

June 2015

## EURES (European Employment Service) - Part of the expected Labour Mobility Package -

**Main instruments:** [Regulation 492/2011](#) and [Implementing Decision 2012/733](#)

*This briefing is one of a series of 'Implementation Appraisals', produced by the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), on the operation of existing EU legislation in practice. Each such briefing focuses on a specific EU law which is, or will shortly be, subject to an amending proposal from the European Commission, intended to update the current text. 'Implementation Appraisals' aim to provide a succinct overview of material publicly available on the implementation, application and effectiveness of an EU law to date - drawing on available inputs from, inter alia, the EU institutions and advisory committees, national parliaments, and relevant external consultation and outreach exercises. They are provided to assist parliamentary committees in their consideration of the new Commission proposal, once tabled.*

<b>EP committee responsible</b> at time of adoption of the EU legislation: Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)
<b>Date of adoption</b> of original legislation in plenary: 7 September 2010 (Regulation 492/2011)
<b>Date of entry into force</b> of Regulation 492/2011: 16 June 2011 (Article 42)
<b>Date foreseen for review</b> of legislation: Every 2 years the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee on the implementation of Chapter II (Clearance of vacancies and applications for employment), summarising the information required and the data obtained from the studies and research carried out and highlighting any useful points with regard to developments on the Union's labour market (Article 17 (3), Regulation 492/2011). <sup>1</sup>
<b>Timeline for new amending legislation:</b> The Commission Work Programme 2015 ( <a href="#">Annex I</a> ) noted that "the (Labour Mobility) package aims at supporting labour mobility and tackling abuse by means of better coordination of social security systems, the targeted review of the Posting of Workers Directive and an enhanced EURES." Based on the accessible information, the Commission intends to present this package by the end of 2015. <sup>2</sup> However, already in January 2014, it submitted a <a href="#">proposal</a> of a regulation in order to re-establish the EURES and to enhance access of workers to intra-EU labour mobility support services (COM(2014) 6 final). <sup>3</sup> This proposal is currently in the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and is scheduled for vote in June 2015. It is not clear whether this proposal is a part of the expected package or whether the Commission's Labour Mobility package will bring further reforms to the EURES.

<sup>1</sup> Regulation 492/2011 abolished Regulation 1612/68 which included an identical review clause (Article 19 (3)). After 2011 no report has been submitted to the Parliament. The latest [EURES Activity Report](#) is from 2010. It covers the years 2006 - 2008. According to the answer of the Commission on a question of MEP G. Mato (January 2015), the Commission is preparing a new EURES report that would cover the years 2009 - 2013 for the end of 2015. See, further section 3. European Parliament position/MEP questions of this briefing.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the [answer](#) given by Ms Thyssen on behalf of the Commission to a [question](#) of a group of MEPs.

<sup>3</sup> See, further in section 1. Background of this briefing.

# 1. Background

Pursuant to Article 45 TFEU, freedom of movement of workers is linked with the abolition of any discrimination based on nationality between workers of the Member States as regards employment, remuneration and conditions of work and employment. Workers can move from high unemployment areas to areas with labour shortages and workers with the right skills can fill vacant positions anywhere in the EU. However, in 2014, only 3.1 per cent (around 8.1 million) of the European labour force was economically active in another Member State.<sup>4</sup>

In Annex I to its annual Work Program 2015 ([CWP 2015](#)), the European Commission announced that in order to enhance a deeper and fairer internal market with a strengthened industrial base it will submit the Labour Mobility package. While aiming at supporting labour mobility, this package tackles three substantial issues:

- a better coordination of social security systems,<sup>5</sup>
- a review of the Posting of Workers Directive<sup>6</sup> and
- an enhanced EURES (European Employment Services).<sup>7</sup>

This implementation appraisal focuses on the third theme of the expected Labour Mobility Package - EURES. In particular, it concentrates on legal acts in the field of labour mobility connected with EURES, especially, Regulation 492/2011 and Commission Implementing Decision 2012/733.

