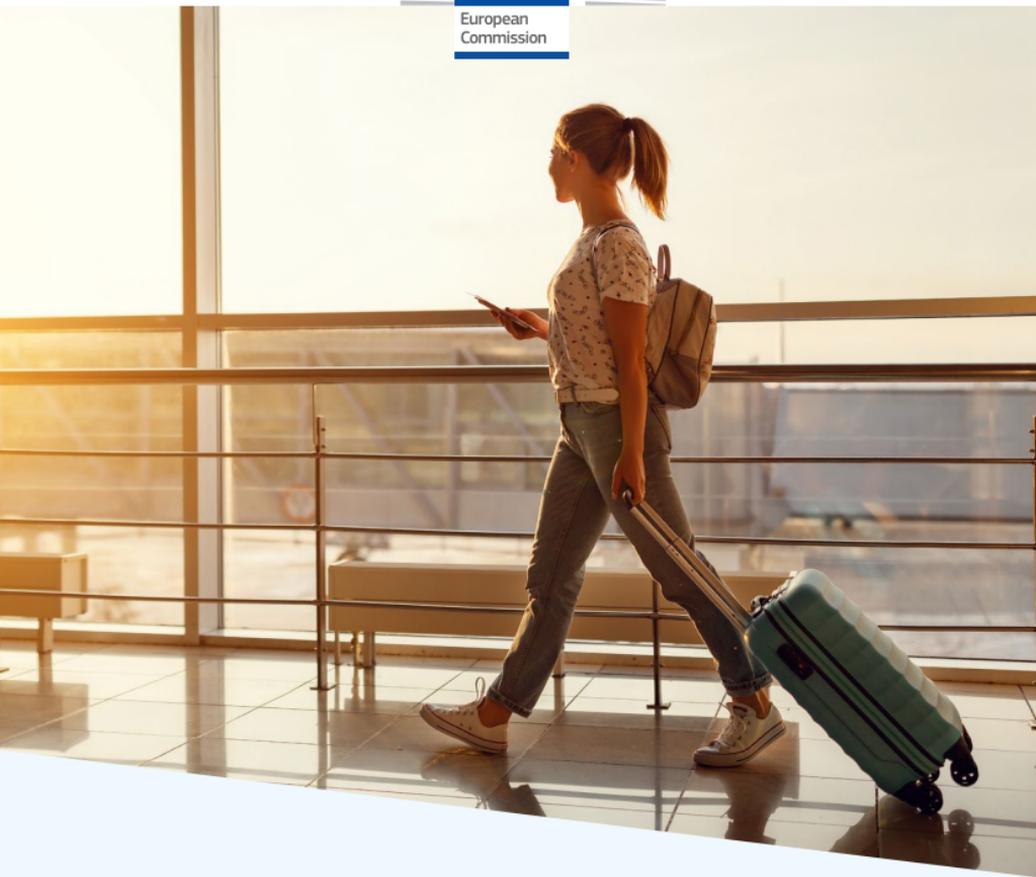




European
Commission



READY TO MAKE THE MOVE?

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LIVING AND
WORKING ABROAD – AND SO MUCH MORE**



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European Commission

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Unit C. 3.

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INTRODUCTION

- Do you fancy a change of scenery?
- Do you want to develop your professional and personal skills?
- Are you finding it hard to get work locally?
- Are you interested in discovering other countries and cultures?
- Might your skills be worth more to an employer in another European country?
- Are you ready for a new challenge in life?

If you answered yes to any of the above, this booklet could be just what you need. It is designed for anyone who is thinking of moving to live and work abroad – or else, commuting daily to work in a neighbouring country as a cross-border worker. It includes tips on looking for and applying for work in each European Union Member State, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland. All these countries have an agreement to allow each other's citizens to travel and work in any of the other countries.

The booklet has been produced by EURES, the European jobs network, which was set up in 1993 to promote and put into practice the European Union's principle of free movement of workers (¹). EURES Advisers from each country in the network share their expert local knowledge to help jobseekers look for work in another country, apply for jobs, succeed at interviews, prepare the paperwork for living and working abroad, and settle into their new environment.

Together, the Advisers bring over 20 years of experience in matching job vacancies with jobseekers in Europe, and can offer

(¹) Some EU citizens may have restricted access to the European labour market for a certain period, depending on when their country joined the EU. EURES can tell you which countries you can move to freely and which require a work permit.

expert, personalised information and guidance to jobseekers, job changers, and employers at all stages of the recruitment process.

Although aimed at jobseekers, the booklet should also be useful for employers to find out a little more about their applicants' cultural backgrounds.

More and more people are recognising the benefits of gaining professional experience in another European country. Working abroad can increase your skill levels and improve your chances of finding a better job in your own country. Thanks to the European Union's principle of free movement of workers, opportunities for the motivated and mobile jobseeker are better than ever.

'Men for Trees® specialises in forestry and related areas. With partner companies in Cyprus and Romania, our main markets are Germany, Austria, and Sweden. After posting a job announcement with EURES and receiving relevant CVs, EURES enabled us to hire around 25 workers from Romania with German skills – a big help for our sector in Austria. We are extremely pleased with the performance of EURES and with our fruitful collaboration.'

Men for Trees, Austria

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

The booklet begins with introductory sections to help jobseekers think about the reality of moving abroad to work, provide general advice on applying for work and preparing for interviews, and give information about the EURES network and how it can help in your search.

Dotted through the booklet are a number of testimonials from employers, employees and EURES Advisers about the services EURES can provide and giving advice on working abroad.

In addition, an interview with a consultant and trainer in cross-cultural issues gives his take on the challenges and rewards of working abroad. A chapter on social media offers advice on how to make the best use of the Internet in your job search.

The bulk of the booklet comprises country-by-country sections on the labour market and job landscape in the 32 European countries that are members of the EURES network.

A brief overview of each country gives details of the skills and professions that are most in demand (at the time of writing) in the local labour market. This is followed by practical advice on looking for work, approaching employers, preparing for interviews, and presenting yourself in the best way possible.

Nothing beats the advice of a local expert. Did you know that Norwegian business culture is somewhat informal? That only a firm handshake is acceptable in the Netherlands? Or that in some countries you should be prepared to state your salary requirements, but in others you are advised to avoid talking about money until you are offered the job? These are the sorts of essential topics dealt with in the country sections.

FIND OUT MORE

In addition to the information you get in this booklet, we urge you to visit the EURES job mobility portal to find out more. On the portal, you can find a selection of links to other websites of interest for jobseekers and employers, source recruitment events, post your CV, view current offers of employment, and much more. Details of what the portal offers can be found on page 9 of this booklet. You can also consult one of more than 900 EURES Advisers – or other network partners listed online – for personalised help with any questions.

Looking to connect with other jobseekers and EURES users and share experiences and ideas? Then the EURES Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram pages are the best places to start. In addition, if you have any ideas that you think will help keep the information contained in this booklet up-to-date for future editions, we would be very glad to hear from you. Simply use the contact form on the EURES portal to send us your feedback.

We are confident that you will find this booklet helpful as you think about moving abroad to work – and we wish you every success along the way!

'Contacting EURES was the best thing I could have done for my career. Last year I sent a letter to my local EURES Adviser explaining that I wanted to do an internship in a wine company in Italy. Three months later, EURES Italy found a position including accommodation and living costs. The support continued throughout the internship. When I arrived in the country, EURES helped me to complete all the necessary paperwork.'

Dalma, Jobseeker from Hungary



WHY WORK ABROAD?

There are many good reasons to consider moving abroad to work. Here are just a few of them.



Gain professional experience and enhance your CV.



Improve your personal skills, such as initiative, determination, and flexibility.



Increase your self-confidence.



Take advantage of vocational training or an internship.



Try something new and have an adventure.



Boost your earning potential.



Experience a new culture and improve your language skills.



Find more vacancies in your chosen field.



Take advantage of a different lifestyle.



Take time out from your usual job and do something different.

WORKING ABROAD IN EUROPE

EUROPE SUPPORTS MOBILE WORKERS

Labour mobility is important, as it helps to balance the job market. Areas of high growth may struggle with unfilled vacancies, for example, while in other regions there may be persistently high levels of unemployment. Europeans keen and willing to move abroad to live and work – or even to commute across borders for their job – can help to redress this imbalance, while reaping all the benefits that being part of another culture can bring.

Thanks to the European Union's principle of free movement of workers, you can get a job or live or study in any country of the European Union, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland (²).

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKERS

Workers and jobseekers face increasing challenges. The labour market is changing more rapidly than ever before, adapting to the demands of global competition. Employers expect greater flexibility from employees, yet offer less security. Few people still have a job for life. Lifelong learning has become essential to keep abreast of new technologies, new ways of working, and the demand for new skills.

This new working landscape can also present an exciting opportunity. People are more free than before to explore a range of roles, sectors, and locations. With flexibility and an open mind, both employers and employees can benefit from the greater ease of finding work and doing business across Europe.

(²) Some EU citizens may have restricted access to the European labour market for a certain period, depending on when their country joined the EU. EURES can tell you which countries you can move to freely and which require a work permit.

The experience of working abroad, either short or long term, can help you acquire and improve your skills, expand your outlook, and interact with people of different cultures. Many people find that, as well as being an enriching personal experience, working abroad also helps them to find a better job if/when they decide to return home. Going to work abroad is not a decision that anyone should make overnight, however. It needs careful consideration and reflection. Being well prepared is essential.

BE PREPARED: USE EURES!

With the right help and support, jobseekers can find work opportunities outside of their immediate environment.

EURES, the European jobs network, provides job-matching and recruitment services to all European Economic Area (EEA) countries⁽³⁾, plus Switzerland. It helps jobseekers and job changers get to where the jobs are, and opens up to employers a wider pool of candidates with the skills they need to develop their businesses. All EURES services for jobseekers and workers are provided free of charge.

EURES has a network of partners, including public and private employment services, and this network is being extended to include many more recruitment actors in users' home countries, such as private recruitment agencies. More information can be found on the EURES job mobility portal. You can find the overview of Members and Partners of EURES on the EURES Portal.

EURES' SERVICES

EURES' services are comprehensive and available to all European jobseekers – before, during and after their job search. They address every aspect of living and working abroad, from providing career guidance, reviewing and translating CVs, and analysing offers

(3) EEA members are the 27 EU Member States and Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway.

and facilitating video conferencing for interviews, to providing information on the European labour market, giving legal and social security advice, organising job fairs, and advising on training opportunities, language learning and funding opportunities.

The EURES job mobility portal

The EURES portal hosts more than one million job vacancies from 32 countries in Europe, almost as many CVs, and thousands of registered employers. It offers you tools to:

- create a profile that allows you to tag interesting sectors or countries and receive e-mail notifications of relevant job vacancies;
- build and maintain a CV – in one or several language versions – and post it online, so it is visible to the 5 000 employers registered on the portal;
- search for information on living and working in your country of choice;
- search for European Job Days and other recruitment events in your region;
- connect with other jobseekers and exchange tips on job hunting and living and working abroad.

EURES Advisers

EURES Advisers – and other recruitment professionals in the EURES network – can be contacted for information and advice at any stage in your job search and moving process. With specialised expertise in the practical, legal, and administrative aspects of European labour mobility, they can:

- recommend interesting opportunities based on your profile – and even seek to match your profile with a suitable employer in another European country;
- assist you with your job application and pass on your CV to potential employers;
- give you information on the living and working conditions in your destination country;
- help you get started in your new country by providing information on accommodation, social security and taxes, and on schools and healthcare for your family, if relevant.

'We support hundreds of cross-border workers on a daily basis with questions like: Where do I pay my taxes? Where can I claim child benefits? Can I use the health service? This helps make the transition easier for mobile workers moving to another country.'

Joe Lavery, EURES Adviser, Cross-border Partnership Ireland – Northern Ireland

Please note that the services available may differ from one country or EURES partner organisation to another. You can find more information and contact details of your local EURES Adviser and other recruitment professionals on the EURES portal.

EURES in cross-border regions

Working and living in two different countries is the most common form of labour mobility. EURES operates in cross-border regions throughout Europe. Information for cross-border workers is available on the EURES job mobility portal and from your local EURES Adviser.

European Job Days and other events

Each year, hundreds of EURES events are held throughout Europe – all easy to access and free of charge. The best-known are European Job Days – an ideal environment for you to meet potential employers, either on-site or online, as well as to benefit from live Q&As and one-to-one video coaching with job mobility and other relevant experts. EURES also hosts conferences, seminars, and general mobility information days, where EURES Advisers are on hand to provide expert advice on finding a job in Europe. European Job Days can be either general in nature, or focused on a particular sector or sectors. Check the events calendar on the EURES job mobility portal for more information on events in your area.

‘Concentrix has worked with EURES for a number of years, and the partnership is key to our recruitment success. We advertise throughout the EURES network, have worked to build and sustain relationships with individual Advisers around Europe, and regularly attend EURES recruitment events in various countries. Owing to our high recruitment needs and varied language requirements, using the EURES portal and network of advisers for in-country advertising is crucial. The level of service is invaluable – as is the local knowledge and advice.’

Concentrix, Northern Ireland

OTHER EUROPEAN MOBILITY NETWORKS AND SERVICES

Besides EURES, the following European mobility networks may also be of interest.

Your Europe

The Citizens section of this site gives practical information about moving, living, working, and studying in another European country.

It includes tips on vehicle registration, health cover, and consumer protection. A separate Business section offers a practical guide to doing business in Europe.

europa.eu/youreurope/index.htm

Your Europe Advice

If you have a question about your EU rights, Your Europe Advice is a team of independent legal experts who can provide free and personalised advice in your language, within a week. They can also clarify the European law that applies in your particular case.

europa.eu/youreurope/advice

SOLVIT

Citizens or businesses may encounter problems in their dealings with other EU countries due to the misapplication of EU rules. This online network exists to resolve such problems – those related to obtaining a residence permit, getting your professional qualifications recognised, or social security, work, or tax rights, for example – without legal proceedings.

ec.europa.eu/solvit

Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth, and sport in Europe. Its budget of €14.7 billion provides opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, and gain experience abroad.

Erasmus+ doesn't just have opportunities for students. Merging seven prior programmes, it has opportunities for a wide variety of individuals and organisations.

Detailed information on these opportunities, including eligibility criteria, is available in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

**[ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/
programme-guide_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/programme-guide_en)**

Europass

Europass documents enable students and jobseekers to present their skills and qualifications to organisations and recruiters in other countries.

europass.cedefop.europa.eu

Euroguidance

This network of careers guidance bodies helps promote learning opportunities across Europe.

euroguidance.eu

Enterprise Europe Network

This network helps small businesses to get the most out of the European marketplace. Employers can find out how to expand a business, source new technologies, and access EU funding and financial information.

een.ec.europa.eu

European small business portal

This website provides information on, and for, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including policy issues, practical advice, and local contact points.

ec.europa.eu/small-business

POST, LIKE, SHARE...

HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO NET YOUR PERFECT JOB

In 2016, over 50 % of the EU population used at least one social media platform.

But how effectively are jobseekers using social media to promote their skills to employers?

At the very least, as a jobseeker, you should make sure that your online presence is not stopping you from getting a job.

If you want to use social media to target employers, your profile should match how you want to be seen in public and your accounts should be tailored to your target audience, like a CV.

STYLE YOUR PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Make your social media profiles interesting to potential employers. Give relevant details and, if you want employers to see multiple social network accounts, post hyperlinks. Enter the address of your LinkedIn account in your Twitter bio, for example.
- If you really want to show off your skills and promote yourself on Facebook, create a professional fan page. Pages offer more functionalities than a personal account, allowing you to share all of your professional information, including examples of your work and your contact details, whilst maintaining your privacy in relation to information that you may not wish to be made publicly available. You might not want employers to have access to your personal profile, so keep this in mind when adjusting your privacy settings. Always try to keep your professional page updated and maintain it like a website, or you may appear uncommitted.

- Getting referrals or recommendations from former employers through services like LinkedIn can also help interest new employers, allowing them to see a reference and real feedback on your skills and abilities straight away, in the way of an endorsed reference from former colleagues, line managers, etc. This will enable you to stand out and increase the likelihood that you will be employed.

ENGAGE WITH ONLINE COMMUNITIES

- Follow companies you are interested in, as well as industry news, to demonstrate that you are engaged with the sector and in touch with what is going on.
- Comment constructively on campaigns, news or groups from the industry or company you want to work in. This demonstrates that you have an understanding of the subject matter you are reading about, as well as research and analytical skills.
- Contact company employees to find out more about the company. You may not always get an answer, but finding out what the company is like from an employee's point of view can help you make up your mind about working for them or in that sector.



TAKE THE EMPLOYER'S VIEW

Even if you do not want employers to see your profile, be prepared to be viewed. In one study of European employers, 64 % of companies said they used LinkedIn, 41 % said they used Facebook, and 29 % said they used Twitter to find job candidates.

When employers review your profiles, they may be looking at any of the following:

- **Presentation:** How do you present yourself? Are you positive? Have you complained about former employers? Are your photos and posts sensitive, appropriate, and professional?
- **Interpersonal skills:** How do you interact and speak with others?
- **Checking:** Does what you put online match your CV?

WORK YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

- Choose your preferred social media platform. If you want to comment on live events or develop real-time conversations, your best option is Twitter. If you want information about a company or are looking for professional discussions, LinkedIn could be better.
- Different social media may be used in different job sectors. If you are creative, consider highlighting some of your skills in your applications; making an infographic as your CV, for example. If a role involves video or journalism, then create a video CV and upload it to YouTube. Make sure your efforts are visible by adding them to your professional profiles, such as LinkedIn, or by including them as links in your CV.
- Match your social network profile to the industry you want to go into. If it is technical or computer-based, show those skills on your profile through comments on articles. If it is marketing or public relations, show your people skills by interacting and conversing with others.

PREPARE FOR LIFE ABROAD:

TIPS FROM EDOARDO CLEMENTI, ADVISORY MANAGER, ERNST & YOUNG BUSINESS SCHOOL

The best advice for jobseekers thinking of going to work abroad has to be: learn the language. It's through the language that you understand the culture. Some things just can't be translated.

People often underestimate the relevance of cultural issues when moving abroad to work. This includes language and labour market regulations, but also organisational culture in the workplace and wider society. In Nordic countries, typically, there is little hierarchy. In France, there is a lot, and the system is highly centralised. In eastern European countries, authority tends to be very important and negative feedback may not always be welcome.

EURES Advisers are really aware of the importance of the cultural factor. They work in a multicultural organisation and have contacts with colleagues across Europe, and are a good resource for jobseekers.

'People do not always prepare themselves adequately for living and working abroad. They do not realise that it is necessary to find out about their rights and obligations. The advantage of using EURES' services is that they are free, accessible and provide information that makes the process of searching for a job, moving, and working abroad much safer.'

Piret Ustav, EURES Adviser, Estonia

BIG ADVANTAGES

Adapting to work in a foreign environment is a skill in itself. A person who works for a time in Spain, Romania, and Sweden, for example, learns to adapt to different cultural patterns and how to work best and cooperate with people there. These are very valuable skills.

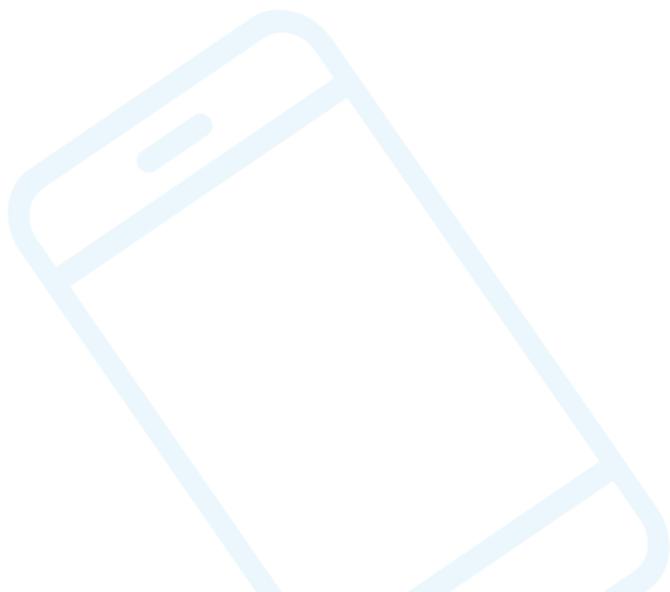
Someone working in a Latin country, for example, might get used to managing flexibility, so that when someone says '5 minutes', they know that this may not be the same as '5 minutes' would mean in another country.

SELL YOUR EXPERIENCE

Working abroad, even if only briefly, can be useful later on, even in a different sector. It shows adaptability. Many employers check a candidate's previous international experience.

PREPARE FOR THE PITFALLS

Be prepared for the culture shock, as it will happen. Many people set off seeing everything through rose-tinted spectacles, but this wears off. It is important to prepare yourself to minimise the negative impacts.



'I attended a job fair in Basel and met a EURES Adviser from Luxembourg. He gave me practical and useful advice, including information on the labour market, living and working conditions in the country, and how to apply for jobs – as well as the steps to be taken before moving abroad.'

Jobseeker from Switzerland, *living and working in Luxembourg*

PREPARE FOR GOING HOME

You can experience 're-entry culture shock' when you return home after working abroad. You might have got used to living in a city with certain standards and you may not find the same quality of life when you return home. Your perception of what good standards are has changed.

People also sometimes imagine that they will find the same place they left when they go home, and can feel let down. Their city, job, family, and network will often have changed after 3 years. Things might be better – but they could also be more difficult. At the end of the day, you are unlikely to find things the same as before you left.

COMPETENCE-BASED INTERVIEWS

A growing number of employers are conducting competence-based (also known as structured or situational) interviews. These have proven to be very effective in predicting future job performance and are more objective than unstructured interviews.

In a competence-based interview, each question is designed to test the candidate on a specific skill or competence. The answer can be matched against pre-decided criteria and marked accordingly. In this way, candidates are compared to the standard required rather than being compared with each other.

Candidates are asked questions relating to their behaviour in specific situations, which they need to back up with concrete examples. The interviewers can probe further by asking for explanations about their behaviour or skills.

HOW TO PREPARE

Prepare for competence-based questions by making sure you know which skills and competencies are required for the post. Examples of common skills covered include:

- working with others;
- planning and organising;
- analysis and problem-solving;
- leading and decision-making;
- communicating and virtual working skills.

Then practice the STAR method: situation, task, action, result.

For example, if you are asked how you deal with stress and to give an example of a situation where you worked under pressure, first describe the context (situation), including what was required of you (task); next – and this should be the bulk of your answer – describe what you did (action); and finally, say what happened (result). Emphasise your role and how this contributed to the outcome.

The key to answering these questions successfully is to use real examples from your own experience with lots of detail, and not just to talk about the topic in a theoretical way.



COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

TOP TIPS AND ADVICE FROM LOCALS ON LOOKING, AND INTERVIEWING, FOR A JOB ABROAD



LOOKING FOR JOBS

Where to look for jobs

Look for job adverts published on the Internet, in newspapers, at employment offices and with private recruitment companies. Don't forget to check the EURES job mobility portal too. A company's own website may contain details of vacancies, or they may use an external recruitment agent to conduct an initial screening of candidates.

Check websites and media targeted at specific occupations and sectors, or particular regions in Europe. These may be useful for identifying companies and contacts you might like to work for. Certain countries have websites specifically targeted at foreign jobseekers.

Post your CV on the EURES job mobility portal and other websites for jobseekers. Don't forget: if there is no closing date on the announcement, check whether the vacancy is still open before applying. Some websites may contain out-of-date announcements.

Many recruitment agencies specialise in vacancies in a particular sector and retain CVs of promising candidates to present to employers. Identify specialist recruiters in your chosen field and contact them for current and future openings.

In some countries, many job vacancies are publicised by word of mouth and personal networking. Check the country sections in this booklet for further details. As a general rule, smaller firms may recruit this way. Larger companies want to market vacancies as widely as possible to attract the best candidates.

'Each year, we are involved in EURES Job Days – or other recruitment events. The statistics can be impressive. At one job fair, for example, there were 900 job vacancies from 17 EEA countries covering different sectors including construction, catering-hospitality, gardening, IT, healthcare and industry.'

Ewa Staniewicz, EURES Adviser, Poland

Time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

The time between when a vacancy is advertised and when the post is filled depends on the type of job. Some jobs can be announced and filled on the same day. However, the employer may wish to meet other candidates or make background checks and seek references.

Also, in some countries, notice periods can be several months long. Employers expect to have to negotiate start dates and crossover periods with outgoing and incoming members of staff.

APPLYING FOR A JOB

Responding to a vacancy announcement

Follow the procedure for applying described in the job advert. Some companies ask candidates to apply with a CV and a covering letter. Others provide an application form that should be completed fully.

Always make the application in the language of the advertisement, unless indicated otherwise.

It is strongly recommended that you personalise your application: find out the name of the individual conducting the selection – this may be a human resources (HR) officer or a department manager – and address your application to them.

Keep a record of the vacancies you have applied for, as you will need this if an employer contacts you.

Making contact by phone

If necessary, phone the company for details of how to apply, for an application form, or to get a contact name so you can address your application letter to the right person.

When calling about a particular job, explain whether you are calling for more information or to actually apply for the job. If the timing of the call is not convenient, ask for a more appropriate time to ring back. Speak clearly and briefly to show that you have prepared for the call. If you are calling from abroad, make this known. Indicate if you would prefer to conduct the call in your own or another (foreign) language.

Prepare a short, clear presentation of yourself, explaining why you are suitable for the job, and try to make an appointment for a face-to-face interview. Avoid a noisy background, especially if you are calling from a mobile phone.

Be prepared to write down any information you receive over the phone.

Make an 'on spec' application

If making a spontaneous application in writing, be persuasive. You need to convince the employer that meeting you will be worth their time. Your grammar and spelling should be perfect and the tone of your letter should be positive and compelling.

Start by specifying the kind of role you are interested in and detail the skills, knowledge and experience you have that are likely to match what the employer is looking for. Then provide other information about your background that is likely to stimulate their interest. Mention your availability too. Try to keep your letter concise.

CV and covering letter

The CV can be general, although it is always better to target it to each application.

