

WAPES Annual Report

2025



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1 Opening voices

In 2025, WAPES brought together Public Employment Services from all regions of the world through conferences, webinars, training activities, research and joint projects.

Across the year, hundreds of practitioners, policymakers and experts participated in WAPES activities, contributing to a shared understanding of how employment services can respond to demographic change, digital transformation and evolving labour market needs.

Three perspectives on 2025



Camille Mouté à Bidias
President of Honour



Greta Metka Barbo Škerbinc
President



Amandine Moignard
Executive Secretary

In 2025, WAPES continued to assert itself as a privileged space for dialogue, reflection and collective learning for public employment services, which are facing profound and rapid changes in the world of work.

Demographic transitions, technological advances and intensifying social expectations are reshaping labour markets worldwide. In this context, the work of public employment services goes beyond the purely technical dimension: it has an eminently societal scope. It is not only a question of supporting career paths, but also of contributing to social cohesion and economic inclusion.

In this regard, WAPES offers a unique framework for international cooperation, enabling the sharing of experiences, the comparison of approaches and the development of a shared vision of employment policies, centred on people and the realities of different regions.

The past year has confirmed the resilience and relevance of WAPES, which has been able to evolve in the face of ongoing changes while remaining true to its founding values. Its strength lies above all in the commitment of its members and their shared conviction that cooperation, solidarity and the sharing of expertise are essential levers for meeting the contemporary challenges of the labour market.

The year 2025 was marked by renewal and collective effort within WAPES. Beyond the activities delivered, it was above all a year shaped by people, trust and shared responsibility.

I would like to acknowledge the Public Employment Services that invested directly in WAPES by sharing their expertise and human resources. This commitment reflects confidence in our network and a genuine belief in the value of working together across borders. I also sincerely thank the members for the trust they placed in me during this year of transition, a responsibility that strengthens my commitment to serve WAPES as a collective endeavour.

Throughout the year, WAPES continued to build partnerships that translate cooperation into concrete action. Close collaboration with Japanese institutions, notably through the ongoing Joint Project, and with international organisations enables WAPES to act as a bridge between global discussions and practical solutions, grounded in the realities of its members.

For the Executive Secretariat, 2025 was a year of transition that required resilience, trust and a strong sense of collective responsibility.

Behind the activities delivered and the results presented in this report, there was an intense period of adaptation and rebuilding. Ensuring continuity while managing change demanded commitment, flexibility and, above all, cooperation. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to those who stood by the Secretariat during this time and helped maintain stability when it mattered most.

The support received through shared expertise and day-to-day collaboration was not only operationally essential, but also deeply encouraging. It reminded us that WAPES is more than an organisation — it is a community built on solidarity and mutual support. Thanks to this collective effort, we enter the next phase with stronger foundations, renewed confidence and a clear sense of purpose.

2 **WAPES in 2025 – At a glance**

RECAP: WAPES IN 2025

"A year of global dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collective action to strengthen public employment services worldwide."



Active Employment Policies & Demographic Challenges

30 presentations, 39 countries and 110 participants

Global Dialogue

WAPES World Congress

In Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Anticipating demographic transitions

