



Finding a job in Europe

a guide for jobseekers



YOUR JOB IN EUROPE



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Europe Direct is a service to help you
find answers to your questions about
the European Union

Freephone number (*):

00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11

(* Certain mobile telephone operators do not allow access to 00 800 numbers or these calls may be billed.

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu>).

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Working abroad – an experience that could change your life

The European Union's *Principle of Free Movement of Workers* means that you can get a job in any country of the EU, as well as in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein (also known as the EEA countries) and Switzerland.

Over the years, these countries have improved the conditions for labour mobility. Despite this, only around 2% of European citizens live and work in a different member state from their country of origin. And yet, the benefits of working abroad are multiple, for instance:

- **Gain new skills, both professionally and personally.** Working in another country strengthens your self-confidence and improves your communication skills as a direct result of working in a different cultural environment.
- **Get new insights and different perspectives.** If you want to experience a new culture, learn or improve a foreign language, then working abroad is the perfect solution.

- If you simply want to work for a short period of time, a **temporary or seasonal job** may be the right solution. Some sectors, such as tourism and agriculture, have high seasonal labour demand and often need to recruit from other countries.

This guide will introduce you to working and living abroad before you make that all important first step towards changing your life.

Considerations before deciding to move abroad

Below we have listed some questions you may ask yourself before deciding whether moving abroad could be for you;

- **What are my chances of finding a job abroad?** The overall EU unemployment rate is still high. Nevertheless, certain jobs sectors are in demand in most EU countries. EURES can give you useful information on the latest labour market trends, as well as information about living and working conditions abroad.
- **Is language a problem?** When looking for a job in another country, speaking the local language is of course an advantage. Basic English language skills are often highly beneficial. Consider registering for a language course to improve your knowledge.
- **Can my family join me?** As a mobile worker, you and your family have the same rights as national workers. Your family members can accompany you and have the right to work or go to school.
- **Will my professional qualifications be recognised abroad?** If you are qualified in your home country to work in a certain profession, then you may do so in any other European country. As a basic



principle, EU/EEA citizens should be able to freely practice their profession in all member states. In practice, the host country sometimes requires specific diplomas, titles, certificates or other qualifications to access certain types of employment or self-employed occupations.

- **Do I need a work permit?** Following the accession of new EU Member States, some citizens may find their access to other labour markets restricted for a certain period. To find out more about the specific measures that may apply to you, please visit the EURES website or consult the Public Employment Service of the Member State where you wish to work.

Who can help you to find a job abroad?

Once you have decided that you want to live and work abroad, there are many sources of useful information and advice:

■ EURES, the European Jobs Network

covering all EU/EEA countries and Switzerland, facilitates your job search and provides the following:

- **Our user-friendly website** helps you search for jobs in 31 European countries. It also gives detailed information on living and working conditions and other tools to help you make choices. <http://eures.europa.eu>
- **An efficient human network** – More than 700 EURES Advisers work in the public employment services throughout Europe. They have specialised expertise in the practical, legal, and administrative matters related to mobility at national and cross-border levels.
- **EURES partner organisations**, such as trade unions and employers' organisations can help with technical questions about your employment and social security rights.

■ **Recruitment agencies** in your country or abroad can offer a wide range of information. They will guide you through the application procedure and help you understand the legal requirements connected to relocating. Before using them, find out if they charge for their

services and check the nature of the employment contracts they offer.

■ **Job search engines** and related websites are useful tools for your independent job search. You can check available job offers, post your CV online and create job search profiles.

After finishing her studies in Latvia, Vita Strazdinia decided to join her Swedish fiancé in Iceland. She registered for an Icelandic language course and soon found employment with a cleaning company. Her first experience of work abroad was disappointing, given that her employer had failed to pay taxes or register her at the local labour office.

Vita left this job and approached the EURES office, where the adviser helped her obtain a social security number and find a new job as a receptionist at a Reykjavik hotel. "I'm still in this job and happy with it", says Vita. "My fiancé and I plan to go back home in two years and start our own business. That will be something equally new and challenging for us!"

How can EURES help you to find a job?

EURES can facilitate your job search:

- **The EURES website** is the gateway to thousands of jobs across Europe. In addition you can:
 - Create and manage job search profiles and receive email notifications about new matching jobs, informing you about the latest vacancies in the fields and/or countries you are interested in.
 - Create and manage your CV online. You can create several language versions of your CV and receive job offers directly from employers.
 - Find relevant information on living and working conditions in EU/EEA countries.
 - Receive useful tips about other job search websites and employment opportunities across Europe.
 - Connect with people like you. The EURES website enables you to contact other mobile workers and share your experience of working abroad.

