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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

on EURES activity July 2018 - June 2020

Submitted pursuant to Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2016/589

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Activity Report provides an **overview of the activities carried out by the EURES network between July 2018 and June 2020** as well as a **description of the state of play of the application of the EURES Regulation (EU) 2016/589 as of June 2020** as provided for in Article 33 of this Regulation.

Launched in 1994, EURES is **a cooperative network between the European Commission, the national Public Employment Services (PES) and other Members and Partners** such as private employment services, social partners, and universities, in all the EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and, in the reference period of this report, the United Kingdom (hereafter: 'EURES countries').

The main goal of the EURES network is the promotion of fair intra-EU labour mobility. It is composed of National Coordination Offices (NCOs) designated by each EURES country, the European Coordination Office (ECO), currently hosted by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission (DG EMPL) and additional EURES Members and Partners. EURES services are delivered through the EURES human network, consisting of EURES staff across the EURES countries, and the European job mobility portal ('EURES Portal') with a number of online service tools available.

At the operational level, the **main activities of the EURES countries** during the current reference period focused on the provision of support services to employers and workers, mostly via the provision of information on labour mobility issues and recruitment activities. In addition, specific support services on apprenticeships and traineeships, post-recruitment assistance and mobility schemes were provided throughout the network. Looking at the **ECO's activities**, it continued providing horizontal support services to ensure the functioning of the EURES network, but also worked on the development and improvement of the EURES Portal and interoperability functionalities.

At the regulatory level, several advancements were achieved in the **implementation of the EURES Regulation**:

- Most **EURES countries** have in place an admission system for new Members and Partners in order to enlarge their networks and a number of new Members and Partners have already been admitted.
- All but one EURES countries are automatically transferring job vacancies and more than half are transferring CVs from national level to the EURES Portal.
- The usability of the EURES Portal was improved and work on the implementation of an automated matching of CVs and job vacancies on the EURES Portal is ongoing.
- Templates to enable harmonised planning and performance measurement across the EURES network are in use (Performance Measurement System and programming cycle).

Nevertheless, some challenges and obstacles still remain to be addressed. The enlargement of the network with the admission of new Members and Partners happens at a slow pace. A **lack of compliance with the EURES Regulation** delays the implementation of interoperability solutions.

ECO's provision of horizontal support to the EURES countries including the promotion of the EURES brand and coordination of the network has been essential for the work of EURES, but more attention can be devoted to enhancing the **exchange of information** on labour mobility, aligning the **programming and monitoring cycles**, and further facilitate the provision of support services to **apprenticeships and traineeships.**

Going forward, in order to achieve the objectives of the EURES reform and to further ensure fair intra-EU labour mobility, EURES countries are recommended to **enhance their efforts in admitting new Members and Partners and adjusting their internal governance and coordination mechanisms** to reflect the new network's composition. Continuing their work on the **accomplishment of automated transfer of job vacancies and CVs**, where this is not yet done, and completing the ongoing **mapping of national classification systems to the European classification of skills, qualifications and occupations (ESCO)** should be a priority in order to enhance the usability of the EURES Portal. It is also important for the EURES network to **integrate even further the analysis of labour market trends in the planning of its activities** and to explore the need for targeted activities in view of socio-demographic developments.

These priorities should be carried out in a challenging implementation context for EURES, given the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on intra-EU labour mobility and considering the transition of ECO to the European Labour Authority (ELA) foreseen for 2021. In this regard**, ELA should prioritise the implementation of the action plan for the transfer, together with the recruitment of qualified staff and sufficient resource allocation.**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is EURES?

EURES is a cooperative network between the **European Commission**, the national **Public Employment Services (PES)** and other **Members and Partners**, in all the EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom[1] (hereafter: 'EURES countries'). EURES facilitates the free movement of workers by providing information and employment support services to workers and employers, and by enhancing cooperation and information exchange between its member organisations.

1.1.1 Legal framework

EURES was launched in 1994 by the European Commission and was taken up by Council Regulation (EEC) No 2434/92 of 27 July 1992 in amending Part II of then Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 on freedom of movement for workers within the Community. From 2011 to 2016 EURES underwent a long process of reform in terms of network composition, governance and tools, in order to reflect changes in mobility patterns and emerging trends in the field. This process culminated in the new **EURES Regulation (EU) 2016/589** which came into force with the aim to create a bigger and stronger network of European employment services, both public and private, in order to deliver a more efficient exchange of labour market information across borders in support of job placements across the EU/EEA area.

The main changes introduced with the new EURES Regulation compared to the previous legal basis are linked to **enhanced transparency** through an increase in the number of jobs advertised on the EURES Portal, including apprenticeships and traineeships that are subject to an employment relationship; **improved online matching of job vacancies and CVs**; provision of a **minimum**

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[1] In the reference period July 2018 and June 2020 the United Kingdom was a full member of EURES. Its membership in EURES will cease on 31 December 2020.

agreed package of services for jobseekers and employers; and **enlargement of the network**. The Regulation is supported by six implementing decisions ensuring a uniform implementation across the EURES countries.[2] Two of the Implementing Decisions, (EU) 2018/1020 of 18 July 2018 and (EU) 2018/1021 of 18 July 2018, were adopted in the reference period.

1.1.2 EURES activities

EURES forms an essential part of the labour market support structure that the EU has developed over past decades to improve its social and economic performance. EURES services are delivered through two complementary channels - the EURES human network, comprising EURES staff across the network, and the European job mobility portal (EURES Portal) with a number of online service tools available.

EURES services to jobseekers and employers

- Helping jobseekers to **find jobs** and employers to **find candidates** across Europe;
- **Matching** job vacancies and CVs on the EURES Portal;
- **Information, guidance** and other labour mobility support services for workers and employers;
- **Post-recruitment assistance**;
- Access to information on aspects of **living and working conditions** such as taxation, pensions, health insurance and social security in EURES countries;
- Specific support services for frontier workers and employers in **cross-border regions**;
- Support to specific groups in the context of EURES-related **targeted mobility schemes**;
- Support for dynamic recruitment events through the **European Online Job Days (EOJD)** platform.

1.1.3 EURES organisation

In accordance with Article 7 of EURES Regulation, the EURES network is composed of:

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[2] Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1255 of 11 July 2017 on a template for the description of national systems and procedures to admit organisations to become EURES Members and Partners.
Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1256 of 11 July 2017 on templates and procedures for the exchange of information on the EURES network national work programmes at Union level.
Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1257 of 11 July 2017 on the technical standards and formats required for a uniform system to enable matching of job vacancies with job applications and CVs on the EURES Portal.
Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/170 of 2 February 2018 on uniform detailed specifications for data collection and analysis to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the EURES network.
Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/1020 of 18 July 2018 on the adoption and updating of the list of skills, competences and occupations of the European classification for the purpose of automated matching through the EURES common IT platform
Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/1021 of 18 July 2018 on the adoption of technical standards and formats necessary for the operation of the automated matching through the common IT platform using the European classification and the interoperability between national systems and the European classification.

- the **National Coordination Offices (NCOs)** designated by the EURES countries and generally linked to either their Public Employment Services (PES) or their Ministry of Labour;
- the **European Coordination Office (ECO)**, hosted by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission (DG EMPL), provides horizontal support to NCOs. In line with Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1149, the responsibility for hosting ECO will be transferred from DG EMPL to the European Labour Authority (ELA);
- other **EURES Members and Partners,** which, according to Article 12 of the EURES Regulation, are the organisations performing operational activities within the EURES network, such as private employment services, social partners, and universities.

Together, the NCOs and ECO constitute the European Coordination Group (ECG) of the EURES network, which has a coordinating role concerning the activities and functioning of the network (Art. 14 of EURES Regulation).

As specified in Article 11 of EURES Regulation, EURES Members and Partners have to undergo an admission procedure before becoming an accredited EURES Member or Partner. In the EURES network, Members must carry out all of the following tasks while Partners need to carry out at least one:

- Contributing to the pool of job vacancies by transmitting data to the EURES Portal and IT platform;
- Contributing to the pool of jobseeker profiles by transmitting data to the EURES Portal and IT platform;
- Providing support services directly to jobseekers and employers.

