Country Report

Bulgaria

Client: European Commission

Rotterdam, London, 20 October 2011

Country Report PES PMS

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ECORYS

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Table of contents

Summary 5

1 Background information 7

2 PES performance measurement systems – Design 9

3 PES performance measurement systems - Use 13

4 EURES 15

5 Geographical labour mobility 21
5.1 Design 21
5.2 Use 23

Annex 25

Summary

ID	
Country	Bulgaria
Name PES	National Employment Agency
Name researcher	EvN, MC
Additional remarks (e.g. source gaps, problems, challenges)	Country visited

1 Background information

General information PES		Source*
Mission & tasks & targets	The National Employment Agency (NEA) has the short-term strategic goal of increasing employment and limiting unemployment. Its long-term goal is to foster economic activity increase the size of the potential working population. The NEA's main functions include the registration of unemployed jobseekers and available vacancies, employment mediation services provision; working with municipalities and employers in developing mutually beneficial action plans, participation in the development and implementation of programs and measures for employment and training, implementation, both independently and in cooperation with other institutions, of projects and programs in the field of employment, professional qualification and training, and social integration, funded by the European Commission and/or other national and international donors, organisation of qualification and motivational training for unemployed and employed, mediation in finding work for Bulgarian citizens abroad and foreign citizens in Bulgaria and lastly analysing the supply and demand side on the labour market and forecasting changes in it.	DWP, International review, 2009 NEA website.
Organisational setup (nr. of central, regional and local offices)	NEA consists of a central administration; 9 Regional Employment Service Directorates (RESD); 105 Labour Office Directorates (LOD) and 145 branches.	NEA website.
Human resources (nr. of staff if possible fte's) Please mention the year	Total nr. of staff – 2396 (2012).	
Financial resources (annual budget) Please mention the year	88 617 255 BGN (2011).	

Institutional context		Source
How closely linked is the PES to relevant governmental body? (*deconcentration*: is this a part of a ministry, is it a legal form, a separate agency?)	The NEA is an executive agency to the Minister of Labour and Social Policy for the implementation of the government policy on employment promotion.	NEA website.
How much autonomy is given to regional and local level in PES? (*decentralisation*: who designs budget, the strategy etc.)	The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is responsible for setting priorities and determining target beneficiaries of the programme. Priority groups are: • the long-term unemployed; • youth without experience, education and profession; • individuals with low educational level, or without qualifications and education; • the disabled; • the elderly unemployed (above 50 years old).	DWP, International review, 2009; NEA website.
To what degree are services or tasks outsourced to voluntary or private sector? (*Privatisation*: which services are outsourced and to whom?)	Training courses are outsourced to private sector.	

Country information		Source
Sending or receiving country?	Sending country.	Interviews.
Background information • % of employment; • % of unemployment; • the main challenges on the labour market.	Employed persons: 2009: 3.25 million, 2010: 3.05 million. Unemployment level: 2009: 7.59%, 2010: 9.47%. In 2010 the employment rate for the population between 15 and 64 is 59.7 % or 2.9 points lower than in 2009.The level of youth unemployment is 23.2%. Long-term unemployed people is 46.5% of all unemployed. The number of discouraged people aged 15-64 years old is 222.3 thousand, and as compared to 2009, it has increased by 38.1 thousand.	NEA website, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Yearbook 2010.

2 PES performance measurement systems – Design

Purpose		Source
For which purpose was the performance measurement system established and for which level? (check for accountability; management information)	The PES PMS was designed and implemented in 2003 as a process model of work within the PES. The purpose of the system is to support / facilitate work of the Local Labour Offices Directorates/LOD/, to monitor performance and to enable management of processes at all levels. The model was designed with the help of KPMG. It initially aimed at reorganising LOD so their activities would be geared towards offering unemployed the most suitable job available in the shortest possible period. This constituted a great change in the way LOD worked and led to the implementation of a performance assessment system and the monitoring of progress towards implementation. The system that rates LOD stimulates and creates incentives to work more effectively and creates competition between labour offices.	Interviews.