## • About EURES

EURES<sup>8</sup> is a job mobility and cooperation network which involves the Commission, the public employment services of the EEA Member States (EU Member States and Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein), other partner organisations<sup>9</sup> and Switzerland. EURES consists of a network of around 960 EURES advisers delivering services online and in person. The EURES network is supported by a [EURES Web Portal](#) which is transformed into a European platform for exchange of job vacancies and CVs. This portal includes information on job vacancies, CVs of applicants, employers willing to be a part of EURES network and EURES advisers. The main purpose of EURES is to "provide information, advice and recruitment/placement (job-matching) services for the benefit of workers and employers as well as any citizen wishing to benefit from the principle of the free movement of persons."<sup>10</sup>

Since January 2014, the EURES programme is one of three axes of the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme.<sup>11</sup> EaSI, as an umbrella programme, is a financial instrument created by [Regulation 1296/2013](#) on a European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation and managed by the Commission to support employment. EaSI shall run from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 and its total budget amounts to EUR 919.469.000.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>4</sup> [Briefing - Reform of the European Network of Employment Services \(EURES\)](#) (Initial Appraisal of a European Commission Impact Assessment), DG EPRS, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> [Briefing - Coordination of social security systems](#) (Implementation appraisal), DG EPRS, January 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Briefing - Posting of workers (Implementation appraisal), DG EPRS, June 2015.

<sup>7</sup> CWP 2015, Annex I, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> EURES was set up in 1993 by, the already repealed, [Commission Decision 93/569](#) implementing, already repealed [Regulation 1612/68](#) on freedom of workers within the Community. It was reformed and re-established in 2003 by [Commission Decision 2003/8](#).

<sup>9</sup> For instance, [Oberrhein \(FR-DE-CH\)](#), [Danubius \(HU-SK\)](#), [Scheldemond \(BE-NL\)](#) or [Inicjatywy Transgraniczne EURES](#).

<sup>10</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?catId=27&acro=eures&lang=en>

<sup>11</sup> The other axes of the EaSI are [PROGRESS](#) programme and [Progress Microfinance](#).

<sup>12</sup> Article 5, Regulation 1296/2013

The EURES axis represents 18% of the EaSI Budget and aims to:

- strengthen and support activities carried out by EURES, including specialist services,
- develop information exchanges and dissemination and other forms of cooperation, such as cross-border partnerships and
- promote voluntary geographical mobility for workers on a fair basis and to contribute to a high level of quality and sustainable employment.

• **[Proposal](#) for a regulation on a European network of Employment Services, workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets<sup>13</sup> (Proposal)**

The aim of the proposal is to enhance access of workers to intra-EU labour mobility support services, thus supporting fair mobility<sup>14</sup> and increasing access to employment opportunities throughout the Union.<sup>15</sup> The proposal changes the existing provisions on the exchange of information on job vacancies, CVs and job applications between the Member States included in Chapter II of [Regulation 492/2011](#). The Proposal intends to integrate into a single document provision of Regulation 492/2011 and Commission decision 2012/733 and repeal the existing legal acts. The proposal identifies shortcomings of the current EURES network, in particular:

- an incomplete pool of job vacancies and CVs accessible at EU level for all Member States,
- a limited matching capability of the EURES portal,
- an uneven access to EURES services across the EU,
- a limited availability to assist job seekers and employers and
- an inefficient information exchange between Member States on labour shortages and surpluses, hampering a more targeted practical co-operation in the EURES network.

Among other things, the proposal intends to:

- establish a flexible mechanism that should enable Member States to include in the EURES network as many organisations as deemed useful to enhance the EURES network's objectives,
- achieve in the EURES portal a nearly complete supply of job vacancies,
- enable the EURES portal to carry out a good automated matching between job vacancies and CVs across the Member States,
- require Member States to make available to the EURES portal all the job vacancies they publish nationally,
- require Public Employment Services and EURES partners to provide job seekers and employers with adequate assistance when registering at the EURES portal,
- make available basic information on the EURES network to any job seeker or employer,
- ensure that support services to workers are free of charge,
- lay down a non-discrimination principle in the access to Active Labour Market Policies between nationals moving within the territory of the own country and nationals moving to other Member States,
- lay down an obligation for Member States to share labour market intelligence relevant for intra-EU labour mobility and

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<sup>13</sup> COM(2014) 6 final

