

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



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Contents

Main characteristics and challenges

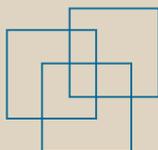
Active labour market programmes

Job matching, placement and
activation strategies

Regulation of private employment
agencies

Annex: Milestones in the institutional
evolution of public employment
services in Colombia

Bibliography



Colombia

Main characteristics and challenges¹

- Labour market and employment situation

Colombia is a medium-sized country that has experienced steady economic growth since the beginning of the 2000s. As the economy has improved, so the numbers of people living in extreme poverty have fallen; however, income inequality remains widespread (Joumard and Londoño, 2013). Low wages, unemployment and a very large informal sector prevent some categories of workers from improving their position in the labour

¹ This document is one of a collection of notes about public employment services in selected Latin American and Caribbean countries jointly launched by the Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch, Employment Policy Department, and the Decent Work Team for the South Cone of Latin America. This note was prepared by Zulum Avila, Employment Service Specialist (ILO), with inputs from MT-Colombia and Juan Chacaltana (ILO). The opinions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of ILO.

market, in particular, those with low skills (below secondary education) and with no access to training (ILO, 2013). Following the economic downturn of 2008-09, fiscal measures implemented to boost productivity and employment growth have contributed to a slow but sustained fall in the unemployment rate and undeclared work (CEPAL, 2013). Nonetheless, increasing productivity and the number of skilled jobs remains a challenge. In 2014, the unemployment rate was the second highest (9.4 per cent) among Latin-American economies and during the same year, 10.4 per cent of the unemployed were available to work more hours but unable to find a full-time job.²

- **Extending employment services and training to all Colombian workers**

In parallel to the introduction of fiscal measures, the national Government promoted key reforms to the governance framework with the aim of implementing employment policy and social protection measures in a more comprehensive manner. At the core of these reforms were passive and active labour market mechanisms, known as the “protection mechanisms for the unemployed”, which aim at preventing prolonged spells of unemployment and ensuring income compensation for all jobless workers.³ Underpinning these protection mechanisms is the provision of public employment services and training (*Congreso de Colombia*, 2013).

Within the new governance framework, the Ministry of Labour (*Ministerio del Trabajo*, MT) reaffirmed its regulatory and coordinating role in the formulation and implementation of employment policy and labour market programmes. As part of the reforms, the public employment service was transformed into an overarching structure which brings together the resources and capacities of public and private providers of employment services (MT, 2011). Within this new structure the MT exercises de facto authority over the planning and management of employment service provision across the country.⁴

- **A public-private model for providing employment services**

The institutional arrangements for employment service provision in Colombia are based on a public-private partnership model. The main objective of this approach is to improve both the infrastructure and the quality of services in order to better connect active workers and jobseekers with formal employment and training opportunities (MT, 2013a). A total of 93 public and private providers are brought together within the Employment Service Network (*Red de Prestadores del Servicio Público de Empleo*), which together operate 208 entry points across the country’s 32 administrative departments (SE, 2014).

All the providers within the Network are bound to observe basic principles such as not charging fees to jobseekers.⁵ They are regulated through a licensing system to ensure compliance with operational standards and current legislation. The Special Administrative Unit of the Public Employment Service (*Unidad Administrativa Especial del Servicio Público de Empleo*, UAESPE) sets out common methods, instruments and benchmarks for the Network and furnishes service providers with technical advice to ensure consistent quality standards and prevent gaps in implementation. The UAESPE is also responsible for securing funds from the public budget and identifying potential additional sources of funding for expanding the Network (MT, 2013c).

2 Unemployment rate for Latin-America and the Caribbean (15-countries), January-September 2014 (ILO, 2014).

3 The Law No. 1636 of June 18, 2013 creates the Protection Mechanisms for the Unemployed. See Annex.

4 Prior to the creation of the public employment service system in May 2013, the National Apprenticeship System (Sistema Nacional de Aprendizaje, SENA) was directly responsible for running the former employment service offices. See Annex.