Indicators		Source
What types of indicators are used to measure performance? (in terms of: inputs, outputs, results, impacts)	The system for performance measurement (PMS) was set up in 2003. Initially, 4 indicators were used. The number varied over the subsequent years due to changes in the active labour market policies (ALMPs) the Employment Agency (EA) pursued. Currently, 4 indicators are used. A larger number of indicators – in 2005 there were 18 indicators in place – made it possible for local offices to manipulate information at the time when no central database was in place – which is a second reason for a lower number of indicators. Indicators are weighed according to the priority attached to various ALMPs to which they relate. The PES PMS formally comprises four indicators: 1. Ratio of actual number of unemployed placed on the primary labour market and number of unemployed planned according to annual action plan of regional employment services directorates (RPES); 2. Ratio between actual and planned spending of funds per month on programmes, measures and qualification courses, broken down by national vs. ESF funding; 3. Number of employed / unemployed persons placed into ALMP programmes by PES officer per period (it was noted that a large proportion of participants are employed and skills needs are assessed by means of an employer survey and that there is 2/3 ESF co-	Interview.

Indicators		Source
	funding. Also, for subsidised employment the duration differs for programmes financed through state budget and the HRD OP); 4. Quality indicator for the effectiveness of the work of PES/RPES in view of requirements for payments under the HRD OP scheme: Ratio between actual (verified/paid) applications and total number of applications. This indicator has been introduced in 2011 to reflect the priority that has now been attached to the use of ESF resources. Besides these four indicators that are used to assess the performance of the PES, the Employment Agency's annual action plan comprises a large number of indicators. The action plans of RPES and labour offices (LPES) are elaborated on the basis of the national action plan. The four indicators are based on the ratio between realised inputs or outputs and targeted inputs or outputs. Indicators – targets in relation to budgets – are agreed with LPES and used for the assessment of LPES' performance. The indicators are part of a framework as they are based on the relation between inputs (budget) and outputs (e.g. number of placements). In the annual action plan, indicators are embedded in a framework in which activities, expected results/outcomes, indicators and a time period are attached to individual objectives. On the basis of performance measurement, funds can be reallocated to programmes which are most demanding in order to use the available funds most effectively. This is done several times a year and allows for the total available budget to be spent. For example, if a LPES will not reach its target of job placements, budget can reallocated to organise e.g. a job fair. Not all indicators available are included in the framework described above. Besides the four indicators described under 1. the annual action plans also comprise (input, output, result) indicators. Furthermore, LPES are required to hold regular satisfaction surveys amongst clients (employers and employees/job seekers). On the basis of these surveys and on the basis of quantitative performance monitoring, proposals for improvement and recommendations for implementation are made centrally.	
Which (sub-) indicators are used for each type? (if there many, please put them in an annex)	There are no further indicators or sub indicators. The PMS consists of the (above mentioned) four indicators. In addition to the four indicators, the NEA has an 'agency action plan' consisting of a large number of indicators	

Indicators		Source
	which are not part of the PMS. Action plans are elaborated on the basis of the national (annual) action plan (since 2000) and elaborated interdepartmentally. Central PES monitors and assessed LEPS action plans. Regular reports are drawn up (every 6, 9 or 12 months, more regularly if required). Lastly, individual employee performance is assessed on the basis of individual action plans of employees of the agency in which indicators are set in the form of tasks / targets that are set according to job descriptions (more on this below).	
Do indicators presuppose causal relationships (input-output; output-results; results-impact)? How?	The four indicators are based on the ratio between realised inputs or outputs and targeted inputs or outputs. Indicators – targets in relation to budgets – are agreed with LPES and used for the assessment of LPES' performance. The indicators are part of a framework as they are based on the relation between inputs (budget) and outputs (e.g. number of placements). In the annual action plan, indicators are embedded in a framework in which activities, expected results/outcomes, indicators and a time period are attached to individual objectives.	Interviews

Targets		Source
Do targets exists, i.e. are indicators quantified? For who are targets set (central office, local offices, individual employees)?	Yes. Targets are set for at central, local and individual level. Regional contextual factors such as characteristics of the labour force and local labour market are taken into account in both the action plan and regional targets.	Interviews.
Are targets SMART?	Unknown.	

Tools		Source
Does the PES PMS includes a Data Warehouse (DWH) and to which other administrations is this DWH linked?	Yes, a database based on PES records is included (not linked to other administrations).	Interviews.
Is a tool (e.g. Balanced Scorecard) for presenting management information available?	No.	Interviews.

