APPROVED BY

State Employment Agency *[Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra]*

Director E. Simsone *[E. Simsone]*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

July \_\_\_, 2019

**THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA**

**MINISTRY OF WELFARE *[LABKLĀJĪBAS MINISTRIJA]***



*[Coat of arms of The Republic of Latvia]*

State Employment Agency

**YEAR 2018**

**PUBLIC REPORT**

**Riga, 2019**Dear reader,

In the European Union, the employment situation in 2018 was positive, with unemployment falling, and the number of new jobs being created. More than 239 million people were in employment relationships. In Latvia, too, the registered unemployment rates continued to fall in 2018, falling to just 6.1% in September and October, the lowest since 2008. During the year, the number of registered unemployed persons has decreased by 3,533 persons: if at the beginning of January 2018 there were 63,121 unemployed persons registered with the State Employment Agency *[Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra]* (hereinafter, also – SEA), at the end of December 2018 the number was 59,588. During the last year, 63,633 unemployed persons registered with the SEA started their employment, of whom 22,516 or 35.4% were employed after completing an event organised by the SEA.

In 2018, employers had registered 88,492 vacancies with the SEA, which was 24% more than in year 2017. The largest increase in job vacancies in year 2018 was observed in the medium-skilled, skilled workers and craftsmen, as well as in the low-skilled professions. The largest increase in job vacancies occurred in the construction sector, as well as transportation and storage sectors.

Throughout the entire year, active work was carried out with employers in order to help them find the required employees. Entrepreneurs and companies increasingly utilised services of the SEA and became involved in the implementation of active employment measures, vacancy fairs, and activities of SEA such as "Open Day for Persons with Disabilities in Companies" and "Career Days for Job Seekers". The number of employers increased, who selected such a service implemented by the SEA as the practical training of unemployed in the company, hence the employers increasingly provided the necessary training of the required employee for the needs of their company with the support of the SEA. The SEA also provided employers with the opportunity to receive free assistance in organising the recruitment process. Selection activities of the job seekers required by the employers were organised for 13,571 available vacancies in branches of SEA.

We paid great attention to the quality of training for the unemployed and job seekers. Enhanced monitoring of the quality of training continued, and regular reviews of the quality of service provided by all training providers and evaluation of cooperation went on, as well. The quality of preparation of documents related to the training process, compliance with their submission deadlines, attendance records and other conditions of cooperation were analyzed. We also interviewed our clients – unemployed and job seekers about the quality of services required by the SEA. In order to better and more precisely identify the needs of the labour market, the knowledge and skills of workers required by employers, and find ways of matching labour supply and demand, employer surveys and short-term labour market forecasts were elaborated.

The situation in the labour market is increasingly influenced by automation of the work processes, the introduction of digital solutions, and the introduction of artificial intelligence. Demands of the society in regard to the quality of living and working environment are changing. Working-life balance opportunities and new forms of work organisation, including teleworking and remote working, are becoming increasingly important. In the context of the rapid digitalisation of the labour market, it is important, in cooperation with employers, workers and the social partners, to identify as precisely as possible the support needed to enable workers to quickly acquire the new skills required in a changing labour market. After evaluating employers' requirements for different professions, and while registering vacancies at the SEA, we have noticed that the demand for digital skills is becoming more and more common also in ordinary professions. In year 2018, 3,858 unemployed and job seekers registered with the SEA were involved in acquisition of digital skills programs of non-formal education.

In cases of labour shortage situations, the target groups of the disadvantaged unemployed persons are also important labour force reserves. Although the number of registered unemployed has decreased in all target groups, the share of the disadvantaged unemployed persons among the total number of unemployed is increasing. These target groups are characterized by a slower return to the labour market, therefore the SEA actively cooperates not only with employers, but also with local governments, social services, non-governmental organisations in order to integrate the disadvantaged unemployed into the labour market. At the end of year 2018, the largest target groups of the registered unemployed were the unemployed persons aged 50 and over – 40.5%, and the long-term unemployed persons – 25.1%.

In view of the ageing population, the question of how to extend working lives in a qualitative manner, and how to ensure the lifelong development of skills and competences for the labour market is becoming increasingly topical. In year 2018, in cooperation with the Latvian Employers' Confederation *["Latvijas Darba devēju konfederācija"/LDDK]* and the Latvian Free Trade Union Confederation ["Latvijas Brīvo arodbiedrību savienība"/LBAS], the implementation of the ESF project "Support for longer working lives" continued. A work methodology for the "Assessment of Work Environment and Human Resources" was developed and employers' application for receiving support was announced. In the regions, workshops like "Experience will always be valuable" were held, attended by staff management specialists from companies, institutions, state and municipal capital companies. These seminars sought and offered solutions to labour market situations related to the ageing of the workforce, the health problems of older workers and the need for modern knowledge and skills, as well as to opportunities for improving the work environment and transferring of work experience.

In order to reduce the risk of social exclusion for the long-term unemployed, to facilitate their reintegration into the labour market and their integration into society, we continued the implementation of the European Social Fund (ESF) project "Support for the long-term unemployed". Within this scope, clients were offered with comprehensive support, including counselling by psychologists, psychotherapists and other professionals, treatment for addictions, determination of occupational fitness, occupational health examinations at a vocational diseases doctor, as well as job search motivation and social mentoring services. In order to make our support activities more accessible, participants were also offered transportation, food and, if necessary, accommodation.

In 2018, 12,090 long-term unemployed settled into permanent employment, of which 7,807 or 64.6% of long-term unemployed had found employment after completion of any of the SEA active employment measures. Last year, 16,352 unemployed people over the age of 50 also found a job, with 5,713 or 34.9% finding a job after completing an active employment measure.

We pay particular attention to the integration of disabled unemployed people into the labour market. In 2018, 3,839 unemployed people with disabilities have found employment, 1,840 or 47.9% have found employment after completing an active SEA measure. In order to provide disabled people with services tailored to their needs, a number of employment activities and training activities at the SEA include the services of occupational/ergonomics therapists, sign interpreters and support staff. In addition, if necessary, the training or workplace is being adapted to the individual's needs.

For the second year in a row, we organised the job seekers' and employers' campaign "Open Day for Disabled Persons in Companies". During this campaign, 64 employers had opened their doors to 296 jobseekers with disabilities, offering 128 vacancies and the opportunity to test their skills in more than 64 occupations in the work environment. In our experience, people with different types of disabilities are successful in a wide range of professional activities – if the job is suitable, the disabled employee is able to perform the same professional duties as the other non-disabled workers.

The SEA also focused on the inclusion in the labour market of persons leaving imprisonment places. SEA career counselors, in cooperation with the Administration of Penitentiary Establishments *[Ieslodzījuma vietu pārvalde]*, provided counselling to prisoners prior to their involvement in vocational training and before release in the following penitentiary establishments: Central Prison *[Centrālcietums]*, Brasa Prison, Ilguciems prison in Riga, as well as the Daugavpils prison, Jekabpils and Jelgava prisons. In 2018, a total of 588 prisoners received career counselling.

In order to help job seekers navigate their region's labour market and meet their employers, inform about job vacancies and key industries in the region, prepare these job seekers for job interviews, and introduce them with state aid for entrepreneurial start-ups, in 2018, for the first time in the service of SEA, we organised a new campaign – "Career Days for Job Seekers" in all branches. About 3.5 thousand jobseekers, 190 employers and business support organisations participated in the campaign.

At the end of 2018, the European Social Fund project "Youth Guarantees", implemented by the SEA, was successfully completed. Within this project, the SEA offered unemployed young people assistance with career choices and career planning, opportunities to develop skills and competences appropriate to the needs of the labour market, gaining work experience by working with employers, and support for starting a business or self-employment. During the implementation of the project, unemployment among young people in Latvia has decreased significantly. During the five years since the project was implemented, a total of 99,226 unemployed persons under the age of 29 registered with the SEA had been permanently employed.

In order to facilitate the return of Latvian nationals working abroad to the Latvian labour market and to inform them about the employment situation and state support in the field of re-emigration, several measures were implemented in cooperation with the Latvian diaspora abroad, Latvian embassies, employers and other involved state institutions in support for re-emigration back into Latvia. These events include face-to-face meetings of SEA leaders and EURES advisers with diaspora representatives in Sweden, Germany, UK and Ireland, the event "From Words to Deeds – Opportunities with Swedish Experience in Latvia" in Stockholm, an information session for representatives of the Latvian community in Ireland "With Irish Experience in Latvia", event "With the British experience in Latvia and for Latvia – the perspective of Latvian entrepreneurs and professionals in implementing re-emigration initiatives and developing a platform for cooperation" in London, we well others.

The "If You Want To Return To Latvia" section on the SEA's website has been set up, featuring information on SEA and EURES support, opening hours and contacts for the SEA EURES advisers, SEA e-services, SEA registered vacancies, SEA CVs and options within the vacancy portal options. The user is provided with the possibility to find a number of booklets and information material, read answers to frequently asked questions by EURES advisers, and links to other useful websites of Latvian institutions and organisations.

We continued to improve and develop our e-services. In March 2018, a new service – "E-Application for services of State Social Insurance Agency *[Valsts sociālās apdrošināšanas aģentūra/VSAA]*"– was introduced, offering unemployed people the opportunity to apply electronically to the State Social Insurance Agency *[Valsts sociālās apdrošināšanas aģentūra/VSAA]* for unemployment benefits through the SEA. According to the data of VSAA, in year 2018 about 58% of the applications received by the VSAA for granting unemployment benefit were received through the SEA. The interactive e-learning module "My Money Today and Tomorrow", developed in 2018 and available on the SEA website, enables unemployed and job seekers to learn financial literacy remotely, without having to visit the SEA in person.

Within the framework of the event "Integration of refugees and persons granted alternative status in the labour market of Latvia" *["Bēgļu un alternatīvo statusu ieguvušo personu integrācija Latvijas darba tirgū"]*, individual consultations of the SEA specialist adviser for asylum seekers were also provided by asylum seekers accommodation centre "Mucenieki" on employment issues in Latvia. In the year 2018, 39 unemployed persons with refugee or alternative status were registered for the first time in the SEA, all were provided with specialized counselling consultations, profiling was performed, Latvian language training and support in finding a suitable employment, were offered. Meetings were also organised with employers, job interviews, and translations of employment contracts were provided where necessary. In year 2018, a total of 27 refugees (including those who received alternative person status) were recruited. In order to facilitate better integration of persons with refugee or alternative status into the labour market, the SEA launched in year 2018 the support measure "Latvian language mentor service for employed refugees and persons with alternative status".

We participate and represent Latvia both in the European Employment Services EURES network and in the European Union member state employment services network PES, of which I am the first vice-chairman of the board since the end of 2017. This post provides me an opportunity to raise awareness, at EU level, about employment issues facing Latvia, and to plan, develop solutions and coordinate measures to promote employment, to keep the workforce ready for today's and future labour market demands, and to discuss the role of employment services in a rapidly changing era.

In Europe, the close co-operation between the Baltic States in the field of employment, based on the exchange of experience and practical information and support in providing daily services to clients, is positively welcomed. In year 2018, the format of cooperation between the employment services of the Baltic States changed significantly. The heads of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian employment services, experts and employees of regional units participated in exchange visits. A discussion on global trends and experiences in the field of lifelong learning took place in Vilnius, Lithuania. In Bauska, Latvia, in its turn, heads of the regional branches of employment services met in order to discuss issues related to the promotion of the unemployed, job seekers and workers over 50 years of age. In October 2018, career counsellors from the Baltic employment services gathered in Viljandi, Estonia, in order to share their experience and methods in career counselling. In cooperation with the Estonian Employment Service, Valka County Council and the City of Valga, we continued the implementation of the project "Promotion of Cross-Border Labour Market Integration and Employment" within the INTERREG EST-LAT cross-border cooperation program.

Year 2018 marked the centenary of the Latvian state. On May 24, the international conference "Employment in Latvia Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow", organised by the SEA, was held. At this conference, Latvian and foreign officials and experts discussed current trends and challenges in the labour market, as well as the role of employment services, the impact of globalization, demographics and digital technologies, and the development of the Latvian labour market in an international context. On the November 13, we organised a conference dedicated to volunteering in Latvia "Volunteering – My Favourite Work".

State Employment Agency *[Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra]*

Director Evita Simsone *[Evita Simsone]*

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# Abbreviations and legend used

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ABI** | - European Social Fund project "Support to the education of unemployed people" (No. 7.1.1.0/15/I/001) |
| **AIB** | - European Social Fund project "Support for the long-term unemployed" (No. 9.1.1.2/15/I/001) |
| **ANP** | - Active employment and preventive measures to reduce unemployment |
| **APSD** | - Temporary community service activities |
| **Unemployed person** | - a person who has acquired unemployment status after registering with the SEA in accordance with the [Unemployment and Jobseekers Support Act](https://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=62539) *[Bezdarbnieku un darba meklētāju atbalsta likuma]* |
| **BURVIS** | - Information system for registration of unemployed and registered vacancies |
| **CV** | - brief professional experience description (*Curriculum Vitae*) |
| **CVVP** | - CV and vacancy portal |
| **Job seeker** | - a person who has acquired job seeker's status after registering with the SEA in accordance with the [Unemployment and Jobseekers Support Act](https://likumi.lv/ta/id/62539-bezdarbnieku-un-darba-mekletaju-atbalsta-likums#p-606537) *[Bezdarbnieku un darba meklētāju atbalsta likuma]* |
| **ERAF** | - European Regional Development Fund. It aims to support the reduction of regional disparities in development and living standards |
| **EU** | - The European Union |
| **ESF** | - European Social Fund. It aims to promote employment, reduce discrimination and inequality in the labour market, support human resource development and contribute to the development of the information society. |
| **EURES** | - European Employment Services Network |
| **IKT** | - Information and communication technologies |
| **JG** | - ESF project "Youth Guarantee" (No. 7.2.1.1/15/I/001) |
| **KPP** | - Measures to increase competitiveness |
| **LDDK** | - Latvian Employers' Confederation *["Latvijas Darba devēju konfederācija"]* |
| **LIAA** | - Investment and Development Agency of Latvia *["Latvijas Investīciju un attīstības aģentūra"]* |
| **LIKTA** | - Latvian Association of Information and Communication Technologies *["Latvijas Informācijas un komunikācijas tehnoloģiju asociācija"]* |
| **LM** | - Ministry of Welfare *[Labklājības ministrija]* |
| **LTRK** | - Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry *[Latvijas Tirdzniecības un rūpniecības kamera]* |
| **MK** | - Cabinet of Ministers *[Ministru kabinets]* |
| **SEA** | - State Employment Agency *[Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra]* |
| **NVO** | - Non-governmental organisations |
| **PNPG** | - Measures/events for specific groups of persons |
| **VSAA** | - State Social Insurance Agency *[Valsts sociālās apdrošināšanas aģentūra]* |
| **VARAM** | - Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development *[Vides aizsardzības un reģionālās attīstības ministrija]* |

# 1. Basic information

### **Legal status**

In accordance with the December 18, 2012 Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 876 "Regulation on the State Employment Agency" *["Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūras nolikums"]*, the SEA is a direct administration institution under the supervision of the minister of welfare. The minister of welfare exercises supervision over the SEA through the Ministry of Welfare *["Labklājības ministrija"]*. The aim of SEA activities is to implement national policies in the field of unemployment reduction and support for the unemployed, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment.