Leveraging digital innovation: user-centric platforms and AI-based matchmaking

Recommendations

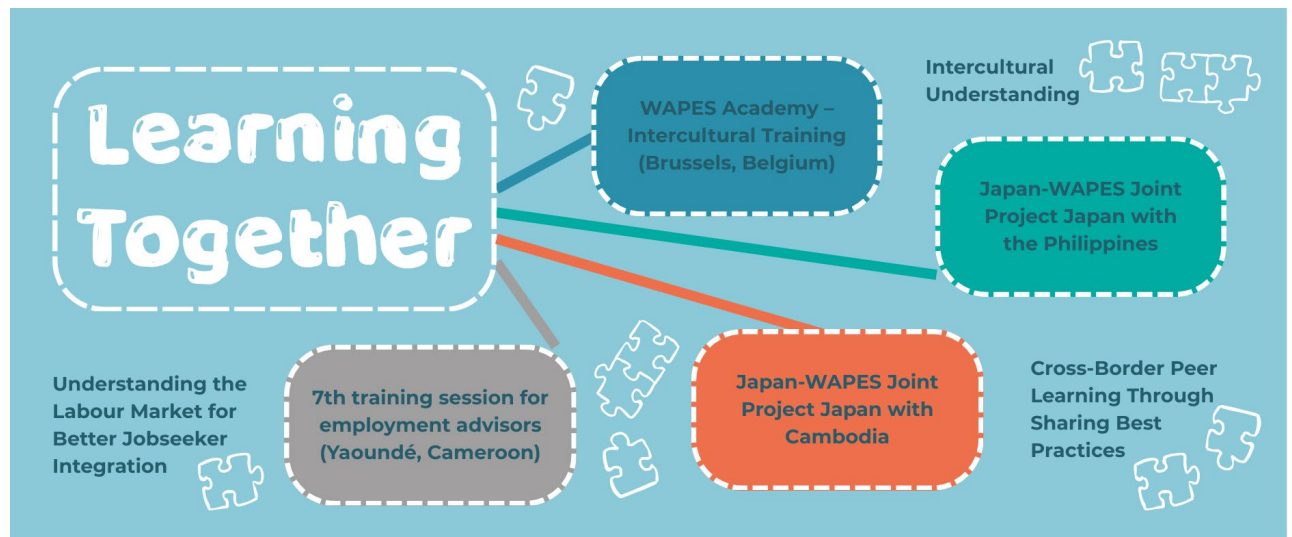
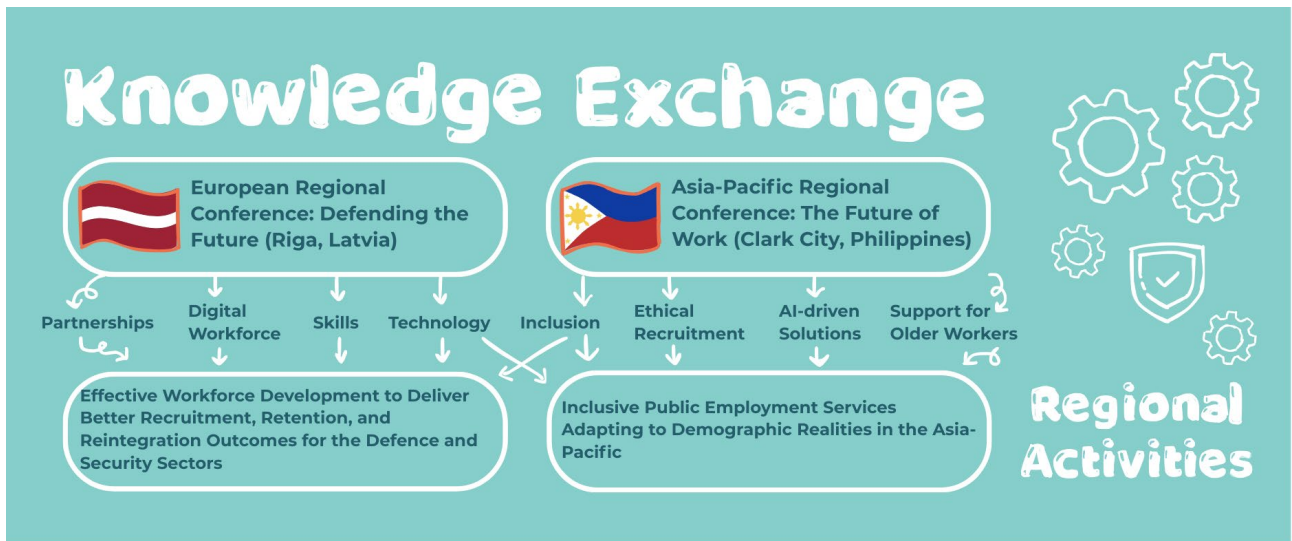
Collaboration with international partners: ILO, ETF, OECD, ICCDPP

WAPES G7 Working Group on Demographic Change

WAPES International Working Group on Digitalisation and AI

Webinar Series 'WAPES's World of PES'

Collaboration



Publications

Global trends in career guidance in public employment services, in collaboration with ICCDPP & iCeGS of University of Derby

Understanding the future skills needs of PES advisers, in collaboration with University of Derby and University of Manchester (coming in 2026)

Communication

Follow us on LinkedIn and sign up for our newsletter to stay up-to-date with WAPES in 2026!

