71 million spent in 2022.

In Belgium Actiris, the ESF+ programme for the Brussels Capital Region, with a budget allocation of EUR 63 million, of which EUR 0.5 million was spent in 2022, will fund projects that aim to facilitate access to quality employment and opportunities to different categories of jobseekers. Concerning young people more specifically, the programme will support projects that facilitate their transition to the labour market, such as training, internships, student placements, mentoring schemes and internships abroad as part of the ALMA initiative.

In Croatia, ESF+ Priority 'Measures of active employment policy for youth' focuses on young people who are NEET (15-29) and includes employment, internship and training subsidies, as well as measures to promote youth self-employment measures. Overall, EUR 569 million are allocated under ESF+ to support a wide range of measures.

In Romania, EUR 924 million of ESF+ is allocated in 2021-2027, of which EUR 32.6 million was spent in 2022. One of the three priorities is harnessing the potential of young people via outreach services and outplacement.

In Poland, the Programme 'European Funds for Social Development 2021-2027' includes actions focusing on the PES development. One action is the development of a system of strategic forecasting of skills needs linked to the development of the green economy and the digital economy.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

REACT-EU funding was mobilised by PES to implement different forms of ALMPs (BE Actiris, DE, EE, FR, HR, LT, LV, PT, SK) and was used by PES to implement COVID-mitigation measures in ES, HU, RO and SK.

Box 22. Measures supported by REACT-EU

In France, EUR 583 million was allocated for 2021-2023 under REACT-EU, and EUR 296 million was distributed in 2022. The PES Pôle emploi mobilised this funding to support different types of ALMPs, some of which recently launched:

- Global support for individuals furthest from the labour market, in cooperation with local authorities.
- Individualised support for young people under 26 facing significant employment challenges (*Accompagnement Intensif Jeunes (AIJ)*).
- The Youth Commitment Contract launched in March 2022, and also jointly funded by the ESF, targeting NEETs aged 16 to 25 (*Contrat d'Engagement Jeune (CEJ)*).
- A pilot scheme of individual and group guidance for vocational secondary education students, involving different partners (*Professional Future, Avenir Pro*).
- Health and Employment Pathway, a multi-disciplinary support to focus on health issues for long-term unemployed selected by their PES counsellor (*Parcours Emploi Santé*), since March 2022.
- Guidance and support to promote self-employment opportunities.

In Germany, in 2022, EUR 1.2 million of REACT-EU funding supported job centres in implementing these measures: 'Chance' (focusing on families with children) and 'ReStart' employment coach and JUMP'.

In Estonia, EUR 7.9 million from REACT-EU is allocated from 2021 to 2023, of which EUR 1.9 million was spent in 2022. This funding supported services to employers, training measures as well as job-to-job and outplacement schemes.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

The RRF supports structural improvement in PES, including upgrades of PES buildings (BE Forem, EE), performance management systems, the modernisation and digitalisation of services (BE Forem, IT, PL, RO) as well as specific ALMPs, including measures targeting vulnerable groups (BE Actiris), wage subsidies (EE), measures to support the green transition (HR) and support for business creation (LT).

Box 23. PES reforms receiving RRF funding

In Poland, a total of EUR 52 million from the RRF is allocated to Investment in Labour Market Institution Reform. The first objective is to modernise IT systems, develop new functionalities to align with new legal requirements, digitalise PES processes and tools, expand the ICT infrastructure and implement new IT-based communication to interact more effectively with users. The other part of the investment focuses on training for PES employees on new procedures and standards, the employment of third-country nationals, the electronic execution of certain job contracts and corresponding IT tools and systems.

In Croatia, EUR 198 million under the RRF is allocated to designing and implementing innovative ALMPs to accompany the shift towards a green and digital economy. These ALMPs aim to support both employment and self-employment opportunities linked to the transitions to a green and digital economy, and to increase the competitiveness and employability of the labour force, with a particular focus on the long-term unemployed.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

The TSI was used to foster innovative practices to tackle long-term unemployment (BE Forem), help implement a national skills framework for learning pathways and upgrading counselling services (EL), create a new client system (HU) or an integrated quality management system (LV), or support the integration of third country nationals (PL).

Box 24. Examples of PES capacity building measures supported by the TSI

In Hungary, the PES used funds of about EUR 300 000 from the TSI to support the development of a new client system at the PES.

In Greece, in 2022, EUR 2 million from the TSI was spent to reform and modernise the PES.

In Poland, the TSI project supports the social and labour market inclusion of third-country nationals, including those fleeing Ukraine, strengthening the capacity of the Integration Centres for Foreigners and improving the recognition and validation of skills and qualifications obtained in Ukraine. The project’s budget is EUR 500 000.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

Only two PES (RO, EL) reported that they used the JTF. In Romania, where 6 county agencies meet the eligibility requirements to implement projects from the JTF, such projects (EUR 280 million allocated from 2021 to 2027) focus on modernising the PES, improving vocational training for jobseekers and measures for employers.

In addition to the EU funds mentioned above, other sources of EU funding used by PES include: Erasmus+ (BE Forem, HR, LU), the Asylum Migration Integration Fund (MT) and EaSI (BE Forem, HR, LU). For example, in Malta, the Supported Employment Services for Migrants project was partly financed under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020; EUR 147 000 was spent in 2022, out of EUR 1.1 million allocated until June 2023. The project targeted different categories of migrants (asylum seekers, refugees, individuals granted subsidiary or humanitarian protection, temporary protection status, or specific residence authorisation). Services included different ALMPs including guidance,

basic English and Maltese courses, short-term placement and staff training to help them overcome obstacles to labour market integration.

Conclusions on PES financing

EU funds play a significant role in bolstering the operations of PES. They support many different areas, including capacity building, training of PES staff, reform and transformation of the PES, digitalisation of PES services, skills intelligence and forecasting, and the implementation of ALMPs, including support to the most vulnerable groups. PES used different types of funding to support different activities, including funds to support the integration of refugees. Changes in programming periods may have implications for PES delivery as specific projects may come to an end before new projects start, and it is important for PES to ensure continuity of services in some cases (for example, when working with vulnerable groups). Ultimately, European funds play an important role in ensuring that PES can take steps to support their modernisation, both on an operational and a strategic level, but it is important that PES use these funds wisely to support reforms and advancements.