- **EURES Advisers** are trained experts on practical, legal and administrative aspects of job mobility. They work within the public employment service of each member country, or within other partner organisations in the EURES network.

What can **EURES Advisers** do for you?

- **Give advice on job opportunities.**
You can ask them for information about vacancies, as well as current trends in the European labour market.
- **Recommend you to potential employers.**
- **Provide detailed information on living and working abroad:** accommodation, schools, taxes, healthcare, recognition of qualifications, and more.

Rense Sjöers from the Netherlands was planning to move to Slovakia with his wife Willeke to open a bed & breakfast hotel in the Liptov region. Rense contacted the EURES team in Liptovský Mikulás, who supported him with all administrative matters to open his business. Rense even got a start-up subsidy from the local labour office thanks to EURES, his first partner in the new country.

Applying for a job

Once you have found an interesting job opening, it is time to prepare your application. The cover letter introduces you and your CV to the employer. Bear in mind that this is the first impression you give. State briefly which job you are interested in, why you are applying and what you would contribute. If you use the CV online service on the EURES web portal, you will be guided through the process of creating your CV, which you can print out in the *Europass* format, the European standard CV.

TIPS for preparing a successful CV

- **Simplicity.** Recruiters usually skim through CVs for a few seconds before making a selection. Keep your CV reader-friendly by using short sentences, positive language, and, where appropriate, technical terms. Remove irrelevant information.
- **Accomplishments.** Highlight responsibilities, which are relevant to the desired job even if they weren't dominating previous activities. Try to use 'active' verbs, demonstrate a cause-effect relationship when describing your accomplishments and always highlight your measurable achievements.
- **Reverse chronology.** List your most recent experience and training first.
- **Factual.** Make sure the information you provide is factual and accurate.
- **Education.** Emphasise your academic accomplishments, in particular if you have limited professional experience.
- **Length.** Try to keep your CV to a maximum of two pages.
- **Clarity.** Have the CV proofread by somebody else before uploading it onto the EURES web portal.
- **References.** Always double check names and contact details and secure their permission before providing them.

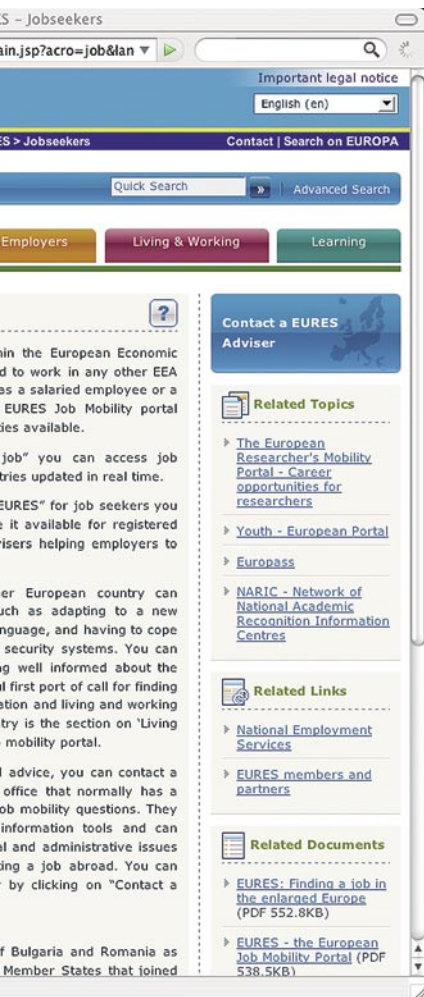


The EURES job portal

Key sections:

- 1 Search for a job** explains how to find a job on the portal.
- 2 Are you a graduate?** provides a checklist to guide you through the job search process, when you are about to finish or have recently concluded your studies. It also provides useful information on careers in research and about the European Commission's education and training opportunities throughout Europe.
- 3 Create a MY EURES account.** This tool enables you to create and manage your CV and job search profiles online, and to subscribe to e-mail notifications about new job matches.
- 4 Statistics** provides up-to-date information on the number of employers (per country and per sector) and jobseekers that use the EURES CV online service.





5 **Living & Working** contains practical, legal and administrative information. The *Labour Market Information* sub-section informs on current trends in the European labour market by country, region and sector of activity. Upcoming events for jobseekers in the country or region selected can be found in the *Events Calendar*.

