

ILO Welcomes WAPES to Geneva

As a result of the meeting February 22 hosted by the Employment Sector with the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES) in Geneva, new opportunities for partnership are developing.

WAPES is the international professional organization of the Directors of National Public Employment Services, and it is a key partner of EMP/SKILLS in the promotion of improvements in public employment services around the world. WAPES and the ILO have been working together since the founding of WAPES in the late 1980s by six countries and ILO. It has since grown to 75 members and is now divided into five regional groups.

WAPES sponsors workshops and study visits on topics of mutual interest to its members. These workshops are also an important means of transmitting ILO research and tools. WAPES also produces a newsletter and maintains a website. WAPES and the ILO have just collaborated on a survey of WAPES members that provides the most comprehensive information available on the world-wide organization and programmes of national public employment services.

The meeting in Geneva was attended by PES national administrators from France, Germany, Japan, Morocco, Mali, Sweden, Netherlands and Belgium, as well as WAPES Secretariat staff. A good portion of the day was devoted to presentations which were intended to familiarize WAPES members with the relevant activities of the ILO and familiarize the ILO staff with the role of employment services around the world. A presentation on PES activities was made by WAPES President Mr. Christian Charpy, the Director-General of the French Public Employment Service (ANPE). Presentations on the ILO were made by Mr. José-Manuel Salazar, Mr. Peter Auer, Ms. Giovanna Rossignotti and Ms. Chris Evans-Klock of the Employment Sector as well as Mr. Alejandro Bonilla-Garcia of ISSA and Mr. Valter Nebuloni of ILO-TURIN.

The other objective of the meeting was to discuss ways to create synergies between the two organizations, particularly in the provision of technical assistance and technical cooperation. Several specific actions were proposed, and a follow-up meeting will be held shortly in Sweden to plan the next concrete steps.