The covering letter is not just a letter accompanying a CV; it must be personal, relevant, and attract attention. Use the national format and standards for a letter – find these out in advance.

Your letter must always be tailored to a particular vacancy, be signed, and give the reasons why you are applying. Include the correct address of the company, the date, the job you are applying for, information on where you found the job advertisement, what you can offer (qualifications, work, and other experience), a request for a personal interview, your name, and correct contact details. If you do not have a contact name to write to at the company, address your correspondence (e-mail or letter) to 'Dear Sir or Madam'.

Highlight why you are suitable for the job in question and describe what you will contribute to the company. Address the most important requirements mentioned in the job advertisement, using your own words to show how you meet them. Focus on what you can offer to the employer and how joining the company will help them (rather than on how getting the job will help you).

Want to stand out? Then research the company before you apply. Find out about its people and culture, locations at home and abroad, size of the workforce, and future strategy. Look for details about the company in the trade press, as well as on the company's own website, to get the bigger picture (their competitors, the state of the market, and local economic factors).

Pay attention to presentation: a clear layout for your letter and CV is essential. The European format Europass CV is widely used in some countries, but not in all – refer to the country sections in this booklet for specific advice.

Make your documents easy to read and tidy, to appeal to the employer. Avoid animation or fancy design, unless this is a requirement of the job.

Sell your skills: Besides your education, training, and professional experience, add details of skills gained during voluntary activities or hobbies. Confirm if you have a driving license, which languages you speak (and to what level), and what IT and other skills you have.

Photographs: In some countries it is standard to send a photo with a job application. In others it is not advisable. Refer to the country sections in this booklet for advice.

e-mail applications

Avoid using a jokey or humorous e-mail address or cryptic subject line. Do not send your application from your current employer's e-mail system or by mass mail. Fill in the subject line with the name of the position you are applying for.

e-mail attachments

Keep attachments to a minimum and avoid sending large files. If your application is a covering letter and a CV or application form, write a brief cover note in the e-mail message describing the attachments to the e-mail. The CV and covering letter should usually be sent as attachments (check country sections in this booklet for specific advice).

Make sure you answer all the questions if there is an application form to be completed.

Waiting for a reply

It is not unusual to receive no reply to your application if the employer is not interested in your profile.



PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Interview culture is as varied as the number of companies and organisations on the market. Find out as much as possible about the process in advance. Do you need to take documents, prepare a presentation, or undertake psychometric, practical, or other tests as part of the interview? How long will the process take and who are you likely to meet?

For non-specialist jobs, there is usually just one interview. If the vacancy is for a specialised or more senior position, there may be several rounds and a panel of interviewers.

Bear in mind that well-known firms and brand names vary from country to country. Research the equivalent to any well-known names on your CV in order to help the interviewer understand your background. Equally, for tools, software, and protocols, try to find out the correct terms, or their equivalent in the language of the country where you are applying to work.

The same goes for your educational and training background. Universities, training institutions, and qualifications can vary widely. Be ready to give a brief description of the main subject areas you covered to help show the employer how you meet their requirements.

There is currently no universal recognition of educational qualifications across Europe, meaning that an employer in one country may be hesitant to hire a worker from another country if they do not understand their level of qualification. One solution is to use the Europass skills passport, which can help you to give a comprehensive picture of your skills and qualifications by creating a folder for all your documents ([europa.eu/en/documents/european-skills-passport](https://europa.eu/europass/en/documents/european-skills-passport)).

Since 2013, the EURES job mobility portal has also utilised sectoral skills passports to help jobseekers describe their skills in a way that can be easily understood by employers all over Europe.

You can find useful information on the Your Europe portal:

europa.eu/youreurope

If travelling a distance to an interview, consider whether your travel costs will be covered. Note the correct address for the interview venue, how to get there, and how long you need to allow for the journey, so as not to arrive late. Carry relevant details and contact numbers to alert the company in case you are delayed.

Prepare what you are going to wear in advance and consider the impact of your personal presentation, attitude, body language, and the way you express yourself. Non-verbal communication is almost as important as what you say.

Take a pen and notebook so that you can make notes during the interview.

Interview tips

- Check/ask in advance about the structure of the interview, whether it will involve tests, and what form these will take, including whether you need to prepare a presentation and whether you need to bring copies or originals of your diplomas or other documents.
- Take a copy of your CV, the application form, a notebook and pen, and a list of questions you would like to ask.
- Confirm your attendance at the interview and double-check the date, time, and contact person.

PERSONAL PRESENTATION

Employers pay attention to accuracy, appearance, composure, confidence, gestures, and level of preparation during an interview.

Switch off your mobile phone before you enter the interview. Shake hands with your interviewers if invited to do so. Wait for a seat to be offered. Try to appear self-confident and composed. Speak clearly and not too quietly. Try to avoid showing signs of nervousness. Make eye contact.

Be careful not to criticise former employers or other people. If invited to express criticism about something or someone, try to make the best of it and put things as positively as possible. Do not discuss personal or financial problems.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Prepare well for the range of questions that might be covered. Most questions are likely to focus on your experience, skills, and motivation. Persuade your interviewers that you are very motivated to get the job. Tell them about how your strengths and interests match those that they are seeking. Answer questions fully but concisely. Speak only about facts that may be of interest to the employer. Be polite, honest, and professional. Never lie.

Be clear and concise in your answers and do not use jargon or acronyms. Common interview questions asked by employers include the following.

- Why do you want this job?
- What can you contribute to our company?
- Tell me something about yourself. Who are you?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?

- Why do you want to work in this country?
- How long do you intend to stay in this country?
- Why did you leave your last job?
- Are your qualifications appropriate for the job we have to offer?

Expect to give practical examples to demonstrate your motivation and skills.

TRICKY QUESTIONS

Deal diplomatically with questions about your weaknesses or inappropriate qualifications. Try to present your weaknesses as strengths. Counter bad experiences by giving several examples of things that worked out well and that you managed to cope with well.

Prepare answers in advance for questions about the reasons why you left other jobs or former employers. Practice these with your family and friends. They should tell you honestly if the answer you give is convincing.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

Some interviews may address non-professional topics. Nevertheless, certain areas are considered as private and candidates should not feel obliged to answer questions on these topics. All countries have anti-discrimination laws in conformity with EU rules relating to sexual orientation, age, disability, race, or ethnic origin and religious beliefs. Other areas that should not be considered for discussion within the interview are political opinions, health, marital status, or family plans. If the interview does include this sort of question, you are advised to ask: 'How does this relate to the job I am applying for?'

ASKING QUESTIONS

Generally, keep your questions for the end of the interview. Questions may cover the following: the management structure of the company, a typical working day of an employee in that position, the deadline for receiving feedback, and the company's staff training and qualification programmes.

DISCUSSING MONEY

Discussions about pay depend on the country and the job being applied for (refer to country sections in this booklet for specific advice on this). If in doubt, wait for the employer to raise the issue. Avoid discussing pay requirements at your first interview. In many countries, it is common to wait for the employer to make a job offer before negotiating pay and other benefits.

You may have more chance of negotiating pay and benefits with a small company, as large companies and institutions usually operate a fixed salary scale.

Whether pay is expressed hourly, daily, monthly, or annually varies between sectors and countries. See country sections for details.



MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION

DRESS CODE

Find out what standard dress code is for the sector in question (e.g. conservative and sober or original and individual) and dress for the occasion, rather than in the latest fashion. It is common to dress professionally for a job interview, even if the work environment is casual.

In general, candidates are advised to be neat and tidy. Wear smart, clean shoes. Avoid sportswear or revealing garments (short skirts, low tops). Avoid strong deodorants and perfumes. Hair and beards should be clean and tidy, and make-up and jewellery discreet. See also individual country sections in this booklet for national advice on dress codes.

GENERAL ADVICE

Be polite, friendly and smile. Make eye contact with the interviewer. Listen carefully to questions and answer each one (for up to 2 minutes or so). Speak clearly, confidently, and calmly.

Compare your strengths and experience with the requirements of the position you are applying for. Thank the employer for their time.

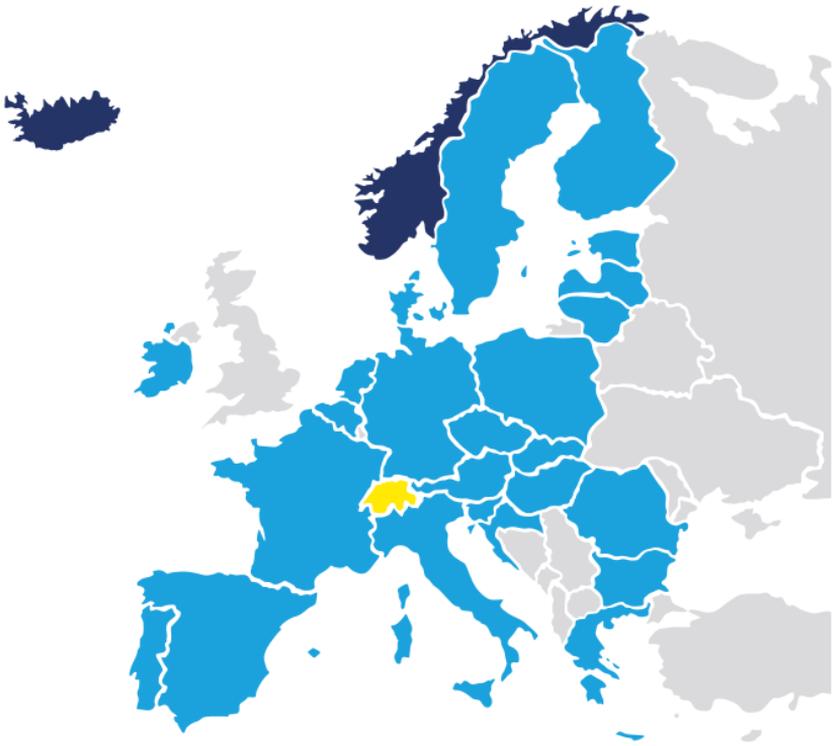
Prove your interest in working for the company by learning as much as possible about it in advance.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND EURES ACROSS EUROPE?

- **EU Member States:** Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden.
- **European Economic Area:** EU Member States + Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway.
- Switzerland.

EURES is represented in different regions and cross-border regions. For further details, visit the EURES portal.

To find your nearest EURES Adviser, go to eures.europa.eu



In the following chapter, sources such as the EURES website's country sections, national employment websites, and Eurobarometer reports were used to write each country's introduction texts containing tourism and labour market-related information. The other information in this section has been provided by the EURES member organisations in each country.



BELGIUM



Official languages - Dutch (north), French (south), German



Government - Constitutional monarchy – Federal State



Population - 11 million



Capital - Brussels



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +32



Internet code - .be

WHY GO TO WORK IN BELGIUM?

Home to EU institutions and other international organisations, Belgium is affluent and multilingual. The Dutch-speaking Flemish north has coastal resorts, the historic cities of Bruges and Ghent, and the vibrant port city of Antwerp. To the south, the French-speaking Wallonia has dense forest, remote heathland, and a more relaxed way of life. Brussels is a melting pot of the two cultures and a large international community.

Employee shortages vary by region with many vacancies unfilled, particularly in Flanders. Most jobs are in the services or public sector. There is also consistent demand for healthcare, IT, and primary education professionals, domestic cleaners, sales staff, construction workers, transport and logistics staff, and mechanical, electrical, and electronic personnel.

LOOKING FOR WORK

To find a job in Belgium, it is good to speak Dutch and/or French, the most widely spoken languages. German is spoken only in a small part of Belgium. Brussels, the capital, is bilingual: for most jobs here, people have to know both Dutch and French. However, many English-speaking people also manage to find work in Belgium, mainly in Brussels.

Belgium has four public employment services for the different regions and language communities.

Actiris in the capital region, Brussels (bilingual Dutch/ French):
actiris.be

Le Forem in Wallonia (south and French-speaking region):
leforem.be and **jeunes.leforem.be**

VDAB in Flanders (north and Dutch-speaking region): **vdab.be**

ADG in German-speaking areas in the west of Belgium: **adg.be**

The EURES portal's Links section contains links to other job websites and newspapers that feature job vacancy adverts. See also the website about international mobility in Brussels: **actirisinternational.be**

Tips for job applications

Most employers select candidates on the basis of a CV and covering letter. If you apply by e-mail, use a 'professional' e-mail address. Put a clear reference in your e-mail and take care with the layout of both the covering letter and the CV. Use accepted Belgian standards to write your covering letter.

Writing your CV

Most employers read the CV first and only then read the covering letter. Your CV acts as your business card. It must highlight your strengths and skills in order to grab the attention of the employer. Your CV therefore needs to be easy to read, attractive, and clearly structured.

What information should I include in my CV?

- **Personal details:** State your name, address, telephone number (with your country code if you live outside Belgium), and e-mail address.
- **The role or job you are applying for:** Put the name of this in the title (using Belgian job titles) and adapt your CV to include experiences and skills that match the company and the vacancy.
- **Experience:** List your most recent experience first and include a short description of each role. Emphasise important tasks you have undertaken or any professional successes.
- **Education:** List your most recent education entry first and only go back as far as your secondary education.
- **Relevant training:** List any relevant seminars/training you have taken part in.
- **Knowledge and skills:** Show your experience in a particular area (e.g. ICT skills).
- **Languages:** Use the Common European Framework of References for Languages to determine your level.
- **Interests:** Give an overview of any sports groups, cultural activities, or volunteer work that you are involved with.

Is there any information I do not need to include in my CV?

In order to prevent any form of discrimination in recruitment,

you do not need to provide any private details about your age, nationality, gender, etc.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

No, except where this is important for the job or if the employer asks for it.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, most applications are sent by e-mail.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The national format is preferred, but the Europass format is used increasingly, too.

Writing your covering letter

Write a separate covering letter for each application, tailored to the company and the vacancy itself.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

- Introduce yourself to your potential employer.
- Describe your personality and your profile.
- Identity your strengths and how you differ from other candidates with the same qualifications.
- Make your letter stand out.

What if I'm submitting a speculative job application?

In a speculative application, you are applying for a job at a particular company, but without responding to a specific vacancy.

This can make it more difficult to write your covering letter, as you cannot tailor the letter to a particular job. In this case it is important to set out your career goals clearly and convincingly. Always bear in mind that there are no catch-all guidelines for a good covering letter and that every employer will have their own personal opinion.

Making contact by phone

If you call the employer, introduce yourself briefly and clearly, and speak in the required language. If you are making a spontaneous application, introduce yourself and make clear what kind of position you are applying for.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

No, they are usually not required at this stage. However, they may need to be submitted when signing your contract, so have a translated diploma ready.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

Six weeks, although for some jobs (e.g. vacancies where there is a shortage of applicants) this can be much shorter.

Preparing for the interview

If the employer is interested in your profile, one or more interviews might be arranged, as well as assessments and skill and psychological testing.

Prepare well by researching the company, reflecting on why you want to work for this employer and in this sector, and practicing answers to questions in another language.

An interview can be seen as a form of negotiation, rather than as a question and answer session. For the employer, your attitude, assertiveness, politeness, and the way you present yourself are crucial. You will be a representative for the company and you have to fit in with the team.

Who will be there?

A psychologist usually conducts the first interview. Afterwards you may have an interview with your potential line manager, or even a future colleague. The final interview, to negotiate salary, etc., will be with a representative of the HR department. Expect 45 minutes for an interview and half a day for testing.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, in Belgium this is common.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Interviews normally start with the interviewers introducing themselves. Then the candidate is asked to present him or herself. The interviewer will move from very general to very detailed questions. At the end of the interview, the candidate can ask additional questions. The interview will conclude with practical arrangements for the decision period and feedback.

The atmosphere is normally formal and professional. Act professionally, both before and after the interview. Speak only about topics that might be of interest to the employer. Take note of the way interviewers present themselves; use their first name only if they do. Be aware that the atmosphere at an interview does not always reflect the company culture.

When is a question out of bounds?

You do not have to answer questions about religion, sex, family plans, etc. You can make an official complaint if you feel you have been discriminated against.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation, or proof of good conduct?

References or letters of recommendation are not used in Belgium. They may be requested, but this does not happen often. Proof of good conduct may be required for certain jobs.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Salary negotiations usually take place in the final phase of the recruitment procedure when the applicant has the opportunity to ask questions. Salary is normally expressed as gross pay, per month or per hour, depending on the type of contract. Do not be afraid to ask for clarification of the exact content of your salary package. Salary negotiations are only possible in the private sector.

The main non-statutory benefits are: meal vouchers, hospital insurance, company car, mobile phone, computer, and refunding of transport costs for commuters. Negotiations take place between the applicant and a HR representative.

Is a trial period likely?

From a legal point of view, a one-day work trial is not possible, unless arranged via a temporary jobs agency (which means that you will be paid for that day). Practical testing at the workplace is possible.

How long is the standard probationary period?

Since 1 January 2014, employers have no longer been able to include a probationary period clause in an employment contract.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

In general, the employer will not cover your travel costs.

When will I hear the result?

This depends on the job and the employer.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

If an employer has promised to give you feedback within a week, do not call before that time. If they have not called you after two weeks, you may call and ask for feedback.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Always be punctual. Try to arrive 5 minutes early. If you expect to arrive late, due to traffic, train delays, etc., let the employer know. Be sure to have a contact number with you when travelling to the interview.

Dress-code tips

Dress as you would expect someone to do in the position for which you are applying, neither over- nor underdressed for the role. Jewellery or perfume should match your clothing. Remember that the way you present yourself reflects your personality.



BULGARIA



Official language - Bulgarian



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 7 million



Capital - Sofia



Currency - Bulgarian lev (BGN)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +359



Internet code - .bg

WHY GO TO WORK IN BULGARIA?

Sun-lovers flock to the Black Sea coast's beaches, while the more adventurous can hike the rugged mountains and forests still roamed by lynx, bears, and other rare wildlife. History fans can view plentiful Roman remains and get acquainted with the ancient Thracians, a prehistoric tribe known for their metalworking, horsemanship, and artistic culture.

Bulgaria has seen strong economic growth since it joined the EU in 2007. While the wages in some sectors are still low when compared to the rest of Europe, big Bulgarian and international companies are able to offer competitive salaries in sectors like ICT.

There are also good opportunities for entrepreneurs. Many multinational corporations require highly qualified staff for their growing business needs. Most jobs are in personal services (chefs, waiting and bar staff, hairdressers, beauticians, urban transport ticket inspectors, entertainers, etc.), mining, processing, and agriculture. The hotel business and tourism are also sectors with a significant demand for workers.

'Bulgaria is a good country to live and work in. Hospitable and respectful of those from other countries, its people are open, frank, and warm. The countryside is very beautiful, the climate is good, there is a vibrant cultural life – and the wine and cuisine are excellent!'

Elena Vidinska, EURES Adviser, Bulgaria

LOOKING FOR WORK

Jobseekers can start by looking for work through the national employment agency, the biggest mediator on the labour market. A number of private agencies are also licensed to operate, including Adecco Bulgaria, Manpower Bulgaria, Job Tiger, and Jobs.bg. For web links to these organisations, visit the EURES portal's Links page. Other resources include the EURES page on the Bulgarian national employment agency's own portal (eures.bg), as well as the local labour offices across the country.

Tips for job applications

The normal application procedure is that candidates apply for a job and are then invited for an interview with the employer or his or her representative. In addition to a CV, the employer usually requires a short motivation letter, showing why the candidate is interested in that vacancy.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

A photo on the CV is advisable, though not obligatory.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

Ideally, the covering letter should be typed on a computer.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, the European (Europass) CV format is preferred.

Making contact by phone

In general, applicants should follow the application instructions provided in the job description.

The aim of a phone call is to fix an appointment for an interview and this is usually instigated by the employer. If you do want to make a call, be sure to do the following: introduce yourself, and clarify which position you are interested in and your reason for calling. Focus briefly and clearly on why you are suitable for the position and try to fix a date for an interview.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

No, but you may be required to present a copy of your diploma during the interview.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This depends on the employer's requirements, but can be between one and several months.

Preparing for the interview

The applicant should know about the activity of the company, the management, the clients and competitors, and the opportunities for development. Employers pay attention to accuracy, appearance, composure, confidence, and gestures during interviews.

Who will be there?

If the interview is held at the local labour office, the participants are the labour officer, the candidate, and the employer or their representative. If the interview is held at the company, the participants are the employer or their representative and the candidate.

Do we shake hands?

Sometimes, but only on the initiative of the interviewer.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Meetings usually take from half an hour to an hour at most. Where an employer insists on the candidate taking a practical test after the meeting, the procedure will be longer.

Typically, interviews follow a basic structure, which starts – after the greetings – with the employer or his/her representative asking questions to the candidate. The employer will try to have a normal conversation with the candidate, who ideally will remain self-confident and composed.

Candidates should be polite, friendly and smile; make eye contact; listen carefully to questions; answer each question; speak distinctly, self-confidently, and calmly; briefly summarise their strengths; and compare their experience with the requirements of the position they are applying for.

A candidate can ask questions at the end of the interview. Questions may cover the management structure of the company, a typical working day for an employee in that position, the deadline for receiving feedback, or the company's staff training and qualification programmes.

When is a question out of bounds?

The employment promotion act forbids direct or indirect discrimination in job application procedures. The employer may not ask for information about a candidate's private life. The law on personal data protection provides that private information is defined as any information about an individual person that can be traced through an individual number.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Previous employers can act as referees and supply references to prove that a candidate is suitable for a job vacancy. Some employers may require letters of recommendation. Whether or not proof of good conduct is needed depends on the nature of the work.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Candidates do not usually raise the question of pay during the first interview. It is common to wait for the employer to make a job offer before negotiating pay and other benefits. Depending on the contract, payment is calculated by the hour or monthly. The level of pay is determined by the duration of the work or by production figures. The amount of pay for one item (the production quota) is negotiated between the employee and employer and cannot be less than the amount set out in the collective labour agreement. There are payment thresholds for certain groups of professions. In all other cases, the level of pay should not be less than the minimum salary annually fixed by the government.

The salary is usually paid each month, though in some cases a weekly payment is possible. It is common to get an advance payment (part of the monthly salary) approximately in the middle of the monthly period. Some large private companies pay performance bonuses.

Social insurance contributions, health insurance contributions, and taxes are fixed by law and deducted from salaries by employers. If an employer wishes to offer additional benefits or more days of holiday, they may do so.

Is a trial period likely?

Only as part of the probation period (see below).

How long is the standard probationary period?

Companies usually ask candidates to agree to a trial/probation period for up to 6 months, which is allowed by the Bulgarian labour code. During this period, the employee may be released without notice.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

This would be very rare. Travel costs may be covered under some specific programmes for unemployed persons registered in labour offices.

When will I hear the result?

When an applicant is referred to the employer by a labour office, the employer is obliged to inform the local labour office about the result of the selection procedure within seven days. When the local labour office is involved in organising the interview, they are expected to inform unsuccessful candidates about the employer's decision. In other cases, there is no legal requirement for employers to inform applicants about the result of the selection procedure.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

At the end of the interview, thank the employer for the time taken.

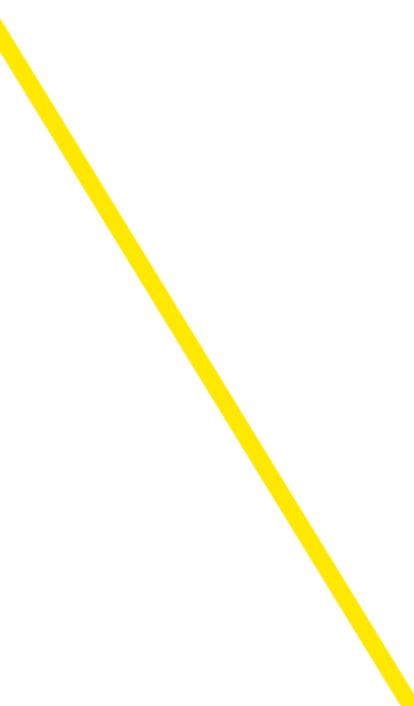
The employer will usually inform the candidate about the result of the interview 1-4 weeks after the interview has taken place. The candidate can also contact the employer to ask for the result, unless another agreement was made in advance.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Job applicants are expected to arrive around ten minutes before the time fixed for the interview.

Dress-code tips

Clothes should be smart casual: no sportswear, short skirts, or bright colours. Clothes should be clean, and shoes should be polished and should match the clothing. Avoid strong deodorants and perfumes and pay attention to details like clean hair, nails, and hairstyle. Men should be clean-shaven or have a well-groomed beard.





CZECHIA



Official language - Czechia



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 10 million



Capital - Prague



Currency - Czech koruna (CZK)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +420



Internet code - .cz

WHY GO TO WORK IN CZECHIA?

Comprising the ancient lands of Bohemia and Moravia, Czechia is at the crossroads of European cultures. Prague, its stunning capital, has a vibrant arts scene; the wider countryside is dotted with castles, historic villages, and spa towns.

Czechia belongs to the countries with the lowest unemployment rate in the EU. Unemployment levels vary widely between regions: the north and east have much higher levels of unemployment than Prague and the central region, which enjoy sustained interest of foreign investors and large numbers of tourists. Vacancies commonly look for catering and retail staff, sales representatives, health sector professionals, ICT specialists, customer service staff, support staff, truck drivers, skilled engineers and technicians, and machine operators.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Vacancies are communicated by the labour office and by employers themselves, although many employers in Czechia use the services of private employment agencies, which provide details of job vacancies when you register with them.

Tips for job applications

Reply as soon as possible to a job announcement that interests you, taking into account the criteria mentioned in the advert. You want to attract the employer's interest, and your first contact with them is very important.

If you apply electronically, send a covering letter of one page maximum and a structured CV. Do not send your application from your present employer's e-mail box, from an e-mail address with a nickname, or by mass mailing.

Fill out the subject of the e-mail with the title of position, for example, and clearly describe the attachments to the e-mail. Send your CV as an attachment.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

This is optional.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, there is no such preference.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, the Europass format is accepted.