1.2 EURES implementation

Articles 33 and 35 of the EURES Regulation require that reports on the activities of the network are prepared by the Commission in 2018 and 2020 and an ex-post evaluation is submitted in 2021. The first EURES Activity Report covered the period from January 2016 until June 2018 and was published on 2 April 2019, concluding that at the regulatory level the implementation of the EURES Regulation had been completed in most areas, as such:

- NCOs had been nominated;
- PES had been appointed as Members of the national EURES networks;
- Progress was made in setting up admission systems for Members and Partners;
- New monitoring and performance tools were put in place;
- Progress was made on the transparent exchange of job vacancies and CVs between national databases and EURES Portal.

Areas for further development were identified and include the network enlargement through the admission of new Members and Partners, the implementation of the CV and job vacancy exchange with all EURES countries and the introduction of the European classification of skills, qualifications and occupations (ESCO).

This second EURES Activity Report covers the period July 2018 to June 2020 (hereafter: 'reference period').

2 MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE EURES NETWORK: JULY 2018 – JUNE 2020

2.1 Activities in EURES countries

2.1.1 General support services for workers and employers

All EURES countries provided support services to workers and employers. The main focus of the activities remained on workers and jobseekers, although an upward trend in the number of services provided to employers was observed. Main activity types included provision of information, guidance and counselling, organisation of onsite and online recruitment events, and provision of support in direct matching and placement. In some cases, the activities were planned by the EURES countries based on a sectoral approach, whilst others focused on outgoing or incoming mobility. Some EURES countries adopted a general labour market approach.

2.1.1.1 Matching and placing activities

Between July 2018 and June 2020, **432 503 job applications** (including CVs) and **1 662 468 job vacancies** were handled and processed by EURES staff. The focus had been on jobseekers and employers from the country of their national EURES network, while only 37% of the job applications and 9% of the job vacancies were from other EURES countries. In addition, **18 397 events** were organised in the same period across the network, with 69% of them being information events, 12% recruitment events and the remaining 19% combining recruitment and information activities. Between July 2018 and June 2020, **419 745** jobseekers and **15 834** employers had registered via the self-service on the EURES Portal. Combining the results from the EURES **Performance Measurement System (**PMS) and estimations based on the customer satisfaction survey, the EURES network either through the EURES Portal or the national EURES networks have facilitated at least **84 580 placements in 2018 and 83 360 placements in 2019**.

2.1.1.2 Information and guidance

Examples of information and guidance activities for jobseekers and employers provided by the EURES staff include one-to-one counselling, support with drafting job vacancies, organisation of workshops. Overall, **5 924 376 individual contacts with workers** and **403 244 with employers** were reported between July 2018 and June 2020. Concerning the topics discussed, around 43% of the contacts with workers focused on placements and 32% on living and working conditions. With regard to the main discussion topics with employers, placements represented around 40%, followed by general information on EURES with a share of approximately 39%.

Relevant information is also accessible through the EURES Portal, with EURES countries regularly updating general information on their labour markets and living and working conditions (e.g. administrative procedures, social security system, tax issues, employment contracts, usual methods of looking for employment). The information is available in 26 languages. In addition, **16 EURES countries have their own EURES national website** where jobseekers and employers can find,

among others, labour mobility information, an overview of the EURES services and a link to the EURES Portal.

2.1.2 Specific support services

Support services and programmes targeting specific groups were also at the core of activities implemented by EURES countries.

2.1.2.1 Support in cross-border regions

EURES Members and Partners provide information as well as placement and recruitment services tailored to the specific requirements and circumstances of frontier workers and employers in cross-border regions. These activities were implemented through the formal EURES Cross-Border Partnerships (CBPs), financed through the EURES axis of the European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) 2014 – 2020, and by establishing collaboration agreements with neighbouring EURES countries or other organisations outside the EURES network[3].

In 2018, **nine CBPs** were supported through an EaSI grant from the previous year and **11 CBPs** in 2019. Moreover, during 2019, **eight CBPs** were selected to receive the EaSI grant for 2020 and 2021. EURES CBPs reported 195 060 individual contacts with workers in 2019 and 18 182 individual contacts with clients on the topic of job search in 2018. Overall, 5 408 cross-border job seekers found a job with the help of CBP in 2018 and 2019. These figures show that the focus of the CBP activities has mostly been on the provision of multilingual information, often delivered through physical one-stop-shop solutions. The information provided consists, for the majority, in guidance for posted workers and commuters, such as access to social security systems, recognition of qualifications abroad and taxation.

Concerning support services provided in cross-border regions outside the framework of formal CBPs, EURES countries often report other **cross-border cooperation** arrangements in their activity reports, mostly aimed at providing information and facilitating the organisation of **recruitment** events in cross-border areas.

2.1.2.2 Post-recruitment assistance

Post-recruitment assistance aims to ensure the best possible integration of mobile workers into their new positions. EURES countries continued focusing on providing information to workers and employers prior to signing an employment contract, and in addition, around two-thirds of them also organised post-recruitment activities (e.g. **21 EURES countries** reported organising post-recruitment activities in 2019). The majority of activities comprised the provision of information and guidance on tax and social security issues, but some EURES countries also offer support services to the families of the hired employee and/or provide language trainings.

2.1.2.3 Support to youth – apprenticeships and traineeships

Activities linked to apprenticeships and traineeships that are subject to an employment relationship were limited and implemented unevenly across the EURES countries, mainly depending on the national role of PES in the provision of services in the area of apprenticeships and traineeships.

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[3] As set out in Article 3(7) and 16(4) of Regulation (EU) 2016/589.

In most cases, the support was linked to the promotion of targeted mobility schemes, described in the next paragraph, or other European programmes and initiatives dedicated to youth employment (e.g. Erasmus+, Youth Guarantee, Eurodyssey – the Assembly of European Regions). Some EURES countries also provided workshops and information activities targeting youth. However, the EURES activities were often limited due to the absence of competence of Public Employment Services (PES) in this field.

In addition to services provided through EURES staff in some countries, apprenticeships and traineeships are exchanged on the EURES Portal with **11 447 apprenticeship** and **1 483 traineeship offers** available as of July 2020.

2.1.2.4 EURES-related targeted mobility schemes
EURES also aims to place **specific groups of jobseekers** and to help fill **vacancies in specific sectors with recruitment difficulties**. To that end, EURES activities can be complementary to, or integrated with, **targeted mobility schemes** financed under the EU Programme for **Employment and Social Innovation** (EaSI). The table below provides an overview of the main characteristics of three targeted mobility schemes that were implemented in the period July 2018 to June 2020 including their target populations, actively participating countries and main performance indicators.

Overview of EURES-related mobility schemes targeting particular age groups

Duration	Target group	EURES countries	Performance indicators	EaSI Funding
Your first EURES Job				
February 2015 – **ongoing**	Jobseekers aged 18-35 years / companies with skills needs	Lead employment services**: DE, FR, IT, SE** Partners in: **BG, HR, CY, PT, RO, SI, ES, DK, FI, IE, NL, FI, SK**[4]	*July 2018 –June 2020* Registered jobseekers: **13 977** Registered employers: **3 551** Registered vacancies: **3 477** Placements: **4 062**	*Dec 2018 – Dec 2020* Foreseen budget[5]: **€ 11 200 000** Granted budget: **€ 14 851 070**
Reactivate				
November 2016 – **ongoing**	Jobseekers aged 35 or older / employers in need of qualified workforce	Lead employment services in: **FR, SE, PL, DE, IT** Partners in: **EL, ES, NL, MT**[6]	*Oct 2018 – June 2020* Registered jobseekers: **5 216** Registered employers: **708** Registered vacancies: **3 940** Placements: **852**	*Dec 2018 – Dec 2020* Foreseen budget: **€ 5 000 000** Granted budget: **€ 4 852 994**
EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme[7]				

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[4] Information provided on the EURES Portal
[5] Call for proposals VP/2018/009.
[6] Information provided on the EURES Portal

Duration	Target group	EURES countries	Performance indicators	EaSI Funding
January 2020- **ongoing**	Jobseekers over 18	Lead employment services: **DE, SE** Partners in: **RO, FI, EE, IE, SE, PT, DK, ES, NL, SL, DE, SK**	*Started in Jan 2020* Registered jobseekers: **ongoing** Registered employers: **ongoing** Registered vacancies: **ongoing** Placements: **ongoing**	*Jan 2020 – Dec 2021* Foreseen budget: **€ 9 000 000** Granted budget: **€ 8 860 242**

Across Your First EURES Job and Reactivate, the majority of placements were realised in the sectors Human health and social work, Information and communication, Education, Transportation and Storage. The top sending countries were Spain, Italy and France. The top receiving countries were Germany and the United Kingdom across both schemes, and Ireland for Your first EURES Job and Bulgaria for Reactivate.