On April 1, 2018, the SEA March 20, 2018 normative regulation No. 5 "Amendments to the November 24, 2015 internal normative regulation No. 48 "Rules of Procedure of the the State Employment Agency"". According to these regulations, the SEA consists of 28 branches and the following administrative units – five departments (Financial Management Department, Accounting Department, Legal Department, EU Fund Projects Department and Services Department) and six independent departments (Human Resources Department, Risk Management and Internal Control Department), Public Relations Departments, Customer Services Management and Development Department, Information Systems Maintenance and Development Department, and Statistics Department).

### **Functions for which the SEA is responsible**

Regulation of the SEA stipupates that the **SEA shall have the following functions:**

* provide the unemployed persons, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment, with prompt and high-quality assistance according to their needs, abilities and desires, in order to promote their competitiveness in the labour market;
* organise or implement active employment measures and preventive measures in order to reduce unemployment;
* prepare proposals for the development and implementation of public policy in the field of unemployment reduction and support for the unemployed, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment;
* license and supervise merchants which provide employment and job seeking services (except for manning ships);
* perform the functions of a second level intermediate body or liaison body involved in the management of European Union funds.

### **Directions of the SEA activity**

In order to ensure its functions, the **SEA carries out the following assignments:**

* the organisation evaluates implementation of active employment measures and preventive measures in order to reduce unemployment, performs a cost analysis, make proposals for improvement of the measures, as well as promotes the diversification of these measures according to the demand in the labour market;
* forecasts labour market developments in the short term, including conducting employer surveys;
* registers and accounts the unemployed persons and job seekers, informs about their rights and obligations, regularly updates and improves their registration and accounting system and develops and improves the system of classification of the registered unemployed persons;
* improves individual work with the unemployed persons aimed to ensure their return to the labour market as quickly as possible;
* organises cooperation and mutual information exchange between SEA and employers, regularly updates and improves the accounting of vacancies applied by employers;
* lists the workplaces applied for by the employer and informs about them;
* provides career counselling to the unemployed persons, job seekers, persons at risk of unemployment and other persons, as well as regularly improves the informative methodological basis for provision of career counselling services;
* ensures preparation and submission of information regarding the unemployment situation in the country, in compliance with the requirements of regulatory enactments;
* co-operates with foreign and international institutions in the field of unemployment reduction, promotion of employment and career counselling, as well as takes measures in order to ensure exchange of information on labour movement issued;
* ensures protection of personal data and other information at the disposal of the SEA in accordance with the requirements of regulatory enactments;
* ensures the development of innovative methods and solutions and their implementation in the SEA work with the unemployed persons, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment, as well as cooperation partners;
* maintains and systematically updates databases necessary for the performance of SEA functions;
* provides co-functioning of The Republic of Latvia within the European Employment Services Network (EURES).

### **Main assignments of the reporting year**

During the reporting period, the SEA operated in accordance with its work plan for the year 2018. The assignments raised in order to achieve the objective "Implementing support measures in order to re-integrate unemployed people into the labour market and keeping people at risk of unemployment for as long as possible in the job market" within the operational sector of SEA "Services for the unemployed, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment" are as follows:

* Provide customer-oriented, convenient and high-quality services to SEA clients of the same high quality at every customer service point;
* Improve access to, and encourage the use of electronic services;
* Promote the employment of persons with disabilities by supporting the start-up of employment and the adaptation of the working environment, as well as raising public and employer awareness of the employability of persons with disabilities;
* Encourage older workers to remain in the labour market for as long as possible;
* Improve the transition of the long-term unemployed to employment and participation in activities and measures;
* Improve the monitoring of the implementation of European Social Fund projects and ensure appropriate support measures for clients;
* Improve management of resources and services provided by the SEA.

The assignments raised in order to achieve the objective "Strengthening employers' confidence in the SEA by means of improving services of the SEA according to employers' requirement for qualitative filling of vacancies" within the operational sector of SEA "Services for the unemployed, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment" are as follows:

* Develop services for employers;
* Ensure implementation of the EURES Regulation;
* Improve public information on the services provided by the SEA;
* Implement international cooperation.

# 2. Financial Resources and Performance Results

### **Financing from the state budget and its usage**

Table No. 1

Sub-programs financed by the gasic budget (*EUR*)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **During 2018** | | |
| **No.** | **Financial indicators** | **Year 2017 (actual execution)** | **Approved by law** | **With amendments** | **Actual execution** |
| 1. | Financial resources to cover expenditures (in total) | 40,101,228 | 42,089,224 | 40,299,605 | 40,299,605 |
| 1.1. | Donations | 40,096,978 | 41,873,687 | 40,084,068 | 40,084,068 |
| 1.2. | Paid services and other own revenue | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1.3. | Foreign financial assistance | 4,250 | 175,537 | 175,537 | 44,971 |
| 2. | Expenses (in total) | 39,102,065 | 42,089,224 | 40,299,605 | 39,466,761 |
| 2.1. | Maintenance costs (in total) | 38,878,846 | 41,889,965 | 39,961,631 | 39,132,600 |
| 2.1.1. | Regular expenses | 12,729,477 | 14,526,771 | 13,672,543 | 13,392,574 |
| 2.1.3. | Subsidies, grants and social benefits | 25,265,303 | 25,455,399 | 25,030,962 | 24,711,904 |
| 2.1.4. | Regular payments to the European Community budget and international cooperation | 0 | 72,934 | 72,934 | 17,214 |
| 2.1.5. | Transfers of maintenance costs | 884,066 | 1,834,861 | 1,185,192 | 1,010,908 |
| 2.2. | Capital expenditures | 223,219 | 199,259 | 337,974 | 334,161 |
| 2.3. | Financial balance sheet | 999,163 | 0 | 0 | 832,844 |

Table No. 2

Sub-program 04.02.00 "Specific employment budget" (*EUR*)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  |  | **During 2018** | | |
| **No.** | **Financial indicators** | | **Year 2017 (actual execution)** | **Approved by law** | **With amendments** | **Actual execution** |
| 1. | Financial resources to cover expenditures (in total) | | 8,808,189 | 8,808,189 | 8,851,019 | 8,851,019 |
| 1.1. | Revenue from the state social insurance compulsory contribution section | | 8,808,189 | 8,808,189 | 8,808,189 | 8,808,189 |
| 1.1.1 | Compulsory state social insurance contributions to insurance of unemployment cases/situations | | 8,808,189 | 8,808,189 | 8,808,189 | 8,808,189 |
| 2. | Expenses (in total) | | 8,762,335 | 8,808,189 | 8,851,019 | 8,644,001 |
| 2.1. | Maintenance costs (in total) | | 8,762,335 | 8,808,189 | 8,851,019 | 8,644,001 |
| 2.1.1. | Regular expenses | | 1,180,402 | 1,197,410 | 1,205,128 | 1,202,127 |
| 2.1.2. | Subsidies, grants and social benefits | | 1,400,462 | 1,295,894 | 1,635,890 | 1,598,929 |
| 2.1.3. | Transfers of maintenance costs | | 6,181,471 | 6,314,885 | 6,010,001 | 5,842,945 |
| 2.2. | Capital expenditures | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2.3. | Financial balance sheet | | 45,854 | 0 | 0 | 207,018 |

### **Main activities financed under the budget programs and sub-programs, their objectives, planned results of the activities, as well as performance analysis and evaluation of the efficiency of the use of state budget resources**

**2.1.2. Use of the SEA budget (*EUR*)**

Table No. 3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Programs (subprograms)  Code | Program (subprogram) name | Year 2017 (actual execution), thsd. | Year 2018, plan  thsd. | Year 2018 plan in accordance with the law and MK regulations | Year 2018 (actual execution), thsd. | Year 2018 execution changes compared to year 2017 execution, thsd. | Year 2018 execution changes compared to year 2017 execution, % |
|  | **State Employment Agency** *[Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra]* **(SEA)**  **- in total** | ***47,864.4*** | ***50,897.4*** | ***49,150.7*** | ***48,110.8*** | ***246.4*** | ***0.51*** |
| ***04.00.00*** | ***State support to social security*** | ***379.5*** | ***453.8*** | ***453.8*** | ***395.2*** | ***15.7*** | ***4.14*** |
| 04.00.00 | Aid for persons performing temporary occupation in the public services (pension insurance) | *379.5* | *453.8* | *453.8* | *395.2* | *15.7* | *4.14* |
| ***07.00.00*** | ***Labour market development*** | ***6,442.3*** | ***6,576.9*** | ***6,556.9*** | ***6,482.4*** | ***40.1*** | ***0.62*** |
| 07.00.01 | Ensuring the SEA activities | 6,442.3 | 6,576.9 | 6,556.9 | 6,482.4 | 40.1 | 0.62 |
| ***62.00.00*** | ***Implementation of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) projects and activities*** | ***0*** | ***0*** | ***117.2*** | ***111.9*** | ***111.9*** | ***100*** |
| 62.00.07 | Projects implemented by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the welfare sector (2014 - 2020) | 0 | 0 | 117.2 | 111.9 | 111.9 | 100 |
| ***63.00.00*** | ***Implementation of European Social Fund (ESF) projects and activities*** | ***32,170.2*** | ***34,805.3*** | ***32,792.8*** | ***32,228.9*** | ***58.7*** | ***0.18*** |
| 63.00.07 | Welfare projects implemented by the ESF  (2014 - 2020) | 32,170.2 | 34,805.3 | 32,792.8 | 32,228.9 | 58.7 | 0.18 |
| ***69.00.00*** | ***Implementation of cross-border cooperation programs, projects and activities of the objective "European Territorial Cooperation"*** | ***13.1*** | ***253.2*** | ***212.5*** | ***81.9*** | ***68.8*** | ***525.2*** |
| 69.00.06 | Implementation of cross-border cooperation programs, projects and activities of the objective "European Territorial Cooperation" | 8.8 | 193.2 | 152.5 | 71.8 | 63 | 715.9 |
| 69.00.21 | Refunds to the national central budget for the financing of the "European territorial cooperation" objective (2014 - 2020) | 4.3 | 60.0 | 60.0 | 10.1 | 5.8 | 134.9 |
| ***97.00.00*** | ***Sectoral management and policy planning*** | ***97.0*** | ***0*** | ***89.7*** | ***89.7*** | ***-7.3*** | ***-7.5*** |
| 97.00.02 | Execution of the centralized functions of the branch | 97.0 | 0 | 89.7 | 89.7 | -7.3 | -7.5 |
| ***99.00.00*** | ***Usage of contingency funds*** | ***0*** | ***0*** | ***76.8*** | ***76.8*** | ***76.8*** | ***100*** |
| ***04.00.02*** | ***Specific employment budget*** | ***8,762.3*** | ***8,808.2*** | ***8,851.0*** | ***8,644.0*** | ***-118.3*** | ***-1.4*** |

**2.2.2. Main activities funded by the budget programs and sub-programs, objectives of these activities and the results expected**

**04.00.00 Social insurance**

Key operational objective:

Provide state aid to a specific number of persons in certain situations of life – by contributions to state pension insurance for persons performing paid temporary public service duties.

Operational results:

Ensured state social insurance mandatory contributions for persons who carry out paid temporary public services.

Amount of expenditures of the SEA under the sub-program in year 2018 was 395.2 thsd. *euros* or 87.1% of the planned.

**07.00.00 Labour market development**

**07.01.00 Ensuring the functioning of the State Employment Agency**

Key operational objectives:

Implement policies to reduce unemployment and support the unemployed and job seekers by providing quality services.

Amount of expenditures for ensuring the basic activity of the institution in the framework of the sub-program in year 2018 was 6,409.7 thsd. *euros* or 100 % of the planned.

The main activities carried out by the SEA under the sub-program are:

* provide the unemployed persons, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment, with prompt and high-quality assistance according to their needs, abilities and desires, in order to promote their competitiveness in the labour market;
* register and log the unemployed persons and job seekers;
* organise cooperation and mutual information exchange between the agency and the employers, list and inform about the jobs/vacancies submitted by the employers;
* organise and implement active employment measures and preventive measures in order to reduce unemployment;
* prepare proposals for the development and implementation of public policy in the field of unemployment reduction and support for the unemployed, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment;
* license and supervise merchants which provide employment and job seeking services (except for manning ships);
* forecast labour market developments in the short term, including conducting employer surveys;
* provide career counselling to the unemployed persons, job seekers, persons at risk of unemployment and other persons, and regularly improve the informative methodological basis for provision of career counselling services;
* provide information on the unemployment situation in the country;
* co-operate with foreign and international institutions in the field of unemployment reduction, promotion of employment and career counselling, as well as take measures in order to ensure exchange of information on labour movement issued and provide co-functioning of The Republic of Latvia within the European Employment Services Network (EURES);
* coordinate the exchange of information between the persons who wish to perform volunteer work, and those who organise such work.

Operational results:

The unemployed persons, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment, have been provided with prompt and high-quality assistance according to their interests, abilities and desires to promote their competitiveness in the labour market. The following performance result indicators have been achieved:

1. Customers of the SEA served in person (average monthly) 59,118.

*The parameter includes registered unemployed person's visits to the agent, counselling, individual career counselling, number of profiled participants, and collaboration with employers. Excludes information about group career counsellors, information days participants, remotely served clients.*

1. Served customers per one customer care worker (average monthly) 121.

*Customer care workers – employment agents, employment organisers, career consultants, coordinating experts, specialised consultant.*

1. The share of unemployed and job seekers engaged in active labour market policy measures, or in employment within 60 months after obtaining the status of an unemployed person or a job seeker – 60.4%.
2. Clients served remotely (since early year) – 63 007.