Internal information available to European Commission services suggests that the use of EU funds by PES is more extensive than is shown in the PES Capacity survey responses. This indicates a potential lack of awareness within the PES Network regarding the funding available at the national level and suggests the need for sharing targeted information with PES, such as country factsheets on Cohesion Funds for PES.

9 PES HUMAN RESOURCES

This final section summarises the insights collected in the PES Capacity Questionnaire on PES staff (human resources), analysing trends in overall staffing and looking at changes in staffing levels over time⁶².

Starting with describing trends in overall staffing levels and staff turnover in PES, this section goes on to analyse the ratio and developments of frontline staff in PES, relative to their areas of expertise and the target groups which they service. Further sub-sections then review the mobility of staff across their PES and looks at emerging and growing working patterns following the COVID-19 pandemic, including the stabilising acceptance of remote and hybrid working.

Key findings:

- The total number of staff employed by all PES (in FTE) remained stable overall between 2022 and 2023, but with diverging trends across PES.
- Turnover among PES staff is on the rise since 2020, reaching 9.3% in 2022 average across 27 PES, a common trend across PES.
- The average proportion of front-line staff remained stable across PES at 65.3% in 2023, compared to 67.9% in 2022. This share varies across PES, with those PES assuming no responsibilities for unemployment and other benefits displaying higher shares of front-line staff.
- The most common model found in PES in the allocation of front-line staff remains a combination of counsellors exclusively assigned to supporting jobseekers, with other counsellors focusing on employers and some supporting both groups.
- Hybrid and remote work are developing across many PES. In 39% (12 out of 31) of PES, a majority of staff already engage in remote or hybrid work, while barriers to remote work are being lifted. This trend is more acute in head offices than in local offices.

Thematic foci:

- Between 2022 and 2023, PES staff deployment was impacted by the evolution of unemployment rates, the end of structural funds' programming periods as well as internal reorganisation to improve the service offer.

9.1 PES staffing trends

Evolution of total staff numbers measured in Full-Time Equivalent

Overall between April 2022 and April 2023⁶³, the number of staff employed by PES remained stable and decreased only slightly by -0.4%⁶⁴.

However, this relative stabilisation of PES resources hides disparities across national contexts. Figure 20 provides a more detailed overview of PES which reported increases or decreases in total number staff numbers, and which did not experience major changes between April 2022 and April 2023. The five PES (BG, HU, MT, SI and SK) that recently experienced the most noticeable decreases of staff in terms of annual percentage change

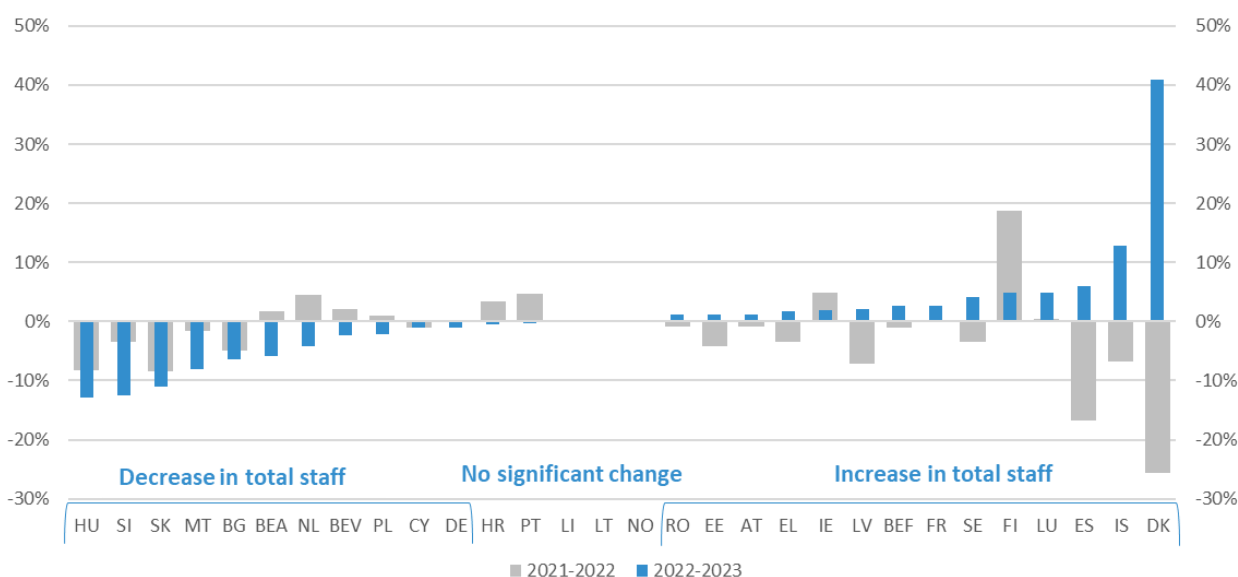
⁶² The cut-off date for information on staff was set as 30 April 2023, enabling comparison with data from previous PES Capacity survey waves, where PES annually reported staff information as of 30 April.

⁶³ While most countries reported data as of April 2023, in HU, the data provided is from 31 August 2023 and in PL the data refers to the end of December 2022.

⁶⁴ Data is available for the 31 PES surveyed.

between 2022 and 2023, had already experienced a reduction in staff number in the previous year. This suggests a trend which persists today.

Figure 20. Annual percentage change in the number of staff between 2021-2022 and 2022-2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q2.1 Please provide details on the number of people employed (in FTE numbers), n=28.

Note: No or partial information available for IT, LI, and SE. BG as reported increase of staff in the questionnaire but the comparison with data from last year shows a decrease.

When increases in total staff numbers were reported, these were linked to the implementation of new measures, such as the roll-out of the Youth Commitment in France since March 2022. In Greece, the increase is related to transfers of employees from other administrations, and in Spain, both the incorporation of interim staff and a new intake of public servants led to an increase of the PES human resources. In Latvia, vacant positions were filled in a context of increasing application for PES positions.

When looking at those PES experiencing a downwards trend over the past year, the contraction of personnel was correlated to the end of specific COVID-19 mitigation measures (BE VDAB), the end of the ESF-funded projects in 2022 (SI), the decline in the number of unemployment benefit claims (NL) and overall staff reductions linked to budget constraints (SK, BE Actiris). For example, at Actiris in Belgium, only one out of two staff leaving the organisation are currently being replaced.

