



Employers statement on the EU Talent Pool

24 February 2025

European employers have been among the main advocates of the introduction of an EU Talent Pool and strongly support the European Commission's proposal that was made as part of the Skills and Talent package in 2023. There is significant potential for economic migration to play a greater role in helping to address the ongoing labour and skills shortages faced by employers across sectors throughout the EU.

To make Europe more attractive to job seekers from third countries and to facilitate matching between foreign workers and European employers, it is crucial that opportunities in the European labour markets are made more visible and accessible. An EU Talent Pool can help to make job vacancies offered by EU employers across borders transparent to a wider pool of job seekers. This would give companies a potentially larger selection of suitable candidates than is currently the case with national job placement instruments. It will be easier for candidates to look for jobs from third countries. A common EU platform can achieve economies of scale and thus help to better position Europe in the global competition for talent.

According to the EU Competitiveness Compass, the EU Talent Pool is an essential tool in the EU's overall competitiveness to continue to attract skilled professionals from third countries and to match them with jobs on our labour markets. The recognition and better understanding of different types of training and education completed in third countries is necessary to take full advantage of the Talent Pool initiative.

However, to achieve this it is crucial that the Talent Pool focuses on its European added value and complements national systems in a meaningful way. In terms of implementation, this means that the Talent Pool must be easy to use for the large number of stakeholders involved (either employers or applicants), be compatible with the respective national immigration laws and visa procedures as well as avoid parallel structures with the national systems.

Key provisions to ensure the success of the Talent Pool are:

- The EU Talent Pool should be on a **voluntary** basis. However, employers hope that as many Member States as possible will opt-in to the Talent Pool as this will maximise the added value of the Talent Pool initiative for Member States and the EU as a whole.
- The Talent Pool should focus on facilitating the targeted recruitment of third country nationals of **all skill and qualification levels** (low, medium and high).
- The Talent Pool, through the national contact points, should provide extensive information that will help support and assist registered jobseekers from third countries and participating employers, for instance, as regards, visas, residence permits, stay-back options and post-study work opportunities.

- The Talent Pool should allow a broad and flexible search for applicants by all relevant actors on the national labour markets. **Access** should be granted to employers, public and private employment agencies and temporary work agencies.
- The Regulation should not and does not need to define the **term “employer”**. Instead, it should set out who has access to the pool – an approach taken in the Council’s general approach as concerns the notion of the participating employer.
- The Talent Pool should be a truly **demand-led migration management tool** by ensuring the necessary flexibility on the national level. An indicative EU shortage occupation list may be a useful starting point, while also allowing sufficient flexibility to the national and sectoral level to identify the occupations in shortage and make use of the Talent Pool to fill vacancies, taking into account the different labour market dynamics. Beyond a possible initial focus on shortage occupations, the Talent Pool should clearly be designed with the perspective of matching workers with vacancies across all occupations.
- The Talent Pool should not be restricted to third countries part of talent partnerships.
- **Technical interoperability** between national systems and the Talent Pool IT platform is absolutely essential, including those run by the Public Employment Services as well as private providers.
- Talent Pool actors need to follow the principle of **fair recruitment while avoiding a baseline of distrust towards employers**. Introducing highly bureaucratic vetting mechanisms of employers as a prerequisite to enter the pool conflicts not only with the national checks that are part of the national visa application procedures (hence taking place after a successful matching) but will also discourage employers from participating.
- The EU **social partners** must have a fixed role in the governance structure of the talent pool. We appreciate the EP’s proposal to broaden the number of EU social partner representatives in the steering committee from two to three on each side of industry, which will allow the participation of the three EU cross-industry employers - BusinessEurope, SGI Europe and SMEunited. There should also be a mechanism for sectoral social partners to give input and for ad-hoc participation, taking into account the issues being discussed.
- **Vacancies** need to be posted on the Talent Pool without undue delay to meet immediate skill demands of labour markets. Requirements for month-long waiting periods (labour market test), before the search for skilled and qualified labour from outside the EU can begin, will result in unnecessary delays to employers’ recruitment processes. Employers must be able to pursue recruitment via the Talent Pool and EURES simultaneously. Vacancies need to be able to be uploaded by both the National Contact Points as well as participating employers and other labour market entities.
- It is essential to ensure that **public and private employment services work hand in hand to make sure that the applicable rules apply in practice**, which will be critical in order to generate trust in the talent pool operations by all actors¹.
- We fully support the possibility for participating Member States to put in place accelerated immigration procedures, particularly in relation to obtaining visas and residence permits

¹ It can also be noted that members of the World Employment Confederation subscribe to a code of conduct¹, which contains principles that ethical, quality and professional private employment services should deploy in the provision of their services

for work purposes. The introduction of faster migration procedures is a positive development.

- The Talent Pool must be **advertised** extensively through outreach activities in third countries and established as a brand.

Employers call on the swift approval of the Regulation by the EU institutions.