Making contact by phone

If you are contacting the employer by phone, it is better to do so at the beginning of the working day. Try to speak to the person responsible for your field. Be prepared for questions – make sure you have a pen, a notebook, and your CV to hand. Reply briefly and to the point and ask for the opportunity to meet in person. Do your best to accept the time suggested.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

No, recruiters usually check diplomas or other documents at the interview stage. Applicants must normally submit copies of their diplomas and documents after signing the job agreement.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This is variable. The advertisement may state an exact start date or the employer and the applicant may agree this between them.

Preparing for the interview

Recruiters expect applicants to be informed about the company (structure, scope of activities) and about the details of the position on offer. They will ask the applicant why they want to work in that company in particular. The candidate must also be prepared to answer questions related to his or her expert knowledge and any other qualifications (personal qualities, ability to work individually or in a team, reliability, adaptability, and previous experience, for example). To verify an applicant's personality, some employers also require that they take psycho-diagnostic tests.

The most common type of interview is in person. However, the first round of interviews may be carried out online.

Who will be there?

One to three interviewers, as a rule.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, this is standard practice.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Most meetings start with a short introductory chat about personal details. This is followed by questions that help the personnel officer to obtain more detailed information about the applicant, their expectations and career aims. These questions focus on education and job experience. The next part of the interview is about the position itself. This informs the candidate about the company, its internal relationships and working environment.

Common questions include: Can you tell us something about yourself? What do you expect from a job in our company? Why did you leave your last job? What did you do when you were unemployed? When can you start work? What are your salary expectations? Are you willing to work overtime?

The end of the interview can cover non-professional questions, or the applicant may be given the time to explain their motivation for the job and to show their skills and knowledge. It is important to behave confidently and show your interest in the job and the company. The question of pay is best left until employers raise it or tell you that they want to employ you.

When is a question out of bounds?

Anti-discrimination law is covered in statutory regulations (e.g. labour code, employment law, etc.). Questions about political orientation, membership of a political party, religious affiliation,

family situation and property, or partnership relations and marital status should not be asked.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

References or letters of recommendation are usually not required. Employers verify information about the applicants' last jobs by means of a phone call to their former employer.

Proof of good conduct is generally required for certain jobs, such as teachers, judges, or police officers. This is issued by the Czech filling and verification information national terminal (Czech POINTs) – a network of assisted public administration centres where every citizen can obtain information on the data kept on him or her by the state in its central registers.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

If you want to negotiate pay, you need to have salary/wage awareness, as rates can differ from branch to branch and place to place. There is a better chance of negotiating pay with private and smaller employers. In large companies, public or state administrations, or budget-dependent institutions, salary scales are generally fixed. Remuneration is expressed in hourly or monthly terms, rarely in annual figures – except for top management positions.

Rules for paid holidays are set out in the labour code, but can be modified by agreement between the employer and trade unions. In some cases, annual bonuses and conditions can be negotiated, mostly where managers' contracts are involved.

Other benefits may be offered as a perk, e.g. discounts on company products, meal vouchers, vouchers for theatres, swimming pools, money-off vouchers, and holiday allowances. There is room to negotiate between the employer and the trade union of the company.

Is a trial period likely?

Employees must have a contract and receive pay for any work they do.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The employee or employer can withdraw from the contract anytime during the probationary period, which is three months maximum (six months for managers). It may be possible to reduce the length of this (i.e. to make it shorter than three months). Applicants generally accept the company's proposal.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, this is not usual.

When will I hear the result?

Sometime after the interview, you will receive the employer's decision (which should be in writing). If this is positive and you decide to take the job, contact the personnel officer (HR manager) of the company to inform them of your decision and negotiate your start date and other important details of the employment contract.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

Rejected candidates may call to find out why they were not selected, but this is not common practice.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

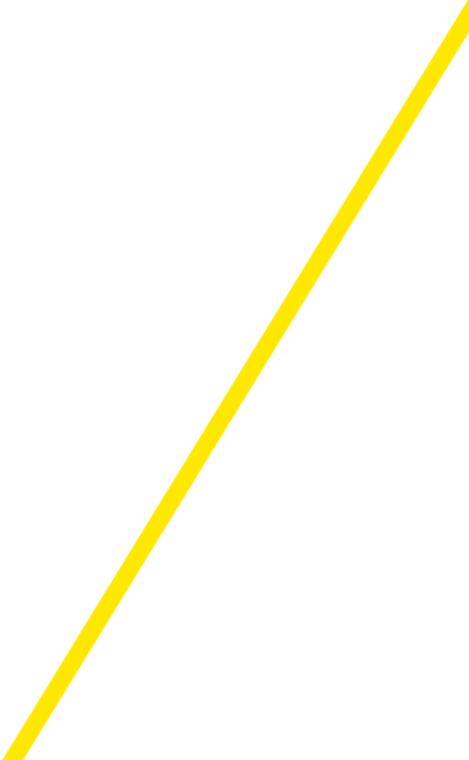
Lateness to an interview on the part of a job applicant is not usually tolerated. Usually five minutes is acceptable, but not more.

Dress-code tips

Clothes should be smart casual: no sportswear, short skirts, or bright colours. Clothes should be clean and shoes should be polished and should match the clothing. Avoid strong deodorants and perfumes and pay attention to details like clean hair, nails, and hairstyle. Men should be clean-shaven or have a well-groomed beard. Do not wear eccentric jewellery.

Any further advice?

Try to find out as much as possible about the company, people, and corporate culture. Prepare well for the interview, be positive, try to adapt to the company culture. Do not talk too much. Be clear in your answers to questions.





DENMARK



Official language - Danish



Government - Constitutional monarchy



Population - 5.6 million



Capital - Copenhagen



Currency - Danish krone (DKK)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +45



Internet code - .dk

WHY GO TO WORK IN DENMARK?

You are never more than an hour from the coast in Denmark, a country famed as one of the happiest on Earth, as well as for its skills in design and craftsmanship, and efficient public services. The gap between rich and poor is very narrow in Denmark, placing most Danes in a thriving middle class.

Unemployment is lower than average for Europe. However, employers still find it difficult to fill certain vacancies, for example for mechanical and IT engineers, construction and production workers, nurses, doctors, psychologists, IT consultants, software developers, pharmaconomists (experts in pharmaceuticals) and others.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Employers will publish vacancies on their own websites or on the official website **jobnet.dk**. Vacancies for foreign jobseekers can also be found on **workindenmark.dk** where you can also submit your CV. Sometimes employers request that vacancies are posted on specific websites or they might use a recruitment agency to handle the initial screening of candidates.

Tips for job applications

The procedure for applications is described in the job advert and should be adhered to. For further tips, e-learning courses about searching for jobs in Denmark are available at **workindenmark.dk/elearning**.

Contacts between the candidate and the employer are usually direct. When sending an application (usually electronically), it is very important to personalise it to the specific employer. Only contact the employer in the language requested in the advertisement. You do not need to be able to cover all the qualifications, but you do need to speak the language suggested in the vacancy. Always write the application and make the contact yourself. Documents in a foreign language must be proved to be authentic.

The following are absolutely not acceptable during an application procedure: misspelling of the name and address of the company; errors in the application; being disloyal towards former employers; turning up late for an interview.

'The EURES Adviser gave me information about doing a greenhouse gardener's course in Denmark and combining it with a Danish language course and work in a Danish farm. I saw it as an interesting opportunity – and a way to develop new skills and knowledge for my future professional life. It broadens your horizons, makes you more independent, builds your self-confidence and expands your personal network.'

Sarunas, Jobseeker from Lithuania

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

Photos are usually optional, although it is becoming increasingly common for employers to request them.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

Typing your application is preferable.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Europass CVs are not popular among Danish employers. You are expected to compile a personalised and targeted CV.

Making contact by phone

It is advisable to contact the enterprise by phone if you wish to send a spontaneous application. This will help you target your application. Job ads will specify who to contact; you are welcome to contact the enterprise before sending an application. Prepare your questions well to ensure that you will not be remembered as a candidate who wasted their time. Avoid asking about the salary; this issue will be dealt with during the interview.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

No, unless they are specifically requested in the job ad. An application consists of a CV and a covering letter, except otherwise stated.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This varies, but is approximately one to two months.

Preparing for the interview

The job interview is a dialogue between you and the interviewers, so you are expected to be active and ask questions. Prepare questions in advance and try to find out about the company's values and mission. There may also be psychological and practical tests.

Who will be there?

There will normally be one to five interviewers present during the interview. It is important to maintain good eye contact with all interviewers. Try to make everybody feel included. A meeting will typically take up to an hour, with the candidate often being offered a cup of coffee or tea.

Do we shake hands?

Shake hands with all people present, both when meeting and saying goodbye. Make it a good firm handshake and maintain friendly eye contact.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Employers pay specific attention to the applicant's ability to meet the qualifications demanded.

There is a specific structure for the meeting. First you may talk briefly about the weather, how you got to the meeting, or another general subject. Companies will often give a short introduction before applicants have the opportunity to present themselves. The applicant can ask questions about the position, salary, working conditions, cooperation with co-workers, contract, holidays, extra entitlements, etc. at the end of the meeting.

The meeting ends with information about what the next steps will be. In general, the atmosphere is friendly and straightforward, and the applicant's attitude is expected to match this. Remember to make good eye contact.

The interview will mostly cover professional topics. The most common questions include your strengths and weaknesses, as well as where you hope to be in three to five years' time. There are no trick questions. Topics might also involve non-professional items such as pets/children/sport and other interests as additional material, or as small talk at the end of the interview.

When is a question out of bounds?

There are anti-discrimination laws in Denmark in conformity with EU rules relating to sex, age, disability, race, religion, and political opinions. You do not have to answer all questions. Sexual orientation and whether you are planning to have (more) children are considered to be strictly private matters.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

The need for references depends on the situation. Referees will be contacted if the employer is uncertain or if a high level of professionalism is needed, for example in managerial or academic posts. References may be from former employers or colleagues (they are expected to answer a possible request for a reference from the employer).

A letter of recommendation can be useful. Good recommendations are always helpful. If you wish to work with children, you must have a Children's Certificate. If you wish to work with the elderly, or in the financial sector, proof of good conduct is needed.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

It is common to negotiate the salary or working hours, as well as fringe benefits, depending on the company sector and the level of the job offer. Remuneration may be per hour, week, or month, but it is rarely annual. Holiday pay is according to the statutory requirement. If there is a bonus system, it should be mentioned separately.

There are standard employment contracts, but the company might use their own. Use the standard contract to make sure that nothing is forgotten in your individual contract. It is possible to search for examples of standard contracts online.

There is room to negotiate extra benefits, depending on the level of the job. The most common extra benefits include free telephone, newspapers, company car, internet, etc. Negotiation is either with the head of the company or the HR department.

Is a trial period likely?

This is not usual, except in a small number of professions. You can refuse.

How long is the standard probationary period?

A three-month probationary period is common.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Travel costs for getting to an interview are rarely reimbursed.

When will I hear the result?

It varies, but usually you will hear from the employer within a week of the interview. If other candidates are equally qualified, you may be called in for a second interview.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

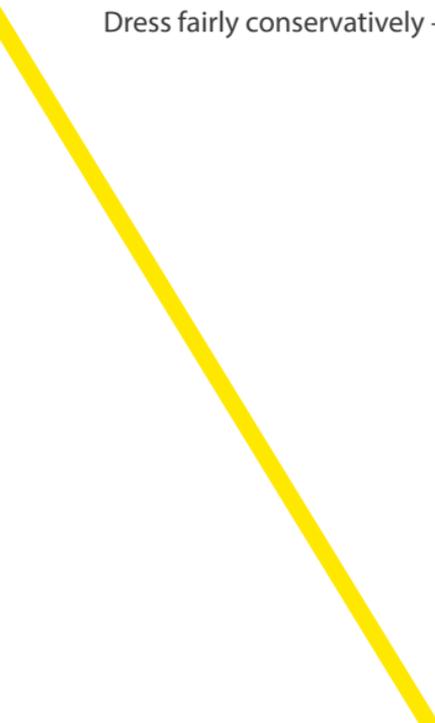
It is common to call or meet again for an evaluation, so that employers can feedback to applicants on ways in which they may be able to improve.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Danes are very punctual. Preferably turn up five to ten minutes in advance. You are not expected to confirm your attendance. You cannot be absent and make a new appointment unless you hold unique qualifications worth waiting for.

Dress-code tips

Dress fairly conservatively – not too flashy, not too relaxed.





GERMANY



Official language - German



Government - Federal parliamentary republic



Population - 83 million



Capital - Berlin



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +49



Internet code - .de

WHY GO TO WORK IN GERMANY?

The largest EU member has it all, from world-class cities to pretty villages and fairy tale castles, dramatic mountains, deep forests, and sandy beaches – and a peerless train network to explore it all in style.

Germany is an industrial powerhouse, famous for the quality of its manufacture and design, especially in motor vehicles and electronics. The country has weathered the economic crisis well, registering a growth in jobs, while other EU countries have seen job numbers decline. Jobseekers find work most easily in the south and south-west, while unemployment in the eastern 'Länder' (states), although falling, is still higher than in the west. In terms of sectors, there is demand for workers to fill skilled technical, IT and engineering vacancies, as well as jobs in construction, transportation, health, care work, midwifery, and education. Applicants looking for dual vocational training in a company will also find a lot of opportunities in several professions.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Jobseekers can get a general idea of the German labour market from the website of the national public employment service (see the Links section on the EURES portal).

In addition, the website of the Ministry of Economics and Technology, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and the national public employment service has helpful information about living and working in Germany, as well as dual vocational training in companies: **make-it-in-germany.com**. Qualified advisers offer information by hotline, text chat or through online workshops for applicants.

Other job sites may cater to specific professions or regions. If you have a definite idea of where you want to live, look at the website of the regional newspaper.

In Germany, certain professions are 'regulated', which means that Germans and foreign nationals may only work in these professions if they have a very precise qualification. This applies to professions such as doctors and lawyers.

If you want to work in one of these regulated professions, you need to have your professional qualification recognised in Germany. More information and relevant links are available at: **make-it-in-germany.com/en**.

Tips for job applications

In Germany, a written job application normally consists of a covering letter, a curriculum vitae with a photo, and copies of qualifications, certificates, evidence of professional experience and work samples, where applicable.

Most German employers expect a job application to be written in the German language, as this is the common spoken language in most companies.

More and more German organisations now only accept applications made by e-mail or via their company's own online application forms.

When applying by e-mail, it is advisable to compile a single PDF document containing all your application documents and send it as an attachment. If possible, you should ensure that the size of the file does not exceed two megabytes (2MB).

If an online application form is used, on the other hand, you should store the various application documents as separate PDF files so that you can upload them individually if necessary.

Writing your CV

Your CV should be a maximum of two pages, with the relevant sections set out in chronological order or reverse chronological order (i.e. beginning with the most recent information).

You should also sign and date your CV.

What information should I include in my CV?

Divide your CV into the following sections:

- Contact information;
- Employment record;
- Schooling and vocational training (and, where applicable, tertiary education);
- Language skills (categorised into mother tongue, advanced working knowledge, spoken and written fluency, basic knowledge);
- Other professional knowledge and experience (e.g. ICT skills);
- Hobbies and activities (e.g. voluntary activities).

Is it standard to include a photo on a CV?

Despite current trends towards anonymity in selection procedures, a friendly application photograph remains part and parcel of a job application in Germany. It is attached either to the cover sheet of the application folder or to the top right-hand corner of the CV.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

There's no preference for handwritten CVs, unless clearly specified.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The Europass CV is often used, besides other personal data sheets. In some cases, it is more beneficial to create an individual format, to set oneself apart from the other CVs.

Writing your covering letter

The covering letter should not run to more than one side of A4.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

The covering letter should briefly and convincingly express why you are seeking a job, what interests you about the post advertised, and why you think you are the best person to do this job. Explain why you want to live in Germany. End your letter expressing the hope to be invited to a personal interview – and, of course, with 'Mit freundlichen Grüßen' ('Yours sincerely').

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Enclose with your application copies of supporting evidence for all the education and training courses, periods of practical training, and previous jobs that are mentioned in your application. In some cases, for example when applying to a small business, you should

have your qualifications and employer references translated into German. Even if you already have professional experience, you will often have to enclose your school certificates with the application.

'From a jobless and unskilled worker to a professional with long-term employment and appropriate remuneration: this dream is being realised by a young candidate from Spain. After trying several options and intensive career development support, he took a chance by starting a dual vocational training course as a warehouse specialist in Germany, supported by a European funding programme.'

We, as EURES Advisers, offer applicants from European countries support and practical information to help them find an apprenticeship. Completing dual vocational training in a company is a very good starting point for obtaining a professional diploma and facilitates career development in the future, not only in Germany.

There are a large number of recognised and prestigious professions in Germany. Unqualified workers are some of the most vulnerable members in society and the first who are at risk of unemployment. We EURES Advisers want to counteract that.'

Sofia Tornikidou, *EURES Adviser, Germany*

Making contact by phone

If you make telephone calls to the employer or the HR department, make sure you are always polite and give your full name (first name and surname). Prepare your answers in advance and be concise.

If you are considering a spontaneous application, prepare what you want to say and be sure that you can explain why you are applying in this way.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

For jobs without training or skilled crafts and trades, it can be up to a month. For highly qualified jobs, it can be up to three months.

Preparing for an interview

Employers pay a great deal of attention to the way you present yourself, including your clothing, hairstyle and jewellery, your attitude, body language, eye contact, and the way you express yourself. Be prepared to persuade the interviewer that you are very motivated to get the job and prove this by asking questions during the interview.

Always try to find out in advance what the company specialises in and what products it makes, and an estimate of the number of employees and their national and foreign locations, in case the interviewers test your knowledge of their company.

In exceptional cases and depending on the job, it may be possible to conduct a first interview by phone. More and more companies use Skype or other VoIP tools.

Who will be there?

On average, the interview is conducted by between two and six people. The following may take part in the interview: the company owner or general manager, people in management functions, HR staff, and peer colleagues.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, interviewers expect you to shake hands when you enter the interview room.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Yes, the interview is usually very well structured. It starts with introductions to present the representatives of the company and the company itself. Then it is the applicant's turn. From this point on, a company representative will ask all kinds of questions.

Towards the end of the interview, the applicant has the opportunity to ask further questions. At the end, the applicant is given more information about the application procedure and when the employer will let them know the decision. The interview usually takes about an hour, but it may vary.

Bear in mind that some questions can be tricky. Questions about strengths and weaknesses or about inappropriate qualifications need to be answered carefully and diplomatically. Try to present your weaknesses as strengths. For example, if you know that one of your weaknesses is that you are impatient with your colleagues, tell the employer that you are experienced in encouraging your colleagues to meet deadlines and follow through to deliver results.

If you are asked whether you are over-qualified for a job, you might answer that it is quite possible that this is the case at the moment, but that you are sure that after you have become integrated in the company, the employer will no doubt find a job or task that is a more suitable match for your qualifications.

When is a question out of bounds?

Germany has anti-discrimination law known as the *Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz* (AGGs) (general equal treatment law). This law states that questions about strictly private situations that have nothing to do with the job are not permissible. Questions about your general health, a planned pregnancy, financial situation, religion, sexuality, etc. are considered to be strictly private matters.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Testimonials that prove that you are an efficient, hard-working employee are a must to convince your potential employer that you should be hired for the job. The testimonial is a certificate that every employee in Germany has the right to receive from their employer. The simple testimonial contains personal data and information about the type and duration of the employment, with no evaluation. The qualified testimonial also includes the output, qualification, and official behaviour of the employee. You must send testimonials and copies of your diplomas with your covering letter and your CV.

References and letters of recommendation are not widely used. Only in exceptional cases will a new employer contact your existing or previous employer.

For a job in the public sector, you will need proof of good conduct, available from your local police station. For other jobs, you will not usually know in advance if you need this. The employer may ask for it when you sign your contract.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Contract negotiations depend on the company and the sector in which it operates. Apart from fixed payment jobs, pay can be taken to be negotiable. When you start to negotiate, remember that in Germany, pay is expressed in hourly or monthly rates. Questions of pay are negotiated by the executive responsible (zuständige Führungskraft).

Besides your pay, you can negotiate extra benefits, such as holiday pay and annual bonuses, provided they are not already included in the company's contract.

Is a trial period likely?

Some companies may ask for a one-day trial period. It is recommended not to refuse.

How long is the standard probationary period?

There is no general duration fixed in the German civil code, but it is limited to a maximum of six months. This should not be confused with employment on probation, which is by nature a temporary working contract (with the probation as a factual reason for the limitation).

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Some companies might cover the costs you incur in attending the interview, but there is no rule on this. You can only wait and see if they offer to reimburse your expenses.

When will I hear the result?

If a company decides to offer you a job, it will normally let you know by phone.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

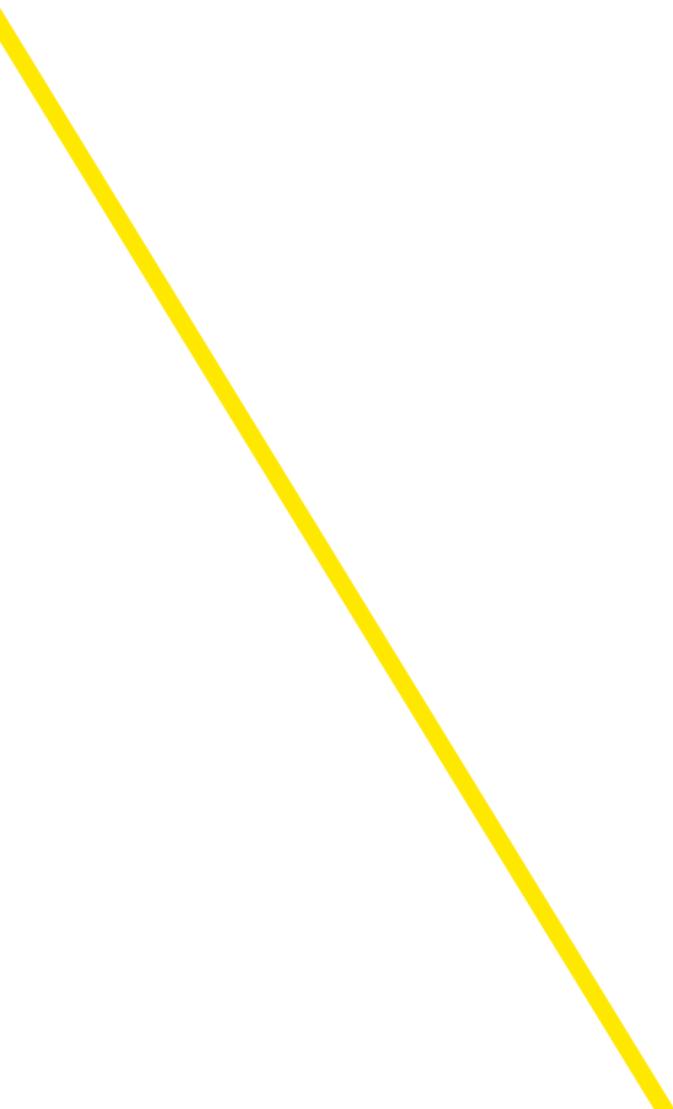
At the end of the interview, the employer should explain the next steps of the procedure and how long this will take. If the period that you agreed on has elapsed without you hearing anything, you can contact them for more information.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Punctuality is very important to German employers.

Dress-code tips

Dress in line with the business and function that you are applying for. For example, bankers or bank employees need to wear a tie. Avoid eye-catching jewellery.





ESTONIA



Official language - Estonian



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 1.3 million



Capital - Tallinn



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +372



Internet code - .ee

WHY GO TO WORK IN ESTONIA?

Estonia is a true digital society and start-up nation of Europe. 99% of state services are online, so you can run your business, access government services, and sign documents online – anywhere, anytime. Estonia has developed extensive expertise in cyber security infrastructure, becoming one of the most recognised and valued international cyber security experts.

The number of jobs will increase in occupations related to ICT technology and in the fields of health care and social services. The unemployment rate in Estonia is relatively low, compared to other European Union countries. The decrease in unemployment has continued in recent years. There is, therefore, a continuous need for talent in sectors relying on skilled labour.

Estonia is one of Europe's most spacious countries. With a territory roughly matching that of the Netherlands, it is home to only 1.3 million people. English is widely spoken. The living environment is very clean, relaxed, and safe.

LOOKING FOR WORK

The most common ways to find a job in Estonia are through employment portals, social media, company career pages, word of mouth, newspaper advertisements, recruitment companies, and the public employment service: the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund and its labour offices (weblinks on the Links page of the EURES portal). Other useful Estonian job search portals include CV-Online (<http://www.cv.ee>) and CV Market (<http://www.cvkeskus.ee>).

Connections are generally quite important for finding a job. If you have a connection that will help you find out more about a company, use this opportunity. Do you know someone who works in a company? Ask if they can help.

Use social media! Follow the companies you're interested in on Facebook, as well as on LinkedIn and Instagram. This way, you may find information that isn't available anywhere else.

Tips for job applications

In Estonia, it is most common to apply for a job through an online job database. It is advisable to use an electronic application, and this should be short and specific. Any written application should be legible, grammatically correct, short, and relevant.

After sending your CV and cover letter or motivational letter, an invitation to a face-to-face interview usually follows. A short preliminary interview can sometimes be conducted via phone (usually lasting up to thirty minutes). Sometimes, questions in the form of a video interview must be answered (for example, in the Videolind environment); less often, an online personality test must be filled in. After the initial interview, personality tests or tests for other specific cognitive functions (for example, attention accuracy, speed of perception, spatial thinking) may follow, as well as a

language skills test, creative tasks, a work shadow day, a trial day, and follow-up face-to-face meetings with colleagues or higher-ups in the company.

Writing your CV

Your CV should be no longer than two A4 pages.

What information should I include in my CV?

The most common form of CV should include the following details:

- Forename and surname;
- Citizenship;
- Address;
- Telephone number;
- E-mail address;
- Education;
- Continuing vocational training;
- Work experience;
- Language skills;
- Other skills (IT, driving licence, etc.);
- Hobbies.

You may also add references – this is not obligatory, but may increase a candidate's chances.

Include your desired salary in the CV if requested in the job offer.