The new scheme called EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS) was set up in 2019, ensuring the continuity of implementation and further development of the two previously established schemes, Your First EURES Job and Reactivate. TMS covers the target groups of both schemes and is implemented by Sweden and Germany as lead countries. Its implementation is delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1.3   Resources and governance

2.1.3.1   Human resources
EURES staff includes both advisers working on EURES in the national or regional PES and in other EURES Member or Partner organisations. The EURES network had **2 568 EURES staff members** (1 255 full time equivalent (FTE)) in 2018 and 2 642 EURES staff members (1 232 FTE) in 2019. The distribution of FTE by country ranges and reflects the different sizes of the labour market, from two FTE in Malta and Luxembourg, to 20 in Bulgaria, 33 in the Czech Republic, 89 in France and 156 in Germany.

2.1.3.2   Financial resources
The funding of the EURES network at national level changed during the EURES reform process and with the entry into force of the EURES Regulation. While before 2014, the functioning of EURES was financed through annual grants deriving from a separate EU budget line, as of 2015 EURES countries became in charge of securing their own budget for EURES activities. In this frame, the financial resources used by EURES countries mostly derive from two sources: the European Social Fund (ESF) and national budgets. The composition of the budget and its volume differs from one EURES country to another as some countries use only national resources, and others both. Results from a survey among the NCOs on the use of the ESF for EURES activities show that around € 58 000 000 have been made available in the programming period 2014-2020.

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[7] Call for proposals VP/2019/009

In addition, EURES countries may apply for financial resources available through the EURES axis of the Employment and Social Innovation programme (EaSI) to cover the activities carried out under the targeted mobility schemes and, in certain occasions, additional costs.[8] Finally, a limited number of EURES countries complemented the available resources with additional sources, such as specific budgets of Member and Partner organisations.

2.1.3.3 IT infrastructure

In addition to standard **IT equipment,** EURES countries ensured access for EURES staff to relevant software, including tools for webinars and web conferences. Moreover, **digital services** such as online information sessions, counselling through Skype or other chatting tools were provided by the majority of the EURES countries. Examples of further activities to improve the delivery of online services include development of national EURES websites (e.g. Bulgaria) and implementation of online handbooks to support the provision of services (e.g. Denmark).

With regard to interoperability questions, the EURES countries continued working on adjusting their IT infrastructure for the transmission of job vacancies and CVs to the EURES Portal. Further changes on the IT infrastructure were necessary in some EURES countries in view of the broadening of the network and alignment of IT infrastructures of new EURES Members and Partners (e.g. Hungary, Poland).

2.1.3.4 Governance and stakeholder cooperation

Looking at internal governance, the focus of EURES activities was on the design and implementation of an official admission system for new EURES Members and Partners and the consequent broadening of the EURES network (e.g. launch of calls, review of applications, on-boarding of new EURES Members and Partners). Some EURES countries also introduced organisational set-up changes due to the admission of new Members and Partners (e.g. shift of the role of the NCO towards strategic questions, organisational separation of the NCO from PES in order to ensure neutrality).

In addition, a large majority of EURES countries carried out activities to improve the organisation and ensure the efficiency of the governance of their national EURES network. This included enhancing cooperation with new EURES Members and Partners via working groups, monthly reports, and national EURES team meetings.

The vast majority of EURES countries enhanced cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders at local, regional, national and cross-border levels. These include social partners, other European networks, career guidance services, chambers of commerce, and authorities in charge of social security and taxation, education, universities or professional associations.

2.1.3.5 Communication in EURES countries

Communication activities by EURES countries aimed mainly at raising awareness and enhancing knowledge about EURES services in order to gain clients, targeting jobseekers and employers.

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[8] VP/2019/010: EaSI-EURES - Support to national classification inventories & innovative national online services for mobile workers

Among the communication activities carried out, information campaigns of a general nature or targeting specific groups or sectors were implemented. Examples include information events for employers and social partners in Bulgaria and an awareness raising campaign in Ireland. Moreover, in the period 2018 to 2020, there has been a stronger shift towards the use of social media channels, with most of the EURES countries having a Facebook, LinkedIn and/or Twitter account:

Reach / Impressions of posts on social media channels of EURES countries

Social media channel	Semester 2, 2018	Semester 1, 2019	Semester 2, 2019	Semester 1, 2020	Total
Facebook	1 933 419	2 199 555	4 892 949	1 750 944	10 776 867
Twitter	1 059 658	314 606	950 702	766 335	3 091 301
LinkedIn	163 111	329 400	847 239	1 537 762	2 877 512

Other communication means included printed promotional material, such as publications, leaflets and roll ups, and also the use of video testimonials (e.g. Portugal, Denmark), radio and television (e.g. Spain, Slovakia).

2.1.3.6 Monitoring and evaluation of activities

The Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/170 introduced specifications for a uniformed data collection and analysis approach, helping monitor the performance of the EURES network. The EURES **Performance Measurement System (PMS)** was introduced in 2018 and since then NCOs provide data on five core and 11 network indicators, every six months.

To this end, changes in national reporting and monitoring systems were a pivotal focus of activities in the reference period. NCOs reported that workflows and new structures were introduced in order to establish a unified programming and monitoring system at national level and facilitate the data collection within all the EURES Members and Partners. For example, monitoring data are collected through an online survey in Italy. In Poland, a unified monitoring system (electronic monitoring database for data collection) was implemented and countries such as Spain and Norway developed cloud-based online solutions to gather data at national level. In several countries, the data are collected manually. In addition, PMS-related training events and workshops were organised for EURES staff in a number of EURES countries and at EU level.

In addition to the PMS, the **programming cycle (PC)** is the main monitoring tool for yearly activities of the EURES countries. The Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1256 introduced the arrangements and templates to be used in the PC. Within this frame, each NCO reports on the outputs and outcomes of their national EURES network in a yearly National Activity Report, against the objectives set out in their National Work Programme.

2.2 Horizontal support activities from the European Coordination Office (ECO)

2.2.1 Coordination and governance support

In order to ensure a fruitful cooperation within the EURES network, ECO organises the work of the European Coordination Group (ECG), which meets at regular intervals and *ad hoc* to discuss the

state of play, present recent developments and share information and best practices. **Ten ECG meetings** were held from July 2018 to July 2020.

In addition, to provide support to the NCOs, ECO supervises and facilitates the different stages of the programming cycle and coordinates NCOs' planning by commenting and reporting on their programmes individually.

2.2.2 Operation and development of the EURES Portal and related IT support

ECO operates the EURES Portal and provides related IT support and guidance to the EURES countries in order to enhance interoperability. In the reference period, ECO continued the provision of these services. In particular, among others, supporting material and technical standards and formats were developed and provided to EURES countries in order to facilitate the mapping of their national, regional and sectoral classifications according to the European classification (**ESCO mapping**). Such mapping is a precondition for the introduction of an automated matching function on the EURES Portal. The support provided included, for instance, the provision of an online ESCO mapping platform, the ESCO implementation manual, and dedicated training sessions. To fulfil this requirement, a number of EURES countries applied for financial support.[9]

In addition, ECO continued implementing changes on the **EURES Portal**, such as improvements to its filter function, to increase its user-friendliness. In this context, the last version update, EURES Portal 4.4, was launched in early 2020 and includes the revamp of the Portal with a new design for the Homepage, compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), changes in the self-service CV lifespan, restricted access for non-EU nationals without a work permit and improvement for enquiries sent by EURES staff. Moreover, ECO introduced a customer satisfaction survey, in order to investigate users' perceptions of the Portal. Over 70% of the employers were satisfied or very satisfied with the EURES Portal. Concerning the jobseekers and workers, approximately 95% of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the Portal and 8% reported to have found a job using the EURES Portal.