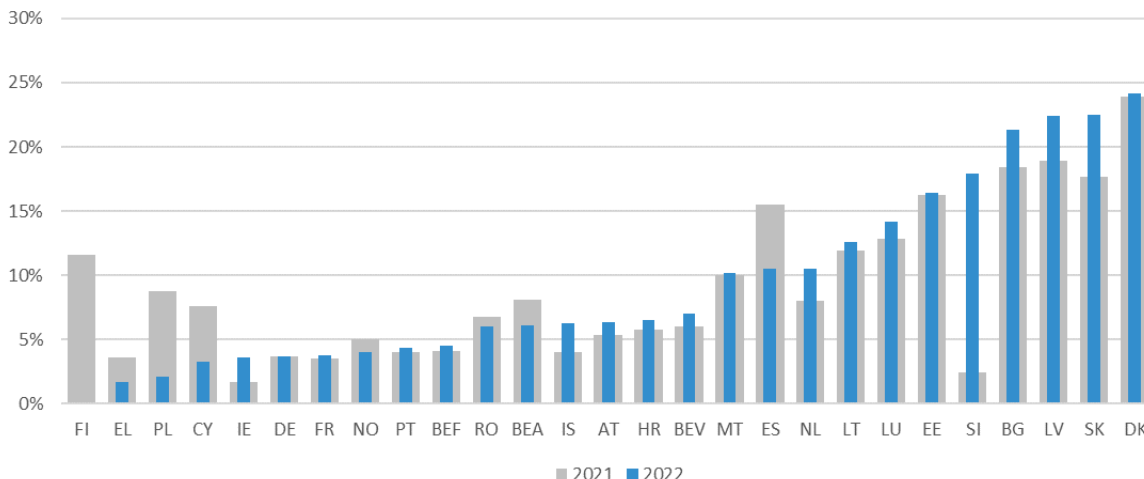
Staff turnover

In 2022, staff turnover⁶⁵ was 9.3% on average across 27 PES who responded to this survey question, again with significant variations across the PES. Overall, an upward trend in turnover rates is observed since 2020, from 7.2% in 2020 to 8.9% in 2021.

As evidenced in Figure 21 below, most PES experienced higher turnover rates than in previous years (67% or 18 PES among those 27 PES for which data is available for 2021 to 2022). Several PES pointed at the expiration of fixed-term contracts due to specific projects as one of the main reasons behind the high turnover (HR, SI). In the Netherlands reorganisation was behind the high turnover. Part of the IT staff were replaced in another part of the organisation, while their job has not changed much, they are not dedicated staff of the PES anymore.

⁶⁵ Staff turnover is defined as 'the proportion of total staff leaving the organisation over a set period of one year for whatever reason' (including retirement, leaving voluntarily, redundancy, etc.).

Figure 21. Staff turnover in PES, 2021 and 2022



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q2.2 Overall staff turnover, n=27.

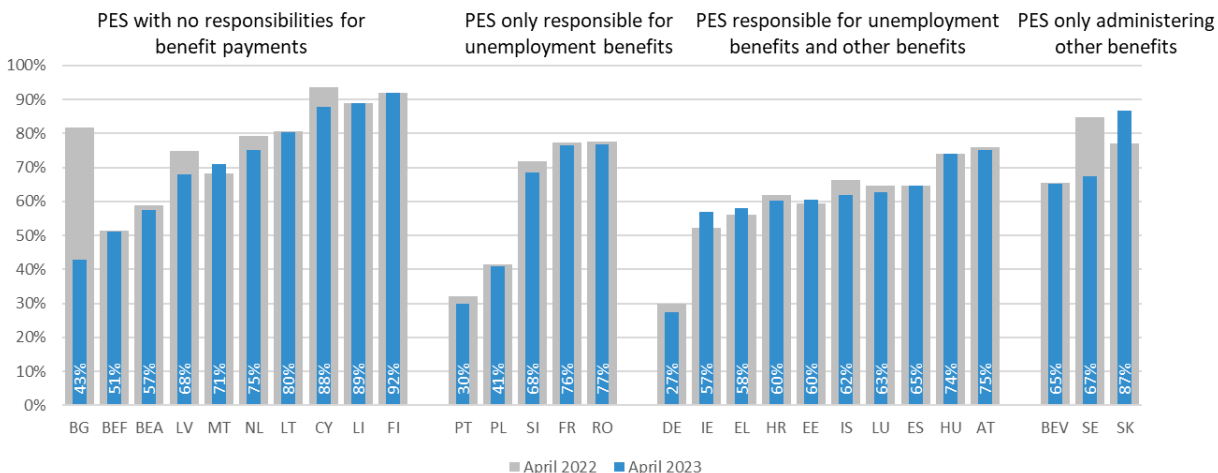
Note: No or partial information available for HU, IT, LI and SE. For DK, data refers to turnover in STAR.

9.2 Front-line staff in PES represent nearly two-thirds of all PES human resources

Overall, most PES staff work in front office divisions or units that are in direct contact with customers. This proportion reached 65.3% in April 2023 on average across the 28 PES with available data on front-line staff in FTE⁶⁶. This compares to 67.9% in the same PES during the previous year. In most PES, the share of front-line staff over total staff remains at a level similar to the previous year.

When comparing countries and PES, important differences can be found. This should be analysed by PES with responsibilities in the delivery of unemployment benefits and/or other categories of benefits. Indeed, PES who do not have responsibility for benefits generally report higher shares of front-line staff (71.5% on average across the 10 PES not administering any benefits).

Figure 22. Proportion of front-line staff in PES, depending on responsibility for unemployment and other benefits, 2022 and 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q2.1 Please provide details on the number of people employed (in FTE numbers), n=27.

⁶⁶ Data on number of front-line staff not available for DK, NO and only partial data is available for IT.

Dedicated counsellors for tailored support

Across the countries surveyed, PES operate in different ways to implement targeted front-office services. The most common model relies on specialised counsellors for specific groups. Almost all PES surveyed (90%, 28 out of 31), except Bulgaria, Romania and Belgium VDAB, indeed report that their front-line staff are assigned to work on specific client groups, a situation which has not evolved significantly compared to previous years.