*Clients who use the following e-services provided by the SEA: Registration of CVs in the CVVP (15,575), training monitoring tool (0), registering the status of unemployed in the BURVIS client portal (4,273), short-term labour market forecasting tool (8,818), e-learning modules (22,916), CVVP vacancies registered by the employees and processed by employees (11 425).*

Within the framework of the sub-program, a measure was also implemented to integrate refugees and persons with alternative status into the Latvian labour market, with a total funding of 72.7 thsd. *euros* or 49.4% of the planned, in which the following results were achieved:

* 39 unemployed persons with a refugee or an alternative status, were registered for the first time with the SEA. All 39 persons have been provided with specialist counselling advice, profiling, Latvian language training and support in finding a suitable job. For the interested persons, meetings with the employees were organised, as well as job interviews, in case if required – translation of the employment contracts was provided, oral translation on the day of signing the contract and on the first employment day;
* During year 2018, national language training in non-formal education framework in basic and medium level courses was initiated by 20 persons who acquired a fugitive or alternative status. Number of participations in total is 23. Three persons initiated in two programs.
* Five lectures on "Job Opportunities in Latvia" were organised in Tigrinja, Russian, Sorani, Arabic languages. These were part-taken by 35 asylum seekers;
* Once a week, a specialist consultant of the SEA advised asylum seekers at asylum seekers accommodation centre "Mucenieki" on working opportunities in Latvia on a full-time basis. In year 2018, 124 consultations were provided;
* In 2018, a total of 27 persons with refugee or alternative status were recruited in employment, several of them repeatedly. Of all those recruited in year 2018, as per data on December 28, 2018, there were 22 persons in the employment relationship;
* In order to facilitate better integration of persons with refugee or alternative status into the labour market, in year 2018, implementation of the support measure "Latvian language mentor service for employed refugees and persons with alternative status" was launched. The service was provided to seven clients.
* Within the sub-program, funding for the Social integration foundation's pilot project "Ensuring of Housing for Three Families Granted with Refugee or Alternative Status" was provided, covering the cost of rent and utilities for housing, as well as providing information support, assistance in finding rental housing, communication with interested persons, including starting a family member's career (communication with the employer, consulting on receipt or submission of documents to state and municipal authorities, assistance with interview with employer).

Party implementing the sub-program: SEA

**62.00.00 Implementation of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) projects and activities**

**62.07.00 Projects implemented by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the welfare sector (2014 - 2020)**

Key operational objectives:

To ensure convenient, modern and functionally adequate public services for residents and economic operators, to improve the efficiency of SEA activities by using the opportunities provided by information and communication technologies, and to create conditions for the use of the information at the disposal of the SEA, as well as for the activities of other public sector institutions, for both entrepreneurs and citizens.

Amount of expenditures of the SEA under the sub-program in year 2018 was 111.9 thsd. *euros* or 95.4 % of the planned.

Key activities and implementing parties:

Within framework of the sub-program, in year 2018, implementation of the project *"Development of a system for forecasting and monitoring labour supply and demand".* During implementation of the project (until year 2021), the information system BURVIS of SEA will be improved, and its connection to the resource management system Horizon will be ensured, which will significantly improve the functionality of the systems, make them more user-friendly and more efficient.

During the reporting period, analyses of the SEA business process was performed, and proposals for process improvement were prepared. Technical specification was developed for procurement organisation of information systems development.

**63.00.00 Implementation of ESF projects and activities**

**63.07.00 Welfare projects implemented by the ESF (2014 - 2020)**

Key operational objectives:

Provide and improve welfare and employment services in the area of employment and social inclusion by mobilizing the funds of ESF.

Amount of expenditures of the SEA under the sub-program in year 2018 was 32,228.9 thsd. *euros* or 98.28 % of the planned.

Key activities and implementing parties:

Projects within the Operational Program "Growth and Jobs" are implemented within framework of the sub-program:

* *"Youth Guarantees"* (2014 - 2018) – The project aims to facilitate the transition of 19,000 unemployed young people into employment, in particular through measures to improve skills and competences in accordance with requirements in the labour market, and acquisition of practical work experience at the workplace;
* *"Support to education of unemployed people"* (2015 - 2021) – aim of the project is to promote competitiveness of the unemployed and job seekers in the labour market by providing support for at least 80,640 unemployed persons and job seekers;
* *"Subsidized jobs for the unemployed"* (2015 - 2022) – aim of the project is to promote the integration into society and permanent employment of 5,177 disadvantaged unemployed persons, including the long-term unemployed;
* *"Operation of EURES network in Latvia"* (2015 - 2020) – aim of the project is to improve access to information support measures for the employed, the unemployed, job seekers and employers by providing assistance in seeking the employment and in establishment of employment legal relationships (within EU/EEA), by organising and implementing at least 600 informative EURES measures;
* *"Support to long-term unemployed persons"* (2015 - 2021) – aim of the project is to promote integration of the long-term unemployed persons into the society, and to seek suitable permanent employment or education/training, reducing the risk of social exclusion for the 19,345 unemployed persons;
* *"Perfection of labour market forecasting system"* (2016 - 2021) – aim of the project is to develop a system of pre-emptive labour market reorganisation in order to make informed and economic-driven decisions for development and implementation of policies and activities. The labour market pre-emptive amendment system will provide easily and transparently accessible information on demand for skills and professions in the short, medium and long term, as well as information on educational opportunities that will make it easier for the users to select a future or next profession.
* *"Support for longer working lives"* (2016 - 2022) – aim of the project is to promote retention of working skills and employment of older-aged workers. Within framework of the project, support measures are planned for the target group of the project – for persons at risk of unemployment from the ages of 50 years, as well as for entrepreneurs and state and municipal institutions. As a result of the project, at least 3,000 older-aged workers are expected to be supported.

**69.06.00 Implementation of cross-border cooperation programs, projects and activities of the objective "European Territorial Cooperation" (2014 - 2020)**

Key operational objective:

Promote cross-border labour market integration and employment in Valka and Valga municipalities through the project "Promotion of Cross-Border Labour Market Integration and Employment".

Amount of expenditures under the sub-program in year 2018 was 71.8 thsd. *euros* or 47.08% of the planned, including 37 thsd. *euros* donations and 34.8 thsd. *euros* financing from foreign partners.

Key activities and implementing parties:

Informative events for employers and job seekers were organised: three "Informational days" (14.02., 18.10. and 31.10.2018.), four events "Entrepreneur Breakftas" (28.03., 20.06., 02.04. and 19.12.2018.), two Vacancy fairs (19.04. and 20.09.2018.), and issuing of the newspaper "Employement in Valga – Valka" in four issues (March, June, September, and December); two events "Sports day" (12.05. and 01.12.2018), as well as three seminars (14.06., 20.09. and 11.12.2018.). In parallel, a study (information gathering, focus group interviews, translations) on the business environment in the Valka – Valga region was conducted.

Party implementing the sub-program: SEA, implementing the project in cooperation with the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, Valka Municipality and Valga City Council.

**69.21.00 Implementation of projects financed by foreign financial assistance in the welfare sector**

Key operational objective:

Within the sub-program, reimbursements were carried out to basic state budget for the European Regional Development Fund financing used in the framework of the project "Promotion of Cross-border Labour Market Integration and Employment".

Amount of expenditures of the SEA under the program in year 2018 was 10.1 thsd. *euros* or 16.9 % of the planned.

Key activities and implementing parties:

Carry out reimbursements to basic state budget for the European Regional Development Fund financing used in the framework of the project "Promotion of Cross-border Labour Market Integration and Employment" (Valka – Valga mobility).

Party implementing the sub-program: SEA

**97.00.00 Sectoral management and policy planning**

**97.02.00 Execution of centralized functions of the branch**

Key operational objective:

Provide a centralized ICT management, accounting, human resources and internal audit function for the industry, as well as a minimum social guarantee for those working in the industry.

Amount of expenditures of the SEA under the sub-program in year 2018 was 89.7 thsd. *euros* or 100% of the planned amount, by purchasing health insurance policies for 427 employees who perform basic functions of the institution.

**99.00.00 Usage of contingency funds**

Key operational objective:

Provide funds for unforeseen disaster and natural disaster relief within the state core budget appropriations, compensation for damages caused by them, and for other contingencies and special measures of national significance.

Amount of expenditures of the SEA under the program in year 2018 was 76.8 thsd. *euros* or 100% of the planned.

Key activities:

1. reimbursements were carried out for enforcement of court judgements in accordance with provision of compensations stipulated by the "Act on Compensation for Damages Caused by State Administrative Institutions" *["Valsts pārvaldes iestāžu nodarīto zaudējumu atlīdzināšanas likums"]*, and incurred by an unlawful administrative act or unlawful factual measure:
2. in accordance with the April 9, 2018 Ministry of Finance *[Finanšu ministrija]* decree No. 127 "On allocation of funds", financial funds were granted in the amount of 14,847 *euros*;
3. in accordance with the November 2, 2018 Ministry of Finance *[Finanšu ministrija]* decree No. 405 "On allocation of funds", financial funds were granted in the amount of 26,233 *euros*;
4. in accordance with the November 27, 2018 Ministry of Finance *[Finanšu ministrija]* decree No. 440 "On allocation of funds", financial funds were granted in the amount of 28,419 *euros*;
5. expenditures were covered related to development and perfection of the "Information system for registration of unemployed and registered vacancies" (BURVIS), and the transfer of data to the database of recipients of health care services in accordance with the November 23, 2018 Ministry of Finance *[Finanšu ministrija]* decree No. 432 "On allocation of funds", funds were granted in the amount of 7,260 *euros*.

**04.00.00 Social insurance**

**04.02.00 Specific employment budget**

Key operational objectives:

Implement and administer active labour market policy measures, including: active employment measures and preventive measures in order to reduce unemployment.

Operational results:

Number of unemployed persons and jobseekers supported in active labour market policy measures (number of new entrants) – 18,951 (number corresponds to participation of persons in the measures, including 17,353 unique persons). The SEA implemented the following measures:

* Measures for specific groups of people – two unemployed were involved anew (by employee replacement in previously co-financed jobs created by the state in earlier periods), and 51 in temporary jobs (148.3 thsd. *euros* spent);
* Promotion of mobility of regional workers – 252 persons received support anew, number of transitioning persons from year 2017 – 39 (80.8 thsd. *euros* spent);
* Paid temporary public works – involved 12,922 persons (5,268.2 thsd. *euros* spent);
* Measures for commencement of business or self-employment – 213 persons have started the measure, 118 persons in transition since year 2017 (543.9 thsd. *euros* spent);
* Employment measures during the summer holidays for persons undergoing training in general, special or vocational education institutions – involved 5,160 persons (1,214.4 thsd. *euros* spent);
* Acquiring of non-formal education (national language training) – 358 unemployed and jobseekers started training (190.2 thsd. *euros* spent);
* 43 persons have received support for regional mobility within the framework of active employment measures (4.1 thsd. *euros* spent);
* Services of ergotherapist were received by 1 person.

Amount of expenditures of the SEA under the sub-program in year 2018 was 8,644.0 thsd. *euros* or 97.7% of the planned.

### **Performed and commissioned studies**

Within framework of the ESF project 7.1.2.2/16/I/001 "Perfection of labour market forecasting system", implemented by SEA, in year 2018, the SEA employment market short-term forecast preparation methodology was perfected, by supplementing it with data from the State Revenue Service *[Valsts ieņēmumu dienests]* on jobs in specific occupation groups, which will allow forecasting for all occupation groups for which data are available. The forecast also take into account projection of demand for replacement labour (estimating outflows from employment, as well as forecasting total job opportunities). In addition to that, a new dimension was added – the opportunity to view forecasts according to the required skills, the methodology was developed by the company SIA "Corporate Consulting".

In the framework of ESF project "Improvement of labour market forecasting system" in the 1st half of year 2018, a second employer survey was conducted by the company SIA "RAIT Custom Research Baltic". The results of the survey are used for preparation of short-term labour market forecasts. In addition, report "Short-term Labour Market Forecast for year 2018" is available.

In order to ensure timely communication on the planned changes that have a significant impact on the local labour market, labour market monitoring is carried out in the service areas of SEA branches – information is regularly collected and compiled on employer visits, planned increases or decreases in the workforce within companies, information seminars for employers, results of job fairs, cooperation of branches with municipal and employer organisations, and on participation in business events. Monitoring of the labour market situation has facilitated the SEA communication with employers, it has provided an opportunity to identify the SEA services that are of interest to employers, and to get acquainted with the work environment of companies, as well as to improve the exchange of information on the labour market.

In year 2018, reports on the labour market situation in the branch service geographical area were prepared, informing the LM about the results of monitoring.

In 2018, the employer satisfaction and requirements survey was conducted during the November month. 86% of employers who have used SEA services (respondents) are fully satisfied or satisfied, which is 8% higher than compared to year 2017. Respondents highly value communication and cooperation skills of the SEA staff – 89% of respondents are fully satisfied and satisfied. More than half or 67% of employers are interested in using SEA services in the future. Results of the survey are available at - http: //www.nva.gov.lv/index.php?cid=2&mid=2&txt=5754&from=0

### **Key services, improvements in accessibility and quality of services**

The Act on Support for Unemployed Persons and Job Seekers *[Bezdarbnieku un darba meklētāju atbalsta likums]* defines the main tasks of the SEA in providing its services. In accordance with the said act, SEA employees, in the course of their work duties, registered jobseekers and unemployed persons, made decisions on granting and losing the status of unemployed, registered vacancies, and informed the SEA clients about the rights and obligations of the unemployed, on activities offered by the SEA, registered job vacancies and licensed firms engaged in placement of the population in jobs.

In order to develop service delivery to employers and develop an individual approach to working with each employer, the SEA has developed the employer segmentation methodology, defining a collaborative and differentiated approach to cooperation based on an assessment of employer needs and relevance, defining principles for segmenting companies, and identifying the most appropriate types of cooperation and its intensity.

In order for the SEA to increase quality of provision of its services to nationally significant employers and to provide centralized service to employers operating throughout the entire Latvia, in year 2018, the SEA has identified, but by year 2019, will gradually start cooperation with employers of national significance – those with branches in the territory Latvia, or active activities in territories under the control of several branches (retail chains, petrol stations, *etc.*), as well as with employers who attract employees from all over the territory of Latvia.

Preparations were made in year 2018 to implement the amendments to the Civil Service Law *[Civildienesta likums]*. These shall enter into force in January 1, 2019 and stipulate that an open competition for civil servants shall be published by the relevant authority in the CVVP of SEA and that the relevant authority shall publish the decision of the CVVP official on the appointment of the applicant within five after taking the relevant decision.

For the first time, in the year 2018, the SEA organised Career Days for jobseekers in order to provide jobseekers with an insight into relevant sectors and job vacancies in the region, and in order to prepare them for job interviews and to receive information on starting a business. Around 3.5 thsd. jobseekers (including 3,000 unemployed and jobseekers registered with the SEA) and around 190 representatives of employers and business support organisations attended the event.