3 A world in transition: why public employment services matter

Across the world, labour markets are undergoing profound transformations. Demographic shifts, rapid digitalisation and growing inequalities are reshaping how people access work and how economies function. In this context, Public Employment Services (PES) play a pivotal role in ensuring that transitions lead to opportunity — not exclusion.

Demographic changes



•What is changing?

- Ageing populations in many countries, alongside rapid youth growth in others
- Labour shortages, skills mismatches and changing career patterns
- Longer working lives and more frequent career transitions

•Why PES matter?

- Anticipating labour market needs and demographic trends
- Supporting youth, older workers and vulnerable groups across the life course
- Connecting skills development, employment and social inclusion

Digital transformation



•What is changing?

- Automation, artificial intelligence and platform-based work
- New skills requirements and faster job transitions
- Digital tools transforming how employment services are delivered

•Why PES matter?

- Ensuring digitalisation enhances access — not inequality
- Supporting youth, older workers and vulnerable groups across the life course
- Supporting workers, employers and PES staff through digital and skills transitions

Inclusion and resilience



•What is changing?

- Greater risk of exclusion for certain groups (youth, migrants, seniors, persons with disabilities)
- Increasing economic uncertainty and external shocks
- Growing need for trust in public institutions

•Why PES matter?

- Acting as a safety net and a springboard back to employment
- Promoting fair access to work and decent employment
- Strengthening social cohesion and labour market resilience

PES are not only intermediaries between jobseekers and employers; they are strategic actors at the heart of inclusive, resilient and future-ready labour markets.

4 Major WAPES milestones in 2025

From global dialogue to concrete action

In 2025, WAPES convened Public Employment Services worldwide around flagship events and strategic platforms for knowledge sharing and mutual learning. From global to regional level, these moments of exchange addressed a shared challenge: how employment services can adapt to profound demographic change while remaining inclusive, effective and people-centred.

Together, the World Congress, the Regional Conferences and the WAPES G7 Working Group formed a coherent journey — combining global vision, regional realities and strategic policy coordination.

4.1 13th WAPES World Congress – Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire



Active Employment Policies and Demographic Challenges (May 2025)

The 13th WAPES World Congress marked a defining moment for the global PES community. Held in Abidjan, it brought together participants from all five WAPES regions to reflect collectively on the future of employment policies in the face of contrasting demographic realities.

With accelerated ageing in many industrialised economies and rapid youth population growth in other regions, the Congress highlighted that demographic change is not a distant trend, but a present and structural transformation reshaping labour markets worldwide.

Highlights

- Strong political engagement, underlining employment policies as a pillar of social cohesion and economic resilience.
- Global dialogue connecting perspectives from Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas.
- Structured discussions on:
 - demographic transitions and labour market impacts,
 - adaptation of active labour market policies,
 - new PES ecosystems and governance models,

- and economic transformations (digital, green and social).
- Thematic workshops showcasing concrete PES initiatives in green jobs, digital transitions and the social and solidarity economy.
- A shared focus on putting people back at the centre of employment policies, across the life course.

Key takeaways

- PES must evolve from operational intermediaries into strategic actors of transition, capable of anticipation and coordination.
- There is no one-size-fits-all response to demographic change, but strong convergence on the need for inclusive, flexible and forward-looking policies.
- Lifelong support — from education and first employment to career transitions and active ageing — is becoming a core mission of PES.
- Data, digital tools and partnerships are essential, but only effective when embedded in human-centred service delivery.

4.2 Turning global challenges into regional solutions

Across regions, WAPES conferences in 2025 translated global debates into practical responses adapted to regional labour market realities. While contexts differ, the underlying message was consistent: stronger cooperation and innovation are essential to manage demographic and workforce transitions.

4.2.1 Europe – Riga, Latvia

Defending the Future: Workforce Development for Defence and Security (October 2025)



The European Regional Conference focused on a specific but highly strategic challenge: how Public Employment Services can support recruitment, retention and reintegration in defence and security sectors.

Highlights

- Concrete examples of cooperation between PES and defence institutions to address skills shortages.
- Focus on modern recruitment approaches and inclusive talent pipelines.
- In-depth discussions on retaining digital and technical skills.
- Strong emphasis on reintegration of veterans through holistic and trauma-informed approaches.