Larger companies may have their own CV format, which can be found on the website of the relevant company.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

This is entirely up to the applicant and is not obligatory. Around half of applications in Estonia include a photo on the CV.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, covering letters and CVs are usually typed and sent electronically.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The national CV format is preferable.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

Your covering letter should include answers to the following questions:

- What are your goals in the new position?
- What three to five positive traits can you highlight for your future employer?
- How do you link your previous work experience to the job on offer?
- Why would you like to work for this particular company?
- Why are you the best candidate for this role?
- Where did you find out about this job?

Should I include a letter of motivation?

The main function of a letter of motivation is to answer the potential employer's question: 'Why should I hire this person in particular?'

It gives you the opportunity to emphasise the aspects specified in your CV that you consider to be so important that you want to stress them separately.

A letter of motivation should be no longer than one A4 page.

Making contact by phone

When you prepare a phone call, be sure to have the vacancy, skills list, your CV, and a notebook to hand. Find the right contact person - this could be a HR specialist, or a representative listed on the vacancy description. Show interest in the vacancy and ask where you should send the necessary documents. Be polite, listen, and speak slowly and clearly, giving specific answers and information about references. Be proactive!

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

No, diplomas and certificates of competencies must be provided only if an employer requests them specifically.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

Two months is the average.

Preparing for an interview

Prepare yourself well enough before the interview to be confident and focused during the meeting. Be prepared to answer any questions you may be asked during the interview and prepare questions you would like to ask the employer. Be confident and persuasive!

Who will be there?

Usually the recruitment manager, often a colleague of the new employee and HR employee(s). Sometimes other applicants are

invited to a group interview. If tests are used in the recruitment process, they are taken individually. Personality tests are usually taken online, at the applicant's leisure. Mental aptitude tests are taken at the recruiting company or at a staff recruitment company. Tests usually take from 30 minutes to an hour and a half.

Do we shake hands?

A handshake is acceptable as a greeting; remember to wait for the employer to offer the handshake first. Be friendly and open, stand or sit up straight, and speak audibly and clearly, keeping eye contact.

Is there a typical interview structure?

At the beginning of a meeting, expect a short warm-up (general questions), followed by specific questions about your personality and motivation.

You then give a brief introduction about yourself. You may then be asked about your strengths and weaknesses, why you are interested specifically in this vacancy, and questions about education, training and previous employment experience, hobbies, job conditions, and salary. You are expected to be frank and friendly, but not too familiar.

Your tasks, working conditions, future colleagues, benefits, and salary will then be discussed. You will be asked to describe your previous jobs, your tasks, and the reason why you left.

Candidates can usually ask for additional information about the vacancy and the company at the end of the interview. Take this opportunity!

When is a question out of bounds?

Questions about private life (e.g. marital status, children, and family plans, military service, sexual orientation, religion or political beliefs, health information not related to the job) are considered to be strictly private matters.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

A candidate should mention two to three references on their CV. These can be previous employers or references from school or university. They should be able to confirm relevant information on the CV and provide relevant background information.

Proving the lack of a criminal record is compulsory for some jobs, such as civil servants and drivers. If a company requires a background check, candidates will be informed of this; the corresponding information is usually marked on the vacancy notice.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Contract negotiations can include the date you start work, salary, and bonuses. The salary may be negotiable, but that depends on the position and company. Pay is generally expressed in monthly terms. Holiday pay is included in remuneration and regulated according to Estonian law. Yearly bonuses cannot be negotiated separately.

Employers may offer the following benefits, but they are not mandatory: free parking, compensation for transport and telecommunication costs, reimbursement for laptop, mobile phone, sport and massage or rehabilitation expenses, days off for birthdays and other private life events (including anything related to children), compensation for glasses, one–two weeks extra

vacation, a company car. In the private sector, these benefits can be negotiated. Additional benefits are to be discussed with your immediate manager.

Is a trial period likely?

An employer does not have the right to ask for free labour during a trial day. If the candidate does not perform any tasks and comes to the trial day for observation, then the employer does not need to compensate them.

How long is the standard probationary period?

Usually four months, six months for civil servants.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, this is not likely.

When will I hear the result?

Almost all companies announce the results within one to four weeks of an interview. Of the employers you apply to, 20% won't respond to your CV.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

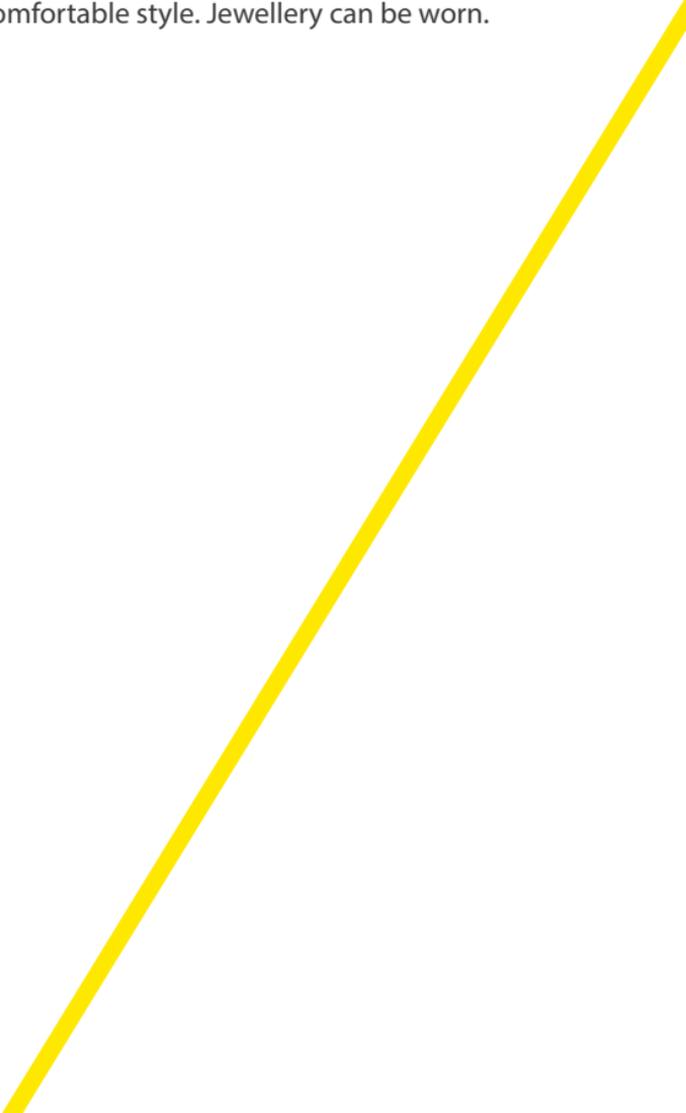
Usually, the candidate is informed at the end of the interview when a decision will be made, and feedback given. If you do not receive any feedback within the promised time, you can call the employer and ask for the results. After the interview, you can send an e-mail to thank the employer for their time – this will show that you are interested and will help the employer to remember you.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Being punctual at the interview is highly recommended. Delay without a valid reason is not permissible. You should arrive a few minutes early; this will show your punctuality and interest in the vacant position.

Dress-code tips

This depends on the job function. It is advisable to dress in a conventional and comfortable style. Jewellery can be worn.





IRELAND



Official languages - English, Irish



Government - Republic



Population - 4.9 million



Capital - Dublin



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +353



Internet code - .ie

WHY GO TO WORK IN IRELAND?

Ireland has charmed visitors with its dramatic western coastline, the vitality of its capital, Dublin, and a musical and literary culture that punches well above its weight. It has modernised rapidly in recent years, but it retains its legendary welcome and a unique, local charm that seems to defy the influence of globalisation.

Ireland has emerged from the 2008 economic crisis and is now a thriving modern knowledge economy, focused on services and high-tech industries. It is regularly cited as one of the most open markets in the world, rating highly in globalisation indexes. Recent surveys point to an increase in the number of difficult-to-fill vacancies in professional occupations (IT programmers, engineers, accountants, doctors, nurses, etc.). There are also vacancies across all occupational groups, particularly for technician posts, multilingual sales positions, and customer care staff. Despite these shortages, it is evident that Ireland remains an attractive location for many workers.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Most vacancies ask candidates either to submit a CV and covering letter, or to complete an application form.

Tips for job applications

Your CV and covering letter are the employer's first impression of you and need to provide evidence that you have the qualities to do the job well. If you are applying to the Irish market, you are expected to identify relevant skills for a job vacancy and provide examples of how you are developing those skills.

Try to type your CV on good quality paper. Print it in black ink on white paper. Use the same template/style/materials for your covering letter. Look at your CV as a marketing tool, which will help convince the employer to notice you.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

No, not unless specifically requested.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, there is no preference in Ireland for handwritten covering letters.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The Europass format CV is not widely used in Ireland. Irish employers prefer a more generic format, although the Europass CV would be accepted too. Remember that your CV has to attract an employer's attention. Keep it specific, bearing in mind that the purpose of the CV is to sell your skill set to your potential employer.

Making contact by phone

It is not customary to telephone an employer other than to ask for an application form or for details of how to apply.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

If the application process involves sending a CV and covering letter, you should send photocopies of relevant qualifications along with the CV. For electronic application forms, state all your qualifications clearly and indicate that the certificates will be available on request. Applicant may be asked to bring originals of diplomas to interviews.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

Up to six weeks, on average, although some jobs may be advertised one day and filled the next.

Preparing for an interview

Preparation is the key to any interview and this is when your job actually begins. It is important to find out as much as you can about a company before you go to an interview. This will help you prepare to answer questions, as well as to prepare questions of your own to ask the interviewer. An important part of preparation is to take time to analyse the job description and highlight what the company is seeking in a candidate. Make a list of the skills, knowledge, and professional and personal qualities that are required by the employer and are critical for success in the job. Prepare a list of questions and answers referring to your own career goals, long-term plans, past successes, and work strengths and weaknesses. Don't forget to take your CV and names of people who could provide references with you.

Who will be there?

Normally two or three people will conduct the interviews. One or more people may conduct tests. Interviews normally last about 40 minutes.

Do we shake hands?

Interviews almost always begin with a greeting and a handshake, so if the interviewer stretches out a hand, be prepared to shake their hand.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Usually an interview will be held in a private office. One of the interviewers will take the role of chairperson and introduce themselves, the panel, and the interview procedure. Normally you can expect a very formal atmosphere, and applicants are expected to treat the process formally and with respect. The vast majority of an interview will concentrate on professional items, with perhaps 10% of the time being spent on non-professional issues. Candidates should be able to show their reasons and motivation for applying for the job. They should be clear and concise in their answers, and should avoid using jargon or acronyms.

You will be offered the opportunity to ask questions, but if there is a second interview in the process you should wait until this interview to ask any relevant questions.

When is a question out of bounds?

There are very strict anti-discrimination laws in Ireland – these laws form the basis of the process. You cannot be asked a question that would be considered discriminatory and you can refuse to answer such a question – e.g. personal matters, such as your age, religion, sexual orientation, etc., are considered to be absolutely private.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

In Ireland, it is very common to use references – usually two. One of these will be a personal reference about your character, and the second will be from your previous employer about your work. Employers will not contact referees unless they are going to make a job offer. Candidates should have cleared the inclusion of a referee with the person in question prior to including them in their application. A previous employer, priest, vicar, or member of the Garda (police) could be good references. They are expected to complete a written or telephone reference with the employer on behalf of the applicant.

While all jobs require that the applicant is of good moral standing, there are nevertheless certain jobs which will require greater proof of character – e.g. caring for children or the elderly – some of which may require Garda references.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Normally the remuneration package is stated before the process takes place. For this reason, there is not a lot of room for financial or other negotiations.

Remuneration can be expressed in hourly, weekly, monthly, or yearly terms. Usually professional and clerical jobs are expressed as a yearly salary, while jobs in building, retail, hotels, and catering are expressed in hourly terms.

Holiday, benefits, and other non-pay issues are included in the pay listed. In general, the personnel officer/manager negotiates pay and any extra benefits.

Is a trial period likely?

You may be asked to work for a trial period of three to six months.

How long is the standard probationary period?

An alternative to a work trial, a probationary period may be anything up to a year. The process will continue up to the time you receive notification of success or failure.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

It's reasonable to ask the employer to cover the costs for attending an interview, however these days you need to be prepared to hear that it's not in the budget. In that case, you'll need to decide whether you're willing to cover the costs yourself.

When will I hear the result?

The employer will explain the follow-up procedure at the first interview.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

Employers will offer feedback to unsuccessful candidates on request.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

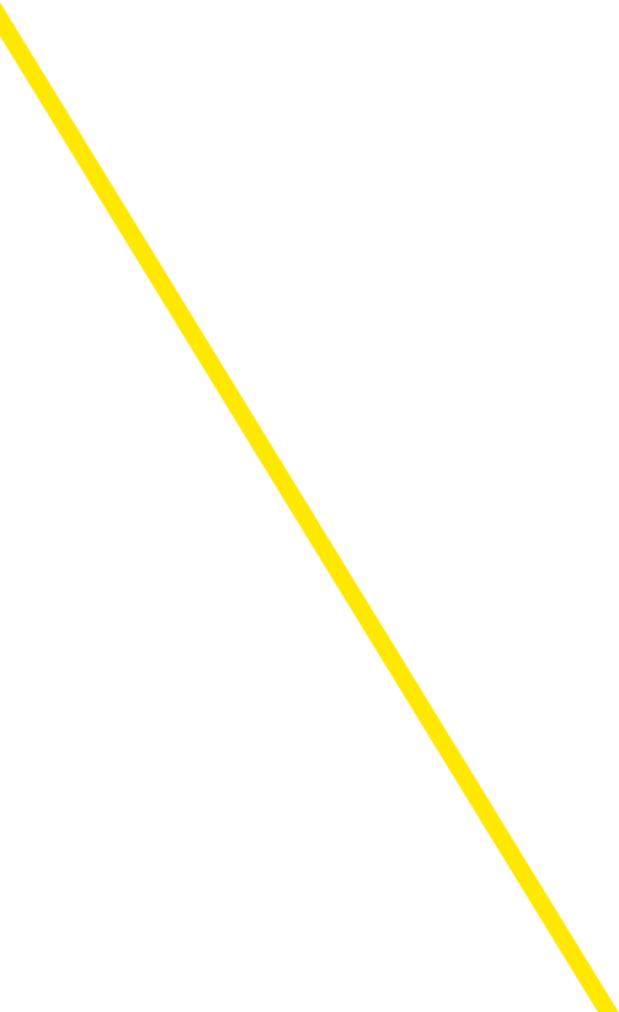
Plan your journey well in advance and arrive at your job interview at least 10 minutes before it is due to begin. Employers will not tolerate candidates who are not punctual for their interview, as it may indicate that there is a problem with their pattern of work.

Dress-code tips

Dressing neatly and tidily is the rule of thumb; face and body piercings are not desirable.

Any further advice?

Employers expect people to present themselves in the best possible way. You should be respectful and courteous. Any other behaviour will not be tolerated. Eye contact is very important.



GREECE

-  Official language - Greek
-  Government - Parliamentary republic
-  Population - 11 million
-  Capital - Athens
-  Currency - euro (EUR)
-  Member EU or EEA - EU
-  Phone code - +30
-  Internet code - .gr

WHY GO TO WORK IN GREECE?

Since ancient times, Greece has been a meeting point for different civilisations, as it is strategically located at an intersection between the east and the west, easily accessible by land or sea. Due to this fact, Greece was among the first nations where respect of diversity became a core ethical value. Today, Greece offers a variety of sights and activities, including more than 2 500 islands, captivating beaches, lush gorges, and romantic ruins.

As Greece was emerging from the '10s economic crisis, it was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Greek state and citizens have dealt extremely effectively with the crisis and outbreaks, so their negative impact has been severely moderated.

The most dynamic sectors are tourism, shipping and logistics, information and communication technologies, food and agriculture, global business services, and energy. During the third and fourth quarters of 2020, the highest demand for labour

concerned office and accounting employees. Following that, there is a strong demand for call center operators, door to door salesmen, and medical imaging/therapeutic equipment technicians. On the other hand, there is a strong supply for builders and construction technicians, unskilled workers, domestic cleaners, teachers, and artists.

The forecast paints an optimistic future for Greece, with decent employment growth, driven by health and social care, ICT services, and construction. Sales workers and health care occupations are predicted to grow substantially until 2030. Although most job openings (including replacements for vacated jobs) up to 2030 will be for high- or medium-level qualifications, decent job opportunities will be available for low-skilled people, too.



LOOKING FOR WORK

Besides looking on the EURES portal, follow the Links page to find the Greek national employment service, **the OAED**, which is managed by Manpower Employment Organisation. You can get contact details for all the local employment offices via the PES index link on the **OAED website**. Private recruitment agencies are allowed in Greece with authorisation from the state.

Tips for job applications

The normal procedure for applying for a job in Greece is to send a CV to the employer by e-mail, hand it in in-person, or to phone them. A covering letter signed by the applicant and giving their reasons for applying must accompany a CV.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

A photo is standard but not obligatory, except in the tourism sector, where employers in hotels and restaurants may require one.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, it is better to send a typewritten letter.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

In general, a Greek CV is no longer than two pages; however, the Europass format is known and may be used. Employers are more interested in the skills, work experience, personality, and passion for work of an applicant than in the format of their CV. Make sure your CV is detailed and correctly structured, with all references available and validated, when required.

Making contact by phone

If you call an employer, be polite, serious, show that you are interested, listen carefully, and be honest.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Not unless asked specifically to do so. However, candidates should have all the necessary documents (diplomas, certificates, letters relating to job experience) available and validated for when they meet the recruiter.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This is usually up to a month.

Preparing for an interview

Before attending an interview, it is a good idea to find out as much as you can about the company.

In the event that you cannot attend the interview, you must ask for a new appointment two to three days in advance, if there is a valid reason.

Who will be there?

For an individual interview, you could be alone with the interviewer. There may be two consecutive interviews with different people. For an interview with a committee, there will likely be three to five people. For a group interview, many candidates are invited to participate in a conversation together.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, it is polite and professionally acceptable to shake hands before and after an interview.

Is there a typical interview structure?

During an interview, the recruiter wants to learn about the skills of an applicant and the possible terms of recruitment. The department manager or the HR manager is in charge of the meeting. There may be two to four meetings and tests before recruitment.

In general, the atmosphere during interviews or tests is relaxed, friendly, and exploratory. The ratio of non-professional to professional items addressed during interviews is about 30:70 % respectively.

Applicants must play an active part in interviews and listen carefully to questions. They should show professionalism and dignity. If an applicant has to relocate for a job, the recruiter will expect them to deal with language issues, as well as accommodation and family issues.

When is a question out of bounds?

Questions about your political position and personal life are considered strictly private.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

It depends on the employer. These are not normally needed, but a previous employer could be a referee. Referees are expected to strengthen the applicant's position by confirming their quality and skills.

Letters of recommendation are not usually required, but must be available at any time. Proof of good conduct might be necessary for security and high-level jobs.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Standard contracts include terms of duration, general remuneration, and holiday pay. It is advisable to let your employer make the first step. You can then negotiate your pay and any possible annual bonuses separately. In cases where there are additional benefits, these might include extra salary at the end of the year, extra medical coverage, a company car, and commission. These should be negotiated with HR staff or a department manager.

Is a trial period likely?

You are under no obligation to agree to a work trial if the employer requests this.

How long is the standard probationary period?

Up to the date of drafting this guide, there is a 12-month paid probationary period. If the contract is terminated within this period, the dismissed employee is not entitled to compensation.

However, a recent European Commission Directive defining a 6 month maximum probationary period will soon be implemented in the national legislation. According to the Directive, in the case of fixed-term employment relationships, the length of such a probationary period is proportionate to the expected duration of the contract and the nature of the work. In the case of the renewal of a contract for the same function and tasks, the employment relationship shall not be subject to a new probationary period.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

It depends on the employer.

When will I hear the result?

The whole procedure generally takes about a month.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

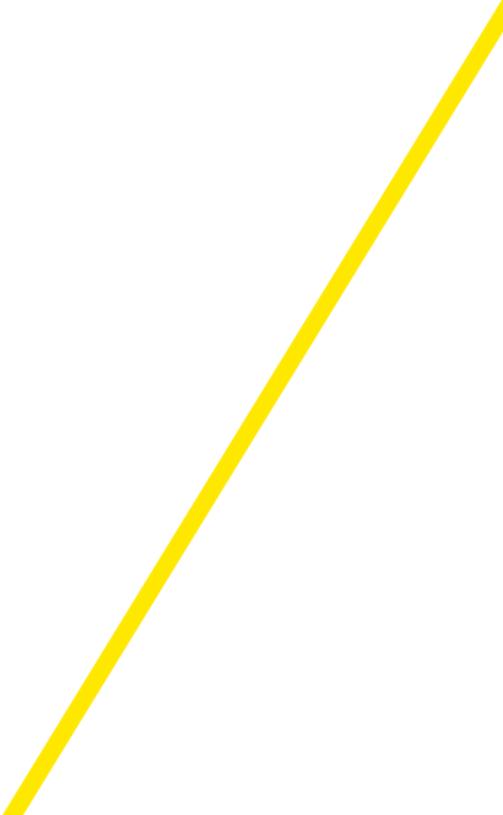
Normally the employer takes the initiative in organising follow-up to the interview. It is not common for candidates to ask for feedback.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

The applicant must be punctual. It is advisable to arrive 10 minutes early for the interview.

Dress-code tips

Check your appearance, and make sure you are clean and well-dressed, according to the standards of the company.





SPAIN



Official language - Spanish



Government - Constitutional monarchy



Population - 47 million



Capital - Madrid



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +34



Internet code - .es

WHY GO TO WORK IN SPAIN?

Spain's historical and cultural wealth is significant, while the country also boasts a diverse landscape and climate. The country has one of the highest number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and Spanish is the second-most spoken language in the world.

In terms of employment, the business structure in Spain is characterised by small business units (especially in the service and commercial sectors). Large companies are highly focused on the industrial sector. Many of them have an international reach and their interests cover areas such as infrastructure development, renewable energy, tourism, banking, insurance, textiles, health technology, aeronautics, processed food, and cars.

The 2008 economic crisis led to a decrease in the number of foreign workers in Spain. However, the tourism sector (and related sectors) held up well and there has been growth in the number of jobs in IT, as well as artistic, recreational and entertainment activities. Trends suggest that further labour market growth is likely to come from the services sector, industry and technological development, and a revival of the agricultural sector due to the application of new technologies.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Finding work in Spain is challenging. Use all the resources available (acquaintances, family members, media, information centres, professional associations, etc.), as well as the EURES network, and a large amount of imagination and creativity. More information can be found on the EURES Spain website (sepe.es/redEURES) and the EURES Spain Facebook page (facebook.com/EuresSpain).

'Working abroad widens your horizons and gives you a taste of independent life. It also helps to build your self-confidence and enlarge your personal network. If you do move, be open to the new culture, as well as ready and willing to learn new things.'

Jobseeker from Lithuania, living and working in Denmark

Tips for job applications

A good CV, accompanied by a covering letter, is a very important tool when it comes to applying for a job or responding to a job advertisement. Statistics show that a high number of candidates are rejected on the basis of their CV before the interview phase. The CV has therefore become an advertising tool for jobseekers, and must be prepared carefully.

While many big companies have their own websites, which candidates can use to apply for their job vacancies, it is common practice to send a CV and a covering letter.

This is not simply a formality; it is how you present yourself to the company and make a first impression. Unless otherwise indicated, both the covering letter and CV must be drafted in Spanish. The covering letter should be concise and use formal language; avoid using standard letters designed for any type of job offer. Both documents must be directly related to the job opening advertised.

Writing your CV

For your CV to be effective, adapt it to each job offer, bearing in mind your skills, training, and professional career, and the details of the specific job vacancy. You may change the order of the sections or paragraphs if this makes the CV more effective. For example, you may put experience before training when you believe that, for a certain job, your experience is more important than your studies.

What information should I include in my CV?

- **Personal details:** Name; nationality; full address; phone number (including international dialling code); e-mail address; etc.
- **Education:** Include academic achievements; personal, transversal, and technical skills; and additional training. Knowledge of foreign languages and IT skills are normally included as an asset.
- **Experience:** This may be listed in chronological or reverse chronological order, or by professional fields. Provide the name of the company; your job title; dates of employment; and the tasks performed.
- **Other information:** This section is optional and is used to provide any information that may prove relevant to the job. References are not normally included in a CV, although the expression 'References provided upon request' may be used.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

A photo is standard but not obligatory. The photo should be a head/shoulder shot (unless a full-body photo is requested), appropriate to the position. Save it in a format that doesn't take up too much space in the CV.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, applications should be typed unless otherwise requested.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Template CVs and advice on how to draft your CV are available on most public employment websites in Spain. While the Europass CV format is used more frequently, short CVs are also very much appreciated by employers.

Writing your covering letter

Read the advertisement or job offer carefully. Analyse the company's needs. What kind of professional are they looking for? Tailor your letter accordingly: highlight those aspects of your CV which you think will spark interest based on the needs of the company that has placed the job offer.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

- **Salutation:** You may use expressions such as 'Dear Sir/Madam', although it is better to address the letter directly to the person in charge of recruitment.
- **Body of the letter:** You should explain why you are applying for the job, highlighting the aspects of your CV that make you particularly suitable for the position. It should not simply repeat the information already included in your CV.
- **Closing:** Use formal expressions such as: 'I look forward to hearing from you', and 'Yours faithfully'. Sign the letter with your name and surname under your signature.

Making contact by phone

For telephone contacts, find out who the person on the phone is and say who you would like to talk to before stating who you are.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Qualifications and certificates are not normally attached (unless expressly requested), as these are usually brought to the interview.

It is advisable to get the authenticity of your documents confirmed by the Spanish authorities, if possible.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This is variable.

Preparing for an interview

Prepare yourself properly by finding out what the company does and thinking about your skills, abilities, attitudes, and the contribution you could make to the company if they were to employ you.

You normally have to attend the company's premises, although it may be possible to use media resources (e.g. platforms, video conferencing, Skype).

Potential tests

It is common to be required to complete tests as part of the interview process:

- **Psychometric tests:** These tests are simply a way of measuring skills, abilities, capabilities, personality traits, interests, and professional values.