The Call Centre plays an important role in ensuring faster and better quality of the customer service. The Call Centre provides information and advisory support to clients by providing answers to various questions. The most topical issues that clients were interested in, in year 2018, were first-time registration, as well as the conditions for obtaining unemployed status. The number of customer-serviced calls during the year was 30,345 (130 calls per day on average). In order to ensure and improve the quality of service, customer calls are regularly listened to, and analysed, on a random basis. Customer information is sometimes used in order to prepare questions that need to be discussed with employees, and in order to inform the public in greater detail (such as conditions for starting a student summer event, ESF projects and other support activities, *etc.*).

In year 2018, the SEA continued to improve the process of monitoring the implementation of activities executed by its partners, with increased monitoring of both attendance, and quality of implementation of the events. Branches of the SEA also continue to provide their oversight functions in order to intensify on-site inspection measures.

Pursuant to the August 10, 2016 cooperation agreement No. 1.1-10.3/102 "On implementation of the Operational Program "Growth and Jobs" of the European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for period 2014 - 2020" and particularly its specific support target No. 9.1.2. (*i. e.*, "Increase the integration of ex-prisoners into society and the labour market"), the SEA career counsellors (core budget staff) provide individual and group career counselling to prisoners. In year 2018, career counselling was provided in six penitentiary establishments: In Riga – in Central Prison *[Centrālcietums]*, Brasa prison and Ilguciems prison, as well as in Daugavpils – in Daugavgriva prison, in Jekabpils – Jekabpils prison, and in Jelgava – in Jelgava prison. Within the thematic division "prior to involvement of the convicts in professional education programme" (professional aptitude, including to the program offered by the prison system) – consultations were received by 265 persons, and in thematic division "prior to release of the prisoners" (information on current developments in the labour market and job search issues) – consultations were received by 323 persons.

On January 23, 2018, an interdepartmental agreement was concluded between the State Education Development Agency *[Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra]* and the SEA "On cooperation within implementation of the Operational Program "Growth and Jobs" of the European Union funds and its specific support target 8.4.1. (*i. e.*, "Improve professional competence of employed persons") of the project "Improvement of professional competence of employed persons"". Within this project, the SEA provides career counselling to the target group clients (upon prior request of the client) and informs about the opportunities offered by the project. In year 2018, 285 employees received career counselling (professional aptitude test) and information about the project opportunities.

Career guidance counsellors are regularly provided with methodological and informative support in counselling various target groups (remote counselling, informative and methodological materials). In order to improve the competence of career consultants on current issues in the national economy, the SEA organised two career consultant training seminars in year 2018 with representatives of the Latvian Association of Chemical and Pharmaceutical Businesses *[Latvijas Ķīmijas un farmācijas uzņēmēju asociācija]* providing information on employment and career opportunities in these sectors.

In March of year 2018, the SEA started the implementation of the service "E-filing for VSAA services" in order to provide the unemployed persons with the opportunity to submit the application for unemployment benefit electronically to the State Social Insurance Agency *[Valsts sociālās apdrošināšanas aģentūra]*.

The SEA, using an individual approach to customer service, based on a person's application, within one business day, the SEA takes a decision on granting the status of unemployed as of the date of receipt of the application (in year 2018, the unemployment status was granted to 87,132 unemployed, which is 203 persons less than in year 2017) and, during the first visit, profiles an unemployed person in order to determine job opportunities and suitable SEA services. As the number of unemployed persons decreases, a more personalized approach to customer service is provided.

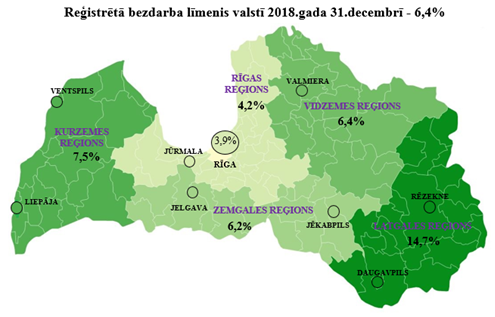
From September 17 to 21, 2018, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development *[Vides aizsardzības un reģionālās attīstības ministrija/VARAM]* organised the campaign "Days without queues”, which took place for the fifth time in year2018, with the participation of, among other organisations, the SEA. During the campaign, the SEA provided 5,886 consultations on e-services, which is 7.6% of the total number of registered SEA clients during the campaign period.

The SEA has been the partner of Digital Week organised by LIKTA and VARAM for the ninth year from March 19 to 23, 2018. 79 events were organised in the branches, such as group consultations on job search opportunities on the Internet, and open days for all interested persons who wanted to get more information about SEA e-services. In addition, clients were invited in order to introduce them to e-services in order to support job search and career planning. Workshops on digital services for employers took place. The SEA successfully co-operated with other institutions, such as LIAA, VSAA, libraries and schools in organising events.

In year 2018, the SEA became the partner of Integrated Communication and Training Program "My Latvija.lv. Act digitally! *[My Latvija.lv. Dari digitāli!]*. Within the framework of the program, the SEA has prepared three video instructions for users of the CVVP of SEA in year 2018: Submission of application for unemployment status; Applying for a vacancy; Vacancy registration. The SEA also participated in the development of descriptions of five life situations (Starting a business, Doing business, Losing and searching for a job, Employment for different groups, Studies and lifelong learning).

In year 2018, the activities of the cooperation program INTERREG V-A - Estonia - Latvia within the project "Promotion of Cross-border Labour Market Integration and Employment". The project included three workshops for jobseekers and unemployed persons, three business breakfasts and three information days for employers and jobseekers. 20.09.2018 A vacancy fair was organised in Valka.

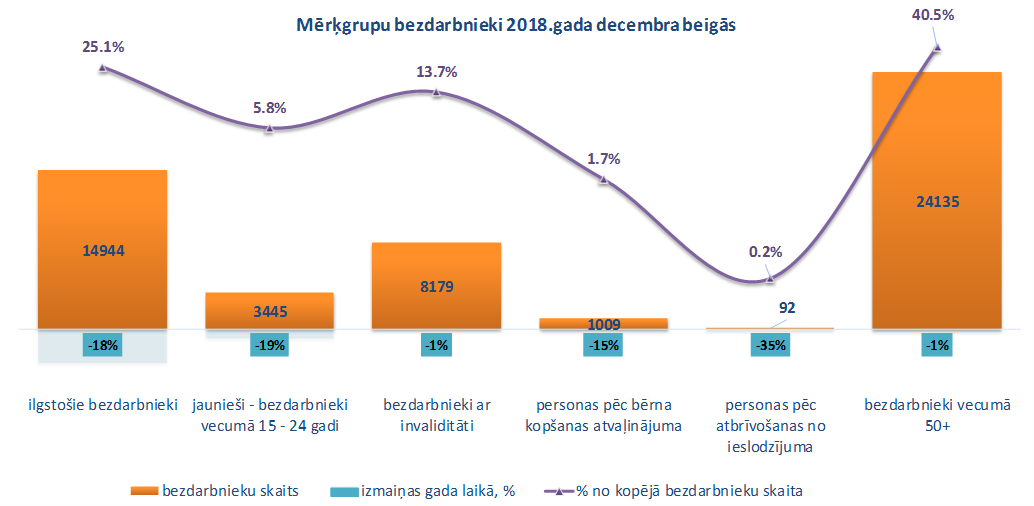
Figure No. 1



Average statistical portrait of the unemployed persons at the end of year 2018:

* Women – 56%
* Aged 50 years and more – 40.5%
* The average duration of unemployment is 161 days, or just over 5 months.
* Have vocational (36.2%) or low[[1]](#footnote-2) (43,4%) educational level
* With last occupation in simple professions

Figure No. 2



In year 2018, 63,633 unemployed persons became employed, of whom 22,516 (35.4%) were employed after completing an active measure (excluding information days[[2]](#footnote-3)). When evaluating the arrangement of work in terms of measures implemented by the SEA (Figure No. 3), the highest results can be observed after the following measures:

- Practical training at the employer (97%);

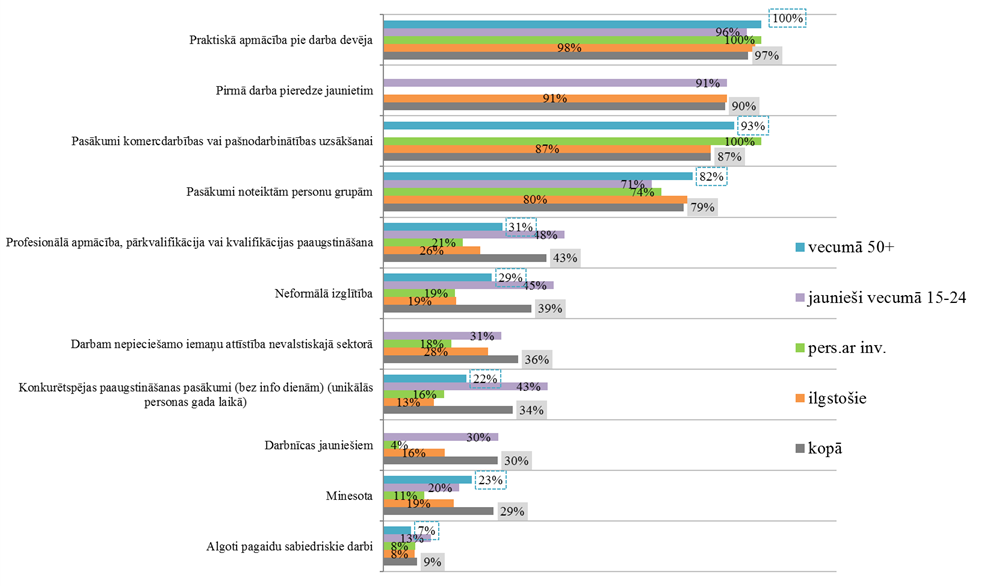
- First work experience for a young person (90%);

- Measures for starting a business or self-employment (87%).

Very high employment rates (79%) are after participation in a subsidized job. In terms of training activities, the highest rates of job placement are after completing vocational training programs (43%), followed by participation in non-formal education programs (39%). The impact of the community service program on job placement is relatively low (9%).

Percentage of unemployed people in employment during the first six months after completion of a measure/event – data on the unemployed who completed their participation from 01.07.2017. through 06.30.2018 and found employment within the first 6 months after completion of the event until 31.12.2018. (Illustration No. 3)

Figure No. 3



**2.1.4. SEA services for the unemployed, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment**

The SEA offers unemployed and job seekers a variety of training and temporary job opportunities, as well as the opportunity to register their CVs with the portal CVVP, and view current vacancies. The services offered by the SEA are divided into active employment measures and preventive unemployment reduction measures. The main aim of active employment measures is to provide support to the unemployed person by promoting the person's competitiveness and faster integration into the labour market.

* + - 1. **Preventive measures to reduce unemployment:**

***Career services***

The SEA career Services (on-site and extramural) are open to all the interested. On-site services – career counselling, off-site/extramural services include completing self-study tests at the SEA portal CVVP, information on the SEA's Career section of the web site, interactive e-learning "Preparing a Cover Letter and Preparing for a Job Interview".

The purpose of career counselling is to promote the client's integration into the labour market, providing support in career selection and planning, determination of professional suitability, including before engaging in training and employment activities, and to promote awareness and active engagement in lifelong learning.

**Types of career counselling offered by the SEA:**

* individual career counselling;
* individual diagnostic career counselling;
* group career counselling;
* group informative career counselling;
* individual informative career counselling.

In order to ensure efficiency of counselling of clients of SEA target groups, in year 2018 the methodology for work with clients with mild mental disorders was renewed, methodological kit for work in prisons was updated, methodological materials on issues of job search, job interviews (practical training) were prepared. A working group of leading career consultants and experts actively participates in the development and improvement of the informative methodological base, and regularly prepares and updates new methodologies and methodological recommendations.

For the first time in year 2018, a campaign "Career days for job seekers" was organised in all SEA branches. The aim of the campaign is to give the SEA a possibility, for the registered and unregistered unemployed and job seekers, to gain a deeper insight into the important sectors and vacancies in the region, to get practically prepared for a job interview and to get information about a possibilities to start a business in their region.

During the campaign, three activities were implemented: "Job opportunities in our region" – meeting with employers in the region"; "Create your own workplace!" - business start-up opportunities; "Job interview simulations" - individual and group sessions and (preparation for job interviews, role plays). Around 190 employers and business support organisations took part in the campaign, and about 3.5 thousand jobseekers received in-depth and practical support in job search and career development.

In cooperation with the State Education Development Agency *[Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra]*, career counsellors were introduced to new counselling methods that have proven to be effective in practice (N. Amundsons "Active Engagement", M. Savickis "Life Planning Guidebook"). In cooperation with the Latvian Employers' Confederation *[Latvijas Darba devēju konfederācija]*, career counsellors were provided with up-to-date information materials in the field of chemistry and pharmacy.

In the 12 months of year 2018, 28,368 unique people received career guidance within the core budget\*; within the ESF project "Youth Guarantees” – 16,059 unique persons\*; within the ESF project "Support for the long-term unemployed" – 15,960 unique persons\*.

*\* unique individuals during the year*

An electronic customer survey was conducted in year 2018 in order to evaluate the satisfaction of SEA clients with the career advice they received, and to develop suggestions for improvement of services. Overall, results of the survey indicate a high level of SEA career services: 94% of respondents (73.7% satisfied, and 20.3% rather satisfied) rated the service positively.

**2.4.1.2. Active employment measures:**

***Measures to increase competitiveness (KPP)***

Measures to increase competitiveness are aimed at promoting the competitiveness of the unemployed persons, job seekers and persons at risk of unemployment in the labour market. KPPs include individual counselling and group sessions (courses, seminars, lectures, and other classes) on job search techniques, psychological support, and the acquisition of basic skills and competences for the labour market.