5 Decree No. 2852 (2013), Title II defines the various categories of employment service providers (MT, 2013a).

- **Categories of public and private employment service providers**

The members of the Employment Service Network differ in their legal status and can most usefully be categorized with reference to their source of finance. Those providers that are fully or partially financed from the public purse are the Public Employment Agency (*Agencia Pública de Empleo, APE*), administered by the National Apprenticeship System (*Sistema Nacional de Aprendizaje, SENA*)⁶; local and provincial governments; and the family subsidy associations

(*Cajas de Compensación Familiar, CCF*). Those that operate without funding from the MT comprise private (for-profit) employment agencies providing job-matching services; agencies advertising job vacancies and jobseekers' CVs online; agencies providing job information only; and agencies specializing in placing high-skilled workers (SE, 2014). There are also the job banks (*bolsas de empleo*), which focus on advertising job vacancies, mostly online; their services, however, are only available to jobseekers affiliated to not-for-profit organizations authorized by the MT to operate as job banks (e.g. students and university graduates). For a summary of the various categories of provider, see table 1.

TABLE 1
THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE NETWORK BY CATEGORY OF PROVIDER, SOURCE OF FINANCE AND SERVICES PROVIDED

Category of provider	Source of finance	No. providers	Employment centres	Access points
Public providers				
<i>Public Employment Agency /SENA</i>	<i>Public</i>		Yes	33
<i>Local governments</i>	<i>Public</i>		Yes	29
<i>Family subsidy associations</i>	<i>Mixed</i>		Yes	46
Private providers		73		
<i>Private employment agencies</i>	<i>Private</i>		Yes	54
<i>Online job databases</i>	<i>Private</i>		No	4
<i>Job information agencies</i>	<i>Private</i>		No	9
<i>Specialized agencies</i>	<i>Private</i>		No	10
Job Banks	Other	20	No	23
Total		93		208

Source: SE, 2014.

⁶ Services involving the employment of workers with a view to making them available to a third party (user enterprise) or to placing Colombian workers abroad require a special category of licence (MT, 2013b). See section below on the regulation of private employment agencies.

Any public provider or private employment agency with the capacity to deliver core and/or complementary employment services as set out in the legislation can be accredited to run an employment centre. In the first quarter of 2014, there were a total of 162 employment centres managed by private employment agencies and public providers. As shown in table 1 (above), private employment agencies were the largest category of provider, operating 54 employment centres. The family subsidy associations, which are responsible for paying unemployment benefits, were the second largest with 46 employment centres. These associations in particular represent a key partner for the MT in reaching out to workers who are unlikely to access employment services, such as socially marginalized groups.

- **An innovative approach in the process of consolidation**

Colombia is the only Latin American country that has adopted on a large scale a service delivery model involving public, private and not-for-profit providers of employment services. The legal framework for this innovative model is nearly complete, although some elements –for example, the implementation of a quality management system for planning,

monitoring and evaluating performance– are still under development. A unified online system for sharing data and information on job vacancies and jobseekers was introduced in 2013, but in the first quarter of 2014 only 43 employment centres had set it up. Few private employment agencies were working with this system, partly because the protocol for reporting statistical information on their activities to the MT is also under development (SE, 2014).

Challenges ahead include establishing a unified institutional image that identifies all categories of providers as parts of a single system. The various points of access to the Employment Service Network need to be easily identifiable by both jobseekers and employers. The new employment service system opened up services to all categories of jobless workers, and as a result demand for one-to-one support is increasing, particularly from workers who are more likely to require help with every aspect of the jobsearch process. Service providers therefore need to be ready to adapt their existing resources to respond to clients from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Nonetheless, the MT estimates that once the Employment Services Network is consolidated it will have the potential to reach 1.5 million unemployed people, representing 64.3 per cent of the total unemployed at national level (SE, 2014).

Active labour market programmes

Colombia is working towards achieving coordination between welfare provision and policies promoting labour market integration within the framework of the local employment plans. This framework provides those involved in local employment development with an action plan for the design and implementation of job creation and inclusion policies. The overall purpose of this approach is to improve the working and earning capacity of socially disadvantaged groups. The first steps taken in this direction include the introduction of systems for sharing information and tools to improve the capacity of government agencies to better meet the needs of target populations.

For example, the National Information System on Beneficiaries of Social Programmes (*Sistema de Identificación de Beneficiarios de Subsidios del Estado*, SISBEN) helps to assess the living standards and socio-demographic characteristics of potential beneficiaries of welfare and employment programmes. With the help of the MT a similar tool was developed to assess how ready participants in welfare programmes were to take up jobs. The Social Welfare Department

(*Departamento para la Prosperidad Social*, DPS), which is responsible for promoting the earning capacity and employability of socially disadvantaged groups, now applies this assessment tool to connect socially disadvantaged groups with services as required, e.g. jobsearch support and placement (MT, 2013d).