6 **Contact a EURES Adviser** to guide you by country or cross-border partnership.

7 **Related links** connects you with:

- a. Websites dealing with related topics, such as researchers' mobility, Europass, Youth European Portal;
- b. Links to the Public Employment Services, EURES members and partners' offices in the EU plus Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein;
- c. EURES documents aiming to guide you during your job search.

How to prepare for a successful interview

Hopefully the employer will find your application interesting, in which case you may be invited to an interview, either in person or by telephone. Good preparation is vital.

- **Background information.** Make sure you are well informed about the company, and ready to ask questions about the firm and particular aspects of the job.
- **Personal skills.** You are likely to be asked to prove your command of the host country language and to illustrate how your skills and attributes fit the job requirements.
- **Real life scenarios.** Before the interview, come up with at least three examples of challenging situations you have been able to manage and be ready to expand on them.
- **Unexpected questions.** Don't lose heart when tricky or unexpected questions are asked. Stay calm, take a moment to reply, and above all be honest. If you don't know, say so, but explain how you would find out.
- **Team work.** Highlight your contribution to previous team accomplishments. Leadership skills should also be mentioned and supported by examples.

What documents should you bring to the interview?

- Several copies of your CV in the employer's language, and possibly also in English.
- Translation of your diploma(s). For certain jobs, such as in the public sector, you will need to obtain a certified translation, available from your educational institute or the relevant ministry.
- Photocopies of your graduation certificates, attended language courses or other qualifications.
- Identity documents. Bring a passport, an identity card or a copy of your birth certificate.
- A European Health Insurance Card will prove useful if the interviewer offers you a position on the spot.
- Passport photos for easier identification of your CV later on.
- Recommendation letters can set you aside from other candidates. If you have no professional experience, bring an endorsement from your school.

Moving abroad

Let's hope that you interviewed well and that you are offered a job. Once you have signed the contract, you can start preparing your move. Whether you go alone or with your family, there are some formalities you must be aware of when leaving your country.

- Ensure that you legally and properly end any contractual relationships with your service providers: housing, water, gas, phone, internet, TV, etc. You may wish to consider also your bank and insurance companies (generally for very long-term or definitive stay in the host country).
- Inform your local authority that you are moving abroad if this is a requirement.
- Change your postal address with all institutions or entities you usually deal with.
- Inform the tax administration of your country of origin that you are leaving.

Also remember:

- Valid passport and/or identity card for yourself and your family members.
- Visa for you and/or your family members if you are not EU nationals.



Gunars Peipins, a young Latvian, knew little about the British labour market. So he paid €1,000 for the assistance of a 'professional' Latvian recruitment agency, which provided him an illegal, poorly paid position in the construction industry - a job he lost a month later.

But being committed, Gunars contacted Latvian EURES Adviser Zanna Ribakova, who helped him find a position in a fish factory in Scotland. However, his life was once again about to change. After impressing a local nightclub manager with his dancing talent, Gunars was offered a job as a performer. "I am very thankful to EURES for being so supportive," Gunars said. "They helped me put the past behind and now I am enjoying my new life."

Arriving in a new country

Housing

It can be difficult to find suitable accommodation before you have arrived. If your employer cannot help you, start with a temporary solution and search for more permanent housing once you are there.

Social Security

All social security benefits linked to an employment contract in the country are equally granted to all EU/EEA citizens. Social benefits cover sickness and maternity leave, unemployment and family benefits, accidents at work and occupational diseases, invalidity, and old-age pensions. Contact your social security institution before your departure to obtain necessary information and the required EU forms and/or a European Health Insurance card (note that certain Member States have opted not to distribute this card yet).

Taxation

European countries have concluded bilateral tax agreements to prevent their citizens from paying twice for the same activity or income in another EU country. Contact the relevant authorities in your country of origin to get personalised advice.

