



Global Labour Market Activation Summit 2025

Summary Note from WAPES & Deloitte

About the Global Labour Market Activation Summit

The Global Labour Market Activation (LMA) Summit 2025, held by Deloitte in Paris from 18 to 20 June, brought together more than 40 delegates from 14 jurisdictions alongside representatives of major international organisations, including the LEED (Local Employment and Economic Development Programme) at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES). The three-day event provided an intensive platform for discussion on emerging challenges and opportunities for Public Employment Services worldwide.

This summary written by WAPES and Deloitte reflects our combined insights and reflections from the 2025 Labour Market Activation Summit based on the discussions and presentations provided.

Summit Snapshot:

Top-of-Mind Questions for Public Employment Services Organisations

The Summit sparked lively discussions and raised some of the most pressing issues facing Public Employment Services organisations (PES) today. Here is a quick look at the big questions shaping the conversation.



How can PES support the rapid transition of skills?

Labour markets are evolving quickly due to industry shifts (e.g., AI, green transition), technology, and global events. Accelerating training, job matching, and employer collaboration are core to keeping pace.



Activating the inactive and promoting inclusion – What works?

There is a growing focus on activating individuals at the intersection of disabilities, health, and employment. Cohort-based (and employer-enabled) activation programs, integrated supports and technology systems across benefits ecosystems are emerging areas of focus for PES.



Why and how should PES deepen employer partnerships?

PES' ability to engage with employers is critical to supporting workforce adjustments and resilience. Employer perceptions, expectations for job-ready talent, and PES' capacity often hinder employer partnerships. PES are investing in capability building, engagement strategies, agile service portfolios, and local partnerships to strengthen their employer relationships.



Scaling hybrid service delivery - What are the success factors?

Successful support for PES service recipients often involves hybrid and multi-channel models, with end-to-end digital journeys and humans-in-the-loop to provide a single, digital, source of truth for employment supports. They are enabled by (new) digital skills and access assessments and initiatives.



What skills do PES need today and tomorrow?

AI adoption and the renewed role for PES in workforce development will shift PES staff's role towards ecosystem collaboration, local labour market facilitation, and specialized service provision. Change management and upskilling is critical for future-ready PES organizations.

Summit Summary

From the outset, the Summit's focus was on the powerful forces reshaping labour markets globally.

The OECD LEED Programme's keynote highlighted four key megatrends: demographic change, the rapid advance of artificial intelligence and digitalisation, the green transition, and shifting trade patterns. These trends are producing starkly different challenges not only across global regions and countries, but also within countries – across regions, local areas and demographic groups such as genders.

- **In the Global North, ageing populations are tightening labour supply** and creating an urgent need to extend working lives, reskill older workers, and manage migration effectively. **In the Global South, the demographic reality is a youth surge**, placing heavy pressure on education systems, job creation, and skills development.

In addition to these global contrasts, significant differences also exist within countries, where regions experience these pressures in very different ways. For example:

- **Green task jobs make up over 30% of employment** in some regions, compared to less than 10% in others, highlighting significant regional differences with implications for gender disparities in access to sustainable work.
- Additionally, projections suggest that up to **70% of workers may be exposed to generative AI** in the near future. However, workers in urban areas, highly skilled workers, and female workers will be more greatly exposed, raising further considerations about how technological change may impact gender equality in the workforce.

The OECD LEED Programme's analysis stressed that **PES must broaden their target groups and service provision and adjust provision and reach to regional and local variation**. This means not only addressing the unemployed but also engaging inactive groups, remote communities, and underrepresented populations. Integrating employment services with health, housing, and education, offering flexible training formats such as micro-credentials and bootcamps, and forming strong partnerships with industry and local stakeholders, such as the social economy, were identified as key strategies.

Drawing on insights from the WAPES World Congress 2025 in Abidjan, the research snapshot presented by Amandine Moignard reinforced these themes from a membership perspective. It emphasised **the need for PES to act as integrated and proactive platforms, capable of anticipating skills needs, managing professional transitions, and providing personalised support pathways**. The research underscored the importance of inclusive strategies that prioritise young people, seniors, migrants, and other groups at risk of exclusion. Case examples ranged from Italy's GOL programme supporting youth and women, to Burkina Faso's large-scale skills assessments for young people, and Japan's policy of extending senior employment to the age of 70.