Quality assurance		Source
Is quality of client satisfaction measured? How and frequency?	Local PES are required to hold regular satisfaction surveys amongst clients (employers and employees/job seekers). On the basis of these surveys and on the basis of quantitative performance monitoring, proposals for improvement and recommendations for implementation are made centrally.	Interviews.

Management and support		Source
What are the main data sources of the PMS?	Monthly reports are generated on the basis of the national database which is fed by the local PES. Some indicators – unemployment, announced vacancies – are monitored on a daily basis. The following indicators are measured on a monthly basis: • inflow and outflow of unemployed; • inflow and outflow of registered vacancies; • inflow and outflow of vacancies in the private and public sector; • number of vacancies for persons with disabilities; • number of vacancies filled, closed, still vacant by the end of the month.	Interviews.
How is data collected and updated?	Monthly reports are generated on the basis of the national database which is fed by the local PES.	Interviews.
Who has access to the data generated by the PMS?	Not explicitly addressed during interview. Presumably it is limited to the PES management (central, regional and local).	Interviews.

Tagging customers		Source
Are customers willing to work abroad or willing to hire foreigners especially tagged in the system?	No.	Interviews.

Tracking customers		Source
Is contact maintained with clients to ascertain the results of activity/support provided? For example, are any follow-up surveys undertaken?	No.	Interviews.

Influence PES resources on PMS		Source
In which ways and to what extent is the PES PMS influenced by the PES resources, business models and national priorities?	The system for performance measurement was set up in 2003. Initially, four indicators were used. The number varied over the subsequent years due to changes in the active labour market policies (ALMPs) the NEA pursued. Currently, four indicators are used. A larger number of indicators – in 2005 there were 18 indicators in place – made it possible for local offices to manipulate information at the time when no central database was in place – which is a second reason for a lower number of indicators. Indicators are weighed according to the priority attached to various ALMPs to which they relate.	Interviews.

3 PES performance measurement systems - Use

Performance management areas		Source
Is performance measurement being use for the operational, tactical or strategic level? By whom?	It is used, at strategic, tactical and operational levels by management.	Interviews.
At which level (s) of the organisation is performance management practiced?	At all three levels (centrally, regionally and locally).	Interviews.
In which management areas (Human resources, Financial resources, Quality management, and Strategy development) are the findings of performance measurement used?	In all four areas. For the purpose of human resource management it is used by management at all levels. For the other three areas it is used by central management.	Interviews.

PES mission and target setting		Source
Please describe the target-setting process: actors involved, frequency, etc.	The four indicators are based on the ratio between realised inputs or outputs and targeted inputs or outputs. Indicators – targets in relation to budgets – are agreed between the Ministry and local PES and used for the assessment of local PES' performance. The indicators are part of a framework as they are based on the relation between inputs (budget) and outputs (e.g. number of placements). In the annual action plan, indicators are embedded in a framework in which activities, expected results/outcomes, indicators and a time period are attached to individual objectives. On the basis of performance measurement, funds can be reallocated to programmes which are most demanding in order to use the available funds most effectively. This is done several times a year and allows for the total available budget to be spent. For example, if a Local PES will not reach its target of job placements, budget can reallocated to organise e.g. a job fair. Not all indicators available are included in the framework described above. Besides the four indicators described under 1. the annual action plans also comprise (input, output, outcome) indicators. Furthermore, local PES are required to hold regular satisfaction surveys amongst clients	Interviews.

PES mission and target setting		Source
	(employers and employees/job seekers). On the basis of these surveys and on the basis of quantitative performance monitoring, proposals for improvement and recommendations for implementation are made centrally. Targets for every region are set by the Ministry according to specifics of each region. Regional contextual factors such as characteristics of the labour force and local labour market are taken into account in both the action plan and targets.	

Benchmarking		Source
Are sub national PES offices benchmarked for functional reasons, including	Yes, On the basis of performance measurement, funds can be reallocated to programmes which are most demanding in order to use the available funds most effectively. This is done several times a year and allows for the total available budget to be spent. For example, if a Local PES will not reach its target of job placements, budget can reallocated to organise e.g. a job fair.	Interviews.

