

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK REPORT Helsinki Employment Services

a. Introduction:

PES assessed: Helsinki Employment Services

Objectives: conduct a comprehensive evaluation of PES performance through Benchlearning methodology

Agenda: LDD4 in Helsinki, Finland, June 3-5th, 2025

Participants: June 3: 19 participants / June 4: 26 participants / June 5: 24 participants

b. Evaluation Process:

1. Self-assessment
2. External assessment including: Light evaluation during Benchlearning sessions with Post-its / Discussions at PES headquarters / Verification of activity implementation
3. Follow-up questionnaires from project partners
4. Compilation of lessons learned and recommendations

c. Strengths and areas for improvement for the 4 areas of Benchlearning including the 4 best practices:

1. Strengths and areas of improvement for “Sustainable activation and management of transitions”

1.1. Holistic profiling

Average score: **4,5 out of 6**

Strengths:

- support for vulnerable groups: migrants, NEETs, and older job seekers
- Multidisciplinary teams with social, health, and education services
- Ohjaamo-one-stop-shop guidance centre
- Strategic cooperation with stakeholders like the universities

Areas for Improvement:

- Limited interoperability between systems the IT system still suffers from legal limitations
- a lack of quantitative and qualitative data and lack of effective data-analysing tools
- Development of intersectional analysis is currently not at a sufficient level
- Need to clarify networking strategy
- continuous evaluation of the actual impact of interventions (especially qualitative assessment)

1.2. Segmented and tailor-made action plan and ALMP-measures

Average score: **4,15 out of 6**

Strengths:

- very structured and a clear way of handling clients
- segmentation tool
- a variety of Short Training Courses and individual training support
- strong cooperation with vocational training providers
- financial support for employers

Areas for Improvement:

- The impact evaluation of active labour policies could be more systematized
- competence-based profiling, preferably by adopting the ESCO model
- more systematic analysis of labour market mismatches
- gender-specific services for women were not presented in depth

1.3. Users' accessibility and engagement

Average score: **4,6 out of 6**

Strengths:

1. a multi-channel strategy to ensure service accessibility
2. Well defined early intervention model and psychological support
3. Tools like the Service Manual have been implemented to promote user proactivity
4. Specialized digital courses and services are being developed with a focus on specific
5. Continuous learning of staff: "Morning School" sessions and dedicated training platforms

Areas for Improvement:

1. There is currently no assessment of the efficiency of service channels
2. User involvement remains underdeveloped
3. A lack of dedicated digital platforms for communication between jobseekers and PES

=> Best practice: Power BI and model of information management

Average score: **7,8 out of 10**

The tool is a clear and easily accessible way of collecting and presenting information about job seekers and job market. It combines data from different sources and visualises data. Qualifications of the work force are gathered into easily readable reports and graphs. The tool suffers from a lack of coordination between the systems that causes limited analysis and reports. Technical and legal limitations hinder the potential of the tool and limits its applications which could be many.

2. Strengths and areas of improvement for "Relations with employers"

2.1. Specialized Units for Employer Services

Average score: **4 out of 6**

Strengths:

- A specialized unit of employer services which are divided in specialised sectors
- Recruitment events
- Business Helsinki offers inclusive, multilingual support for entrepreneurs at all stages
- An inclusive public procurement model (Hankinnoilla työllistäminen)
- Wage subsidies and workplace adaptation support promote inclusive hiring

Areas for Improvement:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the services and promoting them is still in progress
- Limited resources in the staff
- The lack of an integrated CRM and a unified communication strategy

2.2. Matching Labour Supply and Demand to Overcome Labour Shortages

Average score: **4,5 out of 6**

Strengths:

- sectoral cooperation with companies
- numerous annual events to promote entrepreneurship
- Jobseeker database tailored to sectoral needs

Areas for Improvement:

- Need for a more systematic approach to labour market mismatches
- It is advisable to move towards an integrated skills intelligence strategy
- Strengthen RDI (Research, Development, Innovation)
- Develop a unified communication strategy for employers
- Increase internal staff training on green and digital transitions

2.3. Employer Engagement Strategy

Average score: **3,5 out of 6**

Strengths

- development of a corporate relations strategy based on sectoral planning and personalized support
- The PES collaborates with entrepreneurs through long-term engagements

- Collaboration with private employment agencies has begun
- Informal networking spaces with partners

Areas for Improvement:

- lack of a fully defined employer services strategy
- There is no centralised contact point or dedicated communication channel for employers
- There is a clear need for a common CRM system
- limited monitoring of the impact and effectiveness of employer-related activities

=> Best practice: IPS coaching model

Average score: **9,35 out of 10**

IPS coaching model integrates employment, health, and social services. Collaboration with Metropolia University of Applied Sciences enhances the project's impact and capacity for innovation. IPS model is an evidence-based approach that is client-centered and inclusive. Active "place and train" strategy endorses social responsibility of companies. IPS model offers tailored counselling and coaching for sustainable jobs, not just training positions. However long-term coaching and active employer engagement demand substantial time and staffing, which can limit scalability. Its success relies heavily on employers' willingness to embrace inclusive hiring practices.

3. Evidence-based design and implementation of PES services

3.1. Promotion of Local Labour Market Understanding and Knowledge

Average score: **3,3 out of 6**

Strengths:

- There is an excessive amount of existing labour market information
- Advanced tools like Power BI, support foresight and data-driven decision-making
- Algorithmic tool for service allocation - an innovative effort to personalise services
- Regular baseline and needs assessments for jobseekers to tailor service

Areas for Improvement:

- Tools and a data are not consistently used across all levels of the organisation
- a need for stronger systematic approach to labour market analysis
- there are no programs for qualitative evaluation of public policies.
- More transparency - labour market information should be shared through public digital platforms

3.2. Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

Average score: **4,5 out of 6**

Strengths:

- relevant monitoring practices such as quarterly situational analyses and user satisfaction surveys.
- Tools like Power BI are available to visualise and filter performance data
- Knowledge management is a central part of the organisation's strategy
- The Algorithmic Service Allocation tool

Areas for Improvement:

- Lack of a systematic evaluation framework – even though the PES implements data monitoring
- Participation mechanisms such as user councils remain undeveloped
- Continuous impact assessment of interventions (beyond outputs) is needed

3.3. Policy Design through Change and Innovation

Average score: **4,5 out of 6**

Strengths

- the ability to generate and test innovative services
- Partnerships with city-owned vocational training centres support agile piloting
- internal and external stakeholders are included from the start of development initiatives
- Proactive Services Unit (launched 1/2025) develop systematically partnerships and innovation



Areas for Improvement:

- The PES lacks a comprehensive strategic framework for innovation and change.
- Cooperation with research, development and innovation (RDI) actors, should be
- Collaborative workspaces for co-creation are encouraged.
- Insufficient use of foresight and future trends in policy design

=> Best practice: The Work Ability Score

Average score: **7,9 out of 10**

A simple and accessible self-assessment tool that enables jobseekers to reflect on their own work ability. It fosters a client-centred dialogue and allows client segmentation helping to better targeted services. To enhance the tool's impact, further training is needed to ensure consistent and correct use by all staff. Integration into national employment systems should be pursued, and structured follow-up processes should be developed.

4. Management of partnerships and stakeholders

4.1. Perception of PES and Impacts on Users' and Stakeholders' Engagement

Average score: **4,1 out of 6**

Strengths

- User satisfaction surveys and multilingual communication strategies support inclusivity
- The Specialist Desktop platform performance-based communication
- Partnerships have been mapped and coordination model for partnership delivery is being developed
- Internal communication has improved, e.g. a weekly newsletter, new Intranet (10/2024)

Areas for Improvement

- PES should define a clear vision for partnership development
- Develop a distinct and consistent brand strategy, supported by updated communication strategy
- Tailoring the communication style and message to the target audience
- Engaging with local organizations or influencers can also help extend the reach of service information
- Storytelling can make success stories more engaging and relatable

4.2. Building Strategic Partnerships

Average score: **4,7 out of 6**

Strengths:

- Strategic partnerships with key city-owned institutions
- A coordination model for partnerships and service delivery is currently being developed,
- Balanced Scorecard (BSC) tools are also being developed
- The PES works towards a more goal-oriented approach to partnerships by thematic discussion events
- The collaboration with Helsinki Shipyard

Areas for Improvement:

- no clear overall vision or strategy defining the purpose, goals, and types of partnerships needed
- Assigning dedicated roles would improve efficiency and continuity
- there is no consistent model to measure the effectiveness and outcomes of partnerships.