ECO put in place several measures increasing the synergies between the EURES Portal and the newly launched **Europass** Portal. Europass users looking for jobs are now able to search for EURES jobs, and get suggestions for interesting jobs that match their profile. While search and matching is performed by EURES, results are directly visible on Europass. Additionally, signposting to the different EURES and Europass services on the two Portals helps users to find their way to the service they need. The interoperability of user profiles between EURES and Europass allow registered users on one Portal to export their CVs now to the other portal.

Another important element of ECO's activities in this regard was the organisation of the **Interoperability Working Group (IOCWG)**, with the aim of facilitating the implementation of Articles 17 and 18 of the EURES Regulation and supporting the information exchange. The work of the IOCWG covers two domains: the first deals with all functional requirements and actions to gather CVs and job vacancies, transfer them and validate them; the second refers to applications

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[9] VP/2019/010, EaSI-EURES: Support to national classification inventories and innovative national online services for mobile workers

allowing searching and matching of data. The working group met five times during the reference period.

2.2.3 Training and professional development

The EURES training programme aims to support and assist EURES staff in delivering EURES services. It consists of **pre-training** (organised by the NCOs based on indicative guidelines, tools and helpdesk provided by ECO) and a **Common EURES Training Programme**, conducted under ECO's responsibility. At European level, three types of training on EURES can be distinguished: classroom training, virtual training (live on-line and e-learning), and on demand training.

ECO continued to provide the Common EURES Training Programme and professional development for the EURES staff of Members and Partners. The training activities were based on the training programme for EURES comprising a consolidation phase followed by the **EURES Academy** which was introduced in 2016. In particular, ECO provided 73 training sessions from July 2018 to December 2019, attended by 2 999 EURES staff.

2.2.4 Helpdesk

ECO continued providing a helpdesk function for all users of the EURES Portal and its services (i.e. jobseekers, employers, staff of the EURES Members and Partners, NCOs and guest visitors). This service includes replies to all enquiries relating to the services provided on the EURES Portal, including the Extranet section[10], and the services provided on the European Job Days platform. Enquiries can be submitted through the Portal web form, a free phone number, an online chat or Skype. The EURES helpdesk processed around 27 700 user enquiries in 2018, 24 249 in 2019 and 9 830 in the first half of 2020.

2.2.5 Networking, exchange, and best practice and mutual learning

ECO continued facilitating networking, mutual learning and the exchange of best practices within the EURES network. Apart from regular ECG meetings, **mutual learning events** with representatives from all EURES countries are organised. For example, a mutual learning event on the topic of admission systems was organised in December 2018. In addition, the **EURES Extranet,** updated with a new version in 2018, provides workspaces to enhance the exchange of information between EURES countries. For instance, the virtual space 'Speaker's Corner' provides EURES countries with the opportunity to share files, start discussions or exchange information on events. EURES countries are also able to access each other's Work Programmes and provide individual comments. This **commenting exercise** aims to enhance information exchange and cooperation during the programming period. Further efforts to provide guidance, harmonise and improve the reporting and monitoring process by ECO included the organisation of annual workshops and the provision of feedback and recommendations on the individual submissions.

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[10] The Extranet is the section of the EURES portal only available to internal users, such as EURES advisers, national coordinators and ECO staff. It facilitates the coordination, exchange of information and administrative tasks.

2.2.6   Information and communication activities

ECO continued supporting information and communication activities within the EURES network to foster EURES awareness. More specifically, in order to best support the NCOs in the implementation of the communication strategy and of their national plans, EURES staff were offered hands-on **communication training** sessions organised on average twice a month and covering a wide range of topics such as Social Media Content Creation, LinkedIn, Stakeholder Relationships. In addition, EURES countries could use the **EURES style guide** and **Infographics** developed by ECO.

ECO also continued its own communication activities, including the management of the **EURES social media** accounts, with 287 454 fans on Facebook, 38 741 on Twitter, and 52 812 on LinkedIn. In line with its content strategy, ECO focused on a monthly topic in its communication activities, thus exploring different themes regarding careers and employment for EU/EEA citizens.

Reach / Impressions of posts on social media channels of ECO

Social media channel	Semester 2, 2018	Semester 1, 2019	Semester 2, 2019	Semester 1, 2020	Total
Facebook	39 585 902	6 449 270	2 306 125	7 764 993	56 106 290
Twitter	361 984	910 770	2 587 705	1 227 479	5 087 938
LinkedIn	1 046 669	2 298 356	1 563 189	1 032 480	5 940 694

ECO also manages a YouTube account for EURES with over 7 000 subscribers as of July 2020. Some 35 videos were posted in the last two years. In addition, over 120 **news articles** were shared on the EURES Portal since July 2018 and a **newsletter** is being distributed on a monthly basis.

Moreover, ECO runs the **European (Online) Job Days** (EOJD) platform and supported the organisation of 65 job days and recruitment events (online, onsite or both) in 2018 and 2019.

Key Performance Indicators linked to European (Online) Job Days

Indicator	2018	2019	Total
Number of events	31	34	65
Number of positions	12 817	18 775	31 592
Number of jobseekers	28 878	36 850	65 728
Number of interviews scheduled	846	962	1 808

Looking at the development of Pan-European communication campaigns, EURES was the backbone of the Commission's high-level campaign **#EUmovers**, celebrating 50 years of free movement and 60 years of social security coordination, and ensured an effective outreach of the social media campaign to concerned workers. The campaign raised positive awareness around why Free Movement and Social Security Coordination are so important for EU citizens. It had a large and successful element of engagement with EU workers empowering them to share their stories on how Free Movement and Social Security Coordination had changed their lives.

Furthermore, in 2019, a five-month EU-wide communication campaign under the **#EURES25** was launched to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the EURES network. The

campaign included a strong digital component with videos, paid ads, social media competitions and two internal events for the EURES network, with some EURES advisers being active for 25 years. The campaign enhanced the visibility of EURES on all channels and increased its audience, particularly on LinkedIn and Twitter. Internally the campaign had positive effects on consolidating the EURES network and increasing interaction.

2.2.7 Analysis of geographical and occupational mobility

As per Article 29 of the EURES Regulation, the Commission, who is in charge of analysing geographical and occupational mobility trends, published **two intra-EU labour mobility reports** (i.e. 2018[11] and 2019[12]) containing key information on flows and patterns in the Union and EFTA countries, with a particular focus on the labour market situation of mobile workers and the gender dimension. In addition, using information provided by the NCOs and an analysis of the European Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Commission published **a study on surplus and shortage occupations in 2019**.[13]

2.2.8 Development of an appropriate cooperation and clearance structure for apprenticeships and traineeships

ECO contributed to developing a **common understanding** and **support services** by providing a set of minimum data quality requirements and information on apprenticeships and internships on the EURES Portal.

In addition, ECO, between 2017 and 2018 set up an *ad hoc* **working group** on apprenticeships and traineeships, which drafted a checklist for hosting organisations (e.g. "on welcome an apprentice or a trainee"), sending organisations (e.g. "on send an apprentice or a trainee") and data providers (e.g. on "provide job offers on the EURES Portal"). The checklist is available on the EURES Portal and includes recommendations on the stages of attracting, recruiting and employing apprentices and trainees across Europe.

Moreover, as national information and guidance on apprenticeships and traineeships should, *inter alia*, be published on the EURES portal, since early 2019 ECO has enabled the **transmission and publication of apprenticeship and traineeship vacancies on the EURES Portal**.

2.2.9 Financial resources

ECO's horizontal support activities are supported by the EURES axis of the EaSI programme, that provides the financing of activities, such as the development and maintenance of the EURES Portal, the common training programme, communication, analytical and network activities and of the mobility schemes, such as Your first EURES Job and Cross Border Partnerships. The total budget allocated to the EURES axis during the reference period corresponded to approximately 20% of the EaSI budget, around € 24.3 million in 2018[14] and € 33.8 million in 2019[15].

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[11] Annual report on intra-EU labour mobility 2018
[12] Annual report on intra-EU labour mobility 2019
[13] European Commission, Labour shortages and surpluses 2019.
[14] 2018 EaSI annual work programme
[15] 2019 EaSI annual work programme – 1st amending decision

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGULATION IN THE EURES COUNTRIES

The analysis in this section builds on replies received from the NCOs on a survey and checklist, and other information available to the Commission. The table at the top of each sub-section provides a summary view of the related point in the checklist about the implementation of the EURES Regulation.