<sup>14</sup> Fair mobility is a mobility which takes places on a voluntary basis and which respects labour law and labour standards as well as workers' rights within the Union. COM(2014) 6 final, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

- keep the reporting obligation of the Commission to the Parliament, the Council and the Committees on labour mobility within the Union.<sup>16</sup>

- **Regulation 492/2011 of 5 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers within the Union**

The current Regulation clarifies the freedom of movement of workers. It also constitutes the European regulatory framework for the clearance and exchange of information between the Member States on the intra-EU labour mobility. The Regulation outlaws any form of national discrimination between EU employees. Its Article 3, in particular, forbids:

- separate recruitment procedures for foreign nationals,
- limits or restrictions on advertising of vacancies or imposition of specific conditions such as registering with employment offices for people coming from another EU country,
- subjecting eligibility for employment to conditions of registration with employment offices, or
- impeding recruitment of individual workers, where persons who do not reside in the territory of that State are concerned.

Furthermore, pursuant to the Regulation it is illegal to discriminate between national and other EU workers in particular as regards remuneration, dismissal, and, should he become unemployed, reinstatement or re-employment. Both groups of workers should have equal access to training in vocational schools and retraining centres. Furthermore, workers who are nationals of a Member State and who are employed in the territory of another Member State enjoy all the rights and benefits accorded to national workers in matters of housing. The same principle is applicable to the children of non-national EU workers with regard to their access to national general educational, apprenticeship and vocational training schemes.

The Regulation also established mechanisms for exchange of information. It requires a close cooperation between the central employment services of the Member States and the Commission with a view to acting jointly as regards the clearing of vacancies and applications for employment within the Union and the resultant placing of workers in employment. Pursuant to Article 13, the Member States are obliged to exchange information about:

- vacancies which could be filled by nationals of other Member States,
- vacancies addressed to third countries,
- details of applications for employment by those who have formally expressed a wish to work in another Member State,
- applicants who have declared themselves actually willing to accept employment in another country.

- **Commission Implementing Decision 2012/733 of 26 November 2012 implementing Regulation 492/2011**

In order to fulfil the obligations set in Regulation 492/2011, the Commission, together with the Member States, has an obligation to establish and operate EURES. The Implementing decision lays down provisions on the functioning of EURES. This network has to promote, in particular:

- the development of the European labour market open and accessible for all,

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 8 -13.

- the clearance and placement at the transnational, interregional and cross-border level through the exchange of vacancies and applications for employment, and participation in targeted mobility activities at EU level,
- transparency and information exchange on the European labour markets,
- the development of measures to encourage and facilitate mobility of young workers and
- the exchange of information on traineeships and apprenticeships in the sense of Regulation 492/2011.

## 2. EU-level reports, evaluations and studies

The issue of labour mobility, including posting of workers was a subject of various reports and ex-post evaluations on the operation of the legislation in question, in particular:

- **[Report from the European Commission: Activity Report 2006 - 2008 "Towards a single European labour market: the contribution of EURES" \(December 2010\)](#)**<sup>17</sup>

In this 2010 report the Commission assessed the work of EURES between 2006 and 2008. The report assessed the financial resources of EURES, its network of advisers, cross-border partnerships and the provision of services by EURES. The report noted the EURES's role in cross-border regions. Between 2006 and 2008, there were 22 cross-border partnerships which were involved in the delivery of EURES services.<sup>18</sup> The EURES Portal played an important role in disseminating information on work opportunities for jobseekers, job changers and the unemployed, as well as for employers.<sup>19</sup> Between 2006 and 2008 there were around 300,000 registered jobseekers on the EURES portal. In this period, more than 11,000 successful job-matches took place at 248 events and a further 15,000 job outcomes were registered by the EURES network. The report showed that monthly visits of the EURES Portal, between 2007 and 2010, have risen almost five times, from 800,000 to more than 5 million. Globally, the Commission evaluated EURES's role as a mechanism for job matching as positive.