- **Job-related tests:** These are used to assess an interviewee's knowledge of a specific profession.
- **Group dynamics:** An increasing number of companies are including group exercises in their selection process (e.g. role-playing of potential scenarios).
- **Assessment centre:** Lasting for one–two days, these assess the skills of candidates within simulated workplace situations.

Who will be there?

The interview may be with just one interviewer or various interviewers at the same time, depending on the company and the position.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, people usually shake hands at the beginning and the end of a meeting. It is usual to touch the other person (shoulder, arm) and, where there are women in the group, it is not uncommon to kiss each other (twice). If the Spanish person opposite you tries to give you a kiss, do not refuse it, but you should not be the one to initiate the kiss.

A tip about personal space: Spanish people like to be close and usually leave less space than northern Europeans when meeting someone.

Is there a typical interview structure?

No, it may be structured or unstructured, formal or informal, by a panel or with a group.

The interviewer will discuss your CV, focusing on training and academic work as much as on work experience and skills. They may ask about your attitudes and personality. They will want to identify what you are like, how you behave in certain situations, and how you fit into a team.

Besides a representative from the HR department, there may also be a technical professional to ask questions related to the tasks of a role and the skills it involves. The HR representative will focus on personal and general skills and working conditions.

Candidates can then ask additional questions before the interview concludes with practical arrangements for the decision period and feedback.

Be aware that your non-verbal communication gives information about you throughout the interview. Answer questions about errors or criticism sincerely. Always tell the story from a positive point of view and draw positive conclusions.

If faced with uncomfortable or provocative questions, try to remain calm. Difficult questions are commonly used in the selection of senior executives, sales personnel, or customer liaison staff. Practice your interview technique at [todofp.es](https://www.todofp.es) or [sepe.es](https://www.sepe.es).

When is a question out of bounds?

The employer should not ask for strictly private information. Although it is desirable to answer all the questions, you can always ask politely: 'How does this relate to the job I am applying for?'

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Yes, bring these documents to the interview. It is better to have them to hand should you need them. The use of recommendation letters or references has increased in recent years. Take diplomas, letters of recommendation from previous employers, colleagues or teachers, and any other documents related to the information in your CV.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Salaries are normally expressed in terms of monthly salaries or as an annual total. If the salary is not given in the job notice, ask a trade union (it does not matter if you are registered or not) about the legal and the normal salary for that role. In Spain there is a national minimum wage, and collective agreements vary a lot, depending on the region.

If the employer asks what you want to earn, try to give two figures, or keep the possibility of negotiating open: for example, EUR X to start with and an agreed increase once you have demonstrated your competence.

Is a trial period likely?

Trial periods for workers are established in the different types of employment contracts.

How long is the standard probationary period?

It depends on the kind of contract. It can range from two months for some workers, to six months maximum for highly-qualified workers. During the probationary period, a contract may be terminated by either party for any reason.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, the applicant usually pays these costs. This matter could be negotiated with the employer before the interview.

When will I hear the result?

The length of time after an interview before hearing a result varies between employers. Usually the employer informs the applicant about the result of the interview shortly after, but they are not obligated to do so.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

If you do not receive any feedback shortly after the interview, you can assume that you have not been selected.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

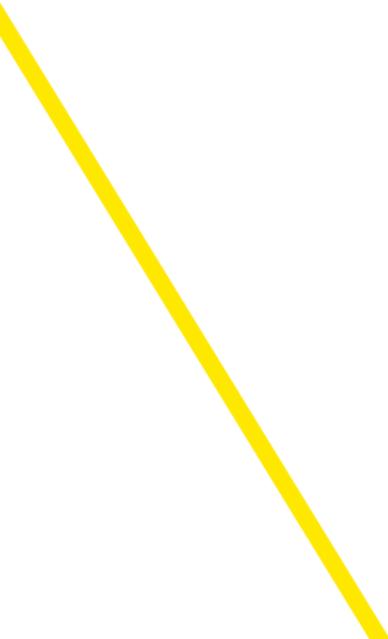
Arriving 5-10 minutes beforehand is enough time to look for the person you will meet. Spaniards having a lack of punctuality is a myth, although it is not unusual to wait five minutes when starting a meeting as a courtesy in case someone is missing.

Dress-code tips

You should attend the interview acting and dressing as though you are going to work there. Depending on the position, the dress-code may vary. Avoid eye-catching jewellery and bright colours.

Any further advice?

Smoking is banned by Spanish law almost everywhere, and many Spanish people dislike it. Candidates are therefore advised not to smoke, even if they are invited to.





FRANCE

-  Official language - French
-  Government - Presidential republic
-  Population - 67.2 million
-  Capital - Paris
-  Currency - euro (EUR)
-  Member EU or EEA - EU
-  Phone code - +33
-  Internet code - .fr

WHY GO TO WORK IN FRANCE?

France is a major tourist centre, attracting 89 million visitors every year. Tourism accounted for more than 7 % of GDP in 2017 and is a significant source of jobs.

The French economy is a social market economy based on private property. It is principally a service economy – three quarters of French people work in the services sector – although industrial firms continue to represent a relatively large share of gross domestic product (GDP) and exports, and account for 20.5 % of the workforce. Over the last 15 years, France has had more foreign investment in industry than any other country in Europe, principally in the chemical, metals and metalworking, and food industries. Since 2014, research and development has represented 10 % of foreign investment each year, on average.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Many job vacancies are available via the French public employment service, Pôle emploi (**pole-emploi.fr**), or via temp agencies, which also recruit for medium- and long-term employment contracts. Each day, on average, the Pôle emploi website displays over 662 000 vacancies. You can send your application by e-mail or post.

Most recruitment processes involve at least one interview with the employer.

Tips for job applications

The most common way to find work in France is to send a covering letter and a CV to an employer. Research the employer in order to adapt your CV, covering letter, and prepare for your interview.

Writing your CV

The CV should consist of one page for young graduates, or two pages maximum for more experienced profiles.

What information should I include in my CV?

A two-page CV should contain the following six sections:

- **Personal details:** Name, address, phone number (with international code) and e-mail. Marital status, age, and nationality (if you are a citizen of the European Economic Area) are optional.
- **Title:** State your desired position, possibly with your strengths. For example: 'Commercial assistant trilingual in English, French and Spanish'.

- **Professional experience:** Include one paragraph per job. Add the dates, position held, company name, economic sector, and location, and detail your responsibilities, tasks, and results.
- **Education:** Provide the year you obtained your qualifications and their equivalent according to the French educational system.
- **Language and IT knowledge:** Indicate your native language and specify your level of French (understanding, writing, and speaking).
- **Other information, often called 'Interests':** Mention if you have lived in France.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

It is common to include a photo on your CV, especially for jobs that involve contact with clients.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

If not specified, send a typewritten covering letter. If the employer uses graphology in the selection process, the vacancy will ask for a handwritten covering letter. However, it is no longer legal to shortlist applicants solely on the basis of graphology.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Although not widely used, use of the Europass CV is increasing, especially in large companies, NGOs, and European institutions. Employers value the section on language skills in particular.

Writing your covering letter

Your covering letter should be no longer than one page and typed (as it is usually sent by e-mail). Demonstrate your interest in the company and highlight how you meet the employer's expectations.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

A covering letter should contain the following items:

- **Top left:** Your first name, SURNAME, full address, telephone number (with the international dialling code), and e-mail address.
- **Top right:** The place from which the letter is being sent and the date.
- **A few lines further down:** The company's address and the name of the person in charge of the recruitment process.
- **The subject of the letter and/or the reference, for example:** 'Re: Product Manager - Ref. 086WXYZ'
- **The contents of the letter.**
- **Bottom right:** Your signature.

Making contact by phone

It is not common to contact an employer by phone before an interview. If you wish to, however, you are advised to do so in French. If you do not know the name of the person in charge of the recruitment process, ask for this information before submitting your application. If you apply for a job through a recruitment agency, it is worth asking about the company's area of activity and size.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

There is no need to send diplomas with your application, but do bring these documents along when you go to the interview. A copy of your diplomas with a certified translation might be useful, especially if your education is different from the French education system.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This is three weeks on average, but it may range from 24 hours to several months.

Preparing for an interview

Employers will pay particular attention to your punctuality and your general attitude, including dress-code. Interviews can take up to half a day, including practical tests. Research the company so that you can highlight your motivation for a position.

Who will be there?

The first interview is usually with a representative from the HR department. In small companies or with craftsmen, you will generally meet the director.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, it is recommended to shake hands with your interviewer at the beginning and end of your appointment. French people value etiquette, and courtesy and good manners are appreciated.

Is there a typical interview structure?

In general, the employer will introduce the company. He or she will then expect you, as a candidate, to demonstrate why you should be hired over the other candidates. You are advised to highlight your skills and explain how they match the employer's expectations and meet the needs of the company.

When is a question out of bounds?

French anti-discrimination legislation is very clear. You can refuse to answer any question that seems inappropriate and/or is not relevant to your application for the given position.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Letters of recommendation are not essential. However, do detail your professional experience in order to show your skills. Some employers may wish to contact one or more of the former employers mentioned on your CV, either by phone or e-mail. For certain jobs related to security or within public administration, you may need to prove that you do not have a criminal record.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

In most cases, the salary is mentioned in the vacancy, written as a monthly or annual gross figure before tax deductions. However, there may be room for negotiating your salary at the end of the recruitment process. It may also be specified on the vacancy that the salary is negotiable, in which case, you are expected to demonstrate that your skills make you worth more than the basic salary offered. You must sign an employment contract before you take up a position, or at the latest on the day you start work.

Is a trial period likely?

Tests are common as part of the recruitment process. Work trials, however, are not widespread. If you are asked to complete one before signing a contract, it must be very short and should not be used to perform undeclared work in disguise.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The probationary period varies from one day up to several months, depending on your qualifications and the type of employment contract. For one-month contracts, it is generally one week. The period can be renewed once.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Travel costs for attending an interview may be covered by the public employment service if the candidate is registered as a jobseeker and asks for financial support before going to the interview.

When will I hear the result?

It takes two–four weeks to get the results: the higher the qualification level, the longer the recruitment process will last. After four weeks, we suggest you call the recruiters for an update.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

It is quite common to ask why you were not selected for a job, but it is important that you do so tactfully and explain that any feedback will be useful for upcoming interviews.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Even though the French are not very punctual – especially in big cities like Paris – we suggest you arrive 15 minutes in advance (on average).

Dress-code tips

The dress-code should be adapted according to the job you are applying for.



CROATIA



Official language - Croatian



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 4.3 million



Capital - Zagreb



Currency - Croatian kuna (HRK)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +385



Internet code - .hr

WHY GO TO WORK IN CROATIA?

Zagreb, a capital whose Austro-Hungarian heritage can be seen in its elegant architecture and cuisine, has been steadily growing as a tourist attraction with a lively arts scene, excellent shopping, countless pubs, and an enchanting advent season. Should you be more of a summer person, you may find yourself among the millions of tourists who flock to Croatia each year to immerse themselves in the charms of the Dalmatian coast and its 1 000 islands.

The unemployment rate in Croatia is low, with tendencies to drop below the EU average. The youth unemployment rate is still slightly above the EU average, with a steady decline over the last couple of years, which is expected to continue in the near future. There are incentives for investors and there is good potential for labour market development, with salaries becoming more competitive each year. There is demand for a skilled workforce in almost every sector, including tourism and hospitality (especially in the summer), transport and logistics, construction, healthcare, and IT. There is also seasonal demand for unskilled workers in agriculture.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Look for work through personal contacts, job-search websites, and newspaper adverts, or by sending a spontaneous application to an employer. There are private agencies for temporary employment, while vacancies in the public sector have to be announced in the official gazette and through the Croatian employment service.

Tips for job applications

Private sector employers will usually request that applications are made via e-mail, and must contain a CV, and sometimes documents such as diplomas or certificates of professional exams, depending on the nature of the job. Sometimes you will be expected to submit an online application on the employer's website and other forms of application will not be considered, while other employers, usually smaller ones, will only require an application by telephone.

Public sector employers will also require an application form to be submitted, along with a CV and proof of qualifications and skills (certificates, diplomas), proof of a clean criminal record, proof of citizenship and residence, and other documents, as necessary.

Open applications to employers are usually well received. Since you cannot know what form of application an employer will consider the most acceptable, it is advisable to enclose proof of qualifications and skills, as well as recommendations, or alternatively the contact information of people who can provide recommendations.

Writing your CV

A CV is compiled in chronological order. It must contain personal information, including on education, additional knowledge, and skills and work experience, as well as interests and hobbies. It should be typed using a computer and in Croatian, unless otherwise requested.

Your CV should be adapted to the employer you are contacting and should emphasise the knowledge and skills applicable to the job for which you are applying.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

A photograph is not necessary, but you can always include a photograph in your CV, such as a passport photo.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, a typewritten application is preferred.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, it is fine to send a Europass CV. However, sometimes a more creative CV format is encouraged.

Writing your covering letter

The covering letter should be no longer than one page and should provide accurate information about the reasons you are the right candidate for the job. The text should be grammatically correct and in accordance with the conventions of business communication. The text should be understandable and easy to read.

Making contact by phone

If the telephone number is provided, it is possible to make contact by phone. However, many employers state that it is not possible to get information by phone.

It is usually not advisable to contact an employer in any way other than the one specified in the job advertisement (by telephone instead of e-mail, by e-mail instead of regular mail, etc.).

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Yes, if this is stated in the vacancy.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This can range from a few days to a few months, depending on the position. Selection procedures for highly-skilled positions, as well as for employment in public institutions, can take some time. Unskilled positions or those in small companies can be filled quickly.

Preparing for an interview

Before an interview with the employer, it is wise to research the employer's activity, the workplace structure, dress-code, and other information that may be useful in a job interview to make the best possible impression.

Written and oral tests (psychological, professional) may be performed before an interview.

If you are no longer interested in a job, inform the employer in good time.

Who will be there?

Either one or a group of people, depending, depending on the company.

Do we shake hands?

Yes. Etiquette states that you shake hands first with the women, then the most important person, then the others.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Interview structures vary, but there are some common characteristics. The atmosphere is usually formal. The interviewers introduce themselves, and will then invite you to present yourself, your education, previous work experience, any special skills and competences, your interests, and why you applied for the job.

Employers usually ask questions about your CV, previous work experience, and how these align with their expectations. Interviews last about half an hour.

Save your own questions for the end of the interview, keep them brief, and avoid going into too much detail.

When is a question out of bounds?

Questions regarding religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or pregnancy must be avoided, according to Croatia's anti-discrimination act, which came into force in 2009. You can also refuse to answer questions related to your private life.

In general, when selecting a candidate for a job (conversation, testing, interviewing, etc.) and signing an employment contract, employers cannot request that workers provide information that is not directly related to the job (family status, religious or national affiliation, etc.).

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

References or letters of recommendation are not needed in Croatia, unless requested. Some companies and institutions need Criminal Records Office certificates.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Employers often set salaries and benefits, and there is limited room for negotiation. In any case, salaries are only negotiable in the private sector; in the public sector they are fixed by law. Salaries are expressed as a monthly rate and should include holiday entitlements. Bonuses and other benefits are negotiated separately.

Is a trial period likely?

From a legal point of view, a one-day work trial is not permitted.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The probationary period is usually between one and six months long.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

The employer is not obliged to cover costs for attending an interview.

When will I hear the result?

At the end of an interview, you can ask the interviewer when the results will be announced. The employer usually informs you about the results a week or two after the interview.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

After the interview, you can call the interviewer and ask for feedback.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

We suggest you arrive 10-15 minutes early in order to organise and review your documents, and to get ready. Let the employer know if you expect to be late or if you are not able to attend.

Dress-code tips

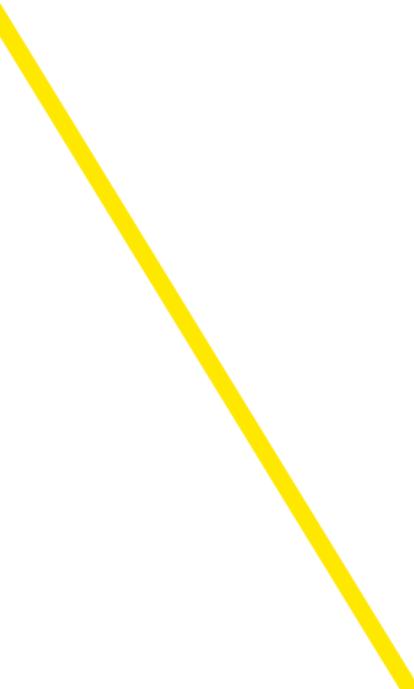
A candidate dressed appropriately and neatly is going to make a much better impression than one dressed in jeans and a t-shirt. Excessive jewellery and accessories, and extreme hairstyles should be avoided. Your personal appearance should reflect that of a potential employee.

Any further advice?

Your behaviour during an interview can affect the outcome. If you show self-confidence, make eye contact with the interviewers, and have a firm handshake, this will give your prospective employer a favourable impression.

Do not speak badly of former employers. Keep questions to general queries about the company and job you are applying for, and avoid asking too much about salaries, benefits, and days off.

Finally, take care to speak about your positive attributes and avoid focusing on your negatives or weaknesses, even if you are asked about them.



 **ITALY**

Official language - Italian



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 60.9 million



Capital - Rome



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +39



Internet code - .it

WHY GO TO WORK IN ITALY?

Italy has it all – from an enviable climate, varied landscape, and historical and artistic treasures, to a beloved national cuisine. Its people know how to live the good life, cherishing family, cultural traditions, and beautiful surroundings.

Recruitment has increased in Italy over the last few years. Recent observations have seen a marked increase in the proportion of highly-skilled jobs on offer, particularly in the information, communication, and business services sectors, because of restructuring by companies engaged in the digital transition (Industry 4.0). There has also been a growth in opportunities for labourers and skilled workers, as well as highly-qualified professionals (in the IT, engineering, management, commercial, and banking sectors). Specialist workers and machine drivers are particularly in demand, with positions involving automatic and semi-automatic machines often left unfilled.

Italy traditionally has a large number of jobs for seasonal workers, due to the large tourism industry.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Jobseekers in Italy usually start by looking for work on the Internet. The National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies (ANPAL) has a new website (anpal.gov.it), while local public employment services also have websites with job offers.

It is also common to consult the websites of specific companies and send them a spontaneous application including your CV. Other options include visiting the local public employment service or private job agencies.

Tips for job applications

The standard application procedure in Italy is to send an up-to-date CV, together with a covering letter, by e-mail or fax (the application procedures are usually indicated in the job advert). For some local businesses, it may be a good idea to visit the company in person and leave your CV with the human resources or personnel manager.

Make it clear which job you are applying for and, if sending by e-mail, activate the reading confirmation option in your e-mail account settings.

Check the receipt status of your application via telephone. If your application is of interest to the company, the employer should contact you within a few days. If not, it means that you have not been selected. CVs are often stored for a long time, however, and you might receive a phone call for a job vacancy that you applied for the previous year. It's important to make a note of your applications so that you are prepared and can remember the details if a recruiter calls after 20 days.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

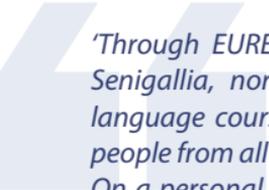
No, but you can include one if you want to.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, you should not send a handwritten application.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, the Europass format is preferred. You can download the form from the Cedefop-Europass website or fill it in online. It should contain your consent to the processing of personal data pursuant to Italian Legislative Decree No 196/2003 and EU Reg. 679/2016.



'Through EURES, I secured an internship in a design studio in Senigallia, northern Italy. At the same time, I did an Italian language course, which turned out to be a great place to meet people from all over the world and make new friends outside work. On a personal level, it was a very valuable experience as I learnt how to manage daily life in a country so different from my home country – and in a new language. Professionally, the internship proved to be very successful because shortly afterwards I got a permanent job as a product designer in Denmark.'

Ebba, jobseeker from Sweden

Writing your covering letter

The covering letter should personalise your application and describe your best points, objectives, and the reasons why you feel you are the best candidate for the job.

Job centres offer advice on writing CVs and covering letters, and can help you to define your professional plan by providing targeted guidance services.

Making contact by phone

If the first contact is made via phone, be polite and speak fluently and correctly. Use the formal form ('lei') when addressing the recruiter, rather than the informal form ('tu'). Ask for an appointment right away and do not forget to ask for the person's contact details.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

No, but bring everything with you to the interview (Italian bureaucracy is very strict).

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

As soon as possible after the new recruit is available. In general, the length of time will be 30-60 days, depending on the nature and level of the vacancy.

Preparing for an interview

If you are particularly interested in a position, collect information about the company or the employer; think about what they would like to hear from you. Being sociable, willing, and enthusiastic could be an advantage.

Who will be there?

Depending on the vacancy, the employer, head of department, HR officer, or even a person specially appointed to conduct such interviews – so either one person or a panel of people – might attend. Written tests are usually carried out in groups. A meeting or a test usually lasts for a maximum of one hour.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, this is common practice.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Interviews usually start by talking about the candidate's previous work experience. The atmosphere is formal. It is up to the interviewer/employer to make the atmosphere more relaxed.

Employers pay attention not only to the way you speak and act, but also whether your appearance and dress are suitable for a vacancy. You should also give a good explanation of your motivation for applying.

After the employer has explained the duties and work that have to be carried out, the applicant can ask questions about any issue that is not clear. This can include the nature and duration of the contract, pay conditions, and anything else.

When is a question out of bounds?

Applicants should feel free not to answer questions about their personal life. Employers should not ask for strictly private information.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

It is always an advantage to a candidate to provide references or letters of recommendation (from previous employers, university professors, etc.) to support their previous work experience or testify to their skills and abilities.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

If you take a job, you will sign a contract that sets out all the information and the description of the financial and work conditions. Negotiation of pay, holidays, bonuses, etc. depends on the employer and on collective agreements (CCNL).

The most common non-statutory benefits in Italy are meal vouchers, a company mobile phone, or a car. Negotiations on pay and non-statutory benefits are conducted with HR staff.

Is a trial period likely?

The employer may ask for a one-day work trial or a probationary period. You can refuse this if the period exceeds the statutory period (which depends on the specific collective agreement).

How long is the standard probationary period?

There is no standard period.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

In some cases, for some positions, candidates may be offered a refund of some or all of the costs incurred travelling to the interview.

When will I hear the result?

If you are hired, it will be up to your new employer to communicate this to you. Employers should specify at interviews how much time will be needed to make a decision.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

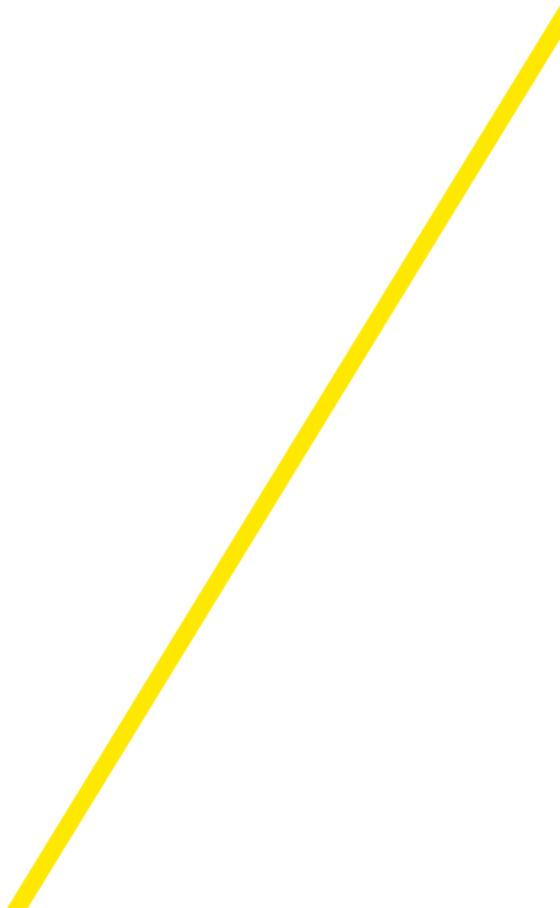
If you want to get follow-up about your interview or ask more questions, you can do so via phone or e-mail.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Punctuality is very important. If you are prevented from going to an appointment, you should give notice as soon as possible.

Dress-code tips

In some companies there is a dress etiquette. The same goes for jewellery. The general rule is: if you do not know anything more specific, go for the smart casual look.





ICELAND



Official language - Icelandic



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 320 000



Capital - Reykjavik



Currency - Icelandic króna (ISK)



Member EU or EEA - EEA



Phone code - +354



Internet code - .is

WHY GO TO WORK IN ICELAND?

Iceland is an island of natural wonders with volcanoes, glaciers, geysers, and mud pots. Fear not the Vikings; Icelanders are friendly, stoic, and humorous, and their capital Reykjavik has the safety and charm of a village.

Unemployment in Iceland has historically been very low, around 1 %. This changed with the financial crisis and the collapse of the banks in 2008, increasing to over 8 %. Since then, the average unemployment rate has fallen again and stood at 3.6 % in 2019. The economic crisis also led to an upturn in tourism, due to the devaluation of the currency.

Foreign workers have become a very important part of the Icelandic labour market during the economic upswing of recent years. About 40 000 foreigners were working in Iceland as of 2019, which equates to approximately 20 % of the total labour force.

LOOKING FOR WORK

If you don't speak Icelandic, the best way to look for work is via EURES. For some vacancies, you are requested to fill in an online application form at vinnumalastofnun.is/eures. For others, you can send your application directly to the employer. Make sure that you complete the form and give as much detail as possible.

You can also find a list of websites that publish vacancies at: vinnumalastofnun.is/en/job-search/other-recruitment-agencies.

Be aware, too, that word of mouth is very powerful in a small community like Iceland, and many jobseekers find work through family contacts or other personal networks. Many employers, especially in tourism and services, use social media to publish vacancies. Use words like 'vinna' and 'starf' to find groups on Facebook that offer job opportunities.

Tips for job applications

Sending a CV and a covering letter is the most common procedure when applying for a job in Iceland.

