

Service contract for measures to enhance cooperation between
Public Employment Services (PES), in particular services to implement
a 'Benchlearning' concept within the PES Network

Guidelines for PES Data Collection and Data Entry

Background

The 1st and 2nd PES Benchlearning cycles formed the basis for the overall methodology of the quantitative benchmarking exercise. Throughout this period, with support of the PES Network members, the definitions of the variables requested were finetuned in order to improve their clarity as well as the comparability of the data.

The focus of the 3rd cycle is to increase data quality to the maximum extent possible. Positive developments have already been made during the last year's data collection, yet a further step is needed. Therefore, every PES is invited, to provide an active contribution by:

- reviewing data provision scripts in order to extract data the way specifically requested for this purpose;
- providing data on long-term-unemployed (LTU) not only for the latest reference years but also backwards until 2010 if not already done;
- for those who did not provide data on participants in ALMP measures (POP1b) and subsidised employment (POP6b) variables, reconsidering options for the provision. Even if your PES is not fully responsible for certain ALMP measures, the ICON team would appreciate the delivery of at least the data on measures in PES responsibility¹. Combined with the more detailed questions in the metadata checklist, it enables us to improve our estimates.

Given the importance of compliance with the PES BL requirements, we recommend you to first fill in the metadata checklist before inputting the data. This will facilitate the early identification of potential issues and an appropriate reaction. The metadata checklist will include a few additional questions that will serve analysis purposes. It is enough to respond to these questions only for the latest reference year – 2019.

These guidelines consist of 1) guidance on data provision and 2) detailed definitions of the variables requested. A questionnaire on jobseeker and employer satisfaction surveys is provided in the annex. Please read carefully the information provided in the guidelines.

¹ **Responsibility** is defined as the PES responsibility for the management and implementation of an intervention, or as the PES responsibility for disbursement of grants/allowances/benefits and financial incentives. Full responsibility means PES is responsible for all ALMP measures of this type distributed in its region of operation. Partial responsibility means PES is responsible for some of the ALMP measures of this type distributed in its region of operation.

Guidance on data provision

The data collection exercise is exclusively performed with the use of the custom-built **online PES Data Collection tool²**, which is accessible only to the PES experts working on the data provision. Each PES is requested to provide the following inputs:

- fill in the metadata checklist
- submit data on POP, SAT, VAC and EXP variables
- fill in the SAT questionnaire.

The tool comes pre-filled with data provided in previous data collections. PES are kindly invited to fill the blank cells and revise any previously submitted data, if necessary. Last year not all PES provided the breakdown of variables POP1a, POP1b, POP3, POP6a and POP6b into LTU and non-LTU. In this case, please provide the data for the missing year t (t=2010, ..., 2019).

The online tool supports the following functionalities:

Data Entry

- Online data entry and editing of POP, SAT, VAC and EXP variables. Data can also be directly uploaded from Excel files to the tool.
- Multi-year export per variable and indicator for each PES. Data for all years for individual variables or indicators can be exported in a single file.
- Calculation of totals and subtotals for each variable. Totals by age cohort, gender and ISCED level in each data entry table are automatically calculated by the tool.
- Collection of background information (metadata) via the metadata checklist and SAT questionnaire. Additional comments can be provided under each requested variable.

Data Validation and Monitoring

- Automated data validation through a set of data checks. The user is notified about major inconsistencies in the data. Consistency checks between cells are performed only if all data are available (detailed validation is performed by the ICON team outside of the data entry tool).
- Automated calculation of mandatory indicators.
- Progress report on the completion rate by variable and year of reference.

Home page

- Information about validation errors: The list of validation errors by year of reference.
- Information about not provided data: The list of variables that are fully or partially incomplete.
- Information about 'TO DO' items: If PES has not submitted the checklist or the satisfaction questionnaire, there will be a new 'TO DO' item.

² <https://entry.pes-benchlearning.eu>

Definitions of the variables

Variable – POP1

The variable POP1 contains two components (POP1a and POP1b) which should be delivered separately and stratified by gender, relevant age cohorts and ISCED levels.

POP1a and POP1b should also be delivered stratified by length of the unemployment spell, into two strata:

1. non-LTU (persons whose unemployment spell is less than 12 months) and
2. LTU (persons whose unemployment spell is 12 months or more).

Only the totals of POP1a and POP1b need to be delivered by length of the spell, i.e. not their gender, age cohort or ISCED levels subtotals.