In contrast to practice in the years before the crisis, when employment offices were limited to participa-

tion in active labour market programmes focused on youth and linked to SENA, today a wider range of clients is served, including long-term unemployed in rural and urban areas, people with disabilities, minority groups and families affected by forced displacement. The point of entry into welfare, training and employment services for all these groups is the Working Together programme. Public providers within the Employment Services Network continue to deliver jobsearch support and placement services to young people through the Youth in Action programme, which targets young people on low incomes and with low levels of educational attainment, and the Young Rural Entrepreneurs programme, which mainly serves young workers in rural communities and disadvantaged groups of young people in marginalized urban areas.

- **Working Together programme (Trabajemos Unidos, Enganche)**

The Working Together programme began in 2011 as a pilot scheme implemented by the MT. It aims to reduce poverty levels by improving participants' employability and helping them to secure formal employment. In 2012, the DPS became responsible for managing the programme and coordinating the delivery of welfare provision, social services, job training, entrepreneurial support and employment services. The programme runs in areas with the highest concentration of poor households and internally displaced people. For example, during the pilot phase, the programme served low-skilled workers from the western region of Colombia known as the Coffee Triangle.

For each participant, an initial needs assessment indicates the mix of services needed to improve the individual's basic skills for work. Job training is an important part of the programme, and SENA organizes its delivery with local partners. As demand for employment services increased after the programme was launched, an additional 333 employment counsellors and 36 placement officers were hired in 2012. The placement officers, in particular, were appointed to work in close collaboration with employers offering jobs to participants. Another key feature of the programme is the continuous psychological and social support offered with the aim of

preventing drop-outs. This is extremely important for participants facing barriers to employment, helping them to stay motivated and committed over a period of several months while they take part in the scheme or in complementary services as required (e.g. social services or other employment support measures).

In 2012, the MT reported that 40,000 participants in 14 administrative departments had been reached. The overall goal set for the period 2011-14 is to serve 100,000 workers. In 2014, the programme will be assessed in order to reach a decision on whether it should remain in place (MT, 2013d). Its continuation is extremely likely, given both its demonstrable benefit to the target population and its effect in strengthening capacity for agency coordination at local level.

- **Youth in Action programme (Jóvenes en Acción)**

The main objective of the Youth in Action programme is to help unemployed young workers (aged 16-24) into formal semi-skilled employment. Programme participants must be registered as beneficiaries of poverty reduction programmes (e.g. *Más Familias en Acción*) and must have completed lower secondary education. In 2013, the programme was extended to cover students from low-income households, providing them with the opportunity learn work skills while also attending higher secondary education (DPS, 2014).

Job training is the preferred approach to improving the employability of the target population because it yields more immediate effects and gives young workers skills they can apply on entering the labour market. Nonetheless, all participants start with three months' classroom training before spending three further months in training at the workplace or receiving support to start up a business. Throughout participation in the programme trainees are insured against third-party liability and accidents at the workplace. Given the low-income background of participants, monetary support in the form of grants to cover the costs of meals and transportation is necessary to ensure participation. After completing their training, participants also receive advice on how to look for employment. APE plays a key role in providing pre-training counselling services to participants and then helping them to find internships or connecting

them with institutions providing seed-capital funds for start-ups.

An impact evaluation carried out by the DPN confirmed the programme's success in improving the employability of the target population. More specifically, it has been established that 90 per cent of participants that complete their training increase their chances of finding formal employment and that participation in the programme has a more statistically significant effect on employability and wages for women than for men (DPN, 2008). The provision of counselling services has had a positive influence on participants' decisions about work and careers, motivating them to continue developing their skills and raising their awareness of the opportunities and resources available to them to pursue more ambitious goals. Another important element in the success of the programme is the active involvement of private enterprises offering internships to young people. SENA has also played a key role in ensuring that training is demand-driven. By the end of 2013, the Youth in Action programme had trained 59,104 individuals (DPS, 2014).

- **Young Rural Entrepreneurs programme (Jóvenes Rurales Emprendedores)**

This programme targets in particular unemployed young workers (aged 16-35) in low-income households and vulnerable populations (regardless of age) in rural and marginalized urban areas. These groups often face high rates of poverty and disadvantages in accessing education, training and job opportunities. The programme helps them to set up businesses through entrepreneurship training in the agricultural, livestock and fisheries industries, in agro-forestry, and in rural trade and services.

