

AGENCY WORK SECTOR FARES WELL IN EUROPE, DESPITE ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

Private employment services in Europe continued to experience positive growth in most segments in 2018, according to the latest Economic Report of the World Employment Confederation. Nine European countries rank amongst the top 15 largest agency work markets globally.

Brussels, 26 February 2020 – Private employment services placed 10.6 million people in jobs in Europe in 2018. The new edition of the World Employment Confederation’s Economic Report shows growth in most of the service segments in the region, with agency work generating most revenues.

“Our data show that all the current top 15 agency work markets experienced positive growth between 2015 and 2018,” explains Even Hagelien, Chairman of the World Employment Confederation’s Economic Affairs Committee. *“With the right enabling environment, we expect this trend to continue in the coming years. Our sector is well prepared to seize the growth opportunities offered by the transformational trends that are affecting the world of work.”*

In total, nine European countries are represented in the top 15 largest agency work markets globally. The United Kingdom is followed by Germany, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland and Belgium in terms of agency work sales revenues. With the exception of Germany, agency work markets in Europe fared well, with the Netherlands (+14.6%) and Switzerland (+6.2%) achieving particularly strong growth.

Direct recruitment grew by 7.2% by Europe in 2018, driven by double-digit growth in the United Kingdom. Career management contracted but Europe remains the region with the largest combined market size. MSP and RPO increased by 42.4% and 38.8% respectively between 2015 and 2018.

The global private employment services industry reached an estimated market value of €473 billion in 2018, an increase of nearly two percent compared to the year before. From a regional outlook, North America remains the strongest region in terms of people placed and revenues in direct recruitment, MSP and RPO. In South America, economic crisis and currency depreciation across the region caused a downturn, particularly in Brazil – the largest market for private employment services in the region. Asia-Pacific performed positively in agency work and direct recruitment.

“Our contribution goes beyond getting people a job,” adds Denis Pennel, Managing Director of the World Employment Confederation. *“Our sector crafts innovative and socially inclusive solutions to address the challenges of the changing world of work. By facilitating work transitions, upskilling the workforce, securing quality work and providing predictability, we contribute to making labour markets more efficient for the benefits of the people, the economy and society.”*

The 2020 Economic Report of the World Employment Confederation is available on [WEC-Europe’s website](https://www.wec-europe.org).

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About the World Employment Confederation-Europe

The World Employment Confederation-Europe is the voice of the private employment services industry at the European level, representing national federations as well as large international workforce solutions companies from across Europe. Members of the World Employment Confederation-Europe represent a wide range of HR services, including agency work, direct recruitment, career management, Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) and Managed Service Provider (MSP).

The World Employment Confederation-Europe works to broaden recognition of the positive economic and social role which the private employment services industry plays in enabling work, adaptation, security and prosperity. This role involves building networks with relevant stakeholders such as policy makers, social partners and the academic world; setting high recruitment and employment standards and practices; acting as a thought-leader shaping futureproof and competitive labour markets and providing strategic data on employment issues. The World Employment Confederation-Europe is the recognised, EU sectoral social partner for temporary agency work.

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