The report pointed to the following challenges for the EURES network:

- to create a "match and map" function which offers a user-friendly, transparent online service for citizens, providing qualitative information on occupations, skills and training opportunities across the EU,
- to establish a European Labour Market Monitor with periodic, up-to-date information on short-term trends on the European labour market,
- to modernise the EURES Job Mobility Portal,
- to finalise the "Your first EURES job" scheme and
- to establish systematic cooperation mechanisms with other EU networks.<sup>20</sup>

Whether these challenges were dealt with successfully should become an element of in the Commission's report for the years 2009 - 2013 which should be presented to the Parliament by the end of 2015. It is to be noted that, pursuant to Regulation 492/2011 and (abolished) Regulation 1612/68, the Commission should have submitted similar reports in 2 year intervals to the European Parliament. However, since 2010, the Commission has not submitted such a report.

<sup>17</sup> COM(2010) 731 final

<sup>18</sup> The most cross-border partnerships were in Germany (9), followed by France (6) and Belgium and the Netherlands (6).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

- **[Communication from the European Commission: Reaffirming the free movement of workers: rights and major developments \(June 2010\)](#)**<sup>21</sup>

In this communication, which aimed to present an overall picture of the rights of EU migrant workers, the Commission among other also noted that the EU migrant workers can make use of the EURES network and its services in order to receive information, advice and assistance for placement and recruitment. They can use the help of the EURES advisers and they can use the EURES website for accessing vacancies online.

- **[Communication from the European Commission - Mobility, an instrument for more and better jobs: The European Job Mobility Action Plan \(2007-2010\) \(December 2007\)](#)**<sup>22</sup>

In this 2007 communication, the Commission noted that worker mobility is a key instrument for an efficiently functioning single market and is essential for allowing more people to find better employment.<sup>23</sup> The aims of this action plan were to:

- improve existing legislation and administrative practices regarding worker mobility,
- ensure policy support for mobility from authorities at all levels,
- reinforce EURES to facilitate mobility of workers and their families,
- foster awareness of the possibilities and advantages of mobility among the wider public.

With regard to the EURES network, the Commission argued that there should be actions taken that would:

- improve the provision of information and raise awareness on the principle of equal treatment and the respect of labour standards within the European labour markets,
- enhance its services to meet the needs of specific categories of workers (e.g. long-term unemployed),
- support individuals in preparing a full career plan,
- increase the collection of strategic information, in particular on mobility flows and
- where relevant, be expanded to the benefits of third country nationals including those who have not yet acquired long term resident status.

- **[Final report - Evaluation of the 'Your first EURES job preparatory action' \(September 2014\)](#)**

In 2014, the Commission published an evaluation report of the scheme 'Your first EURES job preparatory action'. This mobility scheme should help young Europeans between 18 and 30 to find a job, traineeship or apprenticeship in another EU Member State. The scheme was implemented by the Commission between 2012 and 2013. The report monitored the first two years of this preparatory action<sup>24</sup> evaluating its relevance, complementarity, European added value, organisation and governance, effectiveness and efficiency. The report found that the scheme appears relevant to existing needs of both young jobseekers and employers with vacancies where is evidence of recruitment difficulties i.e. bottleneck vacancies.<sup>25</sup> The scheme complements and reinforces the EURES network by adding new measures as a financial support. The report noted that the European added value of this scheme is high, since it constitutes together with

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<sup>21</sup> COM(2010) 373 final

<sup>22</sup> COM/2007/0773 final

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> The report was written by ECORYS in 2014.

<sup>25</sup> See, the Commission's report [Mapping and analysing Bottleneck Vacancies on the EU Labour Markets](#), June 2014.

EURES the main infrastructure for labour mobility in the EU. Still, the report highlighted that while EURES has a general character, this scheme is exclusively focused on young people. With regard to organisation and governance, the report found that it is important to keep experienced employment organisations involved in the implementation of the scheme. The report showed that the scheme can be more effective if there were longer implementation periods. In connection of the scheme, with efficiency the report stated that there are significant hidden costs, particularly among public organisations. However, it also stated that not being a part of the EURES network means significantly higher start-up costs, particularly to set up a partner network.<sup>26</sup>

The report addressed to the Commission several recommendations, in particular to:

- continue to manage the scheme at EU level,
- actively steer to ensure a balance of project types and geographical coverage,
- avoid high administrative burdens on partner organisations, implementing organisations as well as jobseekers,
- invest in visibility at centralised level and
- continue to provide implementation guidelines and continue to monitor the progress of the activities, both at process and result level.<sup>27</sup>

There are also specific recommendations for each of the evaluation criteria.