When data on sub-actions are reported, the table presents an aggregate outcome of the actions. When data for all sub-actions are reported, the lowest value is presented (e.g. if one sub-action has been reported as "Not completed", the entire action is marked as "X - Not completed"). When no data are reported for some sub-actions, the action is presented as partially completed.

	Data not available*
v	Completed
Δ	Partially completed
X	Not completed

*Data are reported as not available by the NCO or no data were reported.

3.1 Composition of the network and organisational matters

I. Composition of the network and organisational matters	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	CH	IS	LI	NO
Action 1: Designation of the National Coordination Office (Article 9(1))	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
Action 2: Designation of a representative for the Coordination Group (Article 14)	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
Action 3: Appointment of the Public Employment Services relevant for the activities in the EURES network as EURES Members (Article 10)	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v	v
Action 4: Identification of the organisations currently operating in the EURES network which continue in the transitional period (Article 40)	v	v		v		v		v	v	v						v					v	v		v	Δ		v	v				

3.1.1 Regulation requirements

As per EURES Regulation, concerning the composition and organisation of the network, EURES countries have to inform ECO about their designated **NCO** and **representative to the European Coordination Group (ECG)**. Concerning EURES Members and Partners, EURES countries are required to nominate the Public Employment Service (PES) as a Member in each country, recognising its special status, and ensure the fulfilment of a set of minimum criteria[16] outlining the obligations of **PES**. Moreover, organisations, which have been part of the national EURES networks before the entry into force of the EURES Regulation, could remain Partners during a transitional period until 13 May 2019 before having to re-apply to become Member or Partners of the EURES network. NCO had to inform ECO of the composition of their network during the transition period.

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[16] Regulation 2016/589, Annex I: Minimum common criteria.

3.1.2 Implementation

All EURES countries designated NCOs and representatives to the ECG, and appointed PES as EURES Members already before 2018. ECO was informed about any changes in the composition of the EURES network. In addition, the organisations with a transitional status were identified by the NCOs, where relevant.

3.1.3 Challenges

No specific challenges were reported by the EURES countries in relation to this set of requirements.

3.2 Governance and interaction with organisations outside the EURES network

II. Governance and cooperation with other organisations outside EURES	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	CH	IS	LI	NO
Action 1: Re-establish collaboration with stakeholders (Article 9(7))	V	V	V	Δ		Δ	V	V	Δ	V		X	Δ	V	Δ	V	Δ	V	V	V	V	X		Δ	V	V	V	V	X			X
Action 2: Re-establish cooperation with other Union information & advisory services and networks (Article 16(2))	V	Δ	V	Δ		Δ	V	V	Δ	V		Δ	V	Δ	V	Δ	V	V	V	V	Δ		Δ	Δ	V	V	V	Δ				Δ
Action 3: Dialogue with social partners at national level (Article 16(3))	V	V	V	Δ		V	V	V	Δ	V		Δ	V	V	V	V	V	V	V		V	Δ		V	V	V	V	V	Δ			X
Action 4: Establish cooperation with relevant competent authorities (Article 26(2))	V	V	V	Δ		V	V	V	V	V		Δ	V	V	Δ	V	Δ	V	V	V	V	X		V	V	V	V	V	Δ			V

3.2.1 Regulation requirements

The core organisations of the EURES network in the EURES countries are the PES and other EURES Members and Partners. However, the functioning of the network requires cooperation with numerous other organisations. The EURES Regulation specifies as responsibilities of the NCOs' to promote **collaboration with relevant stakeholders** (e.g. social partners, vocational training and higher education institutions, chambers of commerce) and **EU information and advisory services and networks**. In addition, NCOs should facilitate regular **dialogue for the EURES network with the social partners**, in line with national law and practice, and establish **contacts with competent authorities at national level** in view of providing access to information to jobseekers and employers on taxation, issues related to work contracts, pensions, health insurance, social security and active labour market measures.

3.2.2 Implementation

Between 2018 and 2020 several steps were taken by almost all the EURES countries that replied to the checklist to (re)enhance collaboration and dialogue with numerous stakeholder organisations, competent authorities and Union information and advisory services. Most EURES countries have completed a mapping of the relevant stakeholders, EU networks, social partners and national authorities, and established communication channels with them. In some cases, the actions were only partially completed either because no analysis was carried out to identify new potential stakeholders, or Members and Partners have not been included in the interactions with these organisations, since they were either newly admitted or there were no Members and Partners admitted yet. EURES countries relied on printed and online information, open or restricted calls of application, but also individual meetings, calls, emails and information seminars to reach out to stakeholders in view of possible cooperation.

No specific challenges were reported for the period 2016 to 2018 by the EURES countries in relation to this set of requirements. For the current reporting period, however, NCOs have pointed out a number of obstacles linked to the communication with external stakeholders. Some NCOs face difficulties in winning the trust of stakeholders and in clearly presenting the added value of EURES membership in view of possible admission to the EURES network, especially given the administrative burden associated with it. Other challenges are linked to a lack of human resources, as well as difficulty in finding a common vision with some external stakeholders.

3.3 Broadening the network

III. Broadening the network	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	CH	IS	LI	NO
Action 1: Preparation for the admission system (Article 11)	Δ	V	V	V		V	V	V	V	V	V	Δ	V	V	Δ	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	X			X
Action 2: Implementation of the admission system (Articles 11 & 12)	X	V	V	V		V	V	V	X	V	V	X	V	X	X	X	X	Δ			X	V	V	X	X	V	V	V	X			X
Action 3: Compliance with the template of the national system and procedures for sharing information between Member States (Article 11(8))	X	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	X	X	X	X
Action 4: Monitoring compliance by Members and Partners		V	V	Δ		V	V	V	V	V		Δ	V	Δ	Δ	V	V	V	V	V	V	V		V	V		V	V	X			

3.3.1   Regulation requirements

With a view to broadening the EURES network, the EURES Regulation requires from each EURES country to **establish** and **implement** a system to admit organisations as EURES Members and Partners, as well as the **monitoring of the compliance** of these organisations with the applicable law. The admission system had to be in place by 13 May 2018 and to be based on the minimum criteria set out in the EURES Regulation. EURES countries could also add national admission criteria. Referring to Article 11 (8) of the Regulation, the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1255 provided a template for the description of the national admission system and procedures for NCOs to notify ECO.

3.3.2   Implementation

All EURES countries have already established or started preparing an admission system for admitting organisations, other than PES, as Members and Partners. The non-EU EURES countries have not yet started the work on admission as the EURES Regulation was taken over in late 2019 by the EEA Joint Committee[17] and now the implementation at national level is still ongoing.

ECO has been informed by almost all EURES countries about their national admission system, using the template defined in Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1255. However, so far only 13 EURES countries have admitted new Members and/or Partners. Therefore, even though having a formal admission system in place, admission of new Members and Partners has not been implemented by more than half of the EURES countries[18].

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[17] Decision of the EEA Joint Committee No 302/2019 of 13 December 2019 amending Annex V (Free movement of workers) and Protocol 31 (on cooperation in specific fields outside the four freedoms) to the EEA Agreement [2020/320]

[18] On 19 November 2019, the Commission sent administrative letters to the Member States that did not yet comply with the provisions of the EURES regulation, in particular the CV exchange and the admission system. Depending on the

Twenty EURES countries reported to have completely or almost completely implemented a monitoring system for new Members and Partners, whilst five are half way or have started to do so. The remainder of the EURES countries have not started the implementation of a monitoring system either because they do not have an admission system in place yet or are waiting for the first organisations to be admitted.

3.3.3 Challenges

One of the challenges, identified in the period 2016 to 2018, was the delay in the setup of the admission system, but this has been largely overcome. However, the increase in the number of new Members and Partners is slow. With a small number of newly admitted Members and Partners, a challenge remains in relation to the implementation of the adopted admission system.

