



## Call for Contributions

# Public Employment Services facing the challenge of skills shortages

4 and 5 September 2024 in Lugano (Switzerland)

## INTRODUCTION

As Public Employment Services (PES) face the challenge posed by labour market shortages, WAPES, SECO, and UWV invite you to a workshop aimed at exploring the causes, effects, potential solutions, and long-term perspectives surrounding this critical issue. Taking place on 4-5 September in Lugano, Switzerland, this event promises to be a platform for mutual learning, sharing challenges, exchanging views, and highlighting best practices. To offer an interactive experience to the participants, the event will be presented in a workshop format rather than a conference format. The workshop format will also be indicative for the selection of contributions. To strike a balance between strategic level and operational-level approaches, the main focus of the event will be on the presentation and discussion of concrete examples. We encourage WAPES members to participate and invite their experts on the following topics to ensure a diverse and enriching dialogue.

## THEMATICAL STRANDS OF THE WORKSHOP

Discussions shall elaborate and evolve the following strands of the challenge of skills shortages:

1. **Labour market intelligence and skills matching:** By modernising their information technology systems, PES improve the quality and accessibility of labour market intelligence. Using data analytics to identify skill needs in emerging industries, such as the green economy, can thereby help to design targeted training initiatives. By implementing competence-based job matching procedures, PES ensure that these skills later on count and are valued in the labour market.
2. **Unlocking labour market potentials:** Characterised by the shortage of skilled workers, the current condition of European labour markets may create new opportunities for people with physical or mental disabilities, discouraged workers as well as refugees often weakly integrated into the labour market. PES could collaborate with stakeholders to design tailored interventions (training, upskilling, career counselling or coaching programmes, e.g. in conjunction with induction grants for employers).
3. **Retaining talent:** Retaining committed staff and well-functioning teams may be even more important than recruiting. Although PES cannot influence the loyalty and commitment of employees in the labour market, they can advise employers on how to be an attractive employer through retraining opportunities, attention to work capacity and workload, the provision of further



services including childcare, a good atmosphere and a corporate culture that fosters the acquisition of skills.

4. **New roles for the PES:** Especially when tapping new labour potentials, the necessary actions quickly go beyond pure skills matching and the integration of ALMP. We are interested in the approaches that PES and public authorities take to develop new labour market potentials (e.g. ambassadorial functions to change attitudes of stakeholders, involvement in practice-based learning or participation of PES in institutional reforms to increase work incentives).

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MEETING

Finally, we warmly invite our European PES colleagues, experts and researchers to join us in this important conversation. Together, let us discuss and harness the collective expertise and viewpoints of our European WAPES community to address labour market shortages and build a more inclusive and resilient future.

If you would like to prepare and deliver a short presentation of 10 to 15 minutes or if your PES would like to contribute by organising a round table discussion or complete panel on a thematical strand of the workshop, please send a proposal (including title, format, your name, institution and an abstract / short description of approximately 2000 characters) to: [ulf.norman@wapes.org](mailto:ulf.norman@wapes.org) (with [dorit.griga@seco.admin.ch](mailto:dorit.griga@seco.admin.ch) in copy) by **31<sup>st</sup> May 2024**. Please note that this is currently a general call for papers / contributions, and topics will be further elaborated upon in the light of submissions from our members and peers, experts, and researchers.

Working language of the workshop will be English. Spanish and French interpretation can be made available. Please indicate your request by filling in the needed language in the registration form.