Key takeaways

- PES play a crucial role in analysing skills needs and designing targeted workforce solutions.
- Inclusive and skills-based recruitment strengthens both labour markets and social trust.
- Retention requires modern career pathways, continuous learning and family-inclusive approaches.
- Successful reintegration goes beyond employment, contributing to dignity, wellbeing and social cohesion.

4.2.2 Asia-Pacific – Clark City, Philippines



The Future of Work: Inclusive PES Adapting to Demographic Realities (November 2025)

The Asia-Pacific Regional Conference addressed how PES can adapt to rapid demographic change, digital transformation and growing labour mobility across the region.

Highlights

- Presentation of the WAPES–Japan Joint Project as a model of regional peer learning.
- Panels on ageing societies, youth employment and digital innovation.
- Strong focus on migration governance, fair recruitment and reintegration.
- Showcasing of digital PES transformation, including AI-driven tools and data platforms.

Key takeaways

- Demographic change requires proactive, inclusive and long-term policy responses.
- Digitalisation can significantly expand PES reach, provided digital inclusion is ensured.
- PES are key actors in managing labour mobility across borders.
- Regional cooperation accelerates innovation and institutional capacity-building.

4.2.3 WAPES G7 Working Group on Demographic Change



The WAPES G7 Working Group continued to serve as a strategic forum for coordinated reflection among G7 Public Employment Services. In 2025, the Group concluded its work on demographic change with the publication of its working paper.

Highlights

- Comparative analysis of ageing, shrinking workforces and skills shortages across G7 countries.
- Examination of the interaction between demographic change and digital transformation.
- Sharing of national policy responses, including active ageing strategies, reskilling programmes and inclusive labour market measures.
- A dedicated member-only webinar reinforcing peer trust and strategic exchange.

Key takeaways

- Demographic change is already reshaping labour markets and PES mandates.
- PES are central to managing transitions through anticipation, prevention and lifelong support.
- Effective responses require systemic, life-course-based approaches, not fragmented measures.
- Digitalisation must support inclusion and resilience.
- International cooperation strengthens policy coherence and accelerates learning.

One Shared Message

- Across global, regional and strategic platforms, 2025 delivered a clear and consistent message:
Public Employment Services are indispensable actors in navigating demographic, digital and social transitions.
- By connecting people to opportunity, supporting careers across the life course, and building strong partnerships, WAPES and its members are shaping more inclusive, resilient and future-ready labour markets worldwide.

5 Learning together

5.1 Webinars & Knowledge Exchange

In 2025, WAPES further consolidated its webinar programme as a core pillar for knowledge exchange and peer learning among Public Employment Services . From January to December 2025, webinars provided an accessible and high-impact format to share practices, explore emerging policy challenges, and strengthen partnerships with international organisations.

- **WAPES World of PES**



The public webinar series “WAPES World of PES” remained a flagship activity in 2025. Designed as 60-minute interactive sessions with Q&A and simultaneous interpretation (EN/FR/ES), the series offered insights into national labour market contexts and the role of PES across WAPES member countries. Launched in 2023, the “World of PES” series continued in 2025, building on a first cycle that featured 13 Public Employment Services in 2023–2024. In 2025, eight country sessions were delivered, featuring PES from Mali, Germany, France, Tunisia, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Peru and Azerbaijan.

Key figures (2025):

- **8 country sessions delivered:** Mali, Germany, France, Tunisia, Philippines, United Kingdom, Peru, Azerbaijan
- **Steady growth in registrations** throughout the year, reflecting increased visibility
- **Approximately 50% live attendance rate**, stable across sessions

Beyond presenting national systems, the series fostered dialogue among PES professionals, highlighting diverse approaches to employment services, labour market intelligence, and service delivery in different institutional and economic contexts.

- **Joint and Thematic Sessions**

In parallel, WAPES organised a series of thematic and joint webinars addressing strategic priorities for PES development and labour market policy.

Key thematic sessions included:

- **Global Career Guidance in PES:** presentation of the WAPES/ICCDPP survey (with [ICCDPP](#) and iCeGS, University of Derby), highlighting the global footprint of career guidance services while identifying gaps in policy support and professional capacity.
- **Skills Development in Public Employment Services:** exchange of innovative training strategies with contributions from the German PES Leadership Academy (Führungsakademie), Académie France Travail, and ANAPEC's Centre for Excellence (Morocco).