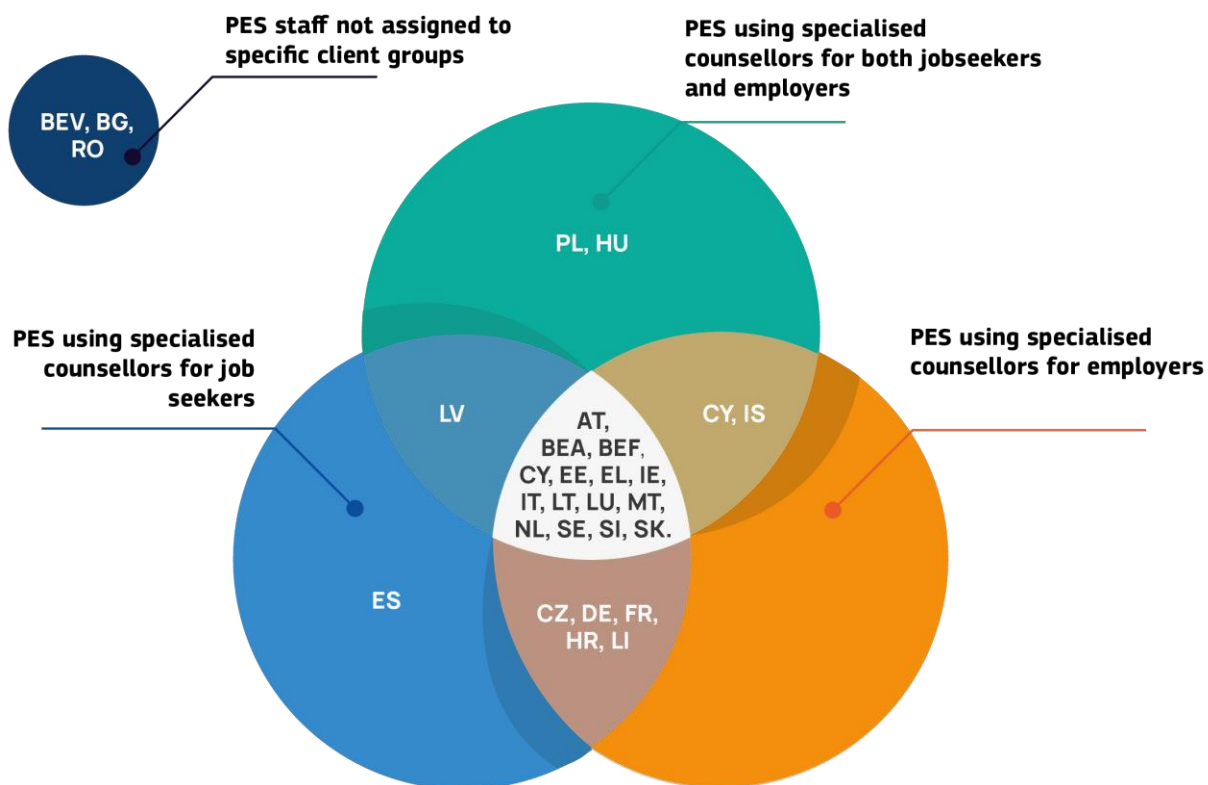
In 15 out of 31 PES (48%), while part of their front-line staff supports jobseekers, other categories of counsellors are assigned to service employers, while some counsellors service both groups.

In 9 out of 31 PES (29%) counsellors exclusively assigned to jobseekers represent more than two-thirds of frontline staff.

In Poland, all PES front-line staff serve both jobseekers and employers; in Latvia, a majority of front-line staff also support both groups, although some counsellors exclusively support jobseekers.

A total of 19 out of 31 PES (61%) have counsellors who exclusively provide services to employers. For instance, in Ireland, employer engagement officers and key account managers deal exclusively with employers while in Cyprus, some counsellors work solely for employers *and* private employment services.

Figure 23. Assigning front-line staff to specific groups: overview across PES in 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q2.1 How many of the front office staff have been assigned to exclusively service jobseekers, employers or both.
 Note: Missing information for FI, PT.

Box 25. Categorisation of front-line staff in the PES of Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, front-line staff totalled 1 074 FTE in 2023. These are classified across different roles, the most represented profile being labour consultants (72%), followed by labour mediators (16%) and labour mediator / Roma mediator (8%). In addition, the

PES counts 1.4% administrative staff and 0.8% of staff in charge of registration, work permits and private intermediaries.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I

Internal mobility and deployment of staff

When considering the factors influencing staff deployment from 2022 to 2023, a significant role was played by reduced pressures on ALMP services and a declining demand for benefits in the context of falling unemployment rates, as reported in several countries (HU, HR, MT). Moreover, the conclusion of the programming period for EU-funds had notable effects on staff allocation between 2022 and 2023 (SI, LV).

Internal organisational adjustments represent critical steps in the ongoing effort to enhance and modernise PES, with a focus on providing effective support to jobseekers and employers. Between 2022 and 2023, the PES of Greece, Belgium Actiris and Belgium Forem, mention that they experienced internal staff transfers following a change in their PES' organisational structure. In Luxembourg, staff were redeployed to areas such as IT, process and project management and training over the last years. Some PES report that they reallocated support to specific groups of jobseekers. For instance, in Norway, counsellors have been assigned to work on the Youth Guarantee since July 2023, while in Iceland changes in allocation between specialists and front-line staff meant more resources moved towards jobseekers with special needs.

9.3 Upscaling of remote and hybrid working at PES

The 2023 PES Capacity Questionnaire explored the extent to which remote work and hybrid positions developed across PES in recent years, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. As evidenced in the 2022 report on ['PES staff management – challenges in the new normal'](#)⁶⁷, while remote/hybrid work arrangements were only in place in few PES and not available to all staff categories before the COVID-19 pandemic, the pandemic radically changed this. In particular, Hybrid working arrangements became widely available options, although their use varies significantly between PES.

Not all PES surveyed were able to report detailed data on different types of remote and hybrid work within their organisation, either due to the high levels of decentralisation and lack of reporting mechanisms, or due to data protection issues⁶⁸.