3.4 Job vacancies and CV exchanges

IV. Data exchange mechanisms, visibility & access to tools and interoperability	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	CH	IS	LI	NO
Action 1: Job vacancy exchange through single coordinated channel	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	X	V
Action 2: CV exchange through single coordinated channel	V	V	X	X	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	X	V	X	V	X	V	V	V	X	X	V	V	X	V	V	V	X	X	X	X	X
Action 3: Preparation for the exchange on apprenticeships and traineeships	V	V	V	X		V		Δ	X	V		X	V	X	X	V	V		X		V	V		Δ	Δ			V	X			Δ
Action 4: Implementation of technical standards and formats necessary for the operation of the automated matching through the common IT platform	V	V	X	V		V	Δ	V	V	V		V	Δ	Δ	V	V	V	V		V	Δ			V			V	V	Δ			X

3.4.1 Regulation requirements

Concerning the transfer of CVs and job vacancies, the EURES Regulation requires all EURES Members and Partners to transfer their publicly available **job vacancies and CVs** to the EURES Portal and prepare for the exchange of **apprenticeship and traineeship data**. All data exchanges must take place through a **single coordinated channel**. Based on Article 17 (8) of the Regulation, the Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/1021 introduced the **technical standards** to be applied to job vacancies and CVs by the EURES countries for the purposes of an automated matching on the EURES Portal. EURES countries also have to ensure the visibility of the EURES Portal at national level and share information on national practices and data issues.

3.4.2 Implementation

Concerning the transfer of CVs and job vacancies, 31 EURES countries have set up a system for transferring job vacancies, and more than half of the EURES countries are transferring CVs through the **single coordinated channel.** Most of the other EURES countries expect to have the system in place by end of 2020, but highlight delays, especially due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in Europe since March 2020. NCOs reported that participation in the Interoperability Working Group meetings and ECO support help them to implement the obligations of the implementing act.

In most cases traineeships and apprenticeships can be transferred to the EURES Portal using the transmission channel set up for job vacancies. However, several EURES countries cannot implement the transfer of **apprenticeships and traineeships** offers to the EURES Portal because of the absence

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planned compliance dates indicated in the replies to these letters, further monitoring and analysis of the implementation, the Commission will consider further actions.

of national policy frameworks to handle such vacancies as job offers (e.g. Sweden, Portugal) or their management by a different organisation such as Ministry of Education (e.g. France).

The implementation of the **European classification for skills, competences and occupations (ESCO)**, its mapping to established national classification systems and the transmission of data in the agreed format is ongoing. A small number of EURES countries use ESCO and thus, did not have to introduce a change. The EURES countries have a period of three years after the publication of the Implementing Decision to complete the mapping exercise, i.e. by 2021.

3.4.3 Challenges

A number of challenges delayed the transfer of CVs and job vacancies through the single coordinated channel. With regard to the transfer of CVs, NCOs have highlighted repeatedly issues arising from the need to integrate a declaration of willingness to share the data of jobseekers or to establish new processes such as risk analysis to be compliant with data protection regulations. NCOs also report internal challenges linked to the low priority within their IT departments attributed to this particular project. In addition, in some cases internal databases had to be adjusted, which further delayed the process. Connecting newly admitted EURES Members and Partners through the single coordinated channel was identified as a future challenge that will grow in importance with the increase in the number of newly admitted organisations.

3.5 Support services

V. Support services	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	CH	IS	LI	NO
Action 1: Ensuring continuity through PES	V	V	V	V		V	V	V	V	V		V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V		V	V	V	V	V	Δ			V
Action 2: Assistance with registration on EURES portal (Article 20)		V	V	V		V	V	V	V	V		V	Δ	V	Δ	V	V	V		Δ	V	X		Δ	V		V	V	X			X
Action 3: Basic information on EURES (Article 22)		V	V	V		V	V	V	V	V		V	Δ		Δ	V	V	V			V	V	V	V			V	V	X			V
Action 4: Monitoring the application by Members and Partners	X	V	V	Δ		V	V	V	V	V		Δ	Δ	V	Δ	Δ	V	V	Δ	Δ	V	Δ		Δ	Δ		V	V	X			X
Action 5: Support services in cross-border regions	X	V	V			V	V	V				Δ	Δ	V	Δ	V	Δ		V		V	Δ		V	V	V	V	V	V			
Action 6: Mainstreaming mobility support in active labour market measures (Article 28, recital 46)	V	Δ	V			V	V	V	V	V		Δ	V	V	V	V			V	Δ		V	V		V	V	V	V	X			X

3.5.1 Regulation requirements

EURES countries are required to ensure the **continuity of EURES services** through their national PES, provide **information** and **assistance** to jobseekers and employers with their registration on the EURES portal and **monitor[19] Members and Partners** in the provision of services. The EURES Regulation also specifies that support services should be provided in **cross-border regions**, where EURES Members or Partners participate in specific cooperation and service structures. EURES countries are also expected to **mainstream mobility support** in their national active labour market policies.

3.5.2 Implementation

All EURES countries report activities and measures taken to **ensure continuity** in the provision of support services for jobseekers and employers through their national PES. **Information** on EURES is available through all PES websites and national EURES Portals, where applicable. In addition, EURES advisers provide information to individual jobseekers and workers. Guidance and support

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[19] As per Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1255

are provided for jobseekers and employers to register on the EURES Portal. In some cases, ensuring **provision of these services by EURES Members and Partners** has not been implemented yet, since no new organisations have been admitted to the network. In 13 EURES countries, support services in **cross-border regions** are provided also through EURES Members and Partners. In the other cases, relevant stakeholders in the cross-border regions for the provision of support services were identified, but have not been admitted as Members or Partners yet. Eighteen EURES countries reported to have implemented actions to **open up** Active Labour Market Policies to include job-search assistance for finding jobs abroad and allowing non-nationals to use the service, and two EURES countries are in the process of doing so.

3.5.3 Challenges

No specific challenges were reported by the EURES countries in relation to this set of requirements.

3.6 Information exchange, programming and performance measurement

VI. Information exchange, programming and performance measurement	AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	UK	CH	IS	LI	NO
Action 1: Exchange of information	√	√	Δ	Δ		X	√	√	√	√		Δ	√	Δ	√	Δ	√	√	Δ	√	√	Δ		Δ	√	Δ	√	Δ	X			Δ
Action 2: Compliance with templates for exchange of information on national work programmes (Article 31)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Action 3: Compliance with uniform specification for data collection for monitoring and evaluation of the EURES network (Article 32)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

3.6.1 Regulation requirements

The EURES Regulation requires from EURES countries **to collect, analyse and share information** on their national labour market situation, including labour shortages and surpluses, as well as on their national EURES activities. The EURES countries also have to provide information regarding their activities planned and report on the performance of their network, using the Commission's templates for the **programming cycle** and **PMS**.

3.6.2 Implementation

Information exchange between NCOs and ECO as well as NCOs and EURES Members and Partners takes place through training activities, meetings and via guidelines and information material. In addition, all 27 EURES countries that reported on this topic provide labour market information that contributes to a joint analysis for EURES.

3.6.3 Challenges

EURES countries report issues with data collection and reporting for both the PMS and the programming cycle. In particular, NCOs highlight the substantial workload connected to reporting and question the justification of such an administrative burden. Developing IT tools that could reduce the workload and facilitate data collection is not perceived as cost-efficient for smaller EURES countries as it requires substantial financial investment. In addition, they mention lack of internal consistency between the reporting for PMS and programming cycle as well as lack of consistency between the reporting for EURES and internal national reporting systems, which rely on different indicators or use different reporting periods. In some cases, data are not available at national level for specific indicators, especially in relation to the number of vacancies available. The

lack or unreliability of data reported limits the reliability and completeness of the possible analysis, according to NCOs.

3.7 Addressed actions from previous reporting period

The first EURES Activity Report identified some priorities for the NCOs for the period 2018 – 2020 in order to ensure compliance with EURES Regulation and the efficient functioning of the EURES network. Specifically, the following recommendations were made:

- Advancing the broadening of the network;
- Enhancing collaboration with other stakeholders and within the network;
- Mainstreaming and optimising communication activities;
- Improving data transfer to the EURES Portal and digital activities;
- Further integrating targeted mobility schemes into EURES countries' activities;
- Ensuring compliance with submission dates and data requests.

Concerning the **broadening of the network,** the admission of new Members and Partners has taken place unevenly across the EURES countries, although important progress was made in the establishment of admission systems in the majority of EURES countries. Nevertheless, obstacles still persist that hinder the enlargement of the network.