In 2025, WAPES organised several joint webinars with strategic partners to address major transformations affecting labour markets and PES, combining policy dialogue with concrete case studies.

- A joint webinar with the International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) focused on fair recruitment in a digital age, exploring the links between migration, labour rights and digital tools, and featuring a national case study from the National Employment Authority (Kenya).
- In cooperation with the European Training Foundation ([ETF](#)), WAPES co-organised two joint webinars focusing on youth employment and the role of Public Employment Services. One webinar addressed Youth Guarantee implementation, including the role of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) for youth, with case studies from Moldova and North Macedonia, while the second examined the role of ALMPs and PES in fragile, conflict and post-conflict contexts, focusing on how PES can adapt policy tools and service delivery to support labour market recovery and resilience, with examples from Egypt and the Philippines.
- Finally, a joint webinar with WCC Group addressed the impact of digitalisation and responsible artificial intelligence (AI) on PES, drawing on experiences from Europe, Malaysia and Costa Rica.
- In addition, a members-only webinar in September 2025 marked the launch of the WAPES G7 Working Group paper on demographic change, concluding the 2024–2025 work cycle and enabling in-depth exchanges among G7 PES on shared demographic and labour market challenges.

5.2 Investing in people: WAPES Academy



In 2025, the WAPES Academy further strengthened its role as a key pillar of capacity building for Public Employment Services, with a strong focus on people-centred skills, professional development and peer learning. Two flagship training initiatives illustrated this commitment: an intercultural training seminar in Europe and an in-depth training programme for employment advisers in Africa.

The **Intercultural Training Seminar**, held in Brussels from 2 to 4 April 2025, marked the first pilot initiative jointly organised by WAPES and SkillLab. Delivered in English, the training brought together 11 participants from 10 countries across four WAPES regions and three continents, reflecting the growing diversity of PES environments. Through a highly interactive approach, participants explored the concept of culture, intercultural communication, and sensitive topics such as stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. The seminar concluded with a collective reflection on intercultural competence and its practical application in daily PES work. Participants highlighted the value of peer exchange and practical exercises, noting that the training deepened their understanding of cultural dynamics and enhanced their ability to operate effectively in multicultural contexts.



Video spotlight – Intercultural Training (Brussels, April 2025)

This short video illustrates the interactive methodology, diversity of participants and key learning moments of the WAPES–SkillLab pilot training.

The **7th Training Session for Employment Advisers**, held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 8 to 20 September 2025, continued a long-standing collaboration between WAPES and the African Association of Public Employment Services (AASEP). Under the theme “The Employment Adviser: Understanding the Labour Market for Better Jobseeker Integration”, the training gathered 48 advisers from 10 African countries. Using participatory methods, case studies and peer learning, the programme strengthened advisers’ capacities in labour market analysis, intermediation tools and employer engagement. Beyond individual skills development, the training contributed to the emergence of a pool of potential trainers capable of disseminating good practices within their respective PES, reinforcing sustainability and regional ownership.



Together, these two initiatives illustrate the WAPES Academy's strategic ambition: to invest in people by equipping PES professionals with the skills, mindset and networks needed to respond to increasingly complex labour markets, while fostering mutual learning and international cooperation.

5.3 Joint Project: strengthening Public Employment Services through strategic cooperation

One of WAPES' flagship initiatives in 2025 was the implementation of the WAPES–Japan Joint Project for the Philippines, financed by Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). Launched at the beginning of 2025, the project supports the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) of the Philippines in strengthening and modernising its Public Employment Service (PES) system through a structured, multi-year cooperation framework.

The Joint Project is built around a five-point strategic agenda, focusing on institutional development, capacity building, service delivery functions, partnerships, and digitalisation. Its objective is to support the professionalisation of employment services while promoting people-centred, inclusive, and future-ready approaches aligned with global labour market transformations.



Throughout 2025, the project progressed through several key milestones. A preliminary coordination meeting was held in Manila in February, followed by

an official launch meeting in Tokyo in March, during which formal commitments were confirmed by DOLE, MHLW, and WAPES. In July, a study visit to Tokyo and Saitama enabled Philippine delegates to engage directly with Japanese PES counterparts, explore digital service delivery models, and exchange practices on youth employment, support for vulnerable jobseekers, and the use of data and technology in employment services.