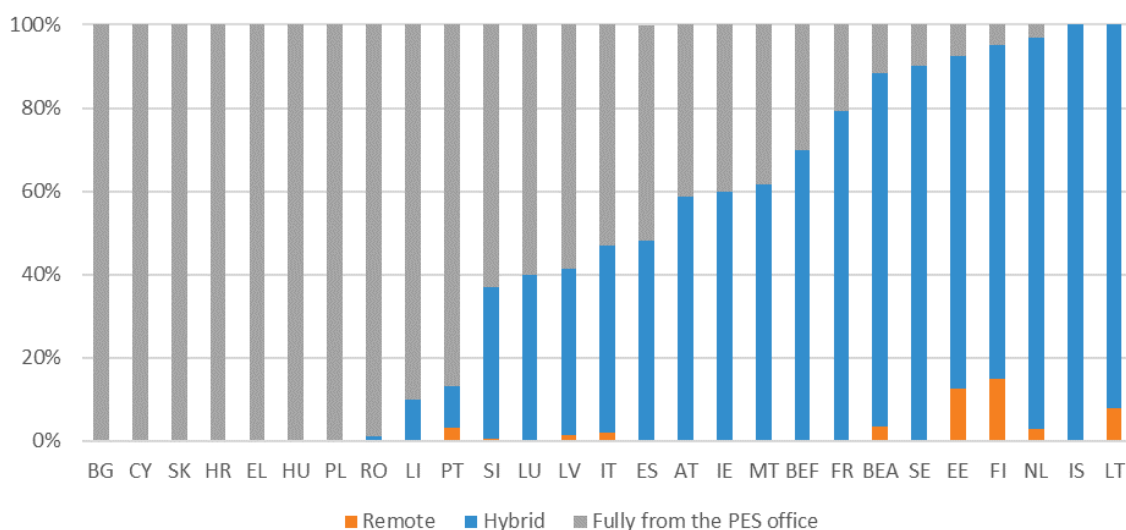
Overall, fully remote posts are not prevalent across PES staff; only 32% (10 out of 31) of PES report that these are possible in their organisation. However, three PES (EE, FI, LT) report that between 8% and 15% of their staff currently work in a fully remote position.

Hybrid positions where staff combine working at the office and outside the office on a regular basis, are found commonly across PES today. Twelve of the 31 PES (39%) surveyed reported that a majority of their current staff work in a remote and hybrid way (AT, BE Actiris, BE Forem, EE, IE, IS, FI, FR, MT, NL and SE). Another five PES (ES, IT, LV, LU, SI) reported that the share of employees working in hybrid arrangements ranged between 25% and 50%. In the PES of LI and PT, the development of hybrid work is emerging. Remote/hybrid work positions are not developed or remain very rare within the PES of BG, CY, EL, HR, HU, PL, RO and SK.

⁶⁷ Sienkiewicz L. (2022). PES staff management – challenges in the 'new normal'.

⁶⁸ Detailed data is not available from STAR (Denmark), NAV (Norway) or in BA (Germany), where for instance due to data protection reasons, it is not possible to report between categories of staff working 'completely remote', 'hybrid' and 'completely from the PES office'.

Figure 24. Percentage of PES staff working fully remote, hybrid or from the office in 2023



Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q2.3 What is the current (at the time of surveying), or planned percentage of staff working fully remote / hybrid / from the office?, n=27.

Note: No or insufficient information available for BEV, DE, DK, and NO. Partial data is available for Italy, only for 8 regions.

In those PES where remote and hybrid work is in place, most report that these new forms of work organisation are more prevalent in their head office than in their local offices. The main explanation provided by PES for this difference is the highest proportion of staff carrying out front-desk duties in local offices and the importance of personal face-to-face contact with customers for these categories of staff. In head offices, less interaction with customers is required and it is perceived to be easier to carry out some tasks remotely, including tasks carried out by managerial staff.

However, in the PES of PT, FI and FR, the current share of employees who work in a hybrid position is similar across all types of offices within their organisation. Some of the services offered to jobseekers are provided via remote support, allowing front-line staff to execute certain tasks outside of the traditional office environment.

Table 7. Prevalence of PES staff working remote or hybrid by type of office and by % of total staff concerned, 2023

PES where remote/hybrid work is more common in the head office than in local offices	PES where remote/hybrid work is equally developed in head office and local offices	No development of remote/hybrid work yet
More than 50% total staff: AT, BEA, BEF, EE, IE, IS, LT, MT, NL, SE	More than 50% total staff: FI, FR	BG, CY, EL, HR, HU, PL, SK
Between 30% and 50% of total staff: ES, IT, LU, LV, SI		
Less than 10% total staff: LI, RO	Less than 50% total staff: PT	
Exact % unknown: BEV, DK, NO		

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire, Part I, Q2.4 Is telework more prevalent in head offices or local agencies?, n=30.

Note: No information available for DE. Partial data is available for Italy for 8 out of the 20 regions.

Although certain regulatory barriers to remote and hybrid working persist, changes in regulations are underway in various countries. A discernible trend towards the adoption of hybrid work practices is observable across different PES, as explored in the box below.

Several PES report that all their employees presently have the option to engage in hybrid work arrangements, irrespective of their role or office location. For instance, in Denmark's PES, a majority of staff work from home one day per week. The Lithuanian PES offers the flexibility for all employees to allocate at least a fifth of their working hours to remote work. Meanwhile in France, hybrid work is available to all employees with a minimum seniority of three months, on a voluntary basis.

Box 26. Expected growth in hybrid and remote working positions: evidence from PES

Belgium Actiris: to date, Actiris had classified remote work into three categories according to regulations: occasional remote work, structural (hybrid) remote work, and complete mobile worker status limited to specific roles. A Decree on Teleworking, published in August 2023 and set to be enforced within a year, will replace these categories with a maximum monthly allowance of 14 days for remote work. Consequently, it is anticipated that the prevalence of hybrid work within the organisation will rise.

Poland: with the incorporation of new regulations governing remote work into the Labour Code in April 2023, the adoption of remote work is expected to become more widespread within local PES offices in Poland.

Cyprus: currently, the Cypriot PES lacks a remote work policy due to the absence of legislation pertaining to teleworking in the public sector. However, legislation on this matter is currently under review in the Cypriot parliament.

Croatia: with reduced demand for ALMPs, it is foreseen that the proportion of PES employees engaged in hybrid work positions will increase to approximately 30%.