Larger employers in Iceland often use standard application forms. You will find these application forms on job agencies' websites or on the website of the relevant company. Many of them are only available in Icelandic, but a growing number are also available in English. You can often attach your CV, application letter, and other important documents with the application.

If you apply spontaneously, try to hand your application directly to the person who will be in charge of the selection procedure. This will make a better impression.

Writing your CV

Your CV should never exceed two pages, should be to the point, and should recently have been updated.

What information should I include in my CV?

CVs vary a great deal, but the following information should usually be included (in reverse chronological order):

- **Personal details:** Name, address, phone number, e-mail address, and perhaps date of birth (ID number) and marital status.
- **Education:** List where you studied, the name of the school, the name of your degree, and in what area your degree and expertise is.
- **Work experience:** Include a brief description of each job/position, including the name of the company and when you worked there.
- **Other qualifications:** Here you should mention your language skills (spoken and written). You can also describe your ICT skills, the type of driving licence you might have, and other relevant qualifications.
- **Other/hobbies:** In a few lines, describe your interests outside of work and leisure activities. If you have lived abroad, it can be useful to mention that.
- **References:** It is very important to name at least two people who will give you a good reference. State the names, job titles, telephone numbers, and e-mails of those individuals. Contact referees beforehand and make sure you have their approval to include them.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

Yes, photos in CVs are very common. Choose the photo well: it should be of you alone and with nothing in the background.

Photos from the beach or last weekend's party are not a good idea.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

Not at all: handwritten covering letters are generally considered unprofessional.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The Europass format is accepted, but not widely used. If you choose to use this format, then make sure that your CV does not become too long.

Writing your covering letter

Your covering letter is an important marketing tool that highlights your most attractive qualifications as a potential employee. It should be no longer than one page and be tailored for the job you are applying for.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

Consider the following when writing the letter:

- If you are responding to an advertisement, be sure to read it carefully and make sure you respond to what it asks for.
- Explain why you want this particular job.
- Make it clear to the recipient that you are familiar with the company and with the required qualifications and, furthermore, how you satisfy these.

Making contact by phone

If applying by phone, remember that Icelandic people are not very formal. Even so, it is usual to state your name and the reason for your call at the start of a conversation. Take care not to speak for too long and never interrupt the person you are talking to.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

You should have your diploma assessed for equivalence and recognition in Iceland. This will make it easier for employers to evaluate your knowledge and skills. It may also help you to get a better job with higher pay.

The basic principle is that valid qualifications for practising a profession in your homeland are also valid in other EEA countries. Higher degrees, three years of academic studies (BA, BSc, BS), and vocational studies with a secondary-school education should be recognised throughout the EEA.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is responsible for coordinating recognition procedures. However, other ministries handle recognition for their respective spheres – for instance, the Ministry of Health for the recognition of medical and health professions. The best place to begin collecting the information you need is menntagatt.is, the national reference point for the assessment and recognition of qualifications.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

In low-skilled jobs, applicants are usually expected to start within days or a month at the latest. For highly-skilled specialist positions, there is more room for negotiation. One to three months is common.

Preparing for an interview

Before you go to an interview, do your homework. Read up about the company on its webpage and be prepared to answer any questions they might bring up. These could include: What are your strengths and weaknesses? How would you describe yourself as a worker? Why did you leave your last job? Show that you are interested in knowing as much as possible about the company and the vacancy.

Who will be there?

There may be one to four people from the employer's side. In general, the more specialised the job, the more people conduct the interview.

Do we shake hands?

People always shake hands at formal occasions such as job interviews. Shake hands firmly and make eye contact. A weak handshake is not a good start.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Interviews usually take 30 minutes to an hour. There is no specific structure. The best thing to do is to present yourself as honestly as possible and not to 'oversell' or 'undersell' your skills. Be polite and try to be calm.

Employers want to discover who you are during the interview. Do not be surprised if they ask questions about your personal life. Non-professional items usually take up a small part of the interview and are used simply to make the atmosphere more relaxed. The employer should already know basic things about your experience from your CV. Use this opportunity to speak in greater depth about your skills and why you are the best candidate. Also, try to convince them that you will contribute something that will enhance the quality of their company and that you are willing to work hard to do this.

Any questions from you regarding the nature of the job are appreciated, but it is better to wait until you know for sure that you have got the job before asking about the salary, unless the employer brings it up first.

At the end of an interview, the employer usually tells you when you can expect to hear from them again. If they do not, the odds are that they are not interested. If an employer has not contacted you within the period you were told, the best thing is to simply contact them and ask for feedback.

While you will always present yourself better in person, if you cannot attend an interview, check if the employer can conduct it as a conference call. Video conferencing is also growing in popularity in Iceland.

When is a question out of bounds?

Anti-discrimination laws in Iceland are quite clear. Employers can ask if you are married or if you have children. They cannot ask about your sexual orientation, your political views, or if you intend to have children. The best thing to do if these questions come up is to point out politely that they make you uncomfortable and question their relevance to the position.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Give details in your CV of at least two people, such as a former employer or teacher, who will give you a good reference. Get their approval in advance. They should know how you work and be able to attest that you have the skills and attitude that you claim to have.

Letters of recommendation can help, but most employers prefer to get the references themselves. Mention letters in your CV nevertheless and be ready to present them at your job interview. Some employers want verification from your local authorities that you do not have a criminal record. This is particularly common in care and cleaning jobs, where you are left on your own, often in private homes or offices.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Salary and contract length may be negotiated in an interview or after a job offer is made. Icelandic labour law states that you should have a job contract no later than two months after a job starts. The contract should state your salary. There is always room to negotiate your pay. You are entitled to one interview with your employer every year to discuss pay.

The most common point of negotiation is over the monthly salary. If you have a job where you often work overtime, negotiating an hourly rate would be a good idea. Holiday pay and bonuses are fixed, so they do not have to be negotiated.

Is a trial period likely?

There is usually no need for a trial period as it is very easy to hire and fire people in Iceland and at the beginning of a job the notice period is very short. You should be paid for every day that you work.

How long is the standard probationary period?

If you have one, it is usually between one and three months long. If the employer does not intend to pay you for this period, you should refuse and inform the Directorate of Labour or a trade union.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Very rarely, except in the case of a highly-skilled specialist job. This is up to the employer.

When will I hear the result?

Employers do not like to contact people to tell them that they have not been hired. Therefore it is a good idea to contact the employer

one week after the application deadline to find out the status of the vacancy. A good rule of thumb is that if you have not been hired one month after the deadline, they do not want to employ you.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

It is a good idea to take the initiative and contact the employer for feedback. It shows that you are interested and take matters into your own hands when needed.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Icelanders are very punctual when it comes to work. It is therefore imperative that you show up on time for your interview.

Dress-code tips

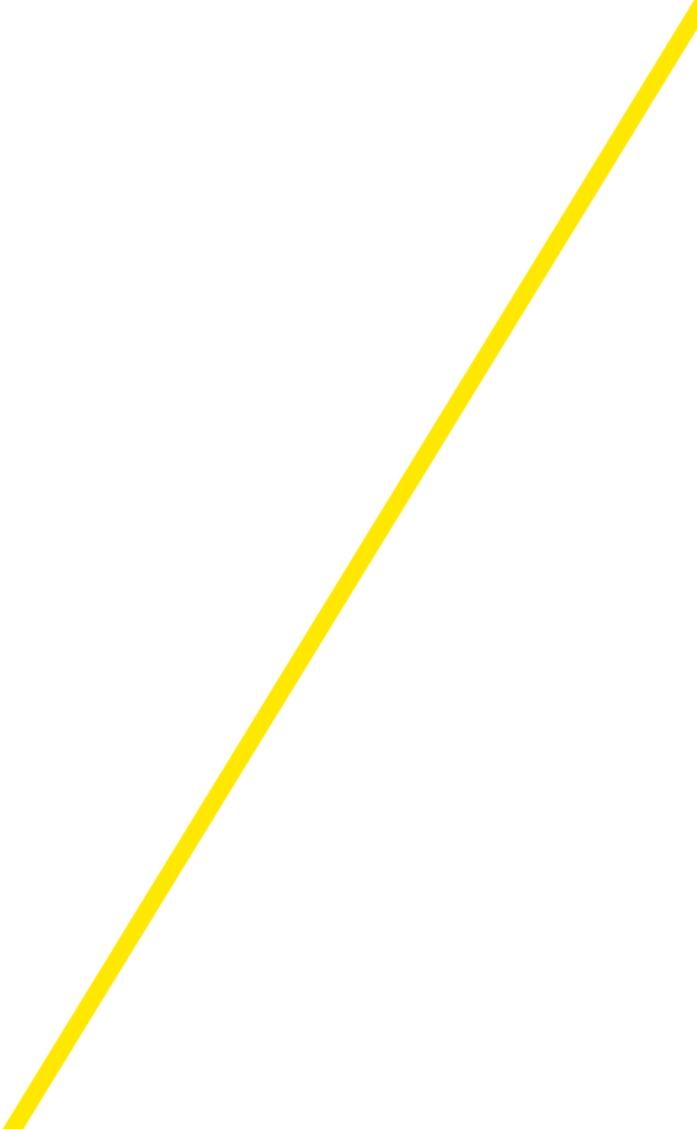
Dress casually and smartly. Avoid wearing too much jewellery. Jewellery on men, except for an engagement or a wedding ring, is frowned upon in Icelandic society.

Any further advice?

Icelandics like people who help themselves, and they are not too hung up on formalities and pecking order. With this in mind, use all methods to find work and be proactive.

'Including the cross-border labour market in your search for employment will create new opportunities and improve your chances of actually finding a new working environment. Ensure that you are well informed, organise your paperwork, take on the challenge and experience a new culture without the hassle of having to move house.'

*Sarah O'Brien, EURES Adviser, Scheldemond cross-border region,
The Netherlands*





CYPRUS



Official languages - Greek, Turkish



Government - Presidential republic



Population - 800 000



Capital - Nicosia



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +357



Internet code - .cy

WHY GO TO WORK IN CYPRUS?

Cyprus retains the marks of 10 000 years of civilisation, as well as a good number of party hotspots. Away from the resorts are villages and ruins drenched in scents typical of the Mediterranean. The country is seen as a very diverse and cosmopolitan place to live, with locals and foreigners enjoying a high standard of living (foreign nationals account for 22 % of Cyprus's total population). Furthermore, Cyprus has an excellent reputation for being a safe and friendly place to live and work.

The country has seen a gradual recovery in its labour market since the economic crisis of 2013. Today, the unemployment rate is relatively low, the employment rate is rising, and many sectors in the economy are looking to hire from abroad to meet labour demand.

The construction, hotel, and catering industries, as well as retail and commerce, IT, and financial services, are the front runners of the Cyprus economy. European citizens have the best prospects for employment in any sectors of the economy.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Candidates can look for vacancies through the Cyprus section of the EURES portal, at public employment service offices or private employment agencies, or in newspapers. Recently, many online job sites have started to list large numbers of job opportunities in Cyprus. Useful links can be found via the EURES portal's Links page and the EURES Cyprus website.

Tips for job applications

The most common way to apply is to send a typed letter and a CV (for unskilled occupations, the application procedure is usually verbal). A job application, with a CV and a covering letter, can be submitted through the Public Employment Service, directly to the employer, or through an employment official at a district labour office. It is very important to state the number of the vacancy in the letter.

The Public Employment Service does not have a CV database. Vacancies are identified once a jobseeker's details have been entered during their registration with the Public Employment Service.

You can also send in your CV through certain large private employment agencies, in order for your application to be considered when a vacancy for someone with your skills and experience arises. This is common practice. You can find these agencies through the Cyprus Human Resource Management Association or by searching the Internet. Some large organisations and some employment agencies have a website where you can fill in your details and apply for an existing or future vacancy.

If you apply for a vacancy found on the EURES portal, mention the national reference number.

Writing your CV

Your CV must be prepared carefully and accurately, be checked for spelling and other mistakes, and provide a rounded view of your capabilities, knowledge, experience, specialisation, and interests. You will find advice about how to prepare a good CV on the Europass website.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

Yes, photos are common on CVs in Cyprus.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, a typed letter is preferred.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, it is quite common and well understood by Cypriot employers.

Writing your covering letter

Both electronic and written applications should include a covering letter, which should be no longer than one page, to the point, and typed. This letter, addressed to the employer or the organisation advertising the post, should contain important data not included in the CV. It should state the title of the job, where you saw the job advertised, and how you can be contacted. It should also be signed.

Making contact by phone

First contact when looking for work in Cyprus is usually made by phone. As a prospective candidate, you are advised to ask if the vacancy is still open and for details of the application procedure.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

A copy of your diploma is always needed, usually at the very beginning of the application. Authenticity of documentation is rarely necessary, except for regulated professions for which registration is required, such as doctors, architects, engineers, etc.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

After an agreement between two parties, a job usually starts by the beginning of the next calendar month for occupations paid on a monthly basis, or by the beginning of the following week for unskilled occupations paid on a weekly basis.

Preparing for an interview

Companies often hold written examinations or carry out forms of practical tests at assessment centres, for instance. The employer analyses the capacities of the candidates in order to identify the most qualified individual. In every circumstance you must, as a candidate, be prepared in accordance with the job requirements. You must have knowledge of the specific employment sector, of the environment in the economic sector, and of the situation on the ground in Cyprus. You must also be able to present your strong points.

Interviews for people who do not speak Greek are usually conducted in English unless there is another common language.

Who will be there?

Be aware that in Cyprus most establishments are small units where the owner is, at the same time, the director and the personnel manager. The director or personnel manager usually conducts the interview.

Do we shake hands?

It is customary to shake hands with someone you meet for the first time.

Is there a typical interview structure?

There is no specific structure for job interviews. You may be asked to present yourself and discuss your positive and negative sides, as well as your qualifications and experience in relation to the job description.

Questions are most often related to qualifications and experience, for example:

Why do you feel you are suitable for this job? What is your experience in this field? What are your expectations of this job? For some professions, an employer may ask a candidate to demonstrate their skills on-site.

When is a question out of bounds?

In Cyprus, there are laws against discrimination and for the protection of personal data. During an interview, a candidate is not obliged to answer strictly private questions or give confidential information (about their sexual orientation, for example).

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

References and letters of recommendation are commonly used for high-level jobs. When listing referees, the applicant should inform the relevant person in advance and ask for their permission to include their name, phone number, and job title in their CV.

Regulated professions usually need proof of good conduct as evidence of a clean criminal record.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

In Cyprus, terms and conditions of employment are usually determined in collective agreements. Candidates are encouraged to be informed about the terms of these agreements. However, collective agreements are not binding by law, and in many cases, wages and other benefits are negotiated between the employer and the employee.

Employers are obliged to inform an employee in writing about the terms and conditions of employment offered within one month of the commencement of employment. This document should include the salary, hours of work, annual leave, etc.

Is a trial period likely?

A trial period may be negotiated between the two parties, but it is not determined by law or by collective agreements.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The usual period is one month.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, this is not standard practice in Cyprus.

When will I hear the result?

There is no general rule as to when candidates are informed about the outcome of an interview.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

It is not customary to give feedback to all candidates. However, any written queries from candidates are usually answered in due time.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

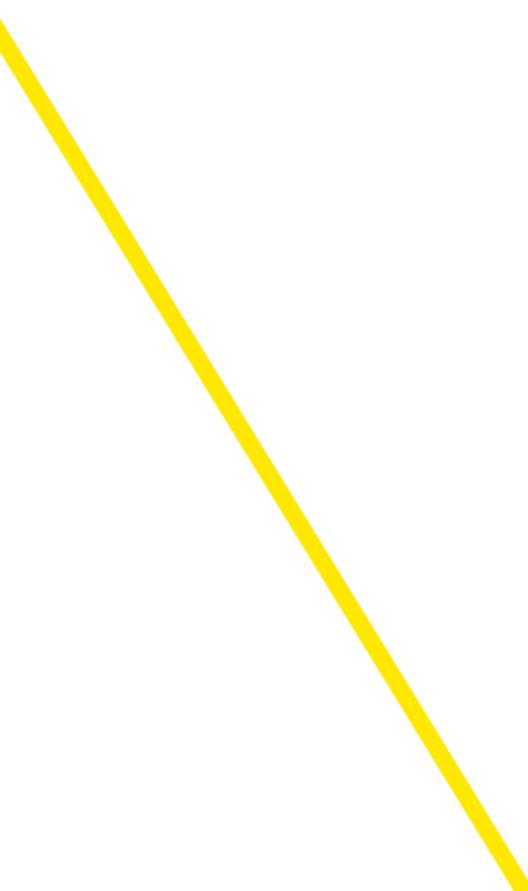
Candidates are encouraged to be on time for their interview. If you cannot attend, give notice of this in advance.

Dress-code tips

Candidates are advised to dress in a smart casual style.

Any further advice?

If you apply for a job in Cyprus from abroad, be sure that the vacancy is still open when you apply. You can do so by contacting the employer directly.





LATVIA



Official language - Latvian



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 1.9 million



Capital - Riga



Currency - Latvian lats (LVL)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +371



Internet code - .lv

WHY GO TO WORK IN LATVIA?

Latvia combines beautiful forests, beaches and spas with a rich culture that includes opera, song and dance festivals – and the chance to undertake both summer and winter sports activities. Capital city Riga boasts stunning art nouveau architecture and, as a former member of the medieval Hanseatic League, has a long and proud history of commerce and international trade.

Latvia has one of the fastest growing economies in Europe, which means that there are a wide range of opportunities for employment and career growth in different sectors. Roles that are particularly in demand include IT specialists, engineers, and highly qualified specialists in industry.

LOOKING FOR WORK

The most common way to find work in Latvia is via personal contacts, social networks, and the state employment agency (NVA).

Tips for job applications

A CV and covering letter are usually required to apply for a job. They are usually sent by e-mail.

Latvian employers value practical experience and practical skills more than formal academic qualifications. However, the right academic background is important for certain professions, especially regulated ones.

Communication skills are important in many business sectors and employers highly value them. Knowledge of languages is also important. While Latvian is an official state language and used in state and municipal institutions, English and Russian are used in the private sector. In international companies and particularly in the IT sector, English is often the main language used.

Employers generally prefer to receive applications from applicants who fulfil all the of requirements listed in the relevant job advertisement.

Writing your CV

In their CV, an applicant must describe professional experience, qualifications, and skills, highlighting the skills and experience that are relevant for the desired job.

When preparing a CV, focus on the accuracy of provided information, as well as the language, style, and presentation.

The main thing to bear in mind is that the most important information should stand out. The CV should not be more than two pages long.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

It is up to you whether or not to include a photo on your CV. Some employers ask for a photo, especially for positions where work is related to customer service.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, the most common way of applying in Latvia is with a typed application.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, either a national-style or European CV may be submitted, as long as it is targeted, clear and well written.

Writing your covering letter

Employers often also request a motivation or covering letter in addition to the CV, especially from applicants for higher-level positions. The covering letter is very important. It should be credible and convincing. Employers are looking for applicants who understand their business, their objectives, and their market. Deceiving a potential employer about work experience or providing other false information is not acceptable.

Making contact by phone

Some employers choose phone contact as a way of applying for a job, especially for lower-skilled positions.

Before you call, make sure that you are familiar with the vacancy description, and prepare answers to possible questions about your work experience, qualifications and expectations.

When you call, be polite, speak clearly, and show your interest in the position and company.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

If requested, copies of your diplomas and other proof of your qualifications must be provided. However, most employers do not ask for this.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This depends on the job position and employer, but is usually one month on average.

Preparing for an interview

If you are invited to a job interview, prepare for it carefully. Research the company by visiting its website. Then think about the questions that the employer might ask you and prepare answers to them.

It is very important to explain your motivation for applying for the job and why you should be chosen. Take the necessary diplomas and certificates to the interview to prove your qualifications.

It is very important to show your motivation for the job, your ability and willingness. You must be honest and explain what you can improve and how. You must show that you would really like to work for the company.

Who will be there?

In smaller companies, the head of the company or line manager conducts the job interview. In larger companies, there are usually three interviewers, including the head of the company or a particular division and a personnel specialist.

Do we shake hands?

A handshake is acceptable as a greeting, but remember to wait for the employer to offer the handshake first.

Is there a typical interview structure?

The interview structure usually depends on the company's recruitment policy and rules. Usually, the employer will ask you to introduce yourself and tell them about your previous work experience, skills, and duties, as well as your personal strengths, weaknesses and motivation. You will then have the chance to ask for additional information about the vacancy and working conditions at the end of the interview.

For some vacancies, you may be asked to do a practical test in order to find out if you are suitable for the job.

When is a question out of bounds?

During the interview, the employer may not ask the applicant any discriminating questions about the applicant's age, marital status, or personal details (height, weight, etc.).

In Latvia, during recruitment it is prohibited to discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender, social origin, language, political views, etc.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Letters of recommendation can be helpful in Latvia because personal contacts are a very common and effective way of finding a job. References and letters of recommendation can also be part of a formal application procedure. They can come from your previous employer or colleagues, but not from relatives.

For some positions it is compulsory to supply proof of good conduct.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Before signing an employment contract, the employee and the employer should discuss working conditions: remuneration, frequency of payment, hours of work and overtime, the probation period, additional benefits, and other matters. Remember that in Latvia, an employment contract is concluded in writing only.

Remuneration for employees in the private sector usually depends on their profession and skills, as well as their company's field of activity. For state and local authorities, remuneration is set by the Law on Remuneration.

Wages and salaries in Latvia are usually paid twice a month.

Benefits in addition to statutory rights may include health insurance, travel expenses or living costs, gym membership, etc. All bonuses depend on the goodwill and facilities of the employer.

Is a trial period likely?

No, there are no trial periods for work in Latvia.

How long is the standard probationary period?

An employer can ask the employee for a probationary period and this has to be specified in the employment contract. The probationary period may last up to three months.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Employers rarely cover costs for attending an interview.

When will I hear the result?

The employer usually notifies you about the outcome of the application procedure within two weeks of the interview, although some companies may not notify you at all. If you do not receive a reply within the stipulated time frame, you can contact the employer and enquire about the outcome.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

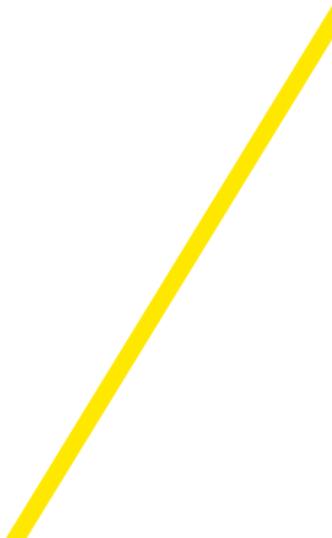
You can ask after the interview when you can expect feedback. If you do not hear from them within the agreed time, you can call and ask for the results.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

The employer expects you to be on time for the interview. It shows your punctuality and sense of responsibility. To arrive 5-10 minutes before the interview is common practice.

Dress-code tips

Dress-code rules depend on the business sector and position. For a bank, a state institution or an office role, your dress style should be conventional. In general, you should be neat and well-groomed.





LIECHTENSTEIN



Official language - German



Government - Constitutional monarchy



Population - 40 000



Capital - Vaduz



Currency - Swiss franc (CHF)



Member EU or EEA - EEA and EFTA



Phone code - +423



Internet code - .li

WHY GO TO WORK IN LIECHTENSTEIN?

In geographical terms, Liechtenstein is situated between Switzerland and Austria in the centre of the Alpine arc. With a total area of 160km² and around 40 000 inhabitants, it is the fourth smallest country in Europe.

Liechtenstein has a very diverse national economy with a large number of small and medium-sized enterprises. The industrial sector and financial services providers make a significant contribution to the national economy, while the contribution of the public sector is comparatively small.

For many years, Liechtenstein's national economy has experienced an above-average growth in employment. Due to this strong economic growth and the small size of the country, Liechtenstein requires an increasing number of workers from abroad.

A high number of inward cross-border commuters has therefore become a distinctive feature of Liechtenstein's national economy. In 2018, this group made up more than 55 % of the country's total workforce.

The unemployment rate in Liechtenstein was the lowest in Europe in 2018 (1.7 % on average and 2.1 % for youth unemployment). The labour market has shortages of craftsmen and skilled technicians.

LOOKING FOR WORK

The best website for jobs in Liechtenstein is the Arbeitsmarkt Service Liechtenstein (amsfl.li). The public labour market service can provide further information.

Tips for job applications

Written applications are most common in Liechtenstein. If you apply by e-mail, use PDF files if possible. Send your complete recruitment file: covering letter, CV with photo, references and letters of recommendation, diploma and other documents that are relevant for the job. Do not forget to include your contact details.

After applying, you will receive an invitation for an interview or a (written) refusal. After the interview, you can expect a test or assessment. There may be one to three interviews before the contract is signed.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

Yes, a photo – or even better, an application video – on the CV is definitely recommended.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, handwritten applications are only used if explicitly asked for by the employer.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

No, you are advised to use the Swiss CV format. A sample CV can be found on amsfl.li.

For larger companies, it is customary to apply via the company's website.

Making contact by phone

When you phone the employer, ask to speak to the contact person mentioned. Do not ask too many questions and keep them to the point. Do not make your call longer than needed.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Preferably yes, or at the very least take them with you to the interview.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

Between one and three months.

Preparing for an interview

Applicants should know as much as they can about the company they are interested in: information about the company, turnover, size, sector, geographical position, organisational culture, etc.

Prepare for questions like: Why do you want to work for our firm? What do you know about our company? Write down questions that you want to ask. Be careful with personal or professional information about yourself that the employer can find on the Internet.

Who will be there?

Usually one to three people will conduct the interview, including at least an HR representative and a supervisor.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, it is customary to shake hands in Liechtenstein.

Is there a typical interview structure?

An interview takes one to two hours. Tests or assessments may take another few hours.

There are structured (fixed questions – easy to compare the candidates), semi-structured and non-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are used most. A possible structure could be: introduction; presentation of the company; questions to the applicant (job, education, interests, extra courses, skills, team spirit, etc.); hobbies and non-professional occupations; personal goals; contract negotiations; summary; and next steps.

The atmosphere will be cooperative, open, and frank. The ratio between non-professional and professional questions will be half-half. It is important to prove your motivation. The employer wants to know as much as possible about a candidate's motivation, knowledge, and skills, but also their personality.