### 3. European Parliament position / MEP questions

Labour mobility, especially EURES was subject of various resolutions of the European Parliament, in particular:

- **European Parliament [resolution](#) of 25 November 2014 on employment and social aspects of the Europe 2020 strategy<sup>28</sup>**

In this resolution the Parliament called on the Member States and the Commission to promote and improve labour mobility mechanisms, in particular the European Job Mobility Portal EURES and the Public Employment Services, in order to boost employment and youth employment.

In March 2015, the European Commission came forward with a [follow up](#) to this resolution.<sup>29</sup> It welcomed the Parliament's support for its work on labour mobility. The Commission reminded that in January 2014 it brought forward a proposal to modernise EURES (COM(2014) 6 final) which should introduce obligations to set up systems in Member States to open up the network to other actors than the public employment services, to provide access to mobility support services in Member States, to increase transparency on job vacancies on the European labour market, and to improve the information exchange on labour shortages across the EU. The proposal is currently examined by the European Parliament.

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<sup>26</sup> See, [Final report](#) - Evaluation of the 'Your first EURES job preparatory action' or [Executive summary](#) - Evaluation of the 'Your first EURES job preparatory action'.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> P8\_TA(2014)0060

<sup>29</sup> SP(2015)64

- **European Parliament [resolution](#) of 17 July 2014 on Youth Employment**<sup>30</sup>

The Parliament called on the Member States and on the Commission to support and promote mobility mechanisms, in particular EURES, which facilitate job seeking in other Member States.

In October 2014, the European Commission came forward with a [follow up](#) to this resolution.<sup>31</sup> The Commission agreed with Parliament's opinion that it is important to support and promote mobility mechanisms, such as EURES. It noted that given the size of the employment challenges in the EU it is essential that the capacity of EURES is significantly increased. Furthermore, it underlined the necessity to support services for young people and that since 2011 it was testing a scheme called '[Your first EURES Job since 2011](#)'.<sup>32</sup> At the same time, the Commission stated that the scheme will continue and that in 2014/2015 its implementation will be assigned to EURES organisations.

- **European Parliament [resolution](#) of 11 June 2013 on educational and occupational mobility of women in the EU**<sup>33</sup>

The Parliament called on the Commission to find a means of integrating the education acquired through youth mobility with jobs matching that education. It also recommended to establish a European Counselling Service Network to help local communities deal with this problem by providing information, know-how and guidance regarding the integration of women; recommends the promotion and use of instruments and networks and continued funding for existing European networks, as well as instruments facilitating mobility such as EURES, which also make it easier for women to find information about their rights and opportunities in the various Member States. It also called on the Commission and the Member States to implement the youth employment package, particularly with regard to 'Your first EURES job', with a view to fostering early educational and occupational mobility of young women.

In October 2013, the European Commission came forward with a [follow up](#) to this resolution.<sup>34</sup> The Commission noted that with a view to enhance mobility, it adopted, in November 2012, a decision to modernise and improve the EURES services.<sup>35</sup> It also claimed that a proposal to develop EURES into a true pan-European job placement and recruitment network was already in the legislative process.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, in June 2013, the Commission launched a "[Call to Action on Youth Unemployment](#)"<sup>37</sup> where it called for urgent action to support intra-EU labour mobility through EURES.

- **European Parliament [resolution](#) of 25 October 2011 on promoting workers' mobility within the European Union**<sup>38</sup>

In this resolution the Parliament acknowledged the importance of public employment services, in particular the EURES system which should remain a means of promoting fair mobility. In this regard it called on the Commission to continue to provide financial resources to support the work of the social partners in border

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<sup>30</sup> P8\_TA(2014)0010

<sup>31</sup> SP(2014)597

<sup>32</sup> This scheme should combine the provision of information, recruitment, matching and placement services with EU financial incentives.

<sup>33</sup> P7\_TA(2013)0247

<sup>34</sup> SP(2012)28

<sup>35</sup> Implementing Decision 2012/733.