Germany: although detailed data regarding the extent of remote and hybrid work is currently unavailable, available evidence suggests a notable evolution in working practices of the PES. Many staff members for instance, routinely use mobile devices to work remotely.

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023, Part I.

Conclusions on PES Human Resources

In recent years, PES worked in an agile and flexible way to accommodate and react to changes in the labour market. This demonstrates that training for roles within the PES are important, so that PES staff can make these shifts successfully. By re-deploying staff, PES can also address issues around staff turnover in certain areas. Internal organisational adjustments represent critical steps in the ongoing effort to enhance and modernise PES, with a focus on providing effective support to jobseekers and employers.

Several PES focused on the importance of having specific counsellors for different target groups, such as employers and vulnerable groups.

Remote and hybrid work arrangements became a common feature of staff management practices in PES. The development of remote and hybrid work is correlated to new work practices introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic, which became more permanent features over time. This includes the digitalisation of part of the PES services, the development of online services and guidance for jobseekers and employers, and the use of online platforms for staff meetings, training and internal communication.

ANNEX 1 DATA SOURCES PER CATEGORY AND YEAR OF REPORTING

Section	Category	Data source	Year of reporting
2. Labour market dynamics affecting PES	Registered jobseekers	Annual Benchlearning	2014- 2022
	Registered vacancies	Annual Benchlearning	2020-2022
3. The evolving landscape of PES	PES legal statuses	PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 Part I: General features of PES operations	2023
	PES mandate		2023
	PES responsibility by tasks and activities		2023
	Recent reforms		2023
	Strategic objectives and targets		2023
	PES responsibilities in relation to skills		2023
	Digitalisation of PES work processes		2023
4. PES activities to cope with labour shortages	New activities to cope with labour shortages	PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 Part I: General features of PES operations	2023
	Services to employers to overcome labour shortages		2023
	Improvements in labour market information and intelligence		2023
	Measures for employer engagement		2023
	Services for jobseekers to meet employers needs		2023
	Cooperations with the private sector		2023
5. In the spotlight: Green transition	PES internal sustainability strategies	PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 Part I: General features of PES operations	2023
	PES measures to support the greening economy		2023
	PES training measures and skills identification		2023
	Green transition activities in partnership		2023

Section	Category	Data source	Year of reporting
6. Active Labour Market Services and measures used by PES	Types of ALMP services and measures for customer groups	PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 Part I: General features of PES operations	2023
	New or modified LMP services or ALMPs		2022
	Outreach activities for inactive individuals and vulnerable groups		2023
7. In the spotlight: Youth Guarantee	PES Mandate	PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 Part II: Monitoring of PES support of the reinforced Youth Guarantee	2023
	PES responsibilities		2023
	PES staff and the reinforced YG		2023
	Mapping activities of YG target groups		2023
	Outreach services to youth		2023
	Preparation phase services		2023
	YG offer and post-placement support services		2023
Monitoring and evaluation activities of the YG	2023		
8. PES financing	PES expenditure in 2022	Annual Benchlearning	2022
	PES expenditure breakdown		2022
	Use of EU funds	PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 Part I: General features of PES operations	2023
9. Human Resources	PES staffing trends	PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023 Part I: General features of PES operations	April 2022-April 2023
	PES Front-line staff		April 2022-April 2023
	Remote and hybrid working		2023

ANNEX 2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

The main strategic objectives and targets set in 2022/23 can be broadly classified into jobseeker-related and employer-related targets, or matching targets which addresses both jobseekers and employers equally. A distinction can also be made between factual outcomes such as the number of persons employed or number of exits from unemployment, and subjective results such as satisfaction with services received. In general, PES are balancing several demand-side and supply-side strategies and objectives. However, some PES focus increasingly on handling vacancies and employer needs, as a response to increasing labour shortages.

Box 27. Examples of general strategic objectives and targets for PES

Filling vacancies (BE Forem, MT, NL), reduce difficulties in filling vacancies (e.g. DE, LV), focus on access of employers to needed and qualified labour (DK, LT);

Focus on collecting vacancies (to increase the market share, e.g. LU);

Increasing the number of placements (FR) and labour market intermediation (EL);

Enlarge the workforce, increase the number of employed (AT), increase the employment rate (FI), bring inactive into the labour market (BG);

Exit from unemployment;

Avoiding unemployment, in the sense of prevention (DE);

Exit from benefit receipt (DE);

Speed of transition from unemployment into the labour market;

Sustainability of placements, which is one aspect of quality of employment;

Contribution to challenges linked with the structural change in qualification and skills requirement (e.g. AT);

Reducing regional disparities (e.g. BG);

Satisfaction rates of jobseekers and employers (e.g. BE Forem, BE VDAB, FR).

Targets reported by PES include general labour market outcomes relating to strategic objectives, and targets related to PES activities. Specific targets are set in relation to the number and share of vacancies collected, the number of participants in initial and continuing training and specific training programmes, the number of participants in other ALMPs and employment services and their outcomes. Detailed targets are also defined in some cases in relation to the PES service value chain and processes. Digitalisation of services are also named among main objectives (e.g. EL, LI).

The quantification of targets depends on a variety of factors. Thus, when the target is to introduce a tool or a process or a principle, then a quantification may not be possible or may not make sense enough. In some countries, specification and quantification of targets is done at territorial level. In some PES, quantified targets refer to a wider employment or human resource development strategy, or a PES multi-annual strategy, and these PES may set mid-term targets as a result. However, in most cases quantified targets are set as yearly targets.

Number of targets set by PES in 2022/23 and quantification of targets

PES	Number of targets	Of which quantified	Comments quantification
AT	6	6	
BEA	18	N/A	Not specified yet
BEF	19	18	
BEV	21	20	
BG	4	17	
HR	12	11	
CY	4	12	Including sub-targets
DK	5	N/A	Targets set locally by the municipalities
EE	4	4	
FI	3	2	
FR	15	12	
DE	18	18	
EL	15	14	
HU	7	7	Calculated on achievements in 2021 and 2022
IE	Pathways to Work 2021 - 2025 Strategy	N/A	A mid-term review of the Pathways to Work Strategy 2021 to 2025 is being finalised, which will contain revised and updated targets for the remainder of the strategy's timeline 2023-2025. It is expected to be published in Q 4, 2023
IT	3	2	
LV	3	0	
LI	3	2	Only digitalisation
LT	4	4	
LU	7	7	
MT	11	11	
NL	3	3 (+ sub-targets)	Internal Critical Performance Indicators (CPI's)
PL	7	7	Referring partly to indicators of the Human Development Strategy 2030

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PES	Number of targets	Of which quantified	Comments quantification
PT	4	4	
RO	16	13	
SK	2	1	
SI	8	8	Including sub-targets
ES	15	10	Partly specified as 'yearly positive changes'
SE	3	3	

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023.