With regard to **improving collaboration with other stakeholders**, most of the NCOs reported steps to increase the dialogue and cooperation with other organisations, public authorities and Union networks. However, it was pointed out that it is often difficult to raise the level of awareness and appreciation of external organisations on the added value of EURES.

Looking at **enhancing the communication and promotion** of EURES, EURES countries engaged in promotion of EURES on social media and undertook steps to increase its visibility.

Moreover, as recommended, steps in improving the **data transfer** were made with the implementation of the single coordinated channel by the majority of EURES countries.

Concerning **targeted mobility schemes**, it appears that EURES countries strived to integrate mobility schemes in their activities.

Finally, the Performance Measurement System and programming cycle templates are in use across all the EURES countries and almost all of them provide all the **requested data** in due time.

4   IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGULATION BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

This section provides an overview of the state of play of the application at EU level of the EURES Regulation as required by the second subparagraph of Article 33 of the Regulation, applying the same symbols as used in Section 3:

	Data not available*
V	Completed
Δ	Partially completed
X	Not completed

4.1.1 Regulation requirements

Areas of ECO activities	Status
Provision of horizontal support activities for the benefit of the EURES network	V
Preparation for the application of the EURES Regulation	V
Facilitation of networking, mutual learning and exchange of best practices (Article 8)	V
Information and communication activities regarding the EURES network (Article 1 – 8)	V
Provision of training programme for the NCOs EURES members/partners (Article 8)	V
Support to broadening the network and the admission systems (Article 3 – 7 – 11)	V
Programming cycle and exchange of labour market information including joint analysis	V
Development and operation of EURES Portal (including helpdesk function) and interoperability platform	V
Measuring performance and monitoring progress	V
Management and dialogue at EU level	V

4.1.2 Implementation

ECO continued providing **horizontal support** to the EURES network:

- ECO provided the necessary **implementation guidance** to EURES organisations at national level, e.g. in terms of training, mutual learning events, coordination meetings and working groups.
- Concerning the support to **networking and learning**, ECO continued organising mutual learning events on different topics and supported networking and bilateral discussions during the annual workshops on programming cycle. Moreover, during the European Coordination Group (ECG) meetings, NCO representatives were often invited to present their good practices and innovative approaches. In addition, the EURES Extranet has been updated with dedicated resources to facilitate networking.
- ECO continued delivering **training activities** to the EURES Members and Partners. The analysis of the responses to NCO surveys shows that these have been particularly appreciated by the NCOs.
- ECO and the Commission were active in raising awareness about EURES through their own **information and communication activities** and by providing communication support to EURES countries.

- Support to **broadening of the network** was provided through mutual learning events, training sessions, discussion in the ECG meetings, and by setting up a working group on the topic with the mandate to produce a set of guidelines and toolkit on admission system, admission process, on-boarding of new Members and Partners and on working as an enlarged EURES network.

Looking at the **programming cycle and exchange of labour market information,** the formalisation of reporting templates and joint analyses was accomplished already before 2018. Concerning the exchange of information on labour markets, ECO continued producing reports on EU labour mobility flows and presenting statistics and analyses on labour shortages and surpluses.

With regard to the improvement of the **EURES Portal**, the data exchange system has been successfully implemented and the European classification for skills, competences and occupations (ESCO) mapping exercise has been launched. During the reference period, the operation of the EURES Portal was further improved by additional features and customer satisfaction survey. ECO continued providing support to EURES Portal users through a centralised Helpdesk. Some EURES countries transfer **apprenticeships and traineeships** offers to the EURES Portal and ECO has provided guidance to organisations working with them.

With regard to the EURES monitoring cycle, the **evaluation and monitoring tools** for the Performance Measurement System (PMS) have been rolled out and results are available.

4.1.3 Challenges

Despite the additional efforts to promote EURES, all available feedback suggests that the **information and communication activities need even to be** further strengthened to promote the EURES brand. Training activities, mutual learning events and working groups are essential for the implementation of the EURES Regulation and the functioning of the network, and adjustments in the **training programme** to allow for more flexibility (e.g. additional online modules, wider access) can be beneficial.

The **programming cycle and exchange of information on the labour markets**, the annual programming cycle workshop and the report on labour shortages and surpluses are appreciated by NCOs. However, the usability of information on labour market shortages and surpluses, to be provided by the NCOs themselves, is limited due to methodological challenges and data availability. In addition, a further alignment of the programming cycle and performance measurement is needed to reduce administrative burden.

Looking at the development of **EURES Portal and interoperability**, while updates of the EURES Portal and the provision of the Helpdesk are assessed by the NCOs as very helpful, the potential of the EURES Extranet as an exchange platform between organisations within the EURES network can be explored further.

4.1.4 Addressed actions from previous reporting period

The first EURES Activity Report highlighted the following attention points for European Coordination Office (ECO):

- Completing and analysing the Performance Measurement System (PMS);
- Continuing the development and improvement of EURES Portal;
- Continuing the provision of implementation guidance, especially with regard to the admission systems;
- Strengthening EURES communication and branding;
- Integrating cross-border activities and information exchange.

ECO has completed the roll-out and subsequent analyses of the **PMS** and continued working on **developing advanced features on the EURES Portal**. In addition, it has taken actions such as organising mutual learning events and setting up a working group to deliver further guidance and support material on the network enlargement. Steps were taken to **strengthen the communication of EURES** at EU, national and local level. Finally, concerning **the integration of cross-border activities and systematic information** exchange in the framework of Cross-Border Partnerships (CBP), the Commission/ECO provided CBP beneficiaries with monitoring templates aligned to the PMS, corresponding to those in use at national level, in order to facilitate the data collection and comparability of information. Moreover, starting from 2020, CBP monitoring data are analysed in the PMS reports.

5   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Conclusions

In order to achieve the reform of EURES and to ensure fair intra-EU labour mobility, the EURES Regulation set several requirements for the EURES network. As highlighted in the first EURES Activity Report, the challenging implementation environment and external factors led to delays in the fulfilling of these obligations by 2018. In the period from July 2018 and June 2020 both ECO and the EURES countries, advanced in the implementation of the Regulation and outstanding actions are in the process of being completed. Examples of the main accomplishments in the reference period are:

- Most EURES countries have in place an admission system and nearly half of EURES countries have admitted new EURES Members and Partners;
- All but one EURES countries have set up a system for transferring job vacancies via the single coordinated channel, and more than half of the EURES countries are transferring CVs;
- The European classification for skills, competences and occupations (ESCO) mapping exercise has been launched by the EURES countries with the help of ECO;
- Several steps were taken by ECO for the improvement of the usability of the EURES Portal and ECO is investigating possibilities to enable the automated matching of CVs and job vacancies in the near future;
- The Performance Measurement System and programming cycle templates are in full use.

Nevertheless, some challenges still remain to be addressed and new ones are emerging.

The **COVID-19** epidemic and closure of internal borders had a serious impact on the free movement of workers and the EURES operations in 2020. New placement activities came to an almost complete standstill in the spring of 2020. EURES information activities were seriously affected.

NCOs reported that EURES staff, especially in PES-based NCOs, were moved to other PES functions such as the implementation of short-term working support schemes considered more urgent, thus seriously hampering the EURES service delivery. The gradual re-opening of borders from June 2020 onwards led to a slow reactivation of EURES activities. ECO presented in May 2020 an action plan for the re-start of EURES in 2020. It is still soon to determine which will be the long term effect in the network, which will have to be reassessed depending on the evolution of the crisis.

In addition, in the short term, the main priorities for the functioning of the EURES network are linked to its enlargement and to the development of interoperability. The **broadening of the EURES network** is essential for its ability to provide key expertise in mobility issues, also through a portfolio of new EURES Members and Partners with different skills and specialisations. In this regard, the EURES countries have to further admit new organisations and will be faced with the challenge of managing a broader network. Moreover, given the fast-changing technological context, it is important that the **EURES Portal** is able to offer a state-of-the-art service to jobseekers and employers in terms of usability, user-friendliness and effectiveness. It is also important that all EURES countries are able to transmit both CVs and job vacancies to the Portal in order to increase the pool of opportunities for EURES's users and continue working on the ESCO mapping and delivery of data in ESCO format, in order to enable automated matching at a later stage which would also attract more EURES members and partners.