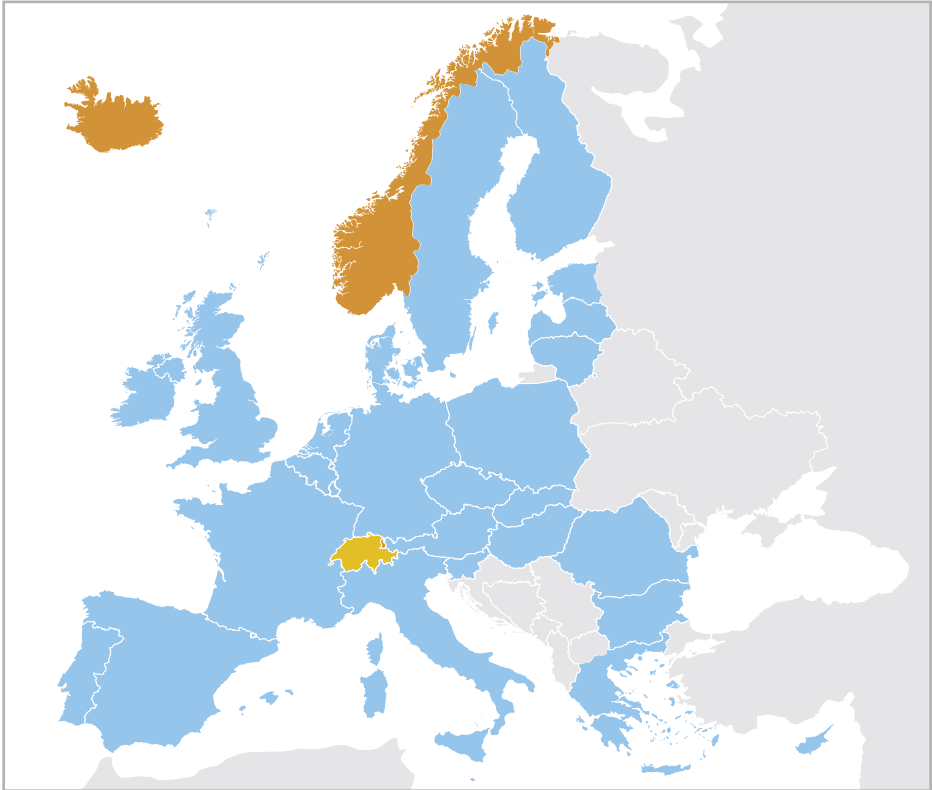
More information

You can find further information on these topics on the EURES web portal under the *Living and working conditions* or by contacting a EURES Adviser.



The booming oil exploration industry in Norway has led to some 10,000 job vacancies for highly trained engineers. EURES Norway recently organised visits of Norwegian employers to Portugal, resulting in 17 local engineers being recruited. One of those is 23-year-old Luis Moutinho. "I discovered that living abroad is the most enriching experience that anyone can have. EURES did an amazing job. The whole process was very well organised, simple and fast. Congratulations to all those who made it possible!"

Where can you find EURES across Europe?



■ EU countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

■ EEA countries: EU-27 + Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein

■ Switzerland

**Are you looking for the closest EURES Adviser?
Go to <http://eures.europa.eu>**

The EURES added value

■ Job fairs and other recruitment events

The EURES network and the national public employment services organise job fairs, seminars, workshops and similar events to promote labour mobility. Consult the Events Calendar on the EURES web portal to find out what's going on in your country or region.

■ European Job Days

Since 2005, the European Commission and EURES have teamed up with a wide range of actors interested in the issue of labour mobility to organise the European Job Days. They took place for the first time in September 2006, with over 500 events in more than 300 cities across the continent. In addition to job fairs, connecting jobseekers and employers, the initiative offered workshops, seminars and various other information activities. Over 200,000 visitors participated and showed that Europeans have a strong interest in the opportunities of living and working abroad.

Due to this success, the European Commission has decided to organise the European Job Days every year in September. They offer some unconventional and exciting opportunities to learn more about workers' mobility, raise awareness on job opportunities abroad and encourage people to think about working in another EU country.



One key target group is “of course” young people, as many of the events promote the benefits of gaining work mobility experience at the beginning of their careers. But there's something in it for every European interested in making a change in their life. You can find up-dated information about the location and schedule of these events at <http://eures.europa.eu>.

Endorsements



Employer

“EURES Advisers are very helpful in supporting us to find employees with specific language skills. We have seven multilingual clients and provide services in 24 different languages. The recruitment of foreign workers is therefore a constant necessity for us.”

Marcella McKeever, recruitment manager, GEM, UK

Employee

“It is wonderful to be an entertainer – a job I would have never done if I had not stopped by the EURES office. Travelling and working in a different country has exposed me to different cultures and helped me gain a new perspective. Work and life experience is vital to moving forward and services such as EURES help you acquire both.”

Alex, resort entertainer, Sol Melià, Spain



EURES

“The European-wide job fair is an excellent example of different political, social and economic actors joining forces to spread the word about the advantages of a free labour market for workers.”

Vladimir Špidla, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Want to know more? Click <http://eures.europa.eu>

European Commission

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