

DECLARATION OF INTENT

BETWEEN THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES OF THE VISEGRAD
COUNTRIES, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY, THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
AND THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Section 1

The purpose of this Declaration is to strengthen cooperation between the Heads of Public Employment Services (Parties) in order to support achieving objectives set out by the Europe 2020 strategy with special emphasis on youth employment and labour mobility.

Section 2

Parties recognize that youth unemployment remains a crucial issue in the Visegrad Countries, similarly to all Member States of the European Union. A comprehensive package of policy initiatives was introduced by the Europe 2020 strategy to improve the education and employability of young people. The Youth on the Move flagship initiative, the Youth Opportunities Initiative and the Youth Employment Package aim to contribute to tackling difficulties young people face while entering the labour market and to foster transition between education and working life.

The Youth Employment Package recommends the Member States to establish a Youth Guarantee to ensure that all young people up to age 25 receive a quality offer of a job, education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving education or becoming unemployed.

Section 3

Parties recall that the network of the European Employment Services (EURES) is the largest structure to support transnational labour mobility in Europe. 2014 is the year of reform for EURES in order to strengthen its role in matching, recruitment and job placement as well as tailor-made counselling and information both for employers and job-seekers in relation with cross-border labour mobility.

The reinforced EURES network can be financed from the resources of the European Social Fund, based on the decision of each Member State. The renewed funding scheme allows the Member States to develop a EURES system which serves better the national labour market needs while fulfilling the quality criteria set up by the applicable European policy documents. Setting up the National Coordination Offices and the accompanying coordination structures within a member state is a new and unprecedented challenge which, for the purpose of mutual learning, deserves intensive discussions among the parties. Also, the indicator systems needed for application to ESF funds and for the reporting system are issue areas where member states can work together.

Section 4

Parties acknowledge that the Visegrad Group provides a framework for the Member States for enhanced co-operation in the field of employment, especially to find solutions for the unemployment of young people.

Section 5

Parties recognize the significance of the issues of youth employment and the implementation of the EURES reform. Parties aim to call the attention of the upcoming Presidencies of the Visegrad Group to place these areas among the sectoral priorities of the Presidency programmes thus the Parties may follow-up and reflect the development of these fields.

Section 6

With the intention of increasing further co-operation of stakeholders of the labour markets of the Visegrad Countries, Parties recommend the Member States of the Visegrad Group to include employment related themes (especially when it comes to the above-mentioned challenges) in the scheme of the Visegrad Fund. This would enable the civil society, public institutions as well as the business sector to have access to financial resources for mutual learning, advocacy and other common projects in the context of labour market issues.

Section 7

Besides the above, Parties wish to co-operate in mutually relevant labour market topics or issues which are of common interest due to our obligation to reach the EU 2020 objectives using the following tools:

1. Exchange of information on labour market developments;
2. Development of employment policy tools with special focus on targeting young people and other disadvantaged job seekers, and the practices related thereto;
3. Labour market analysis: theory and practice;
4. Cooperation with other actors of the labour market;
5. Exchange of best practices on training models appropriate to labour market needs, exchange of experiences concerning the vocational training and skills development of job seekers.

Section 8

This Declaration of Intent was signed in Budapest, on²⁵February, 2014, in four originals, in English language.

On behalf of
the Labour Office of the Czech Republic

Marie Bilkova
Director-General

On behalf of
the National Labour Office of Hungary

Róbert Komáromi
Director-General

On behalf of
the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy,
Poland

Jacek Mecina
Secretary of State

On behalf of
the Central Office of Labour, Social
Affairs and Family, Slovakia

Marián Valentovič
Director-General