In the long term, EURES would benefit from further exploring **synergies** with complementary initiatives such as Europass and the Single Digital Gateway. In addition, the further integration of the **analysis of external factors** (e.g. aging population, youth unemployment) in the long-term planning of EURES could increase the relevance of the network in a dynamic labour market context.

These challenges will have to be addressed in a particularly difficult and uncertain period for labour mobility and EURES. As mentioned above, the outbreak of COVID-19 in Europe hindered labour mobility and shifted resources and strategic priorities in EURES countries, having impact on their operational work and likely to cause further delays in the implementation of EURES actions. Moreover, it is important that the **transition of ECO to European Labour Authority (ELA),** foreseen for 2021, ensures continuity of the horizontal support provided to EURES countries.

5.2 Recommendations for EURES countries

Building on the key findings concerning the implementation status and remaining challenges identified in the report, the main priorities concerns for the next reporting period can be summarised as follows:

- **Re-start of EURES**: in order to mitigate the consequences of COVID-19 in a coordinated manner, it is essential for EURES countries to closely follow-up the implementation of the action plan for the re-start of EURES.
- **Network enlargement:** during the current reference period many advancements have been made concerning the establishment of an admission system in each EURES country and admission of new Members and Partners. Nevertheless, the EURES network is growing at a slow pace. It is important for EURES countries that have not admitted new Members and Partners yet to intensify their efforts in this regard by proactively reaching out to potential Members and Partners in a targeted way. At the same time, it is important for EURES

countries that already work in a broader network to adjust their internal governance and working processes to reflect the new composition of the network.

- **Interoperability and IT developments:** while some steps have been undertaken to enable the automated transmission of national CVs and job vacancies to the EURES Portal, further work remains to be done. For the completion of the implementation of the EURES Regulation it is essential that all EURES countries are connected to the single coordinated channel. Moreover, the European classification for skills, competences and occupations mapping should become a priority of NCOs. Therefore, it is essential that EURES countries have the necessary human and IT resources to implement these changes.

- **Development of EURES services:** while the provision of EURES services in all EURES countries is ensured, it is important for the EURES network to integrate even further the analysis of labour market trends in the planning of its activities and to explore the need for targeted activities in view of socio-demographic developments.

5.3 Actions to be taken forward by the ECO and the European Commission

On the basis of the abovementioned challenges, ECO should prioritise the following aspects:

- Organise the **transfer of ECO to the European Labour Authority** (ELA) in a smooth way ensuring business continuity. The implementation of the action plan for the transfer agreed between the Commission and ELA with a gradual transfer of activities, training and job shadowing for the ELA staff should be the highest priority until the end of 2021.
- Support the NCOs and the entire EURES network to **re-start of EURES activities** and implement the action plan for the re-start.
- Strengthen, together with the NCOs, the **delivery of pertinent information, placement and post-recruitment services** to seasonal workers, cross-border workers, and others most affected by the COVID-19 crisis.
- Promote and support the use of the **European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)** for funding of EURES activities in the next programming period 2021-2028.
- Focus not only on providing continuous guidance on the **programming cycle and Performance Measurement System** (PMS), but also on innovative solutions to combine the two tools in order to facilitate the data collection and analysis, as well as the consistency of the information gathered. Moreover, with the entry into force of the Single Digital Gateway (SDG)[20] and its implementing act, it will be essential to further develop the process of collecting user statistics, especially the response times without increasing the administrative burden for the NCOs.
- Further promote dialogue and discussion in order to facilitate the identification of collaborative schemes to offer **opportunities to young workers and for vocational training**. The lack of a unified and standardised definition and legal frameworks on apprenticeships and traineeships hinders EURES countries in the promotion of such vacancies on the EURES Portal and within their services.
- Continue working on the **improvement of the EURES Portal**, enabling both automated matching of CVs and job vacancies and interaction with Europass, SDG and the European classification for skills, competences and occupations.

5.4 Actions to be taken forward by the European Labour Authority

- Organise the **transfer of ECO to the European Labour Authority (ELA)** in a smooth way ensuring business continuity in cooperation with the Commission. The implementation of the action plan for the transfer, together with the recruitment of qualified staff to support ECO, should be the highest priority until end of 2021.
- Develop a **comprehensive approach to support fair mobility** with EURES, as a key activity that can make a decisive contribution in information provision, placements and post-recruitment assistance for preventing unfair mobility practices.
- Strengthen the **communication of EURES** and promotion of the EURES brand at EU, national and local level by integrating EURES into the overall ELA communication activities.
- Allocate **sufficient resources** in the ELA budget for operating EURES in line with the provisions of the EURES Regulation and address the recommendations directed at ECO.

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[20] Regulation EU 2018/1724

Annex – Relevant figures

Table 1 - Composition of intra-EU mobility, EU-28 citizens in the EU-28, 2017 and 2018

Type of mobility	2017	2018	Annual change
'Long-term' EU-28 movers (all ages) living in EU-28 (Eurostat demography figures)	17 million	17.6 million	+3.6%
'Long-term' EU-28 movers of working age (20-64 years) living in EU-28 (Eurostat demography figures)	12.4 million	12.9 million	+3.4%
(as share of the total working-age population in the EU-28)	4.1%	4.2%	
EU-28 movers of working age living in EU-28 (EU-LFS figures)	11.5 million	11.7 million	+1.1%
…of which **active EU-28 movers** (employed or looking for work)	9.5 million	9.7 million	+1.9%
(as share of the total labour force in the EU-28)	4%	4.1%	
EU-28 movers of working age who were born outside the country of residence (EU-LFS figures)	10.8 million	10.95 million	+1.4%
Cross-border workers (20-64 years) EU-LFS figures)	1.4 million	1.5 million	+2%
(as share of the total employed in the EU-28)	0.7%	0.7%	
Number of postings (of employed and self-employed), all ages (no. of PDs A1) (source: HIVA-KU Leuven)	2.8 million	3 million	+6%
= approximate number of persons	1.8 million	1.9 million	+6%
Annual return mobility (20-64 years) (Eurostat data on mobility flows)	680,000(2016)	723,000(2017)	+6%
(as ratio to EU-28 nationals leaving their country of origin in 2017)	66%	72%	

Source: Annual Intra-EU Labour Mobility Report (2019)

Figure 1 - Main shortage and surplus occupations in 2019

Shortage	Surplus
Heavy Truck and Lorry Drivers	Accounting and Bookkeeping Clerks
Systems Analysts	Translators, Interpreters and Other Linguists
Welders and Flame Cutters	Data Entry Clerks
Ag. and Industrial Machinery Mechanics & Repairers	Graphic and Multimedia Designers
Building and Related Electricians	Hairdressers
Carpenters and Joiners	Journalists
Plumbers and Pipe Fitters	Receptionists (general)
Cooks	Secretaries (general)
Concrete Placers, Concrete Finishers and Related	Sweepers and Related Labourers
Metal Working Machine Tool Setters and Operators	Tailors, Dressmakers, Furriers and Hatters
Motor Vehicle Mechanics and Repairers	Accountants
Nursing Professionals	Administrative and Executive Secretaries
Bricklayers and Related Workers	Car, Taxi and Van Drivers
Bus and Tram Drivers	Cleaners and Helpers in Offices, Hotels etc.
Electrical Engineers	Elementary Workers
Generalist Medical Practitioners	Shop Sales Assistants
Structural Metal Preparers and Erectors	Bank Tellers and Related Clerks
Butchers, Fishmongers and Related Food Preparers	Broadcasting and Audio-visual Technicians
Chefs	Cashiers and Ticket Clerks
Civil Engineers	General Office Clerks
Other Software & Applications Developers/Analysts	Interior Designers and Decorators
Software Developers	Mixed Crop Growers
Accountants	Painters and Related Workers
Advertising and Marketing Professionals	Philosophers, Historians and Political Scientists
Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanics	Primary School Teachers
Electrical Engineering Technicians	Sociologists, Anthropologists and Related
Electrical Mechanics and Fitters	Travel Guides
Electronics Engineering Technicians	
Industrial and Production Engineers	
Plasterers	
Shop Sales Assistants	
Waiters	
Web and Multimedia Developers	

Source: 2019 Analysis of shortage and surplus occupations

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