The Joint Project is coordinated by a dedicated Project Coordinator seconded from MHLW to the WAPES Executive Secretariat, ensuring close operational follow-up and alignment between partners. A mid-term review of the project's progress and initial outcomes was presented during the WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference in November 2025, providing an opportunity for peer learning and regional exchange.

By combining policy dialogue, peer learning, and practical tools, the WAPES–Japan Joint Project illustrates how targeted international cooperation can contribute to strengthening national employment services while generating transferable lessons for the wider WAPES membership.

6 Knowledge that shapes policy: research, surveys and publications

In 2025, WAPES continued to reinforce its role as a global knowledge hub for Public Employment Services by producing and disseminating evidence-based research, policy-oriented publications, and comparative analysis. These activities aim to support informed decision-making, strengthen institutional capacity, and contribute to international policy debates on employment and labour market governance.

A major milestone was the publication of the **General Report of the 13th WAPES World Congress**, which brought together key findings, summaries, and policy recommendations emerging from discussions on active employment policies and demographic challenges. The report highlights the need to adapt employment services to ageing societies, youth-dominated labour markets, technological change, and increasing labour mobility, while keeping people at the centre of policy responses.

WAPES also advanced its research agenda through collaborative studies with academic partners. In partnership with the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy and the University of Derby, WAPES published a global survey on **career guidance in Public Employment Services**, providing insights into the scope, challenges, and future development of guidance services worldwide.

Another key initiative launched in 2025 is the multi-phase research project **“Understanding the Future Skills Needs of PES Counsellors”**, conducted with the University of Derby and Manchester University, with support from Deloitte. The first round of this Delphi-style expert consultation collected responses from experts across more than 50 countries, identifying emerging tasks, competencies, and knowledge areas required for frontline PES staff in the coming decade. Subsequent survey rounds and expert discussions are planned to consolidate consensus and inform future policy and training strategies.

In parallel, WAPES continued to support thematic working groups, notably the conclusion of the **G7 WAPES Working Group on demographic change**, whose work culminated in the publication of a dedicated working paper available in multiple languages. This knowledge production reinforces WAPES’ contribution to global debates and provides concrete tools and insights for its members.

7 Cooperation with partners

In 2025, WAPES strengthened and diversified its cooperation with a broad range of partners, reflecting its role as a global connector between Public Employment Services, international organisations, academia, and external stakeholders. These partnerships supported policy dialogue, knowledge exchange, and innovation, while reinforcing WAPES' visibility and credibility within international employment policy ecosystems.

Institutional and Multilateral Partners

Cooperation with international organisations remained a cornerstone of WAPES' external engagement. WAPES was represented at the Global Conference on Fair Recruitment organised by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in May 2025, marking the tenth anniversary of the Fair Recruitment Initiative. The conference provided a high-level platform for discussions on translating policy frameworks into concrete, transparent, and rights-based recruitment practices, highlighting the role of PES in increasingly digital and mobile labour markets.

This cooperation with the ILO was further strengthened through collaboration with its training arm, the International Training Centre of the ILO ([ITCILO](#)). In June 2025, Minako Takasaki, Joint Project Coordinator seconded from Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, contributed as a speaker to an ITCILO training course in Turin, where she presented Japan's digital PES strategy and shared WAPES' global experience and activities.

At multilateral level, WAPES also participated in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD](#)) Forum on Local Employment and Economic Development ([LEED](#)) in Barranquilla, Colombia, and in policy discussions in Brussels on adult skills systems and the role of subnational actors. These exchanges underlined the strategic importance of PES in building local skills ecosystems and supporting lifelong learning.

WAPES further continued its cooperation with international financial institutions, notably the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), particularly in the field of comparative research and global knowledge production on Public Employment Services, contributing to international reflections on labour market transformation and service modernisation.

At European level, WAPES participated in the 2025 Stakeholder Conference of the [European Public Employment Services Network](#), which brought together public authorities, social partners, private actors, and international organisations to discuss partnerships, data sharing, and innovation in employment service delivery.