ANNEX 3 EXAMPLE OF SPECIFIED TARGETS DEFINED BY PES TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

PES	Objective / indicator	Target
BE Actiris	Reduction in building energy	8% over 3 years
BE VDAB	For VDAB buildings (1) Reduction of CO2 emissions of VDAB buildings (2) Reduction of primary energy usage (3) Use of renewable energy For VDAB vehicles (4) Reduction of CO2-emissions	(1) 84% from 2005 to 2030 and at 100% by 2040 (2) 35% (2005-2020) (3) >32% by 2030 (4) 55% until 2030
DK	CO2 emission of all agency's cars	Zero emission by 2040
FR	CO2 emissions linked to travels for work	Yearly targets, broken down by sites (monitored)
FR	Reducing energy consumption	20% between 2021 and 2024
FR	Linear annual reduction factor by using the international ACT ⁶⁹ method, incorporating the SBTi ⁷⁰ requirements.	35% reduction of GHG emission (2021 – 2030)
NL	Reducing UUV CO2 footprint in the process in order to reach the goal of having climate-neutral operations on scope 1 and 2 of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol) by 2030	62% reduction (2017 – 2021) 100% reduction by 2030.
NL	Reducing energy consumption	By 2029 all rented buildings larger than 100 m2 will have energy label A. For own buildings use 100% green electricity

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023.

⁶⁹ [The Assessing low-Carbon Transition \(ACT\)](#) initiative drives climate action by enabling benchmarking against advanced, science-based metrics.

⁷⁰ [Science Based Targets Initiative](#)

ANNEX 4 LMP SERVICES OR ALMPs* MOST FREQUENTLY USED BY CLIENT GROUP

	Young people	LTU	Older workers	People with disabilities	Refugees**
1.1.1 Information services	81%	77%	81%	77%	68%
1.1.2 Individual case management	81%	90%	81%	84%	68%
2: Training	87%	84%	65%	74%	77%
4: Employment incentives	74%	84%	90%	74%	61%
5: Supported employment and rehabilitation	6%	16%	10%	55%	19%
6: Direct job creation	32%	39%	29%	32%	26%
7: Start-up incentives	32%	32%	29%	26%	26%

Source: PES Capacity Questionnaire 2023.

* The typology in this table follows the classification from the EU LMP database: 1.1. Client services, including 1.1.1. Information services, 1.1.2. Individual case management, 2: Training, 4: Employment incentives (the former 'category 3 Job rotation and job sharing' has been integrated in category 4), 5: Sheltered and supported employment and rehabilitation, 6: Direct job creation, 7: Start-up incentives.

** With a temporary or permanent residence permit (status).

ANNEX 5 COUNTRY NOTES ON AVERAGE TIMEFRAME IN WHICH AN YG OFFER IS MADE IN 2021 AND 2023

	Country notes: 2021	Country notes: 2023
Austria	No difference by type of offer.	In the context of the early intervention placement (on a regular apprenticeship) starts with the date of registration, the latest deadline is 10 days. The training guarantee (set out in the Public Employment Act) ensures that every young person who wants to take up an apprenticeship will get a training place as promised by the training guarantee within 3 months either by entering an apprenticeship in the labour market or a training opportunity by PES.
Belgium Actiris	The average time for receiving an offer varies between 3 and 6 months. 2023: Average time is between 3 and 6 months for making an offer of job/training/traineeship/ etc. 2023: average length of time:- work placement - 1 Month; - internship - 5 months; - apprenticeship - 3 months; - training programme - 4 months; - education - more than 6 months	Average time is between 3 and 6 months for making an offer of job/training/traineeship/ etc. 2023: average length of time:- work placement - 1 Month; - internship - 5 months; - apprenticeship - 3 months; - training programme - 4 months; - education - more than 6 months
Belgium Forem		Young people leaving education (jobseekers prior to receiving insertion benefits) must be guided one month after their registration, whether as part of E-counselling, sectoral or socio-professional support. For those who are already benefit recipients, the deadline is 1 month longer, except for those who enter the socio-professional support scheme (for whom it is always within one month of the date of registration). However, as soon as they register, for those who do not immediately decide which career they wish to pursue, Forem tries to contact them to clarify it; and if necessary, we initiate specific actions directly with these jobseekers (completing their file, sending them for career guidance services, offering skills assessments, etc.).
Belgium VDAB	Within 2 mos.: For low-skilled young jobseekers. within 2 mos.: For mid to high-skilled young jobseekers.	As soon as young people register as jobseekers with VDAB, they receive a digital offer. Low-skilled: VDAB service line makes contact within 2 weeks and refers them to the regional office for personalised service.

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	Country notes: 2021	Country notes: 2023
		After the contact moment at the service line, the counsellor works out a tailor-made offer according to the young person's needs. Mid to high-skilled: VDAB service line makes contact within 2 weeks. Around month 3, there is a follow-up call where the youth are referred to the regional office. After contact with the service line and referral to the sector, the mediator works out a customised pathway according to the young person's needs.
Bulgaria	2021: within 4 mos: An average of 65.06% of young people under 29 years receive an offer within 4 months. Within 6 mos. average of 15.79% (for both age groups) of young people under 29 years – offer accepted after 6 months.	
Croatia	The average time differs from person to person, and it depends on the educational level and occupations, skills, motivation, and willingness to engage into intervention. The offer can be made on the day of registration.	There are no time limits to provide and offer to a job seeker in the specific timeframe. It depends on a young person i.e. profiling and its needs as well as availability of programs. Usually it is within 4 months. The exception is a referral to the job vacancy. The timeframe is immediate upon the registration and continuously until the offer is accepted.
Cyprus	The time of offer depends on the readiness of young unemployed to participate in a training programme or to take up a job.	Introduction to the individualised approach, under which the Counsellors offer an in-depth interview for profiling purposes, create and implement a mutually agreed Individual Action Plan (IAP).
Denmark	within 1 mos. All young people without an ordinary education who receive social assistance ('uddannelseshjælp'/education benefit) will receive an offer of activation within one month. The offer of activation must be individually tailored and aimed at education. within 6 mos. Young people on unemployment benefit with an education are entitled to receive an offer of activation within six months of unemployment.	All young people without an ordinary education who are receiving social assistance (uddannelseshjælp/education benefit) will receive an offer of activation within one month. The offer of activation has to be individually tailored and aimed at education.