Training includes a mix of classroom courses and hands-on activities. Participation can extend to a maximum of two years, to allow participants time

to undertake all relevant aspects of work (e.g. during both the planting and harvesting seasons). The demand-driven training model of the programme has contributed to its success in ensuring that it responds to existing needs at the community level. Decisions on the content of training are made in consultation with local stakeholders, such as employers' associations and trade guilds, and are also supported by labour information from sectoral committees and APE. SENA is responsible for hiring trainers, providing working materials (e.g. manuals, seeds, farm animals and fertilizers) and monitoring the development of business projects. The municipal government co-finances the cost of training, for example, by providing participants with grants for transportation and miscellaneous expenses. APE provides one-to-one advice, placement in internships and referral to institutions that provide seed-capital start-up funds.

The programme was launched in 2003 and currently serves more than 1,091 municipalities across the country. Geographical coverage has been expanded through collaboration agreements between SENA and municipal governments. An independent evaluation carried out in 2010 concluded that the programme had positive effects on the employability and job prospects of participants. About 75 per cent of participants established self-owned businesses and demonstrated improved capacity to conduct their relationships with providers of raw materials and other inputs (e.g. fertilizers, seeds and tools) and financial institutions (Steiner, 2010). Between July 2012 and June 2013, the programme offered 281,248 training places. Of these, 14 per cent were offered to young people participating in poverty reduction programmes (e.g. *Red Unidos*) and the other 86 per cent were given to individuals from particular target groups, including those at risk of being recruited by drug cartels to work on plantations, and those in poverty and at particular risk owing to especially severe winter weather (MT, 2013d).

Job-matching, placement and activation strategies

With the creation of the Employment Service Network, access to employment services has been extended from the 33 employment offices previously administered by SENA to 208 points of access. However, not all providers of the Network offer the same level of support: 2 out of 10 are limited to advertising job vacancies and/or providing job information. Nevertheless, 8 out of 10 providers have the capacity to run employment centres that are equipped and staffed to offer core and/or complementary employment services, including registering jobseekers and vacancies, counselling, placement and referring clients to employment programmes or social services.

• Services for jobseekers

Services delivered in employment centres vary considerably, with public and private providers respectively giving more emphasis to some categories of service than others. For example, in the first half of 2014, all the employment centres administered by APE and the municipal governments offered counselling services, but only 30 per cent of private providers were able to guarantee this type of support. Conversely, 90 per cent of private employment agencies offered jobseekers complementary services such as home visits and one-to-one advice to secure employment, while only 10 per cent of public providers were prepared to provide these (SE, 2014).

Most providers offer a mix of in-person support and self-service provision. The MT and SENA have made significant progress in expanding the availability of self-service provision to increase accessibility and visibility in a cost-effective way. The new channels introduced for service delivery include an online job portal (*Red Empleo*), a toll-free telephone number, a television programme (also streamed live on the internet), online tutorials to assist jobseekers in preparing a CV, and the establishment of both fixed and mobile information kiosks in areas with a high flow of potential jobseekers (e.g. in public markets and shopping centres).

Opening up new channels for service provision has enabled employment counsellors to dedicate more time to jobseekers requiring more intensive support (e.g. socially disadvantaged groups). In 2012, 70 per cent of jobseekers used self-service channels and 30 per cent sought in-person support (SENA, 2013a). The implementation of the new delivery model involving public and private providers has

accentuated the need for tailor-made support and a client-oriented service. Participation in a jobsearch workshop, during which jobseekers are assisted in preparing a personalized plan, has become the main tool for improving employability and speeding up re-employment. According to SENA, this is the most cost-effective method for helping jobseekers, increasing their chances of finding employment by 75 per cent (SENA, 2013b). There is, however, room for improvement in the capacity to follow up the progress made by jobseekers in implementing their individual plans. Currently, only a minority of the private employment agencies have mechanisms in place to accompany jobseekers throughout the different stages involved in the jobsearch process (SE, 2014).

• Services for employers

Private providers of employment services offer employers a more sophisticated range of support than public providers, including for example application and interpretation of psychometric tests, recruitment of workers with specialized job profiles and legal advice. APE in particular has been working on gaining a better understanding of employers' needs in order to improve the level of support it can offer them. A consultation meeting known as *Agendas Empresariales* was introduced in 2013 with the aim of bringing together employers, guilds and local authorities to jointly establish priorities concerning labour needs and the best approach to preparing workers to meet employers' skills requirements (SENA, 2013b).