Rewards		Source
Is target-realisation rewarded? How?	The internal rules of the organization for defining salary basis also set up the order for rewarding the target realization. Assessment of the performance of regular duties is taken into account as well as the fulfilment of ad hoc important assignments.	Interviews.

4 EURES

Information about EURES		Source
General information about EURES (number fte's, cooperation with PES)	At the central PES (headquarters in Sofia) there is a central team of 4 people that are involved in EURES. They receive support from the PR and financial departments. There are 9 regional offices and 105 local PES offices (some of which have more branches) with each an advisor (there are 10 or 11 Euresco certified EURES advisors spread around the country) or an EURES assistant. These advisors and assistants only spend part of their time on EURES related work. Non-EURES staff in the local offices also provide support. All PES employees are informed on where an EURES advisor can be found. For large events, support by non-EURES staff is provided. PES top management provides support to EURES unit. There are two formal annual meetings with top management and regular contacts throughout the year. For example, the European job days are opened by the Minister of Labour and the PES executive director. Also, the information on living and working conditions that is uploaded to the EC site twice a year is provided by the PES for EURES. Plans and reports of EURES unit are part of the PES annual work plan. Summaries of reports go to the Ministry of Labour on a monthly basis. In the PES annual report there is a section on EURES activities. Therefore, the EURES unit and its activities are fully integrated into the PES.	Interviews.
Most important stages and tools	Stages of the process: EURES guidelines -> approved by EC/EURESCO; 1st: planning on the basis of guidelines to meet objectives. Each year: plan is sent to EC. EURES manager drafts the national action plan which goes to the PES executive director for approval. Plan includes actions, objectives, indicators for results. After	Interviews.

Information about EURES		Source
	approval from executive director, plan goes to EC using a form provided by the EC. EURES year starts in June. During the year: monthly information is collected on: • Number of consulted job seekers; • Number of employers consulted, broken down by phone / face to face /e-mail; • Number of colleagues from PES that consulted EURES advisor. EURES advisor at regional level collects information from LPES. After each event, an analytical report containing recommendations and the number of participants is drawn up. An annual report goes to EURESCO. Activities (groups): 1. Improving access to EURES / increasing the visibility within the PES / increasing visibility externally (e.g. employers, students etc.). Through information sessions (>70 a year all over Bulgaria where PES colleagues are informed. Over 1,000 colleagues attended. Questionnaires are sent afterwards, scored 4,75 out of 5 in evaluation of these sessions); information days for job seekers and employers. Two kinds of information days: Open doors in PES offices where EURES assistants attend and information days with participation of EURES advisors, on living and working conditions abroad, on what one needs to know when moving abroad; information days for Bulgarian employers to raise awareness (although Bulgaria is sending country); active communication with media to provide news on EURES on TV, radio in the newspapers; media are invited to large events; Creation and dissemination of information material (>100,000 items disseminated); information sessions for graduates in cooperation with universities and professional schools; 2. Activities to increase mobility: job fairs – either small, specialised job fairs targeted at employers from a single sector (these	

Information about EURES		Source
	are preferred) and larger European job days where employers from 10 to 15 Member States participate (good for the promotion of EURES); 3. Activities aimed at promoting cooperation with stakeholders (Trade Unions, employers and employers' associations, local and regional authorities: Seminars, meetings, cooperation agreements (with universities); 4. Improvement of EURES work (planning, evaluating, knowledge improvement): working meetings combined with training; seminars; in the 9 regional offices, meetings are held to explain next years' plans to e.g. EURES assistants and other PES colleagues; one annual meeting with all advisors; meeting with line managers and directors (they are more and more involved with EURES work). Tools: • EURES portal; • PES website with statistics on e.g. number of registered job seekers; • EURES manual.	
Assessment of the tools: what works well and why and what needs some improvement.	Most tools work well. Where possible improvements are made. European Job days are a mandatory activity for all EURES network partners. They are held at the same time (autumn, sometimes another job day in spring). It is a large event with over 3,000 participants. It is too large to match all foreign employers to local workers. Foreign employers do not provide sufficiently detailed vacancies to be able to communicate these to potential employees in advance. Smaller events would therefore work better and be more efficient. The EURES portal does not work well and sometimes does not work at all. It should be a matching instrument, at the moment it does not function in this way. Job seekers get lost in 1 million vacancies across Europe.	Interviews.
Which factors facilitate or hinder cross-national placement of individuals by EURES. Describe short their impact.	Main factors that hinder placement: 1. Transitional arrangements: Bulgarian workers are not yet free to work in FR, BE, DE, NL, UK;	Interviews.