<sup>36</sup> [MEMO/13/384](#)

<sup>37</sup> COM(2013) 447 final

<sup>38</sup> P7\_TA(2011)0455

regions. Furthermore, the Parliament called for the development of EURES' institutional capabilities and the reinforcement of the one-stop instrument to facilitate mobility of workers. It expressed its worries about the reduction of the funds for EURES and it called for a commitment to a long term strategy for the EURES system. It encouraged the Member States and the Commission to promote EURES among citizens. Last, but not least, it welcomed the pilot project 'Your first EURES job' and proposed action for the creation of a European skills passport.

In February 2012, the European Commission came forward with a [follow up](#) to this resolution.<sup>39</sup> The Commission informed the Parliament about its intentions to reform EURES system with a view to increase its matching and placement capacity and to further contribute to mobility and employment in Europe. It informed about changes of the EURES' focus and establishing tools for capacity-building. The Commission mentioned its commitment to provide financial resources to support the work of stakeholders involved in EURES cross-boarder partnerships. It also acknowledged the need to publicise EURES. In this context, it proposed various methods to step up communication on EURES, including a new EURES web page, the provision of information to job seekers and a new funding mechanism. Also, it stressed that EURES plays a key role in advising mobile workers and jobseekers as regards job vacancies and the various instruments that regulate their employment relationship in the hosting country and working and living conditions there.

- **Written questions**

[Written question by MEP Martina Dlabajová, March 2015](#)

The MEP asked whether the Commission can provide a definition of the terms 'voluntary labour mobility' and 'mobility which takes place on a voluntary basis', which were referred to in its proposal (COM(2014) 06). Furthermore, the Commission should have explained the purpose of the EURES network as notified in the proposal.

[Answer given by Ms Thyssen on behalf of the Commission, June 2015](#)

The Commission answered that its proposal aims to put in place an appropriate EU framework for cooperation between Member States and the Commission for facilitating the exercise of the free movement of workers in accordance with Article 45 TFEU. According to the Commission, this framework must support a high degree of transparency of the labour market information across the EU and the delivery of appropriate services to job seekers and employers interested in labour mobility. Furthermore, the Commission noted that the purpose of EURES is to contribute to increased voluntary geographical and occupational mobility in the Union on a fair basis. EURES should be providing the necessary information and support in order to allow for taking an informed decision on mobility.

[Written question by MEP Nicola Caputo, February 2015](#)

With regard to EURES and the Commission's proposal (COM(2014) 06), the MEP asked the Commission how it intends to make accurate models for the forecasting of demand for labour, how it intends to facilitate interoperability and communication of data between national portals for jobseekers in Europe and how it intends to develop the portal with the aim of affording greater help to jobseekers and employers.

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<sup>39</sup> SP(2012)28

**[Answer given by Ms Thyssen on behalf of the Commission, June 2015](#)**

The Commission answered that its proposal provides for overall labour-market transparency. Furthermore, the proposal sets up a mechanism for exchanging information on labour-market shortages and surpluses and a programming cycle that directs the network's matching activities to job vacancies that are difficult to fill at national level. This process is dependent on good labour-market intelligence, and in particular on national systems for anticipating labour demand and the identification of structural or seasonal skill bottlenecks, at an occupational level specific enough to be used directly by EURES. In this context, the Commission intends to facilitate access to the instruments available at EU level on skills supply and needs, in particular using the European Skills Panorama initiative. The proposal also intends to improve the interoperability of labour-market data across the EU. It should facilitate the exchange of data between national portals and it should bring language clarity including multilingual search functions for the benefit of job-seekers and employers.

**[Written question by MEP Gabriel Mato, January 2015](#)**

The MEP inquired about the Commission's assessment of the work achieved by EURES and about its plans for improving this service and increasing its efficiency. Furthermore, the MEP was interested about new measures that are planned by the Commission for increasing job mobility within the EU.

**[Answer given by Ms Thyssen on behalf of the Commission, March 2015](#)**

The Commission replied, that for the end of 2015 it is preparing an evaluation report on the activities of the network of European Employment services (EURES) between 2009 and 2013. Furthermore, the Commission noted that it already submitted to the Parliament its proposal that should replace part of Regulation 492/2011 and strengthen EURES (COM(2014) 06).