Academic and Knowledge Partners

WAPES continued to cooperate with academic institutions and international research networks, supporting evidence-based policy and practice. These collaborations underpin WAPES' surveys, working papers, and analytical

activities, and contribute to strengthening its role as a global knowledge hub for Public Employment Services.

External and Private-Sector Stakeholders

In parallel, WAPES engaged with a range of external and private-sector stakeholders, whose contributions enriched policy dialogue and peer learning by bringing operational expertise, innovation capacity, and practical perspectives into WAPES activities.

WAPES contributed to the Global Labour Market Activation Summit organised by Deloitte in Paris, where preliminary findings from the 13th WAPES World Congress were presented. This exchange supported dialogue on activation policies, labour market transformation, and evidence-based approaches to employment service reform.

Private-sector engagement was also visible during the WAPES European Regional Conference in Riga, where APM Ingeus and SkillLab participated in expert panels. Their contributions brought practical insights into service delivery models, skills recognition, workforce inclusion, and innovative approaches to recruitment, retention, and reintegration in complex labour market contexts.

Cooperation with WCC Group focused on digitalisation and the responsible use of artificial intelligence in Public Employment Services, notably through joint webinars and thematic exchanges addressing data governance, service modernisation, and ethical, human-centred approaches to AI.

Dialogue, Outreach and Cooperation

Beyond formal events, WAPES maintained active dialogue with Public Employment Services, development partners, private actors, and prospective members through visits and exchanges at its Secretariat in Brussels. These interactions supported cooperation on capacity building, standardisation of counselling practices, digital innovation, and membership development.

Through this diversified cooperation landscape, WAPES reinforces its position as a neutral, member-driven platform that connects institutions, expertise, and practice. These partnerships not only supported WAPES' activities in 2025 but also laid the foundations for deeper and more structured cooperation in the years ahead, in line with WAPES' long-term vision.

8 Governance and leadership transition

In 2025, WAPES experienced a pivotal moment in its governance, marked by both continuity and renewal. Until the elective General Assembly held on 6 May 2025 in Abidjan, the Presidency of the Association was ensured by the *Agence Nationale de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences* (ANAPEC), Morocco. During this transitional period, ANAPEC played a key role in providing institutional stability and strategic guidance, accompanying WAPES through significant organizational and leadership changes. The Association warmly acknowledges ANAPEC's sustained commitment and leadership throughout its mandate.

Building on this continuity, WAPES entered a new governance cycle with the election of its Managing Board for the 2025–2028 mandate during the General Assembly held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, alongside the 13th WAPES World Congress. This renewal strengthens the association's leadership and reflects the diversity and global reach of its membership.

- The Presidency is held by Slovenia, providing strategic direction to the association.
- Five Vice-Presidencies ensure balanced regional representation and coordination: Mali (Africa), Mauritania (Middle East and Arab Countries), Republic of Korea (Asia-Pacific), Türkiye (Europe) and Uruguay (Americas).
- The Managing Board is composed of representatives from all WAPES regions, combining continuity, expertise and geographical balance. In addition to the Vice-Presidents, Board members come from Azerbaijan, Belgium (Synerjob), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Estonia, France, Japan, Sweden, the Netherlands and Zimbabwe.
- The Treasurer role is ensured by the Netherlands.
- Germany and Benin act as WAPES' internal auditors, reinforcing transparency and sound financial governance.

Through this renewed and inclusive governance structure, WAPES reinforces its capacity to guide the association strategically, support its members and advance international cooperation among Public Employment Services worldwide for the 2025–2028 period.

9 The WAPES Executive Secretariat team

A Team Committed to WAPES Members

In 2025, the WAPES Executive Secretariat was energised by a strong spirit of teamwork, trust and close attention to the needs of its members. The appointment of the Executive Secretary to a permanent position in May, during the World Congress in Abidjan, brought stability and continuity at a pivotal moment for the Association.



Throughout the year, WAPES relied on a diverse and highly committed team, combining permanent staff — Amandine Moignard, Executive Secretary, and Pierre-Alain Vandewalle, Communication Manager — with seconded experts from member Public Employment Services. These included Thierry Huort (France Travail, France), Nicole Clobes (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, Germany), Minako Takasaki (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan), Ulf Norman-Letessier (Arbetsförmedlingen, Sweden) and Emma Monster (UWV, the Netherlands).