The following is offered within framework of KPP:

* **courses on themes: Development of national language skills; Business writing skills; Removing the psychological barrier for non-Latvians in learning the official language; Use of e-services; Create your website yourself; Negotiation and the art of argumentation; Developing public speaking skills; Raising self-awareness and awareness of your individuality, self-presentation; Business Basics (limited liability company, micro enterprises, self-employment, *etc.*); Accounting and taxation in business; Project management basics; Legal bases of self-employed persons and basic accounting principles; Business plan development basics for starting a business; Basics of computer skills and the internet; Preparation of documents and organisation of records; Data analysis and reporting using tables, Calculations and graphs; Data analysis and reporting using spreadsheets; Computerized accounting and reporting; Presentation technologies and methods; Communication with clients and partners; E-commerce and Internet marketing; Project management basics; Recurrent training of truck/bus drivers (code 95); Basic knowledge in metalworking;**
* **seminars** on subjects: Household and family budget planning, savings information; Importance of learning motivation; Disabled people's rights and opportunities in the Latvian labour market; Preparation of CV and application letter, use of vacancy portal (including making a video CV); Job search in sparsely populated areas, including activation of the social network in the job search process; Skills to work in a context of change; Impact of long-term unemployment on competitiveness in the labour market and amount of state guaranteed pension; Developing of communication skills and solving communication problems; Emotional intelligence; Work rights; Basics of administrative process; Opportunities for young people in the labour market; Goal masterclass, or setting of proper goals and achieving them; Employment relations in intercultural envirinment;
* **lectures** **on subjects: Social rights; Workplace safety; Functions of state and local government institutions, their objectives, scope of rights and duties of individuals; Stress and overcoming it; Culture of business relations;**
* **individual consultations:** provided by a psychologist, business plan consultant.
* **Within the ESF project "Aid for education of the unemployed", two e-learning modules have been developed and provided to clients, namely:**  (development of KPPs in form of flexible training forms and their implementation): e-learning module **"Preparing a cover letter and preparing for a job interview"**; e-learning module on financial literacy  **"My money today and tomorrow. Financial literacy"**. Aim of the e-learning module is to raise awareness and responsibility of the Latvian population regarding family budgeting and personal finance management, role of the taxes and their impact on social security coverage.

In yea 2018, 53,794 unemployed people were involved in competitiveness improvement measures, including 28,782 unemployed and jobseekers during information days. In cooperation with the LM and employers, the SEA is reviewing the support provided within the KPPs so that it corresponds as much as possible to the requirements of the labour market. Therefore, in year 2019, changes are planned in the context of the support provided in the implementation of the KPPs in order to provide SEA clients with knowledge and insight into the specifics of a particular sector, their expected working conditions, duties and other factors in continuing education programs.

***Measures for starting a business or self-employment***

**Purpose of the measure is to provide consultative and financial support measures to help the unemployed persons, pre-qualified and experienced entrepreneurs to start a business or self-employment, and to be successful in their chosen field for at least two years.**

**Within commercial activities in year 2018, 213 unemployed persons (with replacements) received consultations for the preparation and development of their business plans. 185 business plans have been submitted to the experts for evaluation. A total of 200 unemployed persons are given the opportunity to prepare a business plan, including 20 business plans were prepared without consulting.**

**According to expert opinions, SEA has provided financial support for the implementation of 70 business plans (70 contracts have been signed).**

***Event for specific groups of persons\****

The aim of the measure is employment of the unemployed persons in subsidized or co-financed jobs to help them to understand requirements of the labour market, to facilitate the integration of the unemployed into the community, and to find a permanent job.

**In year 2018, 919 (641 target group unemployed persons and 278 unemployed persons with disabilities) persons started participations in the event/activity, most often in the following occupations: handyman/support worker, sales consultant, retail store salesman, accountant's assistant, farm worker.**

***Vocational training, retraining or raising of qualification\****

Unemployed people have the opportunity to receive a training voucher and get involved in the following:

* grown-up vocational education programs, which enable to obtain professional qualification. After completing the relevant program, the unemployed person takes the professional qualification examination. An unemployed person who has passed a professional qualification examination shall be issued a professional qualification certificate;
* professional development education programs, which enable to improve one's professional skills and to acquire systematic professional knowledge and skills corresponding to the changing demands of the labour market. An unemployed person who has completed an in-service training program, is issued a professional in-service/vocational training certificate;

In year 2018, 3,435 unemployed people were involved in vocational training, retraining or in-service training. Most of the training was done in the following programs: Social care (668 unemployed persons involved), project management (418), organisation of small business (334), arc welder with mechanized equipment in active gas environment (MAG) (321), customer service operator (301), sewer (261), logistics officer (171), worker of finishing construction works (104), accounting (101), arc welder with mechanized machine in inert gas environment (MIG) (91).

***Professional competence assessment activity***

On February 7, 2018, the SEA launched a new measure "Professional competence assessment activity". Purpose of the measure is to enable the unemployed person to prove his or her lifelong professional competence and, upon passing the professional qualification examination, obtain a state-recognized certificate of professional qualification, as well as to increase competitiveness and integration into the labour market.

***Acquisition of non-formal education\****

The aim of the measure is to provide unemployed and job seekers with an opportunity to increase their competitiveness, adaptability to the changing demands of the labour market, increase the opportunities of the unemployed and job seekers to integrate into the labour market.

11,549 unemployed and job seekers involved in non-formal education, vehicle and tractor driver training in year 2018, including: In non-formal education program "Learning the national language" – 1,730 persons, foreign language and computer literacy programmes – 7,499, tractor machinery driver programs – 886, motorised vehicle driver programs – 1,419 persons. Most of the training was done in the following programs: Computer literacy (without prior knowledge) – 1,521 persons, Computer literacy (with prior knowledge) – 1,055 persons, national language according to average national language proficiency level – 1,029 persons, English (w/o prior knowledge) – 1,133 persons, English (with preliminary knowledge) (elementary) – 1 016 persons, national language according to basic national language proficiency – 711 persons. Driver of category "C" – 1,105 persons, driver of category "B" – 626 persons, driver of category "CE" – 461 persons, driver of tractor machinery, category "C" – 393 persons, driver of category "D" – 169 persons.

***Training at an employer\****

The purpose of the activity is to organise practical training of the employee (other than medical institutions, educational establishments whose main task is the implementation of educational programs and political parties) in the given profession, by organising training with the employer.

Taking into account changes in the labour market, as well as the increasing tendency of employers to train employees in the workplace in a potential workplace, with the support of the SEA. In year 2015, 121 unemployed persons were involved in training with the employer within the framework of the ABI project, in year 2016 – 178 persons, in year 2017 - 313 persons, and in year 2018 – 426 persons. The SEA continues to significantly increase the use of this service – both by promoting it more actively and offering it to employers, and by substantially promoting the use of Training at employer's request and Employer Training (indicatively 30% more people are expected to participate in work-related training events in year 2019, namely Training at employer's request and Employer Training, as compared to the indicator initially approved for the year), thus placing greater emphasis on the implementation of SEA training based on the work environment.

***Temporary community service activities***

Temporary community service is an active employment measure for the unemployed in order to acquire and maintain skills in social work. Temporary paid work is carried out in municipalities, associations or foundations, where these organisations hold no intention of making profit.

The aim of the measure is to enable the unemployed to acquire or maintain working skills; to promote the activity of the unemployed for the benefit of society.

In year 2018, 3,421 jobs were created and 12,921 unemployed persons were involved.

This service was most actively used in Latgale region, where 1,960 temporary jobs were created or 57.3% of the total number of temporary paid public employment jobs created in the country; Kurzeme region – 480 jobs (14.0%); Riga region – 338 jobs (9.9%), Vidzeme region – 345 (10.1%), Zemgale region – 298 jobs (8.7%).

***Promoting regional mobility of workers***

Purpose of the measure is to facilitate regional mobility of persons employed by employers by providing financial compensation for the costs of transport and accommodation for the first four months after the start of the employment relationship.

The event is implemented at workplaces within the entire administrative territory of the Republic of Latvia, with the exception of Riga, where there is a demand corresponding to the education and professional experience of the persons concerned. The Riga exception shall not apply if the declared place of residence is outside of Riga.

In year 2018, 252 persons were involved in the event.

***Employment measures during the summer holidays for persons undergoing training in general, special or vocational education institutions***

The aim of the measure is to encourage short-term employment of pupils aged 15 to 20 (inclusive) enrolled in general, vocational or special education institutions in the following school year, for a short-term employment in the summer holidays at co-financed workplaces, providing students with the skills, abilities and experiences to gain.

The pupil employment measure was implemented in cooperation with 466 employers, of which one third (124 or 26%) were municipalities – municipal institutions and capital companies. In total, 295 merchants, 124 state and municipal institutions and capital companies, 37 farms and 10 non-governmental organisations, offered job opportunities to young people in summer of year 2018. In year 2018, a total of 5,080 jobs were created for students, employing 5,160 students (multiple jobs per job).

***Youth Guarantee activity\****

ESF project "Youth guarantee" No. 7.2.1.1/15/I/001 was implemented by SEA within the time-frame from January 2, 2014 to December 31, 2018. The project aims to facilitate the transition of unemployed young people into employment, in particular through measures to improve skills and competences in accordance with requirements in the labour market, and acquisition of practical work experience at the workplace.

SEA helps the young people integrate into the modern labour market by offering them opportunities to develop skills and competences appropriate to the needs of the labour market, as well as gaining practical work experience with employers. The young persons are expected to receive suitable training or employment services within four months of registering as unemployed.

The SEA is implemented project JG in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science *[Izglītības un zinātnes ministriju]*, educational institutions, municipalities, social services, youth organisations and employers.

In year 2018, 12,464 unemployed young people started participating in the project activities, of whom: 411 persons – Development of skills necessary for work in the non-governmental sector; 169 – Workshops for young people; 8,605 – Measures to increase competitiveness; 1,555 – Non-formal education with the coupon method; 111 – Subsidized jobs; 22 – First work experience; 834 – Professional training programs with coupon method, 757 – Vehicle and tractor machinery driver training. In addition, 27,989 career guidance services were provided to young people, and 924 young people were given support for regional mobility.

In year 2018, the SEA concluded the implementation of the JG. Between years 2014 and 2018, 20,083 unemployed young people were provided with JG services.

***Support for the long-term unemployed***

Aim of the project is to promote integration of the long-term unemployed persons into the society, and to seek suitable permanent employment or education/training, reducing the risk of social exclusion.

In 2017, following the organised discussions, the proposal of non-governmental organisations representing persons with disabilities to provide a specialized approach to the implementation of the motivation program for the unemployed with disabilities was supported. Namely, to assemble the motivation program groups for unemployed persons with disabilities separately by appointing/engaging to implementation competent organisations with experience in employing persons with disabilities, thus, starting from May 2018, the support measure "Job search motivation program and social mentoring services for the long-term unemployed" hereinafter - Support Measure) is available to customers within the framework of the European Social Fund (hereinafter – ESF) project "Support for the Long-term Unemployed" (hereinafter – support measure) to promote the integration of the long-term unemployed with disabilities into the labour market. The support measure is available at six branches: Aluksne, Daugavpils, Kraslava, Ludza, Riga regional, Sigulda branches. To provide service in regions where job applications are registered, but no support measure is available yet, AIB regularly encourages existing service providers to add new service addresses.

Likewise, 4 (Preili, Riga, Limbazi, Jekabpils) seminars were organised for employers informing about the AIB target group, inviting employers to allow the target group to prove itself as a good employee, to renew working skills and acquire additional skills, 9 (Limbaži, Jekabpils, Gulbene, Tukums, Ventspils, Ludza, Daugavpils, Kandava, Valka) seminars were held for NGO and Social Services staff, thus informing participants of the support measures available to the long-term unemployed, as well as 6 (Jelgava, Kuldiga, Preili, Riga, Daugavpils, Smiltene) vacancy fair events, as well as 2 information campaigns were organised for employers and employees informing about activation measures of the long-term unemployed persons: from 03.09.2018 to 23.09.2018 and from 15.10.2018 to 02.11.2018, in December, work with organising the 3rd session shall take place, and time-frame of the third session is expected from 07.01.2019 to 27.01.2019.

In year 2018, support activities engaged 16,802 long-term unemployed persons, of them: in the Minnesota 12 step programme – 268 persons, Emotional stress therapy (coding) – 100 persons, Psychotherapist consultations – 4,996 persons, Psychologist consultations – 6,176 persons, Health inspections – 828 persons, In determining professional suitability – 268 persons, Job search and social mentor motivation program, including with disabilities – 4 266, as well as 25,358 long-term unemployed persons have received the Career consultations.

\*Support for regional mobility is available to the unemployed through the active employment measure. Purpose of the measure is to promote the regional mobility of the unemployed by providing financial compensation for the costs of transport and accommodation, when participating in some of the active employment measures.

**2.4.1.3. Support for longer working lives**

Objective: to contribute to maintaining the employability and maintaining of working skills of older workers.

Target group – persons at risk of unemployment, aged 50 and over, working in sectors with a higher proportion of older workers.

Assessment of work environment and human resources potential in enterprises and local government/municipal institutions:

Objective: to promote the quality of jobs in line with the needs of older workers, thus contributing to the retention and employment skills, and employability, of older workers.

Target group – employers (entrepreneurs and state or municipal institutions) and persons at risk of unemployment over 50 years in sectors with a higher proportion of older workers.

On August 16, 2018, the methodology for the assessment of work environment and human resources potential was approved in order to ensure the launch of the service.

On October 1, 2018, employers announced their application for participation in the event "Assessment of Work Environment and Human Resources Potential". 45 employers applied for the project.

In December 2018, eight agreements were concluded with employers on the assessment of work environment and human resources potential, which were started in January 2019.

* + 1. **SEA support for refugees and persons with alternative status**

On December 2, 2015, the Cabinet of Ministers *[Ministru kabinets]* decree No. 759 approved the Action Plan for the Resettlement and Reception of Persons in Need of International Protection in Latvia (hereinafter – the Action Plan). The purpose of this Action Plan is to establish a system suitable for the reception of asylum seekers in Latvia and for the socio-economic inclusion of refugees and persons granted with alternative status.

On January 4, 2016, the SEA started the implementation of the project "Integration of Refugees and Persons with Alternative Status in the Latvian Labour Market" *["Bēgļu un personu ar alternatīvo statusu integrācija Latvijas darba tirgū"]*. It is intended to implement the tasks of the SEA set out in the Action Plan, and to implement measures for the socio-economic integration of refugees and persons granted alternative status through means of employment and jobs.

On June 1, 2017, amendments to the Asylum Law *[Patvēruma likums]* came into force, which stipulated that a person with refugee or alternative working-age status can receive a benefit for living expenses only provided if he or she is employed or registered with the SEA as an unemployed person, or job seeker.

Within the framework of the event "Integration of refugees and persons granted alternative status in the labour market of Latvia" *["Bēgļu un alternatīvo statusu ieguvušo personu integrācija Latvijas darba tirgū"]*, individual consultations of an SEA specialist adviser for asylum seekers were also initiated (from February, 2017) by asylum seekers accommodation centre "Mucenieki" on possibilities of employment in Latvia.

In year 2018, 124 asylum seekers received individual consultations on job opportunities in Latvia, several of them repeatedly. Since year 2017, a total of 240 consultations have been provided to asylum seekers at asylum seekers accommodation centre "Mucenieki".. The number of persons registered with the SEA with refugee and alternative status has been changing in year 2018, 39 persons have been registered with refugee or alternative status, several of them have been re-registered. Since the beginning of the project, until December 28, 2018, 156 unique persons with refugee or alternative status have been registered with the SEA.