The *national approach for calculation of the length of the unemployment spell* will be used. This refers in particular to the way short interruptions (due to illness, exit to employment, etc.) are treated in this calculation.

POP1a comprises the number of persons (i.e. not spells) at the end³ of each month *i* (*i*=1, ..., 12) in a given year *t* (*t*=2010, ..., 2019) who are registered with the PES, who are available for the labour market and who are, or should be, looking for a job excluding those on any active labour market measure. That is, POP1a contains all registered persons **excluding** the following:

1. Participants in any ALMP-measure of the LMP database categories 2-7 or those in LMP database category 9⁴.
2. Full- or part-time working persons who do **not** receive unemployment benefits^{5,6}.
3. Persons who – based on a legal entitlement – claim that they are not searching for work.
4. Persons who are sick and, therefore, are not available for the labour market.
5. Persons who for any other reason are **not** available for the labour market (e.g. students⁷).

³ If a PES calculates this by default in the middle of a month, this is also acceptable. However, it must be ensured that the same reference date is consistently used for all calculations (also for all other variables).

⁴ To be precise, participants in LMP database category 1 should be counted in POP1a irrespective of their unemployment status according to national legislation.

⁵ In this note, unemployment benefits are defined as payments for which eligibility depends on a certain minimum period of past employment. Thus, unemployment benefits also comprise payments which are called 'unemployment allowance', 'unemployment assistance', or alike. By contrast, it does **not** include benefit payments which are paid independently of prior employment periods like 'social assistance', 'social allowance', or alike. The same then holds of course for benefits like 'child allowance', 'housing subsidies', etc.

⁶ By contrast, persons who work and simultaneously receive unemployment benefits (in the definition above) should be counted in POP1a.

⁷ This implies that students who register because they are searching for a job should be counted in POP1a since they are available for the labour market.

POP1b comprises the number of persons (i.e. not spells) who are participating in ALMP measures in the following categories (according to the LMP database) at the end of each month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$):

- (1) Training (LMP category 2)
- (2) Job rotation and job sharing (LMP category 4.3)
- (3) Sheltered and supported employment and rehabilitation (LMP category 5)
- (4) Direct job creation (LMP category 6)

It is not necessary to provide data on each of the four ALMP-categories above, but only the sum of them. This sum does, however, **not** include persons in LMP database category 4.1 (recruitment incentives) or category 7 (start-up incentives). If you are not able to provide the data for all mentioned ALMP-categories, we would highly appreciate, if you provide the data for ALMP-measures which are in the responsibility of your PES.

The sum of POP1a and POP1b will be called **POP1sum** in what follows.

Calculation: For each year (t) and both components mentioned above, separately sum up all persons who fulfil the requirements at the end of each month (i) and divide the result by 12.

Variable – POP6

The variable POP6 contains two components (POP6a and POP6b) which should be delivered separately and stratified by gender, relevant age cohorts and ISCED levels.

POP6a and POP6b should also be delivered stratified by length of the unemployment spell, into two strata:

1. non-LTU (persons whose unemployment spell is less than 12 months) and
2. LTU (persons whose unemployment spell is 12 months or more)

Only the totals of POP6a and POP6b need to be delivered by length of the spell, i.e. not their gender, age cohort or ISCED levels subtotals.

The *national approach for calculation of the length of the unemployment spell* will be used. This refers in particular to the way short interruptions (due to illness, exit to employment, etc.) are treated in this calculation.

POP6a contains the number of persons (i.e. not spells) who exited POP1sum because they started to work on a contractual basis during month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$) **without** receiving a subsidy. In this context it does **not** matter if the subsidy is granted to the person or his / her employer. This implies that persons who exited POP1sum into an ALMP-measure of the LMP database categories 4.1, 6 and 7 should be excluded from POP6a.

POP6b contains the number of persons (i.e. not spells) who exited POP1sum because they started to work on a contractual basis during month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$) while receiving a subsidy for the primary labour market. Again, here it does **not** matter if the subsidy is granted to the person or his / her employer. This is equivalent to the number of persons who exited POP1sum into an ALMP-measure of the LMP database categories 4.1 or 7 (but **not** category 6).