In 2013, APE introduced new services for employers, including access to training and employment support programmes (e.g. subsidies for job creation), and enhanced filtering of applications, with employment

counsellors pre-selecting three candidates for every job vacancy advertised with APE. However, the capacity to offer this type of service is not fully developed, with difficulties arising in particular when employers are seeking candidates with specialized job profiles. SENA is seeking to establish cooperative relationships with private providers in the Employment Service Network to increase responsiveness in this specific area (SENA, 2013b). The job and entrepreneurship fairs (*microruedas de empleo*) organized by APE also help employers to find skilled workers at the local level. In 2012, 75 fairs were organized involving 2,500 employers and 190,000 jobseekers (MT, 2013d).

SENA is also playing a more active role in identifying economic sectors and new niches for job creation that can benefit from services offered by APE. For example, in 2013 a collaboration agreement was established with the oil company EcoPetrol with the objective of providing support for finding and training workers (SENA, 2013b).

- **Special public calls for job placement**

APE organizes special public calls to meet the specific needs of employers in the private sector facing difficulties in recruiting qualified workers in certain occupations, and also of government organizations. The agency advertises job vacancies, and assists jobseekers and employers throughout the recruitment process. This assistance is provided free of charge, for example, under the umbrella of bilateral agreements signed with Spain and Portugal on temporary labour migration. The number of vacancies registered by employers abroad varies with the cyclical fluctuations of the labour market in the receiving countries. The last public calls for the recruitment of emergency and family doctors were made in 2011 for Portugal and in 2012 for Spain. In 2014, services provided to workers interested in working abroad through special public calls for job placement are being reviewed and strengthened (SENA, 2013b).

- **Coverage of the Employment Service Network for jobseekers and employers**

The Employment Service Network is reaching more workers and is present across the whole country. However, the availability of employment services is most highly concentrated in Bogotá, Antioquia and Valle, which are the cities registering the highest rates of employment creation. It is worth noting that 25 per cent of the total labour force works in Bogotá alone.

A total of 8,355 employers were registered on the job portal during the first semester of 2014. They offered 10,000 job vacancies in the service sector, manufacturing industry, trade, and restaurants and hotels, all of which are important engines of economic growth and job creation for the country. The Network also registers lower numbers of vacancies from employers in construction, transport and storage, financial intermediation services, agriculture, real estate, water, gas and electricity supply, and mining and quarrying (SE, 2014).

For the first semester of 2014, it is estimated that employment centres were visited by an average of 7,300 workers a day. Accurate figures are not available because the statistical reports on the activities of the Network and the numbers of people served have not yet been consolidated into a single reporting and management system (SE, 2014). In this same period, the UAESPE reported 280,000 jobseekers registered on the online job portal, of whom 56.7 per cent were women and 43.3 per cent were men. Young workers (aged 19-28) used the online job portal more than older workers (aged 29-60) by a ratio of 2.6 to 1 (SE, 2014). The greater use of the facility by younger workers can be attributed to two factors: first, most of them are graduates of universities or other tertiary institutions, hence they can carry out their jobsearch process autonomously; and, second, most of them have undertaken training delivered by SENA and are aware of employment services available to them (SENA, 2013b).

In 2013, SENA reported 935,000 jobseekers registered on the APE database, of whom 19 per cent were placed in jobs. Of the total registered as jobseekers, four out of ten were served through jobsearch workshops, two out of ten were referred to job training courses relevant to their occupational field and work experience, and the remainder received counselling or information or followed entrepreneurship training with the aim of setting up their own businesses (SENA, 2013b).

- **Labour market information**

The administrative registries of APE are one of the sources of information feeding the Labour and Occupational Observatory, which produces quarterly reports on the dynamics of occupational demand

and supply at the local level.⁷ These inputs inform decision-making at various levels, including defining curricula for SENA's vocational training courses and updating the National Catalogue of Occupations, which provides the basis for building job databases (MT, 2013d). The information is also used to improve job counselling services provided at the employment centres managed by SENA, for example, through wider dissemination of the job profiles most in demand in local labour markets. This is a good practice, and the capacity to use labour market information effectively needs to be developed by other providers within the Network. Good labour market information supports sound decision-making and planning by service providers, and supports both jobseekers and employers when making decisions about their career paths and business plans respectively.



<http://unidad.serviciodeempleo.gov.co>

⁷ The reports include information on the occupations facing labour shortages; occupations where supply currently exceeds demand; occupations where demand is expected to stay broadly in line with overall labour supply; and occupations where demand and supply are low.