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	Country notes: 2021	Country notes: 2023
Estonia	After becoming PES customers, young people receive job offers/vacancies. Participation in a service that is needed by the young person is based on the individual needs and the referral is always done as soon as possible.	We keep an eye on the fact that how fast they enter a service at EUIF or some partner. The youth that have been in NEET status for a long time before registering with us should get an offer within 4 months (but the objective is to solve a young person's other problems before continuing with training or entering the labour market). Youth that have registered with us straight away after school or losing a job, 6 months.
Finland	73.2%-90.2% of young people have prepared employment plans with PES before exceeding 4 weeks unemployment. However, information is not available on whether offers have been given to young.	82.3% of young people have prepared employment plans with PES before exceeding 4 weeks unemployment. However, information is not available on whether offers have been given to young.
France		To offer a structuring solution, covering training, specific intensive external support (Establishments for integration in employment: EPIDE- Etablissements pour l'insertion dans l'emploi; Second Chance Schools: E2C- Ecoles de la 2ème Chance; Adapted Military Service for those residing in oversea territories: SMA- Service Militaire Adapté/ Voluntary Military Service: SMV- Service Militaire Volontaire; Erasmus; Skills Investment Plan: PIC- Plan d'Investissement dans les Compétences; Establishment and Service for Professional Rehabilitation: ESPR- Etablissement et Service de Réadaptation Professionnelle, etc.) and social utility missions (civic service, Universal National Service: SNU- Service National Universel) and periods of subsidised employment (Skills and Employment Pathway: PEC- Parcours Emploi Compétences, Integration through Economic Activity: IAE- Insertion par l'Activité Economique).
Germany		2023: SGB II (Minimum income): No specific targets for the Youth Guarantee are shown in the SGB II Controlling, but several figures on employable benefit recipients (ELB) who have not yet reached the age of 25 are shown. The so-called immediate offer/ Offer U25 was reported until the end of 2022. However, in the course of revising our process indicators, we have dispensed with this figure since this year. In the past years, there was no

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	Country notes: 2021	Country notes: 2023
		need for action here. SGB III (Unemployment insurance): No specific targets for the Youth Guarantee are mapped in Controlling SGB III
Hungary	In 2020 77.5% of registered young people received an offer within 2 weeks after registration and 13.9% of them within one month after registration.	NES has been following the original 2014 YGI idea and from late 2023 will launch the reinforced YG.
Ireland		In line with the Reinforced guarantee the Irish PES strives to provide a good quality offer within 4 months. The Irish PES are working towards improved reporting capability in this regard.
Malta	2021: within 2 mos.: education offer; within 3 mos.: traineeship offer; within 6 mos.: employment offer.	Within 1 month is preparatory phase, Within 2 months is training programme or work placement, within 6 months is employment or Work exposure or Continued education
Lithuania		Suitable offer should be provided as soon as possible - depending on individual needs and employment possibilities of the jobseeker.
Luxembourg	68.73% of the quality offers (work placements, education, apprenticeship, and employment measure) are made within the duration of 4 months, 20.7% between 4 and 6 months and 10.57% are proposed after 6 months.	60% of young jobseekers under the age of 30, receive a quality offer (i.e. job, apprenticeship, training, coaching in career guidance) within 4 months after their registration with the PES.
Norway		Normally, candidate will receive immediate/early follow-up, most individuals receive follow up services within 2-4 weeks. 8 weeks is set as limit.
Poland	The average time varies between 1 month and over 6 months.	
Portugal		On average, the length of time between the entrants and positive exits is 128 days, 6 days above the target (122 days/4 months). By type of offer, the average time is: Employment = 132 days, Education or training programmes = 190 days, Apprenticeship = 70 days, Traineeships = 90 days.
Slovenia		60% of newly registered youth receive an offer within 4 months of registration.

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	Country notes: 2021	Country notes: 2023
Sweden		Time is based on individual needs and agreed in the action plan. Not the same for all young people.

ANNEX 6 PROPORTION OF FRONT-LINE STAFF IN PES, DEPENDING ON RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT AND OTHER BENEFITS, 2022 AND 2023

	April 2022	April 2023	Trend		April 2022	April 2023	Trend
No responsibility for benefits				UB and other benefits			
BEA	58.8%	57.5%	▼	AT	76.0%	75.1%	▼
BEF	51.5%	51.0%	▼	DE	29.8%	27.5%	▼
BG	81.8%	42.8%	▼	EE	59.4%	60.5%	▲
CY	93.5%	87.9%	▼	EL	56.2%	58.1%	▲
FI	92.0%	92.0%	◄►	ES	64.6%	64.5%	◄►
LI	88.9%	88.9%	◄►	FR	77.2%	76.4%	▼
LT	80.5%	80.5%	◄►	HR	61.8%	60.3%	▼
LV	74.8%	68.0%	▼	HU	74.0%	73.9%	▼
MT	68.1%	71.0%	▲	IE	52.1%	56.9%	▲
NL	79.2%	75.1%	▼	IS	66.2%	61.7%	▼
<i>Average</i>	<i>76.9%</i>	<i>71.5%</i>		LU	64.6%	62.7%	▼
				<i>Average</i>	<i>62.0%</i>	<i>61.6%</i>	
Only unemployment benefits				Only other benefits			
PL	41.4%	40.8%	▼	BEV	65.4%	65.3%	◄►
PT	32.1%	30.0%	▼	SE	84.7%	67.5%	▼
RO	77.6%	76.7%	▼	SK	77.1%	86.7%	▲
SI	71.8%	68.4%	▼	<i>Average</i>	<i>71.3%</i>	<i>76.0%</i>	
<i>Average</i>	<i>55.7%</i>	<i>54.0%</i>					

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