Information about EURES		Source
	2. The procedure vis-à-vis the recognition of diplomas is complicated (e.g. for doctors, nurses, construction workers). Skills requirements vary between countries. Also, even highly educated people often cannot make a presentable CV or motivational letter / candidates are sometimes not able to present themselves in order to show their skills; 3. Language barrier. Bulgarian workers often do not speak the local language in the destination country and vice versa for foreign workers in Bulgaria. Bulgaria is attractive for tourists but the salaries are not competitive in comparison to other Member States. Factors that facilitate placement: • Good/excellent cooperation between EURES personnel within Bulgaria and with EURES personnel in other Member States; • Relationship with employers and media; • Language skills of job seekers; • CV / presentation skills of job seekers.	
Opinion on the current way/form of reporting in the EA Monthly reports? What works well what does not.	Technical recommendation: • There should be room for remarks/comments in the reports, e.g. to make remarks/comments to the first question on the percentage of time spent on EURES; • It should be possible to supply the type of contact (phone/email/face to face); • Translation of vacancies is very time consuming / labour intensive. There is currently no room to report this to Euresco. Generally, when the EURES network was created the focus was on promotion of international labour mobility. At the moment placement of workers in jobs in other Member States has become more important. There is a requirement to report on the number of people placed as a result of EURES activities, but the number is an underestimation. There is for example no feedback from e.g. job seekers who have found a job using the EURES portal as the portal is open to anyone. A suggestion is to also allow for the	Interviews.

Information about EURES		Source
	number of persons mediated (referred to employers) to be counted, alongside the number of placements.	
Alternative ways for measuring the performance of EURES (describe shortly)	Germany is said to have excellent statistics / detailed information on who was hired where and serves as an example for Bulgaria. If mediation would be measured besides placement, there would be no double counting (if EURES personnel in both the sending and receiving country mediate, they have each done an effort that is counted once).	Interviews.
What other data is available for measuring the performance of EURES (other than that included in the monthly reports)?	• Number of people that have consulted an EURES advisor/assistant; • Number of people that have received information; • Number of people referred to an employer; • Number of people that participated in various events; • Information from registration forms from participants; • Information from questionnaires handed out at events; • Statistics on job seekers that register on EURES micro website that is part of the PES website + number of visitors to the website; • Number of documents prepared for job seekers; • Large survey on functioning of EURES team at national level has been conducted. The survey included client satisfaction and was reported on in 2010. Questionnaires from job seekers and employers are particularly valuable for EURES.	Interviews.
In your opinion, what are (or could be) the best indicators for measuring the impact of EURES on geographical mobility?	It would be ideal to have feedback from all employers on placement but this is not particularly feasible.	Interviews.

5 Geographical labour mobility

5.1 Design

Specific to geographical mobility		Source
Is the performance of geographical mobility activities other than EURES assessed?	The PES closely monitors the movement of people in and out of the country. This is done through international agreements on the exchange of workforce, through exchange of data between Member States and through data on workers sent through mediation by private employment services. There are three sources of information regarding inbound workers: EEA citizens who work in Bulgaria do not need a work permit, but do need to register. Third- country nationals need to apply for a work permit. Thirdly, private employment agencies send reports with data on the number of foreign nationals that have found work in Bulgaria through their mediation. Indicators are monitored to prevent illegal migration, to manage migration according to the economic situation in Bulgaria so migration can be turned into a positive factor in the context of the economic and demographic situation. This is done on the basis of the national action plan and the PES reports to the Ministry. Monitoring of: 1. No of work permits issued; 2. Registration of short term employment of 3rd country citizens; 3. No of intermediary agencies and no of contracts signed with foreign employers; 4. Financial resources in relation to issued work permits; 5. Financial resources in relation to private employment agencies; 6. No of people that have found employment under international agreements and whether they are placed in short or long term or seasonal employment; 7. Level of qualification, level of education of people migrating to and from Bulgaria (monitoring of workforce 'exported', distinction between 'muscle' and 'brain'; 8. Countries for which Bulgaria citizens require work permits for employment. There are bilateral agreements with (non-exhaustive) Germany (one for qualified workers, one for seasonal employment), France and Switzerland (agreements for internships and for qualified workers).	Interviews.

