

## Public employment services in Europe working together to overcome the crisis

*On 7 and 8 December, the 14th board meeting of the European Public Employment Services Network was held online. Because Germany currently holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, its Federal Employment Agency hosted the meeting. Federal Minister Hubertus Heil opened the event and took part in the panel discussion.*



The pandemic is putting labour markets to the test. Across all EU Member States, millions of workers are in short time work schemes, young people are worried about their training opportunities and many people are afraid they will lose their income.

Working together to deal with the impact of the crisis is a priority of Germany's Presidency of the Council of the European Union. At the meeting, Federal Minister Heil expressed his satisfaction with the results of the initiatives on social and employment policy.

By strengthening the Youth Guarantee, it is now possible to give young people even better support in their transition into training programmes. The crisis has resulted in young people being hit hard by unemployment. In order to provide support at European level to preserve jobs despite the crisis, the member states have agreed on a financial instrument. It can now be used by the member states to promote short-time work schemes. The ministers of employment and social policy have also agreed on a basis for the creation of a well-functioning minimum income scheme.

Federal Minister Heil: "Enhancing the social dimension of Europe has been one of the most important goals of our Presidency. I am very pleased about that, because especially in times of crisis it is important to ensure that people stay in or take up training and employment, and it is important to protect them from poverty. In these times it is particularly important for the public employment services to work together, because especially now their support is crucial for a functioning labour market."

Public employment services have a key role to play in getting through the crisis and in implementing initiatives. Together with **Nicolas Schmit**, European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, **Johannes Kopf**, Chair of the Public Employment Services Network, and **Daniel Terzenbach**, executive board member of the Federal Employment Agency,

Federal Minister Heil emphasised the importance of the cooperation that has been taking place in the PES Network since 2013. Regularly exchanging ideas is necessary for the public employment services in Europe to learn from each other and to become better together. The decision to extend this cooperation in the PES network until 2027, which was adopted during Germany's Presidency of the Council of the European Union, is an important milestone.

On the second day of the board meeting, the members of the PES network discussed the network's work programme for the coming year, the future of work, digital transformation and the challenges facing public employment services.