Team transitions, including the departure of long-standing colleagues, were managed with care and continuity, while new and flexible forms of cooperation emerged. Innovative arrangements — such as Sweden’s partially remote secondment and the Netherlands’ pilot traineeship programme — added fresh perspectives, strengthened knowledge sharing and supported the Secretariat’s evolving way of working.

Working in an open, collaborative and supportive environment, the Executive Secretariat remained fully committed to listening to its members, supporting their priorities and delivering WAPES’ activities with professionalism, dedication and a strong sense of collective purpose.

10 Looking ahead: shaping the next decade of WAPES

As WAPES closes the chapter of 2025, the discussions held within its Managing Board in November provide a clear perspective on the road ahead.

Beyond reviewing activities and results, WAPES members engaged in a forward-looking reflection on the Association's role in a rapidly changing world of work. These exchanges laid the foundations for the Long-Term Strategy 2026–2035, which will guide WAPES' action over the next decade.

Several strategic orientations clearly emerged.

- First, WAPES reaffirmed its ambition to position Public Employment Services as **key actors in managing major global transitions** — demographic change, digital transformation (including artificial intelligence), the green transition, and labour migration. These transitions are no longer separate challenges, but interconnected realities that require integrated, people-centred policy responses.
- Second, the Managing Board highlighted the importance of strengthening **strategic partnerships**. Building on existing cooperation with organisations such as the ILO, OECD, academic institutions and development partners, WAPES will work towards a structured stakeholder strategy that clarifies roles, expectations and complementarities. The objective is to move from ad hoc collaboration to long-term, value-driven partnerships that enhance impact for members.
- Third, WAPES reaffirmed its **unique global identity**. As the only worldwide network of Public Employment Services, WAPES will continue to provide a trusted space for peer learning, interregional dialogue and collective reflection — complementing, rather than duplicating, regional initiatives. In this context, members and Managing Board representatives are encouraged to play a stronger advocacy role within their own institutions and networks.
- Finally, WAPES acknowledged the need to further **strengthen its internal capacity and governance**, ensuring that the Association remains agile, transparent and resilient. Ongoing efforts to modernise procedures, improve sustainability and reinforce the Secretariat's operational capacity are key enablers of this ambition.

Looking towards 2026 and beyond, WAPES enters its next phase with a clear sense of direction: to support Public Employment Services worldwide in delivering inclusive, forward-looking and human-centred responses to the evolving world of work — in close cooperation with members, partners and stakeholders.

11 Selected publications 2025

In 2025, WAPES produced and contributed to a range of research outputs and publications aimed at supporting evidence-based policymaking and strengthening Public Employment Services worldwide. Key publications include:

- **General Report of the 13th WAPES World Congress – Active Employment Policies and Demographic Challenges**
A synthesis of discussions, key messages, and policy recommendations addressing demographic change, digital transformation, and inclusive labour markets. [General Report, Summaries & Recommendations: 13th WAPES World Congress - WAPES](#)
- **Career Guidance in Public Employment Services: Global Trends and Perspectives**
A global survey conducted in collaboration with the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy and the University of Derby, analysing the role, scope, and challenges of career guidance within PES. [Global Career Guidance Trends in Public Employment Services - WAPES](#)
- **Addressing Labour Market Challenges – Demographic Changes**
Working paper produced by the WAPES G7 Working Group, examining how demographic shifts are reshaping labour markets and the strategic responses of Public Employment Services. [WAPES G7 Working Paper on Demographic Change - WAPES](#)
- **Report of the WAPES European Regional Conference – Defending the Future: PES Collaboration with Defence and Security Sectors (Riga, Latvia)**
A thematic report capturing key discussions, case studies, and policy insights on recruitment, retention, and reintegration within defence and security-related labour markets. [European region conference - WAPES](#)
- **Report of the WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference – The Future of Work: Inclusive Public Employment Services Adapting to Demographic Realities in the Asia-Pacific (Clark City, Philippines)**
A regional overview highlighting policy responses to demographic change, digitalisation, youth employment, migration governance, and the transformation of Public Employment Services. [WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference - WAPES](#)

All publications and reports are available on the WAPES website.



WAPES Executive Secretariat
Hendrik Consciencegebouw
Boulevard Roi Albert II, 15
1210 Brussels - Belgium



www.wapes.org