During year 2018, cooperation with 47 employers was established. In total, since May of year 2016, cooperation with 126 employers was established.

27 persons were employed during the year 2018 (23 persons were employed in year 2017, 3 persons were employed in year 2016). Since beginning of the project, 59 unique persons with refugee or alternative status have been recruited by the SEA.

Employed persons work in a variety of sectors, primarily in manufacturing, sewing and construction companies, as well as in passenger transport, IT sector, including municipalities, retail sales, catering and international relations.

In year 2018, the SEA launched the event "Latvian language mentor services for employed refugees and persons with alternative status" *["Latviešu valodas mentora pakalpojumi nodarbinātajiem bēgļiem un personām ar alternatīvo statusu"]*. 7 persons started participating in the event, 5 of them completed their participation.

From December 2016 to December 28, 2018, persons with refugee or alternative status have been involved in non-formal education program – national language program "Latvian language without and intermediate language" *["Latviešu valoda bez starpniekvalodas"]*, total number of participants – 77.

**2.4.3. SEA services for employers**

The most important partners (as well as clients of the SEA) are employers, who provide an opportunity for the unemployed to return to the labour market as soon as possible.

Services offered by the SEA to employers (ref. to Figure No. 4).

Figure No. 4

* Employer-requested training;
* First work place for a young person;
* Subsidized jobs for unemployed youngsters;
* Practical training at an employer;
* Event for specific groups of persons;
* Promoting regional mobility of workers;
* Students' summer employment.

**Employer**

**Registration and filling of vacancies**

**Informative**

**and**

**support measures**

**Active employment measures**

* Registering of a vacancy
* at the agency CV and vacancy portal
* At a branch;
* Search for suitable applicants:
* Uses Agency CV and vacancy portal and its matchmaking functionality;
* Receives support of the Agency's branch staff in organising the selection.
* Vacancy fairs
* Employer visits
* Information at the Agency homepage
* Seminars for the employers
* Consultations on collective redundancies

During the year 2018, the SEA cooperated with 7,019 employers, of whom 6,030 employers registered 88,492 vacancies and 1,634 employers took part in active employment measures. In total, comparing year 2018 with the previous year, the number of employers who have registered job vacancies has increased by 970, and accordingly the number of registered vacancies has increased by 20,797 or 30.7%. In addition to the above, the number of unique employers registering job vacancies has increased by 970, or 19.1%. This activity can be explained as occurring due to labour shortages and the growing popularity of CVVP among employers

To support employers in filling vacancies effectively, and to inform job-seekers of a wider range of job opportunities, the SEA continues to organise and develop the tradition of job fairs by providing a face-to-face meeting for employers and jobseekers. In year 2018, 9 vacancy fairs and 2 international labour markets were organised. **In total, 258 employers took part in Vacancy fairs, and over 4,900 free job vacancies were offered to jobseekers.** **Within the framework of the EURES project, two International Job Fairs were held – in Liepaja and Daugavpils. A total of 51 employers participated in both events, and 1,181 vacancies were offered to jobseekers.**

***Registration of free vacancies and selection of employees***

The employer may register a vacancy with the SEA in several ways:

* At SEA branches in person, by telephone or electronically. In order to obtain information about topicality of the vacancies registered by the SEA, the employees of the branch of the SEA shall contact employers who confirm or deny the topicality of the vacancy at least once every two weeks;
* By means of registration, by using section of the SEA section CVVP (<http://cvvp.nva.gov.lv/>). In this case, the vacancy can be viewed on the Internet, and information about the vacancy is provided to the unemployed persons and job seekers who visit the branches of SEA. Similarly, an employer registered with the CVVP can search for employees by matching the CVs of jobseekers on the portal. In year 2018, the number of active users of CVVP was 111 555 (unique visitors at least once a month), which is 26,062 more than in year 2017. In year 2018, the total view number of the CVVP portal of SEA had a total of 5,728,200 (5,606,536 (97.88%) views from Latvia, and 121,664 views from jobseekers resided in other countries). Great interest in year 2018 came from Great Britain, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands, Norway, Lithuania, Ireland. From the total number of registered vacancies (88,492 vacancies), 32,646 or 37% free vacancies were registered at the CVVP portal, compared to year 2017, the number of free vacancies at the CVVP portal increased by 12% or 14,804 free vacancies.

By accepting the vacancy information, the employee offers the employer assistance from the SEA in selecting applicants, and arranging meetings with the applicants. Employees of the SEA select employees from the unemployed and job seekers upon request of the employer. The total number of selections organised by the SEA has increased in comparison with year 2017. Of the 88,492 vacancies registered by the SEA in year 2018, 13,571 job vacancies (or 15.3%) had first-time or face-to-face selection organised for them. Initial selection was organised for 9,244 vacancies (or 10.4%), while face-to-face selection was organized for 4,327 vacancies (or 4.9%).

***Employer-requested training of the unemployed***

Employers, with the support of the SEA, can obtain the necessary specialists for the company from among the unemployed persons. The employer chooses a training program in which an unemployed would be required to participate, while the SEA organizes training in any licensed professional development training program, professional development training program, informal training programs, and in vehicle and tractor driver training programs. In cooperation with the employers and the educational institutions, a completely new educational program tailored to the specifics of the company may be developed, and within the year 2017, the employers were ever more increasingly encouraged to use this opportunity by the SEA.

In year 2018, training was organized at the request of 8 employers, involving 31 persons. There were 14 unemployed persons involved in vocational training programs, and 17 persons – in non-formal education programs. The most popular educational programs: training of various categories of car and tractor drivers were part-taken by 19 participants.

**2.4.3. EURES services**

The purpose of the measure is to support the free movement of workers within European countries. Consultation and support can be received by anyone interested. Support within the measure/activity:

* it provides jobseekers with advice and information on employment opportunities and living and working conditions in European countries, including in Latvia;
* it helps employers find the most suitable employees;
* it provides information and advice to job seekers and employers in cross-border regions.

In year 2018, 7,426 EURES consultations were provided, including 1,525 individual jobseeker consultations (including, consultations on employment issues and 957 consultations on the social security and tax questions, work and living conditions, as well as general information on EURES services etc.), and 18 group consultations for 514 jobseekers, and 524 individual consultations for employers. In the framework of the ESF project "Operation of the EURES network in Latvia", 88 informative activities of EURES were implemented in year 2018 for the target groups of the project – job seekers, employers and SEA employees. In order to more effectively support Latvian citizens living abroad and their family members who are considering, or have decided to return and work in Latvia, or who wish to start their own business and develop business links in Latvia, a seminar was organized in year 2018 on Latvian labour market opportunities for Latvian nationals in cooperation with the Latvian Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden; meetings were organised with diaspora organisations and Latvian citizens, as well as with Latvian embassies and Latvian organisations in London (United Kingdom) and Dublin (Ireland), cooperation was facilitated with the Latvian business and professional organization in United Kingdom in order to implement re-emigration initiatives. 2 international EURES job fairs were organized – in Liepaja and Daugavpils. In addition, participation in 4 international job fairs was provided, providing information and advice on living and working conditions, on SEA services, and job vacancies in Latvia.

### **2.5. Report of SEA management and performance improvement systems for ensuring of effective operation, as well as information on the structural reforms and reorganisations carried out**

On April 1, 2018, the SEA March 20, 2018 normative regulation No. 5 "Amendments to the November 24, 2015 internal normative regulation No. 48 "Rules of Procedure of the the State Employment Agency"". According to these regulations, the SEA consists of 28 branches and the following administrative units – five departments (Financial Management Department, Accounting Department, Legal Department, EU Fund Projects Department and Services Department) and six independent departments (Human Resources Department, Risk Management and Internal Control Department), Public Relations Departments, Customer Services Management and Development Department, Information Systems Maintenance and Development Department, and Statistics Department).

Starting with April 1, 2018, SEA underwent significant structural and operational organization changes:

* In order to provide legal support to SEA units as well as centralized procurement processes, the Legal Department and Licensing Unit *[Tiesiskā nodrošinājuma un licencēšanas nodaļa]* was established within the Legal Department *[Juridiskais departaments]*, which was also supplemented by Procurement and Contracts Unit *[Iepirkumu un līgumu nodaļa]* and Resources and Document Management Unit *[Resursu un dokumentu pārvaldības nodaļa]*.
* The Financial and development department *[Finanšu un attīstības departaments]* was re-organised, by creating the Financial management department *[Finanšu vadības departaments]*, and within it – the Core functions and active employment measures financial management unit *[Pamatdarbības un aktīvo nodarbinātības pasākumu finanšu vadības nodaļa]* and Structural funds financial management unit *[Struktūrfondu finanšu vadības nodaļa]*.
* In order to more effectively organize implementation and overall organization of all functions, the project "Integration of refugees and persons granted alternative status in the labour market of Latvia" *["Bēgļu un alternatīvo statusu ieguvušo personu integrācija Latvijas darba tirgū"]* was included in the framework of Services Department. A separate Statistical Unit was established. The Customer Services Management Department was replaced with the Customer Services Management and Development Department.

In order to ensure efficiency of the activities implemented by the SEA, and taking into account the principle of good management, efficient use of human and financial resources, in providing services to clients within the optimal branch network module, starting from November 15, 2018, the Gulbene branch of SEA was reformed into the Gulbene and Balvi region customer services centre. In its turn, the Valka branch was reformed into the Valmiera branch Valka customer services centre, whereas the customer service site of the SEA Valka branch in Smiltene was reformed into the SEA Valmiera branch Smiltene customer services centre. Thus, starting from November 15, 2018, the fulfilment of the basic functions of the SEA was ensured in 26 territorial units or branches (up to November 14, 2018 – only in 28 branches), which are directly subject to the SEA deputy director and are responsible for practical execution of the ANP. Branch Board has been established in the SEA in order to facilitate involvement of the Branch in the planning, organization and improvement of the SEA's work.

In order to ensure the provision of quality services to all clients, an evaluation of the effectiveness of remote workplaces at SEA branches was carried out in 2018, resulting in the closure of remote workplaces in Viļaka (Balvi branch), Ilukste (Daugavpils branch), Auce (Dobele branch), Viesite (Jekabpils branch), Karsava and Zilupe (Ludza branch), Ergli, Lubana and Varaklani (Madona branch), and in Salaspils (Riga regional branch). Closure of the remote workplaces allows to optimize the workload of SEA employment agents, as well as to reduce the costs of maintaining remote workplaces. After evaluating the customer flow and in order to provide customers with a full set of SEA support measures and services, customer acceptance at the State Unified Customer Service Centre at Talejas iela 1, Riga, was closed as per December 31, 2018.

On November 20 and 21, 2018, a meeting of the Technical Experts (benchlearning) Task Force of EU Employment Services took place in Brussels. This meeting evaluated the progress achieved so far in the first and second cycles of benchlearning, the data obtained and their quality, the challenges ahead and the improvements required, as well as the measures planned for the third phase. No external evaluations are to be be carried out in year 2019, but a pilot project – in-depth learning activities in working groups (up to 5 employment services each) will be executed. The SEA, together with the employment services in Austria, Belgium and Sweden, will participate in the working group "E-services and Strategy of Channels". It is also planned to participate in the working group "Activation of the long-term unemployed".

In year 2018, the SEA continued the ongoing direction of the process of carrying out control visits to the locations where measures were implemented, with a total of 7,859 inspections performed at the sites of implementers. In addition to the aforementioned, and in order to make the supervision measures more effective, a specific Control acts registry module was introduced within the SEA. In its turn, in order to promote the provision of better quality services, to raise awareness of the implementers and to prevent the risks of non-compliances in the records of the visitors of activities and their documentation, the principle of "Provide consultation first!" has been introduced within the control activities carried out at the sites of implementation. This means that in addition to the information already available on the SEA website http://www.nva.gov.lv, informative self-check and control documentation on the implementation conditions was published for implementing parties of the activity.

In year 2018, the format of cooperation between the employment services of the Baltic States changed significantly. Experts from three levels (institution management, experts, branch staff) from the employment services of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania took part in the exchange visits. On March 22 – 23, 2018, heads of employment services met in Vilnius in order to discuss global trends and experiences in the field of lifelong learning. On June 26 to 27 2018 in Bauska, Latvia, heads of the regional branches of employment services met in order to discuss issues related to the promotion of the unemployed, job seekers and workers over 50 years of age. On October 30 to 31, 2018 a seminar for career counselors in employment services on principles and methods of career counselling was held in the Estonian town of Viljandi.

In year 2018, the compliance of SEA internal legislation with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation was evaluated. In addition, changes were made to the processes and annexes of the Quality Manual. Within an outsourced service, data protection specialist services and advice were acquired.

# 3. Personnel

### **General Information**

Human resources are the most important resource of the SEA, which contributes to the fulfilment of the goals set by the SEA. In total, the SEA in year 2018 employed 783 employees both in the SEA administration and in the SEA regional branches and customer service centres throughout the entire Latvia.

**SEA staff statistics in 2018**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Parameter** | **Quantity** |
| **Mean number of full office positions** | **832** |
| Incl. the number of posts of civil servants | 369 |
| Incl. the number of office positions | 463 |
| **Actual mean number of employees** | **783** |
| Incl. the number of civil servants | 332 |
| Incl. the number of employees | 451 |

The largest share of SEA employees is in the age group from 40 to 59 years.

**Age and gender structure of the SEA staff**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age/gender (number)** | **Females** | **Males** |
| 20 to 24 years | 2 | 2 |
| 25 to 39 years | 221 | 18 |
| 40 to 59 years | 382 | 25 |
| Older than 60 years | 93 | 1 |

98.92% of SEA employees have higher education

**Education level of SEA staff**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level of education** | **Number of employees** | **% of total number** |
| Higher education | 736 | 98.92 |
| Secondary education | 8 | 1.08 |

The variability level of the SEA in year 2018 was 20.17%[[3]](#footnote-4), whereas the rotation ration – 35.88%[[4]](#footnote-5). The SEA conducts annual evaluation of the performance of civil servants and employees, which results in structural changes and improvements in the quality of daily work, planning of career development, additions to the job descriptions, and in defining new training needs. 49.06% of SEA employees are rated as "good", which means that the performance of the work is fully compliant with the requirements throughout the assessment period. 43.88% receive a rating of "very good", which means that they partially go beyond requirements – their performance exceeds the requirements at certain stages of the assessment period or in certain aspects of the performance criterion. 2.01% are evaluated as "excellent", which means that the performance of the work exceeds the requirements throughout the assessment period. 1% is evaluated as "must be optimised", which means that the performance of the work is only partially compliant throughout the assessment period.