Please note:

- If a person who receives unemployment benefits (for a definition see footnote 5 above) starts to work but continues to receive unemployment benefits, this person should **not** be counted in any component of POP6 because this person is not exiting POP1sum.
- If a person started to work two or more times during one month, this person should be counted only as **one** exit to work in the respective component of POP6 of the relevant month. If this person re-registers in the following month, then this person should be counted as an entry (see POP0) for the following month. Hence, for counting the exits to work for a specific month (i) it does not matter for how long a person remained in work but it is decisive that persons are counted and **not** spells.

The sum of POP6a and POP6b will be called POP6sum in what follows.

Calculation: For each year (t) and both components mentioned above, separately sum up all persons who fulfil the requirements at the end of each month (i) and divide the result by 12.

Variable – POP7

The variable POP7 contains two components (POP7_6 and POP7_12) which should be delivered separately and stratified by gender, relevant age cohorts and ISCED levels.

POP7_6 contains the number of persons (i.e. not spells) at the end of each month i (i=1, ..., 12) in a given year t (t=2010, ..., 2019) in POP6sum who fulfilled the requirements of POP6a or POP6b within 6 months of belonging to POP1sum.

POP7_12 contains the number of persons (i.e. not spells) at the end of each month i (i=1, ..., 12) in a given year t (t=2010, ..., 2019) in POP6sum who fulfilled the requirements of POP6a or POP6b within 12 months of belonging to POP1sum.

Calculation: For each year (t) and both components mentioned above, separately sum up all persons who fulfil the requirements at the end of each month (i) and divide the result by 12.

Variable – POP3

The variable POP3 contains only one component which should be stratified by gender, relevant age cohorts and ISCED levels.

POP3 should also be delivered stratified by length of the unemployment spell, into two strata:

1. non-LTU (persons whose unemployment spell is less than 12 months) and
2. LTU (persons whose unemployment spell is 12 months or more)

Only the total of POP3 needs to be delivered by length of the spell, i.e. not its gender, age cohort or ISCED levels subtotals.

The *national approach for calculation of the length of the unemployment spell* will be used. This refers in particular to the way short interruptions (due to illness, exit to employment, etc.) are treated in this calculation.

POP3 contains the number of persons (i.e. not spells) who exited POP1sum during each month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$) **independently** of the reason/destination.

Please note:

- If a person exited POP1sum two or more times during one month, this person should be counted **only once** in POP3 of that month. Again, it is important that persons are counted and not spells.

Calculation: For each year (t), sum up all persons who fulfil the requirements at the end of each month (i) and divide the result by 12.

Variable – POP0

The variable POP0 contains only one component which should be stratified by gender, relevant age cohorts and ISCED levels.

POP0 contains the number of persons (i.e. not spells) entering POP1sum during month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$) without having been in POP1sum the month before or after having left POP1sum during the month before.

Please note:

- This implies that re-registrations for administrative reasons or due to legal requirements should **not** be counted in POP0.
- It also implies that persons having finished an ALMP-measure and not exiting into work are **not** counted in POP0.

Calculation: For each year (t), sum up all persons who fulfil the requirements at the end of each month (i) and divide the result by 12⁸.

Variable – POP8

The variable POP8 contains only one component which should be stratified by gender, relevant age cohorts and ISCED levels.

POP8 contains the number of persons (i.e. not spells) entering POP1sum during month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$) without having been in POP1sum during the 6 months before and who have been inactive during these 6 months (i.e. have neither worked nor been in training or education).

Calculation: For each year (t), sum up all persons who fulfil the requirements at the end of each month (i) and divide the result by 12⁹.

⁸ For January of each year (t), December of the preceding year ($t-1$) has to be taken into account.

⁹ Depending on the month of registration with PES, some months in the previous year may have to be included in the definition of the 6-month period of inactivity. For example, the relevant 6-month period of inactivity for a person who entered POP1sum on 1 April 2019 would be October, November and December 2018, as well as January, February and March 2019.

Variable – SAT

The variable SAT contains two components (Jobseeker_SAT and Employer_SAT) which should be delivered separately.

Jobseeker_SAT contains the share of jobseekers which were generally satisfied with the services of the PES in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$).

Employer_SAT contains the share of employers which were generally satisfied with the services of the PES in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$).

Calculation for both shares:

- In general, always omit 'no answer', 'no opinion', and related categories for the calculation of the shares, i.e. all remaining categories should sum up to 100%.
- If there is an even number of answer categories, take the 'upper' half for calculating the share of satisfied.
- If there is an odd number of answer categories because a 'neutral' value is included in the middle, omit the neutral value and recalculate the remaining responses as if they make up 100%. Then take the 'upper' half of the remaining categories for calculating the share of satisfied.

