

**DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION IMPLEMENTING COUNCIL REGULATION 1612/68 AS  
REGARDS THE CLEARANCE OF VACANCIES AND THE APPLICATIONS FOR  
EMPLOYMENT AND REPEALING COMMISSION DECISION 93/569/CE**

**UNICE'S COMMENTS**

**I. General comments**

1. UNICE has noted the Commission's draft Communication establishing a new legal basis for the European Employment Services network (EURES).
2. UNICE strongly supports moves to facilitate labour mobility and to better match labour demand and supply in the European Union. EURES can play an important role in this respect, especially in the context of an enlarged EU. European employers therefore welcome the draft Commission decision whose objective is to consolidate and strengthen EURES in view of a better monitoring of mobility, of supporting free movement of workers and of informing citizens about relevant legal provisions.
3. UNICE also welcomes the support and information provided for citizens who want to work in another Member State. However, UNICE would like to stress from the outset that, besides information for citizens, more attention should be paid to providing assistance and information to employers. Enhancing mobility can be achieved not only by targeting workers, but also by tailoring information to the needs of companies which try to recruit in another EU country. This is essential for the success of EURES. Moreover, EURES has lacked visibility among companies. By ensuring comprehensive and timely information not only for citizens, but also for companies, their interest in EURES will grow and EURES will become more useful. UNICE therefore calls for such a provision to be added explicitly to the draft decision.
4. Until now, the success of EURES has been rather limited when the relatively large amount of money invested is compared with the modest number of successful cross-border placements during its ten years of existence. Consequently, it has only made a modest contribution in combating bottlenecks on EU labour markets. In this context, it is certainly not sufficient to simply shift the responsibility for EURES more to the regions without a closer orientation of EURES towards the wishes and needs of the workers and the companies.
5. UNICE welcomes the One Stop Job Mobility Information Web Site that would include EURES and the European Learning Opportunities portal. A CV bank to which job seekers who are willing to work in another EU Member State can submit their CVs could also be useful. Similarly, the creation of a database on the working and employment conditions in the EU Member States would be welcomed.

## II. Specific comments

### On the role of social partners' organisations

6. If employers are to make more use of EURES and be more actively involved, they have to be clearly recognised as EURES partners. Article 1(2)(b) of the draft decision which names the EURES partners only states that trade union and employer organisations *may* be included among the EURES partners. It should instead state that they should be included among the EURES partners.
7. With respect to the High Level Strategy Group, the draft decision should state that "The heads of the European Social Partners should be invited to participate". Currently it only foresees that they *may* be invited (article 2(1)).
8. Similarly, with respect to the EURES working party, the representatives of social partners should and not only *may* be invited to participate (article 2(3)). Moreover, not only representatives of the European social partners should be invited, but also the social partners from Member States, as they are best placed to contribute to the development, implementation and monitoring of EURES activities.

### On access of other relevant organisations besides the Public Employment Services

9. It is also important that relevant organisations such as private employment agencies and placement organisations, including temporary work agencies, are given access to the network. Sector-based organisations and private placement agencies should also be allowed to place their vacancy notices on the EURES network. Promoting mobility cannot be achieved simply through Public Employment Services.

### On the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of EURES activities

10. Improved coherence and better monitoring and evaluation of activities and of the success in achieving its goals are essential in order to enhance the role of EURES. The elaboration of guidelines, of activity plans and of evaluation reports can help improve this monitoring and evaluation of activities.
11. It is however essential that this does not become an unduly heavy bureaucratic process that would damage efficiency and that the guidelines do not include prescriptive details, but allow for flexibility in operating activities by EURES members and partners. The draft Commission decision aims at refocusing the role of the Commission and at allowing for greater responsibility of EURES members and partners. It is therefore essential to ensure that the two objectives of the reform do not become incompatible, by imposing strict coordination rules at EU level that would hamper flexibility in working methods of EURES members and partners. In matching labour demand and supply, it is of utmost importance to ensure that local working methods are organised and developed freely to match local situations.
12. Statistics and indicators should be used to measure progress and the success of activities. Proofs that EURES works are essential in convincing more employees and employers to make use of it.

## III. Conclusions

13. To conclude, European employers welcome the draft Commission decision. They would like to draw the Commission's attention to the following points:

- A special provision should ensure that companies are provided with timely and comprehensive information and assistance in recruiting abroad. Currently the draft decision focuses only on informing citizens.
  - Employer organisations should be included as EURES members and they should be invited to participate in the EURES working party and the High Level Strategy Group.
14. European employers hope that their comments will be taken into consideration in an amended version of the decision

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