Specific to geographical mobility		Source
Do indicators related to geographical mobility activity exist within the PES performance measurement system?	The following indicators exist but the NEA does not consider these as core part of the PMS: 1. No of work permits issued; 2. Registration of short term employment of 3rd country citizens; 3. No of intermediary agencies and no of contracts signed with foreign employers; 4. Financial resources in relation to issued work permits; 5. Financial resources in relation to private employment agencies; 6. No of people that have found employment under international agreements and whether they are placed in short or long term or seasonal employment; 7. Level of qualification, level of education of people migrating to and from Bulgaria (monitoring of workforce 'exported', distinction between 'muscle' and 'brain'; 8. Countries for which Bulgaria citizens require work permits for employment.	Interviews.
Are targets in place?	No. The main goal of monitoring numbers of workers leaving Bulgaria and entering Bulgaria and their characteristics is to be able to foresee skills needs in Bulgaria in the near future. It is part of monitoring demand and supply on the labour market which is supplied to the Ministry of Labour to take into consideration when deciding on the programmes and measures that are to be implemented to meet future labour market needs (also to be taken into account when retraining unemployed).	Interviews.
Does the PES collect any (other) data on geographical mobility activity (i.e. which is not included in the performance measurement system)?	Information submitted by private employment agencies on the no of workers placed due to their mediation (Bulgarian workers moving abroad) is collected. No other data are collected by the PES.	Interviews.
Does the PES also monitor geographical labour mobility on the basis of data provided by another organisation (e.g. statistical office)? Which indicators are used?	Yes. 1. All labour contracts are registered by the national revenue agency. The revenue agency supplies info on the no of workers that are gainfully employed from other EU/EEA countries and on self-employed / persons who have set up a company in Bulgaria from other EU/EEA countries; 2. Information on 3rd country nationals can be obtained from the Ministry of Interior or Foreign Affairs Ministry. This is only done if needed and does not take place on a regular basis; 3. Labour attachés of Berlin (DE, AT), London (UK, IE), Athens and Madrid embassies provide the PES with local info; 4. Migrant organisations (NGOs) provide the PES with	Interviews.

Specific to geographical mobility		Source
	qualitative / non-official information. This gives an idea of the attitude of Bulgaria emigrants in other countries towards returning to Bulgaria.	
Where in the PES is data collected and processed?	Centrally.	Interviews.
How is quality of service/client satisfaction related to geographical labour mobility activities measured?	Not measured.	Interviews.
Is contact maintained with clients to ascertain the results of services related to geographical labour mobility provided? For example, are any follow-up surveys undertaken?	No.	Interviews.

5.2 Use

Specific to geographical mobility		Source
At what organisational level (strategic, operational, etc.) and frequency is the effectiveness of services related geographical mobility monitored?	Thorough and detailed data on geographical mobility are not available. This is an EU wide issue. At the operational level data on international mobility is used for redesigning programmes and measures in terms of funding required. At the strategic level, information is used for strategic planning based on prognosis.	Interviews.
Is monitoring information or data used to inform future activity/resource allocation?	Yes.	Interviews.
Are good practices identified and shared? By whom?	No.	Interviews.
Where and when is information on geographical mobility and associated activity used? Is it shared with cross-border/trans-national partners?	Information is conveyed to Ministry of Labour. The PES is not involved in its further use by the Ministry and is not aware of whether or not information is shared by the Ministry. The information contributes to the elaboration of the entire labour market policy of the Ministry of Labour. The PES does also provide information to e.g. the national statistics bureau and occasionally provides input/advice to the Ministry of Labour as needed. Regarding the exchange of information: there is no regulation/legislation in place and no requests for information are received by the PES. Sometimes ad hoc information is provided but not on a regular basis. Recently, the CZ Ministry of Labour sent a request to be provided with the no of CZ citizens working in Bulgaria on an employment contract, for example. Such a request was also received (and an answer was provided) from the Indian embassy.	Interviews.

Annex

Used sources
Interviews:
DWP, International review, 2009.
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Yearbook 2010.
NEA website:
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