Information on the design of the survey is extremely important as it is used for the context-adjustment of the PES indicators and is collected through the specially designed questionnaire (see Annex).

Variable – VAC

The variable VAC contains three components (VAC2a, VAC3a, and VAC3b) which should be delivered separately. The term 'notified' vacancy appears in all three variables. A notified vacancy for the purpose of this exercise includes vacancies which are directly posted to the PES by an employer. The vacancies may be posted to the PES through any conduit, be it online, mail or telephone, etc. However, a 'notified' vacancy does not include vacancies taken by PES from other vacancy websites, recruitment agencies or any other source.

Please also note that a vacancy is considered to be filled, if the employer closes the job advertisement or a client of the PES filled the vacancy. In particular, the vacancy does not have to be 'mediated by PES'. The ICON team is aware that this constraint appears in the wording of VAC3a. However, in practice, it is impossible to clearly define 'PES mediation' in a manner which is practically implementable.

If a job advertisement is automatically closed after a certain amount of time due to internal regulations or alike, this automatic closure should not be counted as 'filled'.

VAC2a contains the number of vacancies **notified** during month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$). This explicitly refers to **an inflow** and not a stock of vacancies.

VAC3a contains the number of notified vacancies at the end of month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$) which were filled.

VAC3b contains the number of notified vacancies at the end of month i ($i=1, \dots, 12$) in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$) which were filled within 60 days after **notification to the PES**.

Calculation: For each year (t), sum up all vacancies which fulfil the requirements at the end of each month (i) and divide the result by 12.

Variable - EXP

The variables concerning expenditure comprise the annual expenditures incurred by the PES in Euro. The PES is the institution that is member of the European PES Network¹⁰. Expenditures for all parts of this institution are included, at all geographical levels.

The variable **EXP** (total) contains six components, EXPa, EXPb, EXPc, EXPd, EXPe and EXPf which should be delivered separately. **These six components should add up to the figure of total expenditure.** All expenditure figures should be *expressed in EURO*¹¹ and not rounded to the nearest thousand or million.

EXP (total) comprises the global annual expenditure incurred by the PES. It is the actual expenditure in the year, not the budget foreseen in advance. This figure includes all PES expenses made in the reference year t (t=2010, ..., 2019) irrespective of their nature.

EXPa (benefits) comprises the PES expenditure on *all* types of benefits (including unemployment benefits, unemployment assistance and social assistance, such as child benefits, etc.) for which the PES has the responsibility of disbursement in a given year t (t=2010, ..., 2019) with no breakdowns.

Not included in this amount are expenditures on benefits provided by other public institutions, such as unemployment insurance funds, municipalities or training institutions that are not part of the PES and not financed by the PES.

EXPb (ALMP) comprises the PES expenditure on active labour market policy measures (allocated in the LMP database to the categories from 2 to 7) in a given year t (t=2010, ..., 2019). Activities included under categories 2-7 in the Eurostat LMP database includes:

- the PES expenditures on all ALMPs,
- in the case of in-house activities all facilities it has for this purpose, e.g. training materials, trainers and training institutions (if applicable),
- in the case of outsourcing, all expenditures for the activities that are outsourced.

Expenditures on (wage cost) subsidies to employers and travel costs reimbursements to jobseekers related to ALMPs *are* included.

Not included in this amount are expenditures on employment services such as placement and counselling. They belong to staff costs and should be reported under EXPc. If there are other expenses concerning this item (e.g. outsourcing of counselling to a private company), it should be placed under other expenses (EXPf).

Not included in this amount are expenditures on services provided by other public institutions, such as unemployment insurance funds, municipalities or training institutions that are not part of the PES and not financed by the PES.

EXPc (staff costs) comprises the PES expenditure on staff costs in a given year t (t=2010, ..., 2019). It includes gross wages, holiday pay, social security contributions and any other wage components. It includes all PES staff, front as well as back office, dealing with employment / ALMPs as well as benefits, etc.

EXPd (staff training costs) comprises the PES expenditure on staff training in a given year t (t=2010, ..., 2019). All costs related to the training of staff, including PES expenditure

¹⁰ If the PES does not have its own or separate accounts, e.g. because it is part of a larger organisation (ministry, other public body) the costs will need to be estimated. The methodology for this can be discussed and agreed with the consultant.