You can ask any questions at the end of the first interview. Questions about salary are usually dealt with during the second interview.

When is a question out of bounds?

Questions about a planned pregnancy, illness, religion, or political affiliation should not be answered if they are not relevant to the job.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Letters of recommendation and references are very important for the recruiter, but need be provided only on request.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

You can negotiate your benefits. The human resources manager is usually the person to negotiate with. It may be useful to contact a trade union first to find out about the range of salaries in that occupation. Normally salaries are expressed on a monthly or annual basis. Holiday pay is included; bonuses are not, at least not in the fixed salary. The most common non-statutory benefits are meal vouchers, company car, mobile phone, sports vouchers, company restaurant, laptop, etc.

Is a trial period likely?

The use of a one-day work trial is not common, but can be useful in certain situations. You can refuse a work trial, but it may be useful for the candidate to get to know the job.

How long is the standard probationary period?

One to three months maximum.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Yes, but do ask about this in advance.

When will I hear the result?

The employer should inform you at the end of the interview about the deadline for the decision or other future steps. If not, you should ask about it.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

After the interview, you can ask for feedback by phone.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

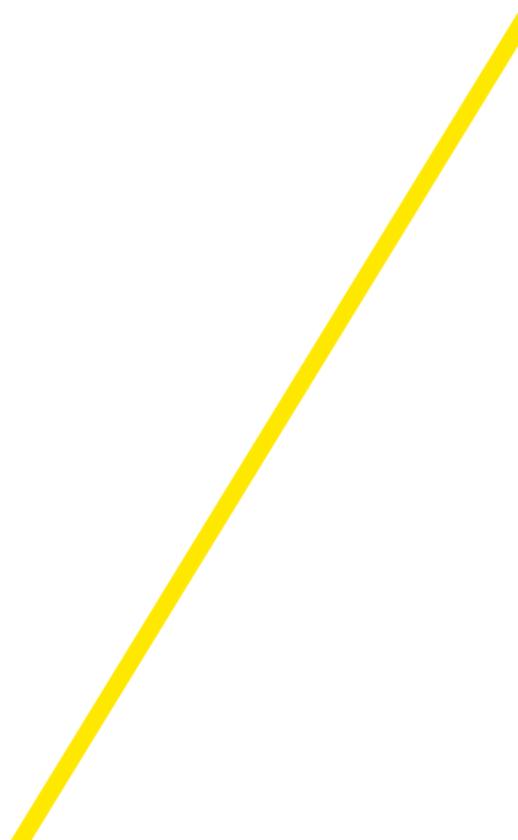
It is usual to arrive about 10 minutes early. You should report on arrival.

Dress-code tips

Your dress code should be adapted to the company and the role. In general, avoid bright colours and revealing clothes, and be sparing with make-up and jewellery.

Any further advice?

Due to its small size and attractive regulatory environment, the Liechtenstein has for some time been obliged to regulate the entry of foreign citizens. The possibility of settling in the country is thus restricted.





LITHUANIA



Official language - Lithuanian



Government - Presidential republic



Population - 2.8 million



Capital - Vilnius



Currency - Lithuanian litas (LTL)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +370



Internet code - .lt

WHY GO TO WORK IN LITHUANIA?

Smoothed by the glaciers of the last ice age, the rolling countryside of Lithuania is dotted with lakes, wetlands, and forests as well as plenty of space to roam and pick wild berries and mushrooms. Larger than Belgium or the Netherlands, it has less than a third of their population.

Since 2010, Lithuania has been ranked among the fastest growing economies in the EU. The traditional industries in the country are food products and beverages, furniture, and engineering. The emerging and most innovative industries are ICT, high-tech engineering, and life sciences.

Currently, there is a high level of demand for advertising and marketing professionals, mechanical engineers, electrical engineers, civil engineers, doctors, chefs, truck drivers, tailors, welders, carpenters and joiners, and builders.

LOOKING FOR WORK

The Lithuanian Employment Services' database of vacancies (uzt.lt) is one of the biggest in Lithuania. However, the job search facility is only available in the Lithuanian language.

Websites where you can find the available vacancies in English are:

- cvonline.lt
- cvmarket.lt
- cvbankas.lt
- noriudarbo.lt
- manager.lt

Recruitment agencies are also commonly used, and personnel departments of large companies often compile databases of potential employees, so you can send your CV directly to them.

Tips for job applications

Generally speaking, jobseekers must: submit a CV and a covering letter, do selection tests, and go for an interview with the employer. These requirements generally do not apply to those looking for manual work, for which a CV and an interview or just an interview generally suffice.

If you are making a spontaneous application, choose the largest companies and send your CV with a covering letter. You can add copies of your original passport or ID card, diplomas, or qualification documents. The CV and covering letter should be written in Lithuanian or, in the case of international companies, in English.

Writing your CV

A CV is one of the important ways of presenting yourself to a prospective employer. Those who screen incoming CVs do not generally have much time to spend on each one, so it is very important that the CV is drawn up properly, that the information it contains is structured and clearly presented, and that there are no grammatical errors.

What information should I include in my CV?

There are no hard-and-fast rules for writing a CV, although it must contain: personal data, contact details, work experience, education, skills and abilities, hobbies, and references. The CV should also contain the contact details of people who can give references to help you get the job. Limit your typed CV to two pages, including only the most relevant details and giving the most recent activities first.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

No, if a photo is required it will be indicated in the vacancy advertisement.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, typed covering letters are more common.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Both national and Europass formats are used, and there is no preference for either one over the other.

Writing your covering letter

The covering letter should be a single sheet of A4 and be convincing. List all the qualities and skills that make you right for the job, remembering to back up your claims with facts.

Do not simply rehash what you have written in your CV. The covering letter should be used to develop information mentioned in the CV and to provide more information about yourself.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

Your covering letter should contain: a brief presentation of yourself, an explanation as to why you are interested in the job and the company, why you are the right person for the job and an indication as to how you might contribute to the success of the company.

Making contact by phone

Telephone calls are not very common for the first contact with a jobseeker. Employers prefer face-to-face interviews.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

If a diploma is required, this will be indicated in the vacancy.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

The typical period is 3-5 weeks.

Preparing for an interview

The job interview is a two-way dialogue allowing the employer to see whether the potential employee will be suitable and the candidate to decide whether they want to pursue a career with that particular employer.

There are usually a few rounds of interviews. Most of the time, this takes the form of an in-depth conversation between the person responsible for recruitment and the candidate.

Who will be there?

In larger companies, when the list of candidates is long and the position is very important, a preliminary interview may be conducted by the personnel manager. The second interview is usually conducted by a line manager, as he/she knows exactly which work-specific questions to ask and is the person that the applicant will be working for directly. Selection centres (assessment centres) are not widely used in Lithuania, but some larger employers use the services of recruitment companies for the pre-selection of staff.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, it is common to shake hands firmly with the interviewer.

Is there a typical interview structure?

No, but you can expect questions such as: What did you do before? Tell us something about yourself (here you have a good chance to present yourself and offer important information to the prospective employer to stimulate their interest in you). Why do you want to work for us? Why did you leave your previous job? How do you see your responsibilities in our company? What can you offer us? What are your strengths and weaknesses, and your interests outside work? What are your future ambitions?

Demonstrate enthusiasm. Make it clear that you want the job. Show that you are prepared. Include evidence that you have found out more about the company in your answers, but do not make it too obvious. Ask questions afterwards.

Be prepared to answer a question about what salary you expect. Applicants are advised to make a brief survey of salary levels in the chosen field prior to any salary negotiations.

When is a question out of bounds?

It is not tactful for employers to ask about age, marital status, pregnancy, addictions, or religion.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Previous employers could be asked for a reference. Letters of recommendation are uncommon in Lithuania, but bring them along if you have them (if in a foreign language, they need to be translated).

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Usually employers ask about the desired pay, which is usually expressed as a monthly amount. Salaries are negotiated with the employer or staff manager. Holiday pay is included in the contract and is strictly defined by labour law.

Is a trial period likely?

Yes, trial periods are quite common in Lithuania and they are indicated in the contract.

How long is the standard probationary period?

It can be up to three months long.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, it is not common for employers to cover travel costs.

When will I hear the result?

Usually you will get the result within two weeks.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

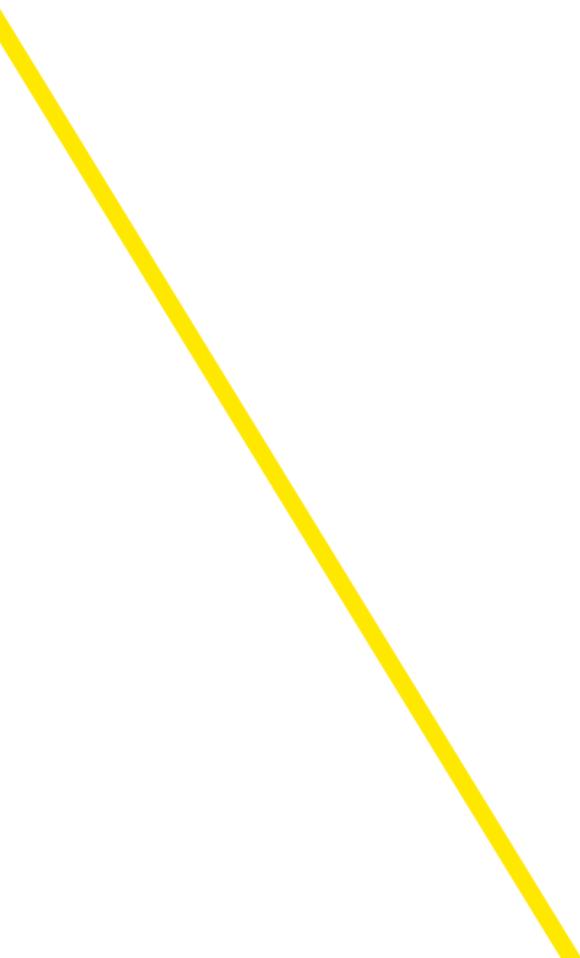
For evaluation, you can call the employer back after a few days.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

It is advisable to arrive 10 minutes early for the interview. Punctuality and a smooth start to the meeting are appreciated in Lithuania.

Dress-code tips

It depends on the vacancy. Try to choose clothing that fits the company's culture. Jewellery and cosmetics should be used in moderation.





LUXEMBOURG



Official languages - French, German, Luxembourgish



Government - Constitutional Grand Duchy



Population - 524 900



Capital - Luxembourg



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +352



Internet code - .lu

WHY GO TO WORK IN LUXEMBOURG?

Postage-stamp-sized Luxembourg is known for its banking sector, low tax regime and fairy tale castles. Besides the city, its magical outside with steep hills and lush wooded valleys are ideal for a walk before lunch in a rustic tavern beside a turreted manor house. Almost half of the country's resident population are foreigners. Even more people commute to work daily in Luxembourg from the other side of its borders.

The Luxembourg economy created 66 530 net additional jobs in paid employment between March 2014 and March 2019 – an increase of 17.8 %. The sectors that saw the strongest growth were health and social services (+7 140 jobs); professional, scientific, and technical activities (+9 760); administrative and support services (+8 850); wholesale and retail trade (+5 290); construction (+6 890); and hotels and restaurants (+3 370).

LOOKING FOR WORK

Job vacancies are posted on bulletin boards in the Luxembourgish public employment service, in Saturday editions of national newspapers, on websites of private employment organisations and on the websites of recruitment organisations and large companies. See the EURES portal's Links page for useful web addresses in Luxembourg.

Spontaneous applications are very common in Luxembourg, especially among young graduates and for people applying to work in large companies. Do not hesitate to apply in this way and get yourself noticed by a company. Your application will probably be stored in a database.

Taking into account that Luxembourg is at the centre of Europe and has three official languages (French, German and Luxembourgish), many job adverts insist that candidates speak different languages. And since companies in Luxembourg also have activities and cooperate with other companies all over Europe, knowledge of extra languages such as Dutch, English, Italian, Portuguese, or Spanish is indispensable or at least very much appreciated. It is essential to be bilingual, including in at least one of the country's official languages, if you want to find a job.

Tips for job applications

The most common application procedure is to send a CV and a covering letter in response to a job advertisement. The letter should make it clear that you understand very well what the company wants in a new employee and that your skills and qualities meet their needs. You should explain your motivation for the job and the reason why you want to work for the company. The letter should be written without mistakes and in the same language as the advert, unless otherwise specified.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

Yes, it is standard to include a photo on your CV.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

Sometimes, as many companies still insist that the covering letter is handwritten. They would, however, normally mention this in the advertisement.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

No, it is not widely used. For employers, the Europass format contains too much information and is too long.

Your CV should be no longer than two pages, and should list your education, training courses and work experience, language skills, computer skills and fields of interest.

Making contact by phone

Contacting the employer by phone is not recommended.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

You are advised to send a copy of your diplomas with the application.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

It all depends on the kind of job and the availability of the person.

Preparing for an interview

Finding a job is hard work. You have to put a lot of time into it in order to be successful as quickly as possible. Things you must definitely do to prepare for the interview are the following.

- Conduct a thorough self-analysis: strengths and weaknesses, skills and competences, your assets.
- If you were unsuccessful in previous application procedures, persist in your efforts and be certain to show clearly why you are applying.
- Make sure you can tell the employer more about the job and working conditions that you are looking for.
- Get informed about the company, their products, and their image.
- Show the employer that you have prepared for the interview. If the employer has the impression that you did not prepare well, he/she will consider you to be sloppy and unprofessional.

Make sure you can supply a short, clear summary of yourself, your motivation, and your strengths in relation to the job requirements.

Who will be there?

The number and role of those present will depend on the job in question.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, always shake hands with your interviewer(s).

Is there a typical interview structure?

There is no typical interview structure; it depends on the job and firm (size and sector of activity).

That said, it is quite possible that the person who is in charge of the interview will ask you some tricky questions, especially about the reasons why you left other jobs or former employers. Make sure you prepare in advance to answer such questions. You can always try out the answers with your family or friends. They should tell you honestly if your answers are convincing.

As a rule, if you are asked about a bad experience, always try to make the best out of it. Never be negative about former employers or colleagues. Counter the bad experience by giving several examples of things that worked out well.

To make a good impression on your potential future employer, remember to show a positive attitude, keep your head up and make eye contact with the person in charge of the interview.

When is a question out of bounds?

Luxembourg has legislation to protect private lives, so highly personal topics should not form part of the interview.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

There are no general rules regarding the use of references or letters of recommendation. Normally the job advert mentions the documents or references that are required. It is often advised to bring copies of these documents to the interview. This is also true for the need for proof of good conduct.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Financial aspects can be negotiated in some companies, but not in those where employers have agreed on a collective labour agreement for pay or where pay is determined by a pay scale.

For white-collar employees or administrative and managerial positions, pay is expressed in monthly rates. Blue-collar wages are expressed in hourly rates. Holiday pay is not standard and annual bonuses depend on the company and the sector. In some cases they are included in collective agreements.

Choose a level of pay that really rewards your abilities. It is important to persuade the employer to reward you for these abilities. You will therefore have to prove the added value that you can provide to the employer once you have been hired. It is not always necessary to name figures when asked to state the level of pay you have in mind. Inform yourself in advance about the usual remuneration in the sector or the company. The pay may consist of a mix of cash payment and non-statutory benefits.

Asking people that occupy the same position in other companies or looking things up in specialist HR magazines can help you to define your negotiation standards.

Is a trial period likely?

Yes, in general there is a three-month trial period for an unqualified worker and a six-month trial period for a qualified person.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The probationary period is six months long in general.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, candidates' travel costs are not usually covered.

When will I hear the result?

You will usually hear after one week.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

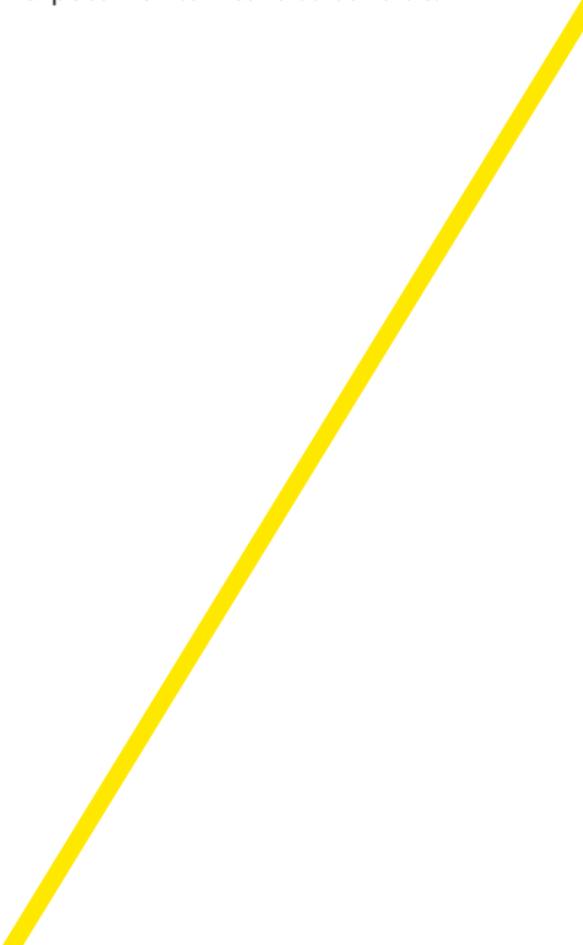
It is acceptable to call the employer and ask for feedback on your interview performance.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Punctuality and respect for the appointment you have made are considered to be very important.

Dress-code tips

Adapt your clothing and your overall appearance to the situation and the kind of company in which you are applying to work. In the financial sector, recruiters still expect men to wear a suit and tie.





HUNGARY



Official language - Hungarian



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 10 million



Capital - Budapest



Currency - Hungarian forint (HUF)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +36



Internet code - .hu

WHY GO TO WORK IN HUNGARY?

Hungary has a culture and language which are unique in central Europe. The capital, Budapest, is vibrant and beautiful, straddling the Danube and attracting lovers of architecture or culture. The country is also blessed with the world's largest reserve of thermal water after Iceland and spa culture is fundamental to the Hungarian people.

The country has attracted significant foreign investment in the past two decades, but in recent years this has shifted away from the textile and food industry to luxury vehicle production, renewable energy systems, high-end tourism, and IT. The employment rate is over 70 %, while the unemployment rate is less than 4 %. The largest numbers of new jobs advertised are for engineers, production line assembly workers, metal workers and technicians, building industry workers, as well as hotel and catering staff.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Most positions in Hungary are filled via personal contacts. Those that are published appear in newspapers and on job portals on the Internet.

Tips for job applications

Sending a CV with a covering letter is the most typical way to apply, but for blue-collar positions it is often enough to call the employer as an initial step. Larger companies may require candidates to complete an application form (sometimes online).

Applicants should prepare by finding out about the activities and profile of the company and about the position in order to decide if they are really interested and to know what the position is about.

For electronic applications, you should either use the online application form (if there is one) or send (only) the documents requested in the announcement.

Writing your CV

CVs must be prepared in Hungarian and, depending on the post, also in English or German. The entire CV should be no more than one or two pages long.

What information should I include in my CV?

You should always include the following details:

- **Personal details**
- **Educational qualifications:** in reverse chronological order
- **Training courses:** in reverse chronological order

- **Places of employment:** This is particularly important because the trend in recent years is that employers prefer to hire people with work experience rather than first-time jobseekers
- **Other skills:** Computer skills, language skills, driving license, etc.
- **Hobbies and leisure activities**

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

Yes, a photo is generally included.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, do not handwrite your application unless it is explicitly requested.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, it is widely used and accepted.

Writing your covering letter

The covering letter should not be longer than one page and, like the CV, should describe the setting of professional objectives and motivation.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

A covering letter addressed to the organisation advertising the post or the potential employer contains important information not included in the CV.

It explains how you heard about the vacancy, the position applied for, any abilities and skills you have that are relevant to the job, why you consider yourself the most suitable candidate for the job and what your goals and plans are.

Making contact by phone

It might be a good idea to make contact sometime after sending your application to show that you are really interested. It also helps to remind the company of your name.

Always prepare for any telephone contact, as you need to get your questions answered (do not forget them) and also be able to respond spontaneously. Make sure you are told what the next step should be.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

With their application, applicants should always attach copies of documents that prove they have the qualifications necessary for the line of work, and copies of language exam certificates.

You will also probably be required to present them at the interview or before signing the contract. The authenticity of documents is not verified initially, but for certain positions (e.g. for doctors), it must be checked before the contract is signed.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

The employer will usually make their decision within weeks of the application deadline, although this depends on the position and number of applicants. Sometimes it can take months from the application to the start of the job.

Preparing for an interview

Employers mostly want to see your personality and commitment during the interview. They also want to see how you react in professional situations and in unexpected circumstances.

Who will be there?

There will typically be one to three people at the interview.

Do we shake hands?

Generally yes, you shake hands with your interviewers.

Is there a typical interview structure?

An interview usually takes half an hour, although some companies do several interviews or tests (e.g. one professional, one personal, etc.). Interview structure varies, but the atmosphere is almost always formal (even if it is friendly). You should be slightly reserved unless you see the employer adopt a more relaxed attitude. The content of the interviews is usually job-oriented, but there is an increasing tendency to cover personality, skills and attitude, intelligence, and general behaviour. You should always try to sell yourself, explaining your motivation and why they should choose you, without of course being too pushy. Often the CV is referred to during the interview, and candidates are almost always asked why they left their previous job and to name their five best and worst characteristics.

You can ask anything about the job, but you should not start the interview by asking about the salary – this topic is normally raised by the employer. You should, however, be prepared to discuss your salary expectations, in which case it is always better to give a range than an exact figure.

When is a question out of bounds?

There is anti-discrimination legislation in Hungary, which means that you do not need to reveal 'sensitive' information about yourself (religion, political allegiance or sexual orientation, a planned pregnancy, etc.) to employers. If you are uncertain about a question's relevance to the job, you can simply ask why it is important to disclose this information.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

It may be useful to provide references, such as details of work you are proud of or feedback from people who can provide an objective, but preferably positive, overview of you as a person. Make sure to ask any people providing references for their permission for you to include their name, telephone number, position, and company name in your CV.

Letters of recommendation are not common, but they may look good if they are from a well-known company, especially if they are in the same field. Some jobs require proof of good conduct (even if it is superfluous), but this is stated in the advert.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Contract negotiations usually take place at the end of the application procedure. You can negotiate pay, but you should always justify this. You should also take into consideration that in some fields (e.g. civil servants) wages are set by law. Salaries are expressed in monthly terms, and the contract should mention holiday entitlements (the minimum is fixed by law). Bonuses are negotiated separately, but if they represent a large proportion of earnings, this is covered in the contract. Remuneration and non-statutory benefits are discussed with the director.

Is a trial period likely?

Yes, almost without exception.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The probationary period is usually three months or can be extended to three months if it is less. If there is a collective agreement at the company, it can be up to six months.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Costs incurred when going to an interview are almost never reimbursed.

When will I hear the result?

You will generally hear within a few weeks, but sometimes within a month or two.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

It is not usual to ask for feedback – you either get the job or a rejection.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Punctuality is a must. If you are late, inform the employer if possible. You should confirm that you will attend the interview. If necessary, you can make a new appointment, but you should make sure to be there the second time.

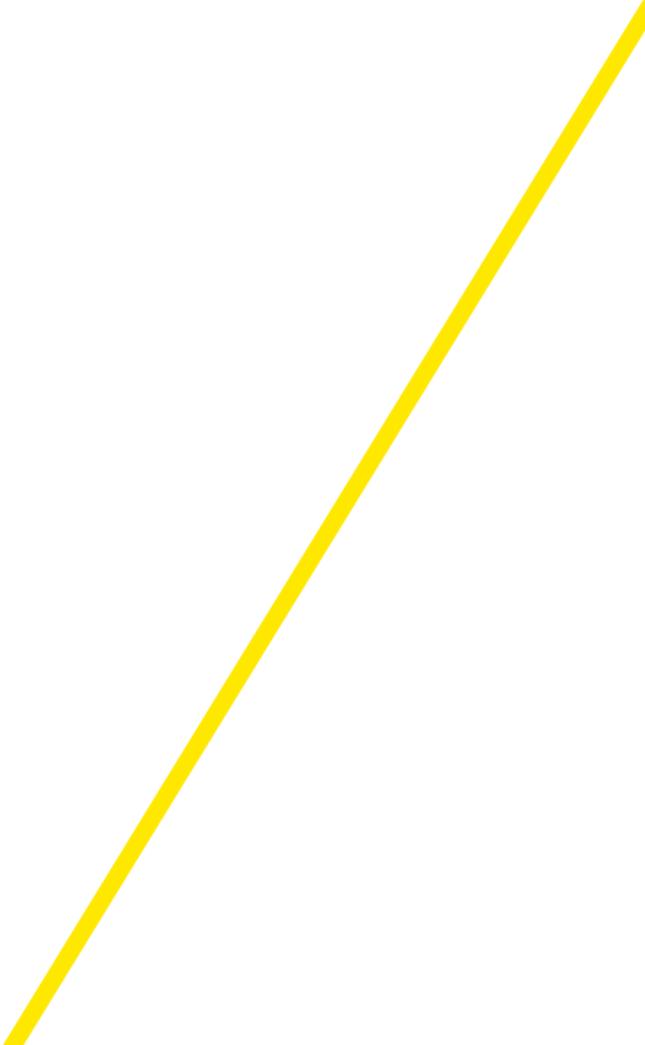
Dress-code tips

Dress code depends on the job, but it is usually formal (suit, dress, etc.). Jewellery is tolerated in moderation, but only for women.

Any further advice?

At the interview, make sure you do not appear unmotivated. Only ask about the salary at the end of the interview if you have no information about it.

Listen carefully to the questions and do not give too much information. Answer all questions – try to use three or four longer sentences instead of many short ones. Smile, and do not be afraid. If there is something you do not know, then say so. Be prepared for questions like ‘What would you like to know about us?’





MALTA



Official languages - English, Maltese



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 476 000



Capital - Valletta



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +356



Internet code - .mt

WHY GO TO WORK IN MALTA?