**[Written question by a group of MEPs, December 2014](#)**

The MEPs inquired whether the EURES platform will make it easier for posted workers to be recruited on the cheap. Furthermore, they asked the Commission to pass on the data on the place of origin of European workers making use of the EURES network.

**[Answer given by Ms Thyssen on behalf of the Commission, February 2015](#)**

The Commission informed that EURES facilitates intra-EU worker mobility by providing access to job vacancies available with public employment services and relevant information on working in other Member States. It noted that the data required by the MEPs can be found on the EURES [portal](#) and in [single market scoreboards](#). Furthermore, the Commission claimed that EURES services are not applicable to posted workers, as it holds as a prerequisite that a recruited worker will be employed by the business offering the vacancy in the relevant Member State.

Members of the European Parliament have also asked further questions related to the field of labour mobility, in particular to EURES.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> See, for example, [E-007521/2015](#), [E-004176/2015](#), [E-004081/2015](#), [P-000864/2015](#), [E-003816/2014](#), [E-002663/2014](#), [P-000826/2014](#), [E-000780/2014](#), [E-010666/2013](#), [E-008404/2013](#), [E-004863-15](#).

## 4. European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions

In its 2014 [opinion](#) on the Proposal on a European network of Employment Services, workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) supported the Commission's proposal. It recommended to the Commission to balance the definition of fair mobility. Furthermore, it saw risks if it is not ensured that private service providers have to meet the same quality standards as Public Employment Services. The EESC pointed out the need for sensitivity in how the proposal establishes the rights and obligations of Member States in relation to the transfer of information and statistics on, for example, mobile workers where no systems are available for monitoring some indicators. In this regard it proposed that the quantitative indicators be complemented by qualitative ones.

In an own-initiative [opinion](#) on intergenerational and intercultural measures to foster social integration of young EU citizens taking up employment in another Member State the EESC considered it essential to strengthen the EURES network. It pointed to deficiencies of the current EURES network, in terms of matching demand with supply and also with regard to support for inclusion and integration. The EESC highlighted the latter aspect as it is very likely that younger people will be involved in European mobility. It also suggested that the intercultural experience of the EURES advisers is necessary to understand the difficulties faced by young immigrants and to be able communicate effectively and to have the ability to help others.

In its 2014 [opinion](#) on Labour Mobility and Strengthening of EURES the Committee of the Regions (CoR) considered that the proposal (COM(2014) 6) should clarify the situation of countries within the EURES network that do not form part of the European Union but are part of the European Economic Area. It also considered that the new structure of the EURES network requires a system of financing with transparent sources. Furthermore, it called on the Commission to involve all the Member States and their regions in efforts to coordinate and improve the EURES network with a view to reinforcing the existing structure. Last, but not least, it recommended that particular consideration should be given to the fact that local and regional levels are the closest to the people, including jobseekers and employers and that the labour market is predominantly regional in nature.

## 5. Conclusion

As intra-EU labour mobility is relatively low, at only 3,1 % of the European labour force, various means need to be considered to increase labour mobility. The European Parliament repeatedly called for changes and further actions in this field, in particular in connection with the European network of employment services (EURES).

The new legislative proposal presented by the European Commission intends to improve EURES, while strengthening the cooperation between the Member States and the EU and enhancing access of workers to intra-EU labour mobility support services, and thus responds to requests of the European Parliament. It presents an opportunity to improve intra EU-labour mobility and the exercise of the freedom of movement of workers, and could take account of the countries that are presently included in EURES, but are not EU Member States, such as Switzerland, Iceland or Norway.

It is also to be noted that at the end of 2015, the Commission intends to present the Labour Mobility package which also aims for an enhanced EURES. It is not clear to what extent this package might contain proposals on how it would relate to, or change the present Commission's proposal.

## 6. Other sources of reference

- [Reform of the European Network of Employment Services \(EURES\)](#), Briefing (Initial Appraisal of a European Commission Impact Assessment), DG EPRS, 2014.
- [Public employment services in the EU Facilitating mobility and employment](#), Briefing, DG EPRS, 2014.
- [EaSI - New EU umbrella programme for employment and social policy](#), DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, November 2013.
- [Free movement of persons in the enlarged European Union \(2nd edition\)](#), N. Rogers, R. Scannell and J. Wash, Sweet and Maxwell, 2012

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