The quality of work of SEA employees was evaluated both by the LM Acknowledgments, and by the SEA Acknowledgment and Appreciation writs.

* 1. **Training and Upgrading of Personnel**

Employees of the SEA continued to improve their qualifications, as they do every year, at higher education institutions. Similarly, also in educational institutions provided by the State Chancellery *[Valsts Kanceleja]*, SEA and State Administration *[Valsts administrācija]* schools, seminars organized by the LM, as well as in other training programs, in accordance with the Training Plan for year 2018 approved by the Director of the SEA.

The training needs of the SEA staff are determined taking into account the existing education of the employees, the knowledge already acquired and the additional knowledge required for performance of the duties to be performed, as well as the recommendations/suggestions of the heads of departments. In addition, the training wishes expressed by the staff were taken into account in the information system of the electronic evaluation form, approved by, within the annual work evaluation, the immediate supervisor of the staff member concerned. The skills and competences acquired during the training significantly improve the performance of SEA functions and tasks, and employees have the opportunity to understand and combine their individual goals with those of the SEA.

In year 2018, emphasis was placed on in-house training of staff, with the involvement of a SEA specialists in a specific field as a lecturer. In year 2018, seminars were organized on the topicalities of the ESF projects, thus informing the employees on the spot about all the current events and changes within the project. In year 2018, more than 40 internal and external trainings took place.

The training programs in year 2018 were mainly focused on improving the professional knowledge and skills of employees, including public procurement and planning, prevention of conflicts of interest and corruption, personnel selection and mobility issues, improvement of customer service skills, labour market forecasting issues, as well as current changes in regulatory enactments. In-service training opportunities have been used to enhance knowledge and experience. Including participation in exchange visits, seminars, study visits and conferences. In year 2018, employees of both the SEA's branches and the administration participated in 70 foreign events related to the improvement of knowledge and exchange of experience.

# 4. Communication with the Public

### **Public information and Education Measures**

In year 2018, the SEA continued to engage in active communication with the public by organizing public information events on SEA activities, services, active employment measures, projects and examples of good practices. The information is being disseminated through central and regional newspapers, magazines and internet portals, on radio and television, and through contacts with partners such as municipalities, employers, industry and professional associations, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and by organizing or participating in informational events – in job fairs, employers' and jobseekers' meetings "Open Day in companies for people with disabilities" and "Career days for jobseekers", in seminars, conferences, events organized by business organizations, exhibitions and other events.

In the year 2018, 201 news on the activities and services of the SEA was prepared and published, including 98 news releases for the media. Once a month, the public was informed about the situation of registered unemployment in the country and regions, information on the monthly registered unemployment data in different sections is available in the section "Documents and Statistics" on the SEA website. In year 2018, there were approximately 4.5 thousand publications in the national central and regional newspapers, radio and television, internet portals, on the activities of SEA, and on current employment issues and the unemployment situation in the country. In order to inform the public about the services of the SEA and their accessibility, interviews and commentaries of the director of the SEA, heads of structural units and branches, as well as experts, were regularly organized on television, radio, central and regional newspapers and in internet portals. In year 2018, the number of unique visitors to the SEA website reached the number of 4,844,464.

In year 2018, an information campaign "Green Light for the Strong-Aged" was launched on SEA support for employers over 50 years of age in order to promote employability and employment retaining abilities. In addition, an information campaign "Unemployment is not Inactivity" was organized on the support of SEA for integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market.

On May 24, the international conference "Employment in Latvia Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow", was held. At this conference, Latvian and foreign officials and experts discussed current trends and challenges in the labour market, as well as the role of employment services, the impact of globalization, demographics and digital technologies, and the development of the Latvian labour market in an international context. The conference was attended by 110 participants and all interested parties could watch the conference broadcast live online.

In year 2019, special attention was paid to operational communication with clients and the general public in the SEA's social network accounts, and the SEA's current messages to clients, business partners and the general public were visualized and formulated in short, understandable language. There was also an active dialogue between the SEA and the clients in the form of questions and answers on social networks. Channel of the social site "Youtube" was supplemented with 25 videos on SEA activities and services, and the number of SEA social account users in year 2018 was as follows: Twitter – 4 016; Facebook – 3 259; Draugiem.lv – 590.

As unemployment decreased and the number of registered vacancies increased, one of the priorities of informing the general public was communication with employers regarding the support of the SEA in attracting the necessary employees. In year 2018, the tasks of informing employers were as follows:

* raise awareness among employers about SEA support in recruitment: which includes on filling the vacancies, job fairs, CVVP portal, training of required staff, creation of subsidized jobs;
* raising employers' awareness and understanding of the potential of the labour pool in order to attract workers, including people with disabilities and the long-term unemployed persons;
* provide employers with prompt information on applying for active employment measures/activities and successful cooperation in the implementation of active employment measures/activities;
* inform and involve employers in all regions of the country in the measurements/activities organised by the SEA in attracting the necessary employees for events "Open Day in companies for people with disabilities" and "Career days for jobseekers";
* Taking into account the demographic situation in the country, inform employers about the use of working resources and potential of the workforce over 50 years of age, and apply for participation in the SEA Support Measure "Assessment of Work Environment and Human Resources Potential”, as well as continue regional workshops (creative laboratories) using practical experience, ideas and vision in all key areas of employment for older workers, and develop practical solutions to make longer-term use of the professional opportunities of this target group, both in the short and the long term;
* inform and involve the employers in the survey for the preparation of short-term labour market forecasts;
* promote the return of Latvian nationals employed abroad, and their integration into the Latvian labour market.

In order to promote employers' awareness and participation in SEA information activities and organized vacancy fairs, up-to-date information on activities organized by SEA branches for entrepreneurs was promptly published in the year 2018 calendar of events for employers. The above information was posted on the "For Employers" section of the SEA website, in its newly created "Calendar" section, on the start page of the SEA website, as well as in social network accounts and in the "News" sections of the relevant SEA branch. SEA press releases on services to employers were sent to central and regional media, municipalities and their portals, employer organizations (LDDK, LTRK, and other), and industry associations.

TV and radio shows were organized for all the SEA vacancy fairs, and comments of the SEA specialists were published in the media. 18 press releases prepared and sent to the media, municipalities and employers' organizations. According to the news agency LETA media monitoring data, there were 146 media publications on SEA Vacancy Fairs in year 2018. Before the Vacancy Fairs in Jelgava and Kuldiga, meetings of the SEA management and entrepreneurs ("Breakfast with entrepreneurs") were held.

Video called the "SEA CVVP" was created and posted on SEA website and on the SEA social network accounts. Video instructions for jobseekers and employers – "How to apply for a job at the SEA CVVP" and "How to register a job at the SEA CVVP portam" were created and posted on the SEA website and on the SEA social network accounts.

From September 17 to 28, in the service areas of all SEA branches, the campaign "Open Day in Companies for Persons with Disabilities" took place, attended by 65 employers and 296 job seekers with disabilities. Promotional banners were displayed on the SEA website and on social networks; the start page of the website also includes a special section "Open Day for Persons with Disabilities" with information about the campaign and activities in each branch, 6 press releases for the media, employers' organizations, municipalities, NGOs on the campaign were made, and 2 publications on the campaign results were prepared.

Current information on the labour market situation in Latvia, SEA CVVP portal and SEA services for re-emigration support were regularly sent to Latvian embassies and Latvian diaspora portals abroad. Meetings were held with Latvian residents living abroad who are considering returning to Latvia in the near or far future. On May 29, 2018, the leaders of the SEA in Stockholm met with representatives of the Latvian diaspora in Sweden, and the SEA and EURES event "From words to deeds - opportunities with Swedish experience in Latvia” was held at the Latvian Embassy. On October 27, representatives of the SEA participated in the annual meeting of Latvian community organizations in the United Kingdom at the Latvian Embassy in the United Kingdom. On November 10, the SEA, in co-operation with the Embassy of the Republic of Latvia in Ireland, organized an information session with representatives of the Latvian community "With Ireland's Experience in Latvia", attended by SEA Director Evita Simsone *[Evita Simsone]* and SEA deputy director Kristine Stasane *[Kristīne Stašāne]*. On December 8, an event was organized in London, at the premises of the Latvian Embassy in the United Kingdom "With British Experience in Latvia and Latvia – Perspective of Latvian Businessmen and Professionals for Implementation of Re-emigration Initiatives and Development of Cooperation Platform". Measures to promote re-emigration are organized, with priority being given to those European countries where most Latvians live and work. During these events, diaspora members were informed about SEA and EURES services and support in the field of re-emigration, labour market situation, working and living conditions in Latvia, possibilities to use SEA services remotely, etc.

The SEA EURES information materials in Latvian (infographics and booklet) "Planning to return to Latvia after working abroad", and a booklet "Living and working in Latvia" in English for jobseekers who do not speak Latvian, have been developed and distributed, for example, spouses of Latvian nationals, or children of Latvian nationals who have been educated and grown abroad. Informative materials are available in both digital and print form. The EURES page of the SEA website is regularly getting its updates under the section "Living and Working in Latvia". In its turn, the websites of SEA branches have a section "Working and Living Conditions", where you can get information on work and education opportunities, salaries, municipal services in the territories of the respective SEA branch.

On December 2018, a section titled "If You Want to Return to Latvia" was created on the SEA website, which gathers useful information for Latvian residents who live and work abroad but are planning or considering returning to Latvia. The "For those who want to return to Latvia” section of the SEA website offers information on SEA and EURES support in re-emigration, as well as the SEA EURES advisers' working hours and contacts, the SEA e-services, the SEA's registered vacancies, the SEA CVVP portal opportunities, including the state social security services and available state aid for starting a business, a video instruction "How to apply for a job at the SEA CVVP portal", answers to frequently asked questions for EURES advisers, links to other useful websites of Latvian institutions and organizations.

In order to promote employment in the cross-border areas, the project "Promoting Cross-Border Labour Market Integration and Employment" of the cooperation program "INTERREG Estonia-Latvia" implemented by Latvia and Estonia has been promoted: 11 articles on the project activities have been prepared and published.

Participation of the SEA was ensured in the LAMPA Conversation Festival. The participant in the conversation, "Portrait of a Future Leader", was a former unemployed person who, following her participation in an ESF project "Youth Guarantee" (within the business or self-employment support measure) became an entrepreneur. In its turn, the discussion "Latvian Financial Literacy Pathways and Roads for year 2018, or What to Do to Improve Households Financial Sustainability" was attended by the SEA ESF project department, popularizing the SEA financial literacy and its e-learning module.

On November 13, a conference on volunteering "Volunteering – My favourite Work" was held in the chamber hall of the VEF block in Riga. Its main goal was to bring together the largest and most active volunteer organizers from all over Latvia in order to jointly review the achievements in the field of volunteering in Latvia, and to outline further developments in the field.

In order to promote the digital services of the SEA, an article "SEA offers a wide range of services online" was prepared, banners and infographics were created. All SEA affiliates organized European Digital Week events from March 19 to 23, and from September 17 to 28, campaign "Days without Queues" was organised, aimed at motivating customers to more actively use electronic services, presenting their diversity and potential strengths. During the campaign, a total of 5,886 consultations were provided at the SEA branches on online SEA services and on distance learning opportunities through the e-learning modules "Preparing a Cover Letter and Preparing for a Job Interview" and "My Money Today and Tomorrow". Financial literacy". A video story has been created on the SEA's participation in the campaign "Days without Queues" in cooperation with VARAM, which has been posted on the SEA's Youtube channel.

A video tutorial on electronic registration for unemployed has been created and posted on the SEA website and on social networks. An e-booklet "First Steps for Refugees on the Way to Work" has been created. In year 2018, within the framework of the SEA project "Integration of Refugees and Persons with Alternative Status in the Latvian Labour Market", infographics "State Health Insurance in Latvia" and "State Social Insurance Services” were created.

Within the ESF project "Support for a longer employement life" in Bauska, Jekabpils, Limbazi, Liepaja, Madona, Rezekne, Riga, Sigulda, Valmiera and Ventspils, workshops for employers "Experience will always be of value" were organized, using interactive teamwork methodology developed by the British Council and recognized by British organizations in the field of town planning, enabling representatives of different fields, backgrounds, interests and age groups to collaborate in a creative laboratory, creating innovative solutions for employees over the age of 50.

### **Measures for getting to know the public opinion on satisfaction with SEA work quality, and results of the said measures**

The SEA purposefully organized work aimed to improve the quality of customer service (remote and face-to-face channels). As a result, Jadviga Bajarune *[Jadviga Bajarune]*, of employment agency of the Riga Regional Branch of the SEA, won the highest rating of the population in the campaign organized by the State Chancellery and called "Movement for Good Service, year 2018". In addition, other SEA employees were honoured at the award ceremony: Employment agent at Riga Regional Branch Karina Mihalovica *[Karīna Mihaloviča]*, Kuldiga branch employment agent Dzineta Podina *[Džineta Podiņa]*, coordination expert Silvija Gintere *[Silvija Gintere]*, Preili branch employement specialist Anita Lazdane *[Anita Lazdāne]*.

Annual surveys are conducted in order to evaluate the satisfaction of unemployed and job seekers with SEA services. Electronic customer survey was also conducted in year 2018 – from November 26 to December 20.

86,044 clients (85,960 unemployed and 83 jobseekers) who have worked with the SEA from November 1, 2017 to November 1, 2018 were invited to participate in the survey. Already for the third year, the survey sample was expanded in order to include respondents who are no longer registered as unemployed or job seekers. The e-mail sent to the clients informed them that participation in this survey was voluntary and based on the customer's choice/consent. The questionnaire was completed by 1,205 unemployed persons and job seekers (hereinafter – respondents).

Comparing the response rate of respondents to year 2016, when 5,726 questionnaires were completed and submitted, in year 2017 a significant decrease in response rate was observed. Only 0.75% of the respondents responded to the invitation to complete the questionnaire. This is due to a survey being taken in the CVVP portal, which requires authentication. During the survey phase, e-mails were received from customers stating that they refused to complete the questionnaire because authentication was too complex and due to the fact that authentication provided no trust in the anonymity and confidentiality of the data. When answering customer questions, it was clarified that the answers obtained were confidential and would only be used in aggregate form. In year 2018, the number of respondents increased by 747 persons.

Analysing respondents' answers, it was found that 67% of customer who have been unemployed or looking for a job for up to one year have the most active response. 15% of responding clients are no longer unemployed but find themselves in employment relations, and 3% are no longer registered as unemployed/seeking employment, but are neither in employment relations. 10% of the respondents are unemployed or jobseekers for a period from 1 to 3 years.