4.3. Resource Allocation and Funding

Average score: **4,5 out of 6**

Strengths:

- The financial structure is based on national and municipal public funds

- Resources are directed towards strategic priorities such as the ESF+ project "Training and advisory work"
- "Strategic Partnerships and Innovation" team coordinates project-based initiatives

Areas for Improvement:

- To develop a systematic strategy involving private sector resources as a complementary funding
- prioritise funding for initiatives that foster innovation and evidence-based service design
- a more robust model for measuring investment impact should be adopted
- External funding remains underexploited potential to enrich service offerings and innovation
- Projects are not always systematically integrated into regular operations

=> Best practice: "Kumppanuuslögöt" Partnership Events

Average score: 7,9 out of 10

Impressive informal approach and engagement to stakeholder partnerships create better services for jobseekers. A good way to establish a permanent communications channel with key partners, identifying synergies and predicting service demand. A dedicated brand is built around it. It's necessary to develop ways to measure the results of these events. So far employers are not involved in these events which was considered vital for the success of the concept.

d. Strengths and areas for improvement for the transversal issues:

1. Digital Transition

Average score: 4,9 out of 6

Strengths:

- Digital transition has been recognized as both a transversal challenge and a strategic opportunity
- Acknowledgement of the diverse digital competencies among clients
- Helsinki PES is investing in digital tools, particularly in data analysis and performance monitoring.

Areas for Improvement:

- More collaboration with educational institutions and employers to develop more impactful training programs and analytical models.
- digital transition should be more explicitly embedded as a strategic goal

2. Green Transition

Average score: 4,1 out of 6

Strengths:

- Commitment to support the twin transition through targeted service development and training
- Designing and rolling training programs focused on green jobs with Sykli Environmental College

Areas for Improvement:

- Helsinki PES has not yet adopted the green transition as a strategic goal -Future strategies should more explicitly align with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals
- limited capacity to gather and analyse data on emerging green jobs
- Allocate more resources to training and partnership development in areas of green competence. Training for employment specialists on green jobs and eco-practices is a critical gap.

3. Targeting of the most vulnerable groups of jobseekers

Average score: 5 out of 6

Strengths:

- data-driven and needs-based approach to supporting vulnerable groups
- Resource allocation based on identified risk factors that predict prolonged unemployment
- a strong capacity to segment and profile vulnerable jobseekers systematically
- Integration services for newcomers are regulated by law and delivered through multilingual support

Areas for Improvement:



- there are still gaps in coverage and continuity, particularly for migrant clients
- Challenges of older long-term unemployed: deteriorating work capacity and the need for upskilling
- there is room to improve the systematic evaluation of intersectional impacts
- There is need to improve digital accessibility for vulnerable groups

4. Gender perspectives

Average score: **4,7 out of 6**

Strengths:

- policy integration: an institutional framework promoting gender equality and service delivery
- Concrete actions: the use of anonymous recruitment processes,
- Will and ability-project: male-focused coaching and support strategies

Areas for Improvement:

- Helsinki PES still has room to deepen gender analysis across all functions
- PES could take a more proactive role in addressing structural inequalities, e.g. sectoral segregation
- intersectional factors are not yet fully embedded into profiling or service delivery
- Lack of innovative gender-targeted projects
- Violence against women remains a widespread issue that should be addressed.

e. Communication strategy and PES reputation

Strengths:

- a multi-channel strategy: a strong commitment to accessible and inclusive communication
- benefit from the institutional credibility of the City of Helsinki brand
- Employer communication is being systematized
- Strong commitment to openness and dialogue - strong visuals and emotionally resonant messaging

Areas for Improvement:

- lacks a unified communication strategy and a clear messaging framework
- A lack of systematic evaluation of communication channels
- There is a need for centralization and tailored messaging strategies in the employer contact process

f. Lessons learned and recommendations: Summary of recommendations and lessons learned

Strengths:

- PES has holistic and multidisciplinary approach to profiling and activation
- segmentation and personalized service model: commitment to early intervention, personalized support, and cross-sectoral collaboration.
- Support for vulnerable groups
- multi-channel communication strategy

Recommendations:

- To develop a unified digital infrastructure that enables secure, real-time information sharing
- To develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework.
- The development of a comprehensive employer engagement strategy, including a CRM system
- Helsinki PES should establish a formal innovation governance model, including RDI (Research, Development, Innovation) partnerships, intrapreneurship programs, and co-creation labs
- To align employment services with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda
- more targeted support for women
- To develop unified communication strategy and distinct PES branding

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