Regulation of private employment agencies

Private employment agencies in Colombia operate in accordance with a licensing system administered by the MT. New regulations were introduced in 2013 alongside the reform of the public employment service and the creation of the public-private Employment Service Network. Decree No. 2852 (MT, 2013a) sets out provisions to ensure that “core employment services” (i.e. registration of jobseekers and vacancies, job information, advice and job placement) are provided free of charge to jobseekers. Recognizing the need for greater flexibility in employment relationships for both workers and enterprises, the MT authorizes the operation of private employment agencies providing services consisting of employing workers with a view to making them available to a third party or user enterprise.⁸

In respect of the increasingly prevalent triangular employment relationships between private employment agencies, agency-placed workers and user enterprises, Colombian law applies the principle of joint liability. This mechanism establishes mutual responsibility between the private employment agency and the user enterprise in respect of workers’ rights and employment benefits. The provision of temporary staff is limited to meeting the seasonal needs of the labour market and to filling the positions of permanent employees temporarily absent from their duties. Temporary work agencies are excluded from providing staff in private security and maintenance services, food processing, and cleaning services (Blanco, 2007).

Temporary agency work in Colombia is largely concentrated in three sectors: construction, wholesale and retail trade, and services. In 2013, 433,898 workers were placed by these agencies, most of them in low-skilled jobs (MT, 2014). Colombia has one of the highest rates of agency work penetration in the Americas at 2.9 per cent, above even that of a very flexible labour market such as the United States, which in 2012 stood at 2.0 per cent (CIETT, 2014).

In August 2014, a total of 618 private employment agencies with 248 offices were licensed (MT, 2014). The MT keeps detailed records about all public and private employment agencies and these are publicly accessible. This allows jobseekers and employers to inform themselves about conditions of service, including application of authorized fees or conditions for placement abroad. Private employment agencies

are also required to deliver regular statistical reports concerning the number of job vacancies collected and the number of workers placed in jobs.

The MT, through its labour inspectorates and territorial offices, is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with existing regulations. Decree No. 4369 (2006) sets out the sanctions to be imposed in cases of infringements of the law, with penalties ranging from heavy fines to the temporary suspension or revocation of licences (MT, 2006). Recently, the MT strengthened the system for filing complaints and suspected cases of abuse, which now includes a toll-free number for reporting misconduct by temporary employment agencies. A web-based mechanism also offers the option of making an anonymous complaint. In 2013, 42 temporary work agencies were investigated and sanctioned (MRE, 2014).

Colombia is bringing national practice in this area into line with relevant international labour standards. Recent amendments to national legislation may lead to favourable conditions for contemplating ratification of the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), if tripartite consensus can be achieved. Convention No. 181 promotes the idea of complementarity and encourages cooperation between the public employment service and private employment agencies, as set out in the Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88), ratified by Colombia in 1967. Adherence to international labour standards enables ratifying countries to establish clear governance mechanisms for improving their own regulatory and supervisory standards with regard to labour market performance and protection of workers.

⁸ In Colombia this category of private employment agencies is known as *agencias de servicios temporales*; they are regulated by Decree No. 4369 (MT, 2006).

ANNEX

MILESTONES IN THE INSTITUTIONAL EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES IN COLOMBIA

1967	Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88) ratified
1971	Employment Service Office created ^{a/} Jointly provision of employment services between Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and SENA established
1977	National Employment Service (SENALDE) created Decentralization process started and regional employment offices gradually implemented
1989	National Employment Service transferred to SENA ^{b/}
2011	Ministry of Labour reformed and entrusted back with the responsibility for coordinating and regulating employment service provision ^{c/}
2013	Protection Mechanisms for the Unemployed established ^{d/} Public Employment Service System and the Employment Service Network created ^{e/} Public Employment Agency created ^{f/}

a/ Law No. 37 of 9 October 1970.

b/ Decrees No. 1422 of 1989 and No. 1802 of 1990.

c/ Law No. 1444 of 2011.

d/ Law No. 1636 of June 18, 2013 creates the Protection Mechanisms for the Unemployed providing access to all the economic active population to: (1) Public Employment Service; (2) National Apprenticeship Service (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje); (3) Solidarity Fund for the Promotion of Employment and Protection to the Unemployed (Fondo de Solidaridad de Fomento al Empleo y Protección al Cesante); and (4) Individual Accounts (Cuentas Individuales) of workers affiliated to the unemployment system.

e/ Decree No. 722 of 2013.

f/ In May 2013, the employment services offices administrated by SENA were reorganized into the Public Employment Agency (Agencia Pública de Empleo); SENA continues to be responsible for its administration, but APE is now part of the public employment service system.

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