

# Career consultations

Information review: October 2015

## LATVIA

The practice is part of the government efforts to improve the capacity and quality of the State Employment Agency (SEA), in particular as part of preventative actions aimed at reducing unemployment.

The service offers free-of-charge career consultations and assistance (information and professional advice) related to professional suitability, re-skilling or other questions for the registered unemployed, jobseekers and other groups.

Overall, the evaluation found that SEA provides career consultancy services which are in line with the career development support system guidelines.

### Name of the PES

Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra  
State Employment Agency

### When was the practice implemented?

September 2007 – on-going

### Which organisation was involved in its implementation?

There is close collaboration with schools and universities. Psychological consultations have always been outsourced to specialists, but since late 2009 core consultation activities have been outsourced to the private and third sector as well.

### Which social groups were targeted by the practice?

Jobseekers;  
Unemployed.  
However, from 2011 priority has been given to young people (15-24 years old), long-term unemployed, and older unemployed people.

### What were the practice's main objectives?

The aim is to provide high quality assistance in choosing an occupation and planning a career, with a view to decrease unemployment and reducing training costs. Since the career consultation service was integrated into the SEA (in 2007), a further aim is to provide both employment and career advice services, ensuring the principle of a one-stop agency in 27 regional offices in Latvia.

### What activities were carried out?

The activities include the following:

- ▶ Individual career consultations: one hour per participant. It includes information about possible career options, creation of an individual career plan, advice on job interviews and creation of a CV.
- ▶ Individual career aptitude consultation: two hour consultation, which includes aptitude tests.
- ▶ Self-evaluation tests;
- ▶ Individual consultation to support problem solving;
- ▶ Group career consultation; they last for three hours and address career and education opportunities as well as assessment of professional competences and their conformity with current labour market needs.
- ▶ e-consultations;
- ▶ Communication training;

Other support activities used in career consultation service are seminars, lectures, and a variety of information materials.

### What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?

The career consultation service has an administrative centre in the SEA office in Riga, but consultations and services are available at all 27 SEA regional branches.  
Up to August 2009, there were more than 60 in-house career consultants, but this was reduced to 36 by 2013 with some core activities outsourced.

### Source(s) of funding

National budget (tax revenue)

What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?	<p><b>People reached:</b></p> <p>In 2006-2008, the number of people who used career consultation services exceeded the planned outcome. In 2006 53 463 people (116% of the target), in 2007 44 252 (93% of target) and in 2007 and in 2008 67 939 (143% of target). The sharp growth observed was tied to the economic recession.</p> <p><b>Products:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Website</li> <li>2) Career consultation e-information (online tests of interests, questionnaires, self-check tests, online games, motivation tests, career planner and others);</li> <li>3) Career information search tool (includes information about educational opportunities, descriptions and job classification);</li> <li>4) Materials also include: guidelines, publications, brochures and other informative materials such as CDs and DVDs.</li> </ol>
What outcomes have been identified?	<p>The share of unemployed among the clients who used career consultation service increased from 23% and 27% in the first two years, and to 57% in 2008.</p> <p>The latest data are for 2011 when priority was given to young people (15-24 years old), long-term unemployed, and older unemployed. For that year, 47 721 clients were served, 84% of whom were unemployed people.</p>
What are the lessons learnt and success factors?	<p>The lessons learnt included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ There is a need to develop preventative type of career guidance measures.</li> <li>▶ There is a need to improve the use of e-consultations and ICT in delivering career guidance services.</li> <li>▶ It is important to collaborate with other institutions in the preparation and dissemination of different information materials.</li> <li>▶ Information materials should be adapted to the needs of the each specific target group, including translations in relevant languages, adaption to each age and disability group.</li> <li>▶ There is a need for improved inter-institutional cooperation.</li> <li>▶ New activities could be developed, e.g. work trials – especially for young people.</li> <li>▶ There is a need to improve collaboration with employers, as their needs are often not considered.</li> </ul>
More information on the practice	<p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/empl_portal/weesp/LV-3.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/empl_portal/weesp/LV-3.pdf</a></p>



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