The ILO contribution focused on the activation of inactive populations, identifying Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) youth, older workers, women, migrants, and people with disabilities as priority groups. The discussion highlighted the multiple barriers these groups

face, from structural obstacles like inadequate childcare and transport, to discriminatory practices, lack of suitable jobs, and low outreach.

The ILO highlighted the need **for tailored PES services, stronger partnerships with NGOs and community organizations for effective outreach, and the importance of co-creating solutions with users**. Comprehensive strategies at both policy and service-delivery levels, supported by digital innovation and sufficient resources, are essential to address inactivity and tap into the economic potential of these groups.

Technology and innovation were also at the forefront of discussions, with a presentation on the current state and potential of AI within PES from the report: [“**Harnessing the opportunities for AI for Public Employment Services**” \(European Commission, 2025\)](#). **While still in the early stages, AI is increasingly used in areas such as profiling and career guidance, often as a supplementary tool for staff to enhance service delivery**. PES were advised to clearly define the business value of AI investments, integrate AI tools into end-to-end workflows, and move beyond small pilots to production-ready applications. This transition requires addressing technical and organizational challenges, ensuring strong governance and transparency. It also means promoting inclusive digital transformation through upskilling, staff training, and a culture of innovation with openness and adaptability to change.

Several panel discussions and interactive sessions provided practical examples from different jurisdictions. The OECD observed that **many PES still struggle with employer engagement, even though targeted HR initiatives are proving successful**. Representatives shared how direct outreach, access to local labour market information, and business intelligence can improve matching between jobseekers and employers. One jurisdiction discussed how its recruitment has adapted to changing skill requirements, such as identifying gaming skills as a pathway to drone operation. Another showcased **innovative youth engagement strategies, using open, informal spaces to build trust with young people**. One panelist shared examples in international labour sourcing, necessary to meet gaps in various industries.

We closed the Summit reflecting on **the impact of these evolving pressures and practices on the role and skills of PES practitioners**. We examined the tensions and opportunities faced by PES globally as PES counsellors continue to counsel, while the ways in which they provide support evolve. Services are becoming increasingly specialized and tailored to individuals, including coaching on digital tools, building employer and community partnerships, guiding displaced workers through career transitions, and acting as integrators across support ecosystems. The way counselling is evolving will be further explored as part of the **“Understanding the Future Skills Needs of PES Counsellors”** study led by Leeds Trinity University, the University of Derby, WAPES, and supported by Deloitte.

Next Steps

The discussions in Paris made clear that PES of the future will need to be adaptive, integrated, and collaborative, working across sectors and borders to ensure that labour markets remain inclusive, resilient, and are prepared for the transformations ahead.

Deloitte and WAPES will collaborate through a series of activities in the year to come, to jointly explore innovative strategies and share best practices across PES networks. Together, we will co-host a series of webinars in 2026 on key topics such as the *Future Skills for PES Staff in a Digital Labor Market*, *Transformation Leadership in PES*, and *Inclusive Recruitment Practices for Disability Employment*. Our collaboration will also continue through the next **Deloitte Global Human Services Summit** that will take place in the Spring of 2026.

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WAPES is the global platform for the exchange of knowledge and best practices among PES, acting as a key partner and advisor on labour market issues internationally. WAPES was represented by its Executive Secretary, Amandine Moignard, and Consultant, Nicole Clobes.

Deloitte is a leading global provider of professional services who supports PES and the labour market activation ecosystem in assisting the unemployed, precariously employed and the economically inactive to reskill, upskill, and achieve sustainable employment. Deloitte was represented by the global leader for Deloitte's Human Services, Josh Hjartarson, and the global leader for Deloitte's Labour Market Activation, Alia Kamlani.



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The Global Labour Market Activation Summit was organized by Deloitte Canada, on behalf of Deloitte's global network.

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