¹¹ OANDA currency convertor (<https://www.oanda.com/currency/convertor>) can be used.

related to in-house trainers and institutions, as well as expenditures for external training should be included, i.e.

- in the case of in-house activities all costs related to the training of staff and to in-house trainers and institutions,
- in the case of outsourcing, all expenditures for external training.

EXPe (pro forma expenditure post) comprises the PES expenditure that is formally included in the PES budget in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$), but that is in reality intended for other institutions; the money is forwarded to those institutions and the PES is not involved in the management or implementation of the activities these funds are for.

EXPf (other) comprises all other PES expenditures in a given year t ($t=2010, \dots, 2019$) not included in EXPa to EXPe categories, such as maintenance costs, investments in building and ICT, etc.

The six expenditure categories EXPa, EXPb, EXPc, EXPd, EXPe and EXPf *should add up* to the figure of total expenditure (EXP).

ANNEX

SAT's Questionnaire

Question 1: Have you conducted either jobseeker or employer satisfaction surveys or both this year (please tick appropriate box)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Yes		
No		
Comment		

Question 2: If the answer to question 1 above is yes: How often did you conduct these surveys in this year (please tick appropriate box)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Monthly		
Quarterly		
Twice		
Once		
Other (specify)		
Comment		

Question 3: If the answer to either survey is that it was conducted more than once in this year: Does the data provided to us refer to a particular month (or quarter, or semester) or was it the average for the year (please tick the appropriate box)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Specific month / quarter / semester / etc.		
The average for the year		
Comment		

Question 4: Was either of the surveys conducted internally (i.e. by PES staff) or commissioned to external consultants/service providers (please tick appropriate box)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Internal		
External		
Comment		

Question 5: If either of the surveys were commissioned to external consultants/service providers: Were these the same consultants/service providers that conducted the survey in the previous year (please tick the appropriate box)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Yes		
No		
Comment		

Question 6: What method was used to gather the information in each survey this year (please tick the appropriate box)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Phone survey		
Postal survey		
E-mail		
Face-to-face		
Online		
Other (please specify)		
Comment		

Question 7: Were some or all of the jobseekers or the employers who were surveyed this year also surveyed in the previous year (please tick the appropriate box)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Yes		
No		
Don't know		
Comment		

Question 8: If the answer to question 7 above is yes: What is the % of jobseekers or employers who participated in the survey in the previous year (please fill in the appropriate box)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Percentage (%)		
Don't know		
Comment		

Question 9a: Who is the target population for the jobseeker satisfaction survey (please tick appropriate box)?

	Yes	No
All jobseekers on the PES register at that point in time		
All jobseekers who newly registered since the last survey		
All jobseekers on the PES register who are considered to be active jobseekers at that point in time		
All jobseekers on PES register which were actively mediated by PES staff		
Other (please specify in detail)		
Comment		

Question 9b: Who is the target population for the employers' satisfaction survey (please tick appropriate box)?

	Yes	No
All employers in the geographical area of responsibility of the PES		
All employers who are somehow 'in contact' with the PES (e.g. by notifying vacancies, being registered at the online platform, etc.)		
All employers who are known to have recruited jobseekers from the PES register in recent months		
Other (please specify in detail)		
Comment		

Question 10: How do you select the participants from the target population for the jobseekers' and/or the employers' satisfaction surveys?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Randomly		
Stratified according to specific variables so that they are representative for the relevant population		
Other (please specify)		
Comment		

Question 11a: If stratified: Please list the variables used for the jobseeker satisfaction survey?

	Jobseekers
Gender	
Age	
ISCED level	
Other (please specify)	
Comment	

Question 11b: If stratified: Please list the variables used for the employers' satisfaction survey?

	Employers
Size	
Sectors	
Region	
Other (please specify)	
Comment	

Question 12: How many scales do you use for rating *different levels of satisfaction* (e.g. 'satisfied'; 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'; 'dissatisfied' = 3 scales)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Number of scales		
Comment		

Question 13: In the data that you delivered to us: How many scales did you combine to calculate the 'share of satisfied'?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Number of scales		
Comment		

Question 14: Is 'overall satisfaction' of the services provided as a separate item in the survey of this year (in contrast to being constructed as an average of another item, e.g. satisfied with online services, satisfied with information provided, satisfied with personnel, etc. ...)?

	Jobseekers	Employers
Yes		
No		
If no, please specify how it is measured		
Comment		