65% women and 35% men participated in the survey. 58% of respondents had higher education, 36% had secondary education, and 6% had basic education.

Respondents were asked to rate their SEA staff counselling skills on situation in the labour market, and on job vacancies. 56% responded that these skills were high, 38% medium and 6% – low. The skills of SEA staff to provide information on the rights and responsibilities of the unemployed persons and job seekers are valued as "high" by 70% of respondents, 27% of respondents believe that these skills were "medium", and 3% – "low". According to the survey data, respondents are generally satisfied with the information provided by the employees of the SEA branches regarding the services of the SEA: 68% of the respondents rated the skills of SEA employees as "high", 27% as "medium", and 5% – as low. 86% of the respondents stated that the SEA employee was "kind" while attending them, but 2% rated the service as "unkind", 12% of respondents chose "depends on occasion".

In order to promote the use of SEA e-services in the year 2018 survey, we continued to find out if clients used the SEA e-services, if not, why, and what would be required in order to intensify the use of e-services.

First of all, we asked whether respondents use the SEA e-services. 79% of respondents said that they used e-services, whereas 21% said they did not. The follow-up questions of the questionnaire depended on the client's answer to the question *Have you utilised the opportunity to receive the SEA e-services?*

In case of answer *Yes*, a supplementary question was asked – *Please indicate how you learned about the SEA e-services?* In most cases, in 60% of cases, respondents learned about e-services from an SEA employee, whereas 46% – from the site [www.nva.gov.lv](http://www.nva.gov.lv/)

As for customers who answered that they used e-services of the SEA, we asked to provide an evaluation in terms of 5 points, where 1 = very bad; 2 = bad; 3 = on average; 4 = good; 5 = very good. The largest majority, namely – 43% of the respondents evaluated SEA e-services with the mark 4. Also comparing the ratings in the used e-services section shows that the most commonly used rating is 4 = good. The number of respondents who rate SEA e-services as very good, has increased by 34%.

87% of the respondents mentioned searching for vacancies as the most frequently used e-service. E-learning section "Financial literacy" was ranked as an innovative SEA e-service, and emerged as the second most sought-after e-service, where 36% were applying for unemployment or job seeker status. 1% of respondents reported applying for an EURES consultation, which was indicated as the less used e-service. The calculation was made with those respondents (948 persons) who answered in question 2 of the questionnaire that they uses e-services of the SEA.

In case if the responders replied to the question *Have you utilised the opportunity to receive the SEA e-services?* with a *No*, the supplementary question *Please provide a reason of not using the SEA e-services*, was asked.

There were several possible answers and the most frequently mentioned reason for not using the e-services was ignorance/not being informed of the e-services – 41%. The second most common reason in 27% of cases was mentioned as enjoying to have a face-to-face contact with an SEA employee. In year 2018, the number of respondents indicating that the necessary authentication means for using the e-service are not available (1%), and 3% responded that they did not know how to use the Internet well enough, has decreased.

In order to interest respondents who answered that they do not use SEA e-services, a question was asked *Which of the following SEA e-services was of interest to you?*, and a link to the e-service was pasted side-by-side with the response variants. In most cases, 61% said they were interested in finding vacancies. 32% said they were interested in applying for unemployment or jobseeker status. The least interest came from e-services such as applying for EURES advice (4%) and the e-learning module "Preparation of CV and Cover Letter" (5%).

In response to the question *If the required type of service is available in person and electronically, what type of service would you prefer?*, 65% of customers said they would like to receive the service remotely, 35% - in person.

In response to the question encouraging more frequent use of SEA e-services electronically, 37% of respondents have opted for individual consultation by an SEA employee, while 31% of respondents would require informative materials to make more frequent use of SEA e-services.

The year 2018 Customer Satisfaction Survey included question *Has an SEA employee helped you get started using the e-services?* 50% of respondents admitted that they did not require help in using the e-services. 37% of the employees helped to get started using e-services, and 13% did not receive support from SEA staff.

### **Cooperation with the non-governmental sector**

The SEA cooperates with the non-governmental sector in achieving common goals by raising public awareness, and awareness of SEA services. The SEA also actively cooperates with associations and foundations by implementing active employment measures "Measures for Specific Groups" and "First Work Experience for Young People", "Development of Work Skills in the Non-Governmental Sector", as well as Support Measure "Job Search Motivation Program and Social Mentoring Services", in order to promote the activation of the long-term unemployed/long-term unemployed persons with disabilities. In implementing these measures, associations and foundations provide support to persons with disabilities, the long-term unemployed persons, the disadvantaged and young unemployed, and, through the work of the targeted unemployed, fulfil the objectives set out in the statutes of associations and foundations.

The SEA, together with its partners, continues to promote development of the volunteering work through the Volunteering Information System, which helps coordinate the exchange of information between organisations who provide volunteer work, and persons who wish to carry out volunteer work. From year 2018 on, at the home-page [www.brivpratigie.lv](http://www.brivpratigie.lv/), organizers of volunteering work have the opportunity to announce volunteering offers (missions) in those regions of Latvia where the SEA has started cooperation with its partners, and promotes and coordinates volunteering through the website[www.brivpratigie.lv](http://www.brivpratigie.lv/). There were 3,601 volunteers registered on the site in year 2018, and the number of missions was 312; where the organizers of voluntary work – 182; partners – 14.

Within the framework of the ANP, the SEA, in cooperation with the Latvian Association of the Deaf *["Latvijas nedzirdīgo savienība"]*, provides sign language interpreting services for persons with disabilities to acquire educational programs and to communicate with other natural and legal persons. In year 2018, the sign language interpreter service was provided to 15 persons with hearing impairments within the ANP.

# 5. Plans for the coming year

### **5.1. Measures taken during the previous year which are to be continued**

Active employment measures and preventive measures aimed at reducing unemployment:

* training measures for unemployed and jobseekers – vocational training, retraining and in-service training, on-the-job training at the employer, training on-demand from the employer, non-formal training, measures to increase competitiveness;
* employment measures – measures for specific groups of persons, measures for starting a business or self-employment, temporary community service activities;
* promoting regional mobility of workers;
* career advice and information days;
* support measures for the long-term unemployed persons – career counselling, individual and group counsel;ing by psychologists and psychotherapists, health examinations, job aptitude determination, job search motivation and social mentoring services (including for the long-term unemployed persons), and support measures for the unemployed with addiction problems;
* employment measures during the summer holidays for persons undergoing training in general, special or vocational education institutions.

### **Main challenges and events for the next year**

### **Provide customer-oriented, convenient and high-quality services to SEA clients of the same high quality at every customer service point;**

### **Improve access to, and encourage the use of electronic services**

* Participation of SEA staff in Digital agents training integrated communication and training activities within the program called "My Latvija.lv. Act digitally! *[My Latvija.lv. Dari digitāli!]*.
* Ensure development of the interactive e-learning module on "How to Build an Effective Job Search Strategy", and make it accessible to clients.
* Within implementation of the ERAF project No. 2.2.1.1/17/I/032 "Development of a system for forecasting and monitoring labour supply and demand", in cooperation with EM, work will be initiated at perfecting the ISes of SEA, in order to significantly improve the already existing labour market short-term forecasting tool, and to develop a WEB-based analysis of the labour market forecasts, which will include short-, medium- and long-term forecasts (including labour market supply) by industry branch, occupation and education; as well as additional information on the labour market and education.

### **Promote the employment of persons with disabilities by supporting the start-up of employment and the adaptation of the working environment, as well as raising public and employer awareness of the employability of persons with disabilities;**

### **Encourage older workers to remain in the labour market for as long as possible;**

### **Improve the transition of the long-term unemployed to employment and participation in activities and measures;**

### **Improve management of resources and services provided by the SEA.**

* Develop the SEA human resource management development plan for year 2020 to 2023.

### **Develop services for employers**

* Organize at least 4 vacancy fairs.
* Develop the SEA cooperation plan with employers for year 2020 - 2023.

### **Ensure implementation of the EURES Regulation**

* Continue work on improving the information technology platform of the SEA, ensuring the continuity of the exchange of a single channel of job vacancies and jobseekers' CVs with the EURES Jobs Mobility Portal.

### **Provide EURES activities in support of re-emigration.**

* Organize measures on re-emigration initiatives in order to promote access to quality information for the Latvian nationals.
* Conducting net-based (online) job fairs.
* EURES regional discussions.

### **Improve public information on the services provided by the SEA**

* Popularize electronic services of SEA.
* Organise the discussion "How many work places are going to be replaced by technologies in Latvia?"
* Organise a discussion with planning regions "Latvia, EU 15 – influence to the job market".

### **Implement international cooperation:**

* Implement the activities of the Interreg EST-LAT cooperation project "Promoting Cross-Border Labour Market Integration and Employment"
* Participation in the project "BSLF for Sustainable Working Life (SWL)".

### **Reduce the administrative burden in licensing and supervision of merchants as unemployment service providers**.

### **Ensure full functioning and development of the volunteering information system.**

### **Planned cooperation projects and studies for next year**

* In the year 2019, it is planned to conduct the SEA customer surveys;
* Within the framework of ESF project "Improvement of labour market forecasting system", also in year 2019, the annual employer survey is to be conducted by the company SIA "RAIT Custom Research Baltic". The aim of the employers' survey is to provide the SEA with input data for the preparation of short-term labour market forecasts, and to find out the needs of the labour market. A report on the results of the survey will be available on the website of the SEA.
* It is planned to conclude a cooperation agreement within the framework of the ESF project "Support for longer employment life" within framework of the Swedish ESF project. Within the framework of the agreement, it is planned to carry out a detailed assessment of the situation of persons over 50 years of age, and to organize experience exchange events, attracting international organizations.
* In year 2019, it is planned to expand the range of activities offered within the framework of the INTERREG V-A-Estonia-Latvia "Cross-border Labour Market Integration and Promotion of Employment" project with two new services, namely, training of Latvian language, and a mentoring programme, so that jobseekers in the neighboring country could have better opportunities to find work in Latvia.
* Three measures are planned to be implemented in the framework of the Baltic States Cooperation Agreement in year 2019: joint seminar at management level in Riga on Digital Transformation, Artificial Intelligence and their Impact on the Baltic Labour Market; Joint Seminar in Lithuania on Case Management and Cooperation with Municipalities; joint seminar in Tallinn on Youth Consultation and Events and NEET (Not in education, employment or training). Visiting to Career services reform and new career centre.

### **SEA financial statement and liabilities**

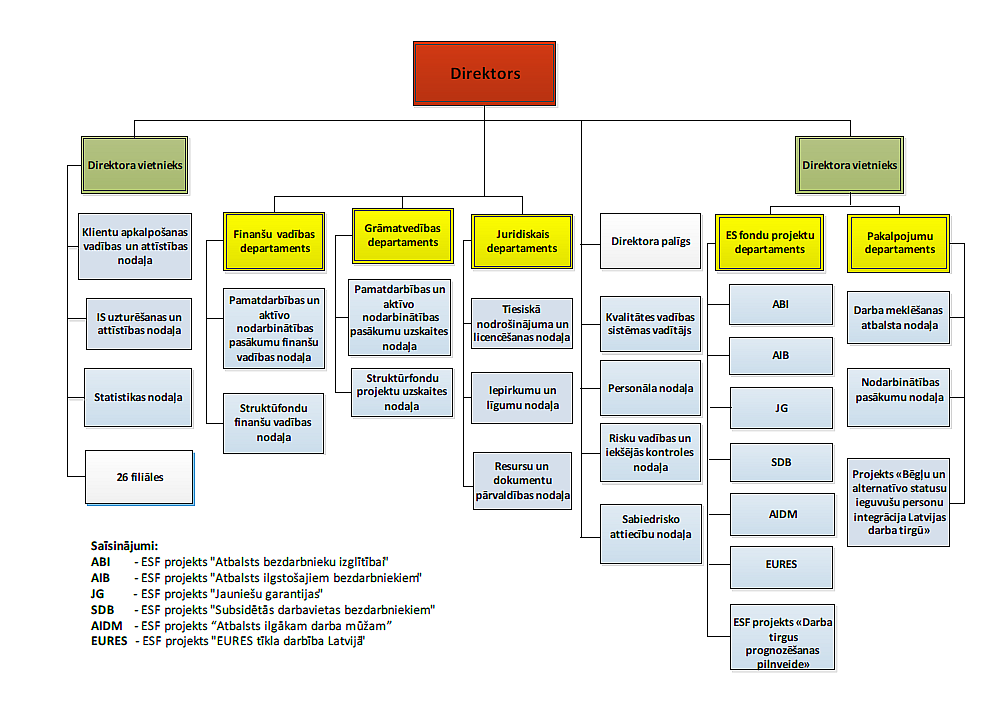
Table No. 8

SEA financial statement and liabilities as per 31.12.2018. (*EUR*)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Parameter | Liabilities (*EUR*) |
| Long-term investments | 1,846,442 |
| Intangible investments | 1,087,615 |
| Fixed assets | 758,827 |
| Current assets | 314,876 |
| Accruals | 7,902 |
| Debtors | 16,741 |
| Deferred expenses and advances for services and projects | 290,233 |
| Monetary funds | 0 |
| IN TOTAL | 2,161,318 |
| Own capital | 675,556 |
| Result of previous years' budget execution | 410,615 |
| Result of report years' budget execution | 264,941 |
| Savings | 28,458 |
| Creditors | 1,457,304 |
| Short-term current liabilities to suppliers and contractors (training the unemployed persons, maintaining of KPP, APSD, PNPG) | 766,691 |
| Short-term accrued liabilities | 496,595 |
| Taxes and social security payments | 136,014 |
| Remuneration payments and withholding (excluding taxes) | 3,800 |
| Other short-term liabilities | 14,204 |
| Deferred income and advances received | 40,000 |
| IN TOTAL | 2,161,318 |
| Leased assets | 115,797 |
| Imbalance assets | 31,808 |
| Penalties and fines due | 3,575 |
| Claims on unlawfully expropriated assets | 3,029 |
| Other imbalance assets | 25,204 |
| Imbalance liabilities | 104,004,984 |
| Future payments under contracts concluded for projects financed by the external financial assistance and EU policy instruments | 103,999,319 |
| Advance payment documents received but not paid | 5,665 |

Appendix

### **STRUCTURAL SCHEMATIC OF SEA FOR YEAR 2018 (as of 15.11.2018.)**



1. General secondary, with/without basic education [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The SEA organises information days within the framework of measures to increase competitiveness (KPP). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Redundancies/average number of employees in year 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Staff rotation rate = (number of employees redundant + number of redundancies) / average number of employees in year 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)