One of the world's smallest and most densely populated states, the archipelago of Malta comprises three inhabited islands plus 18 others. A Mecca for tourists, it attracts three times as many visitors each year as the number of its residents. Despite being so heavily developed, it is testament to the islands' rulers over the years that many historic monuments survive to tell the tale of its 7000-year history – a fascinating story of conquest in the Mediterranean.

The job market is dominated by the service sector and craft-related jobs. Recent surveys have shown a large number of vacancies for teachers, office staff, sales staff, waiters and waitresses, care workers, construction workers, nurses, cleaners, and IT professionals.

LOOKING FOR WORK

The local public employment service is Jobsplus. Vacancies are advertised on the organisation's website and in its job centres around the island. Several private recruitment agencies also promote vacancies through their websites and one-to-one contacts. Local vacancies are advertised by public and private sector organisations in local newspapers. You can find all the useful weblinks on the EURES portal's Links page.

Tips for job applications

Applications are usually sent by e-mail or submitted online, depending on the information given in the advert. You must always attach your personal CV with an application letter. Both the application letter and the CV must be submitted in English, unless it is specified otherwise.

Make sure you include attachments and that these can be opened. Specify clearly which job you are applying for. Avoid using animation or fancy design, especially if the job is a specialised one and design is not relevant for the post.

When applying spontaneously, specify what role you are interested in. Mention your availability. Add relevant qualifications.

Some employers provide their own application forms to be filled in by applicants. Certain forms are standard, while others ask more about previous work experience and use more unstructured (open-ended) questions.

'Due to the unprecedented economic growth in Malta, there is a great demand for workers across all sectors and, in fact, numbers of EU nationals working in Malta are at a record high. EURES Malta is helping many jobseekers find and secure a job here, as well as

advising them on living and working conditions in Malta. The most important part of moving to another country is preparation; it is essential that you know what to expect when you move.'

Giliane Mallia, *Head of EURES National Coordination Office, Malta*

Writing your CV

Your CV should usually be a maximum of two pages. It is recommended that you keep the content and language simple, concise, and precise.

What information should I include in my CV?

- Personal details;
- Education;
- Knowledge of languages;
- Computer skills;
- Specific areas of competence;
- Career information;
- Hobbies.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

No, CVs in Malta do not usually include a photo.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, most applications are expected to be typewritten. If a particular format is required, this will be mentioned in the advert.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The standard Europass CV format is recommended.

Writing your covering letter

Covering letters or e-mails are usually concise and no longer than one A4 page. The letter is a vital tool to give the employer information about why you are suited for the role being advertised. It is important that that letter contains different information to your CV.

Making contact by phone

Usually the employer contacts the applicants by phone for a first interview. Then a face-to-face interview is conducted.

Try to find out the name of the contact person and use the correct name of the company during telephone contacts. You should be polite at all times during the conversation. Talk briefly and to the point, but do not leave out important information. Clarify what the next step will be.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Proof of your qualifications is not usually required at the application stage. However, you will need to show original certificates if you attend an interview. Take photocopies of your certificates in case the interviewer requires copies. Qualifications obtained from non-Maltese education institutions, such as foreign universities, must be recognised. You can request this from the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC), which is part of the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (ncfhe.gov.mt/en/services/Pages/All%20Services/mqric.aspx).

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This depends on the company, the selection process, and your availability.

Preparing for an interview

The recruiter expects availability, company knowledge and – in the case of a foreign candidate – basic knowledge of the culture of Malta from the applicant. Knowledge of the English language is a must for most companies in Malta.

Who will be there?

Usually the employer is present during the interview, unless it is a large organisation, in which case the HR manager and section supervisor will be present.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, this is the first thing you should do when you meet your interviewers. Shake hands and introduce yourself by stating your name and surname. Remember to smile. Do not sit down before they invite you to do so.

Is there a typical interview structure?

The interview is usually very friendly and candidates are made to feel at home. Interviews are usually one-to-one. If the job is not specialised, there will be only one interview, but for a specialised occupation that requires experience, shortlisting is the order of the day, followed by one or two additional interviews. You may be expected to make a presentation in this case.

Keep to the point of the discussion/questions and do not invent skills that you do not possess. Show that you are willing to learn. Eye contact is important, as is body language.

You can ask questions, although these are best kept to a minimum and must be relevant. Asking for a job description or about working conditions might be advisable. If there is a second interview, it is better not to discuss pay at this stage.

The more you know about the company, the better. This shows that you have taken an interest in getting to know the company, its past performance, and future plans. Your enthusiasm may even enhance your chance of being selected. The most common question an applicant is expected to be able to answer is about the core function of the company. Another is whether the company is a subsidiary of another company or whether it exports its products and to what countries, if this is the case.

One tricky question an employer might ask is what pay you expect. There are various ways of answering this, especially if you have done your research and have sufficient experience.

When is a question out of bounds?

The law forbids employers asking questions that may discriminate on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ethnicity, or country of origin. If you are asked questions about your personal life, you may politely decline to answer them, telling the interviewer that your personal life will not interfere with your employment and position. The interviewer may ask questions about personal interests and how you spend your free time, or for your opinion on various issues, including current affairs.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

References are usually required if the vacancy is connected with the service industry, finance and the like. A previous employer, a reliable professional or a parish priest could be a suitable referee. They usually confirm that the person in question is a reliable person who can be expected to perform this type of job without problems.

Letters of recommendation are only needed if the employer asks for them.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

You can negotiate pay, particularly if you have a lot of experience in the job you are applying for. Pay is usually expressed as a weekly or monthly rate. Holiday pay and annual bonuses are included in the remuneration offered. Salaries in Malta are usually quoted as gross (the whole amount before any deductions are made).

The staff member who negotiates pay and non-statutory benefits will be the HR manager if it is a large company or the employer himself/ herself if it is a smaller firm.

If you are hired, the company is bound by law to inform the local authorities about your employment by completing the 'engagement of employment form' and submitting it to Jobsplus on your first working day. This form must have your signature on it. Make sure that the employer sends this form to Jobsplus on the first day of your employment.

Is a trial period likely?

No, you will not be asked for a work trial due to current legislation, which specifies a probationary period. This means that you can refuse if asked to do this.

How long is the standard probationary period?

It usually varies between 6 and 12 months, but this depends on the company, so find out about this before you start work.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

It depends on the company.

When will I hear the result?

Usually the employer will inform you about the result of the interview at a later date. The employer will also tell you if you are invited to a further interview. If you are selected for the job, you will probably be contacted by phone in the case of a small company, or by post if it is a large company.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

It may be possible to meet for an evaluation or to do this on the phone.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Punctuality is taken very seriously at an interview. If you do not know the exact place, you should leave early in order to arrive on time.

If you cannot make it on the day, the appointment can easily be changed to another date if the applicant phones the employer well in advance (at least one day before).

It is good practice to know who the interviewer will be.

Dress-code tips

Wear smart attire for all interviews. Men are encouraged to wear a dark suit over a white or light shirt, with a smart tie. Women are encouraged to wear a suit over a shirt.

Any further advice?

Try not to make long speeches in reply to questions and avoid overreacting to possible criticism by the interviewer. Never criticise a previous employer. Try to be positive and, most importantly, be yourself. Employers want to employ honest and mature people above all.



THE NETHERLANDS



Official language - Dutch



Government - Constitutional monarchy



Population - 17.4 million



Capital - Amsterdam



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +31



Internet code - .nl

WHY GO TO WORK IN THE NETHERLANDS?

When you think of the Netherlands, you probably think of flowers, windmills, clogs and how the Dutch fight against the water. But the country also boasts a rich culture in the modern cities of the Randstad, its historical cities, and its picturesque villages. All of this and more can be reached within a couple of hours thanks to the country's extensive public transportation network.

Employment in the Netherlands is shaped by the economy, with labour supply and demand fluctuating in line with the international economic situation. Social and technological developments are also having an impact and today's employers expect their workers to have different skills than they did in the past. In order to meet the changing requirements of employers, employees must continue their professional development throughout their careers and the Dutch government is stimulating the development of knowledge.

Employees from the EU and their families are entitled to equal treatment, as laid down in the Dutch constitution. In addition, everyone undertaking paid work in the country is entitled to the same basic employment conditions such as statutory minimum wages, entitlement to holidays and sickness pay.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Job vacancies are announced on company websites or specialised jobsites, in newspapers (in general the jobs supplement of a weekend edition), through an intermediate organisation or the public employment service (UWV). It is very common to hand in a spontaneous application to find out about job opportunities in a company.

Tips for job applications

The job application procedure differs according to the type of work you are looking for:

- For jobs at a qualified or highly qualified level, a typed covering letter with a CV is the standard procedure.
- For agricultural or low-skilled roles, employers usually appreciate a personal visit.
- Applications from abroad should generally be made in writing.

Intermediate organisations, which may be employed by a company to fill its vacancies, often pre-select candidates and submit selected CVs to the employer.

Application forms are mainly used by large-scale employers and for online applications.

If you want to apply spontaneously to a company, contact the department or person who can tell you about vacancies. Explain your plans, the job you are looking for and what skills and experience you have. Ask if you can send a covering letter and a CV. If they confirm, you can send a targeted letter to the right person or department. This approach can be very effective in the Netherlands for getting you invited for an interview.

Writing your CV

Your CV should be to the point and professional. It should be a maximum of two pages and only contain appropriate information (be as specific as possible). It should also usually be adapted to the job you are applying for.

Make sure to detail your personal data, work experience and education level truthfully.

What information should I include in my CV?

The order in a CV should be:

- **Personal details**
- **Education:** starting with the most recent and including relevant courses, exact start and end dates, and whether you have a degree
- **Work experience:** starting with the most recent and including exact start and end dates, the names of your employers and the tasks carried out
- **Hobbies and voluntary work**

References and copies of certificates do not need to be included. These can be taken with you to the interview.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

No, but it is acceptable to include one.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, handwritten applications are not recommended.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The Europass CV is not yet widely recognised by employers in the Netherlands. For the time being, use the standard CV that is customary in the Netherlands, especially for unsolicited job applications.

Writing your covering letter

Covering letters are more appreciated if they are in Dutch (unless indicated otherwise), typed on one sheet of A4, and short, concise, and professional.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

- Start by explaining why you are applying for the job.
- Indicate why you believe you are a suitable candidate and why you are motivated to do the job (motivation is one of the most important selection criteria for Dutch employers).
- Conclude by saying that you would be pleased to attend an interview to explain your application in person.

Résumés

Résumés are becoming increasingly common, especially for people with considerable work experience. They are also often used for unsolicited applications to head-hunters. The most common features of a résumé are that they:

- are shorter and more descriptive;
- begin with a description of the type of job you are looking for;
- are slightly more subjective, as some items can be given more or less emphasis;
- do not contain exact dates (you should only mention the figures that underline your suitability).

You may choose the layout of a résumé, whether it be historical, analytical, chronological, functional, or creative.

Making contact by phone

It is not uncommon to phone a company beforehand; however, make sure you have prepared a number of clear questions. The company's website, Chambers of Commerce and your own country's embassy or consulate can be good sources of information.

Ask for the contact person or department mentioned in the job advertisement. Make sure the timing of the call is convenient. Say briefly whether you are calling for more information or to apply for a job. If you are a foreign applicant and are calling from abroad, make this clear and ask if the call can be held in your own or in another foreign language. The first impression you make is decisive.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

No, the company will ask for copies of these, if they are required, at the job interview or on your first day at work. It is wise to have your diploma translated into Dutch or English and to have your qualifications validated.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

From one day to several months.

Preparing for an interview

Candidates may be invited for an exploratory interview, possibly with an intermediate organisation. This is more like an opportunity to get to know each other. The atmosphere is somewhere between formal and informal, and based on equality among the discussion partners.

The employer will want you to show that you know about the job conditions, the company, and its activities. You will have the opportunity to ask questions too. Use this opportunity to show your motivation and interest in the job, not to ask about the salary.

Questions are mainly related to your experience and your skills. As a result of this interview, your application will either be rejected, or you will be invited for a second interview.

A lack of basic information about the company is often one of the main reasons Dutch employers do not invite candidates for a second interview or offer them the job. Consult the company's website, read its annual report, and try to get a good idea of the sector the company operates in, its latest news and likely changes. This will help to prove your motivation.

The follow-up interviews are in-depth interviews about the context of the position, your problem-solving skills, and your experience. Assessments may be used after the first or second interview.

In most cases, you will be informed whether or not you are hired very shortly after the interview.

Dutch employers are increasingly asking for competences together with diplomas or testimonials. Prepare for questions about your competences by practising the so-called STAR method (situation, task, action, result) (see page 18).

Who will be there?

You will usually be interviewed by one or two people.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, a firm handshake is a must in the Netherlands.

Is there a typical interview structure?

On average, the interview takes between one and one and a half hours. The interviewer presents him or herself and the company, before inviting you to tell him/her who you are. They will then tell you more about the job, before asking questions about your CV. They may also ask about your private life.

Questions about your qualities, skills and competences follow. After this, you can ask about topics that have not been addressed or for things to be clarified.

The interviewer closes the interview by explaining further steps in the procedure.

Tricky questions include: Do you have an idea of what the position involves? Compare this post with similar ones in other companies. Why should we choose you instead of someone else? Can you explain this gap in your CV?

When is a question out of bounds?

There is legislation to protect against discrimination. Questions about race or skin colour, religion (although a question like 'Do the hours of work fit in with your religion?' is permissible), nationality, birthplace, pregnancy, health, or family plans are not permitted.

Many Dutch companies have adopted a code of good conduct in recruitment as laid down by the Dutch union for personnel management and organisation development (NVP). If you feel that a company that is signed up to the code did not treat you well, you can make a complaint. You can also apply to the Commission for equal treatment if you think your rights to equal treatment were violated.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

References are not obligatory. It is up to you whether you name referees in your CV. Your new employer can only contact them after you have agreed to this. Personal matters or reasons for resigning are not to be discussed in references.

If proof of good conduct is needed, it should be mentioned in the job advertisement.

When you leave a company, the employer must always give you a certificate. This may simply contain neutral content but must never say anything negative about your personality or your work.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

If the company offers you the job, you can negotiate your salary and probationary period. If you are hired through an intermediate organisation, they will probably negotiate your remuneration request and other conditions and benefits. In the Netherlands, both salary and non-statutory benefits can be negotiated. Think twice about your salary request and make sure it is in accordance with your job.

Different kinds of jobs have different salary scales. These scales are divided into what are known as periodicities. Your experience is used to calculate the scale and periodicity you will be paid. All of this can be negotiated. Remember that voluntary work counts as work experience. For many professions and large companies, working conditions are agreed in collective labour agreements. There is a minimum wage for under-23s and for older people. Earning less than this level is prohibited. Remuneration is expressed on a monthly basis.

Holiday entitlement and the formula for calculating holiday pay are fixed by law. Depending on labour agreements or your age, the amount of holiday entitlement may increase. Bonuses may be negotiated when you start the job and in your annual review. Some collective labour agreements include commitments about profit shares or dividends.

Besides remuneration and holiday pay, you can also negotiate other conditions, such as a company car, travel costs, retirement insurance, training costs, etc. In many cases, the collective labour agreements fix these conditions.

Is a trial period likely?

Yes, this is likely.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The length and nature of a contract affects the length of the probationary period:

- Permanent and temporary contracts of two years or more: two months maximum
- Temporary contracts of more than six months: one month maximum (unless otherwise specified in a sectoral collective agreement)
- Temporary contracts with no fixed end date: one month maximum (unless otherwise specified in a sectoral collective agreement)
- Temporary contracts of six months or less: no probationary period allowed

If you have previously worked as a temporary worker or have been permanently employed by the same employer in the same position/to conduct the same work, your employer may not impose a probationary period.

Imposing a new probationary period is only allowed when you take up a completely different job and/or are given significantly different responsibilities.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

This is not automatic. However, asking for compensation is not considered impolite and is possible.

When will I hear the result?

Companies that apply the code of good behaviour in recruitment will inform unsuccessful candidates why they were not selected within a fortnight and in writing. It is still possible to ask for more information.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

If you are not selected, it is normal to contact the interviewer to evaluate your application procedure. You can ask for the things you did well and what went wrong so that you can learn from these for other interviews.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Punctuality is necessary. Only for a very serious reason (e.g. illness or the death of a relative) can you ask for a new appointment.

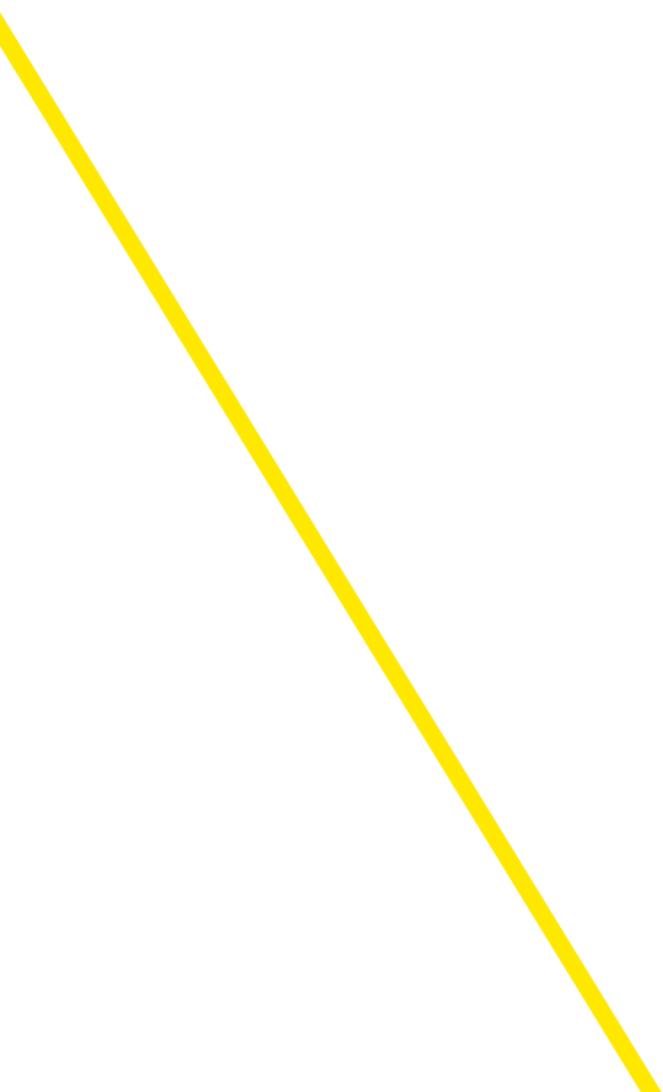
Dress-code tips

It is very much appreciated if you are dressed for the occasion and look neat. Try to choose clothing that fits the company culture rather than the latest fashion. In banking, men have to wear a suit and women are expected to wear a two-piece suit.

The modest use of jewellery is advised. It is accepted that men wear a ring, but bracelets are considered to be overkill. For women, one or more rings are acceptable or even favourable. Other jewellery should be adapted to your outfit.

Any further advice?

Take care that your answers are short and to the point. It can be an advantage if you already have a translation of your diploma, a validated title, or a registered profession.





NORWAY



Official language - Norwegian



Government - Constitutional monarchy



Population - 5 million



Capital - Oslo



Currency - Norwegian krone (NOK)



Member EU or EEA - EEA



Phone code - +47



Internet code - .no

WHY GO TO WORK IN NORWAY?

Although it is a young nation, Norway has a long history and a strong heritage. Over the years, its customs and traditions have merged with impulses and influences from abroad. Characterised by large areas of unspoilt countryside, Norway offers abundant opportunities for outdoor pursuits, including sporting challenges.

Jobseekers interested in looking for work in Norway should be aware that recent surveys have shown a decline in vacancies in finance and insurance, construction and management, and mining and production, alongside growth in information and communication technologies. The labour market has a strong demand for engineers and ICT workers, and engineers in petroleum and geosciences. There is also a shortage of healthcare and nursing staff, particularly nurses.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Jobs are advertised on company websites, on specialised jobsites, in newspapers, through an intermediate organisation or the public employment service (**nav.no**).

Vacancies from the public employment service are transferred to the EURES Portal. You can create a jobseeker profile on the portal and match with Norwegian vacancies you are qualified for.

Tips for job applications

Send an application in English (or in a Scandinavian language if you speak one) with a covering letter and a CV (maximum one page, although CVs for technical candidates might be longer and more detailed).

When sending a spontaneous application, find out the name of a HR representative to send your application to. Write a covering letter (maximum one page) and enclose a CV. Please do not send your CV directly to the EURES services in Norway asking EURES Advisers to distribute it.

Make one application per vacancy or company. If you are applying to a large firm, call or e-mail the recruiter a few days after sending your application to ask if they have read your CV and what they think of it, whether they have received many applications, when you can expect a reply, etc.

Be brief and concise in the description of yourself and your qualifications. Be honest and do not exaggerate. Keep your CV simple and modest. Be honest about your language skills, especially in English. 'Good' English skills are not the same as 'school knowledge' of English.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

It is not common to include a photo.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, handwritten applications are not used in Norway.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

No, it is not.

Making contact by phone

It is common to get in touch with the contact person for more information about the job. Prepare questions relevant to the job/company and call between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Send copies of diplomas/certificates with your application only if this is requested in the job vacancy. If not, send them when the recruiter asks for them. Employers need a certified copy of your diploma and a certified translation (into Norwegian or at least into English).

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

It varies, as does the time that it takes for employers to decide who to hire. Some vacancies indicate the successful candidate can 'start as soon as possible'; others have a starting date three months ahead.

Preparing for an interview

In most cases, you will be asked for an interview in person. In some cases, the first direct contact may be a telephone interview.

Remember that your CV and covering letter are your entrance ticket to an interview. This is where your competence must show.

An interview is based more on your personal abilities and personality in a working situation. The chemistry between you and the recruiter might be decisive. Be interested, motivated, ask questions and dare to speak for yourself and give your opinion.

There may be only one interview (most common), or two or three (for highly qualified staff). An interview lasts 45-90 minutes on average.

Who will be there?

Anywhere from one to five people will conduct the interview. This may include a trade union and a staff representative, particularly for public sector jobs.

Do we shake hands?

A firm handshake is quite common.

Is there a typical interview structure?

The person responsible for the meeting will tell you about the company and the job. Then you will be given time to present yourself and explain why you have applied. Do not hesitate to ask professional questions about the company and the job. At the end of the interview, you can ask about pay and working conditions. Then the recruiter should inform you about when you will get feedback or a reply.

You will mainly discuss professional items, but the recruiter will evaluate you most on your personal way of presenting your professional qualifications. Keep calm and be yourself. Show that you will add value to the company. Do not try to impress the recruiter; be honest, modest, and down to earth.

When is a question out of bounds?

Discrimination on the grounds of political allegiance, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or trade union membership is illegal, unless these topics have direct relevance to the job. You do not have to answer questions about pregnancies or whether you are on some kind of benefit. However, use your common sense. Employers expect you to show initiative, assume responsibility for your own work and be capable of working independently.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Norwegian employers check references systematically. List your referees at the end of your CV. They will need to tell the Norwegian recruiter (in English or a Scandinavian language) about your previous professional duties, and your professional and personal abilities.

Letters of recommendation are not required or commonly requested unless you cannot supply any referees.

Jobs in some sectors (e.g. security, education, and care) require you to show proof that you have no previous criminal convictions, but this will be mentioned in the job advertisement.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Pay is generally expressed in monthly terms, or for a seasonal job it may be expressed in hourly terms. It is not often necessary to negotiate, as there are standard contracts. However, it may be wise to check the salary level with the trade union responsible for the field so that you have an idea of what to expect. Negotiation of your salary usually takes place once you have been offered the job.

Holiday pay is regulated by law and included in your pay. Trade unions negotiate pay and extra statutory benefits at national level. Trade union representatives are responsible for local negotiations at the workplace, but only for their members.

Is a trial period likely?

It is not uncommon for the employer and jobseeker to agree upon a trial period. The length of the trial period can't exceed six months (as long as the employee is not absent during this time).

How long is the standard probationary period?

An employer may decide to hire you on a probationary period to start with. This will normally not exceed six months.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Many companies do refund travel expenses for interviews. However, this should be checked with the employer beforehand.

When will I hear the result?

If you are hired, you will receive written confirmation and possibly a call beforehand. If you have been rejected, you will be usually notified by post or e-mail.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

If you are rejected, you can call the recruiter and ask why, or ask which qualifications the person who got the job had that you did not have. This can give you an idea of where you stand professionally.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

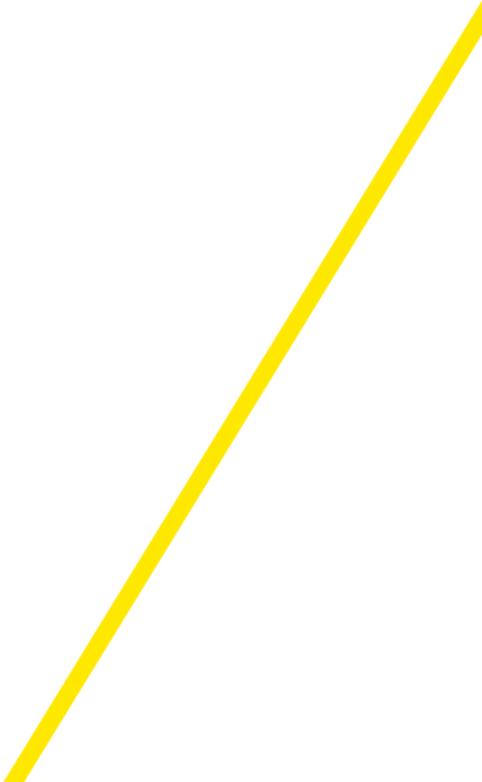
You must be punctual. If you are prevented from attending at the given time, ask as soon as possible for a new appointment.

Dress-code tips

Norway has a casual dress code. The 'white shirt and tie' rule applies only to candidates for management-level positions in finance, real estate, consultancy or where being the representative is a big part of the job. Check the company's homepage for photos of staff and see how they are dressed.

Any further advice?

Generally speaking, do not try to impress recruiters by the way you look. Impress them by your professional and personal skills. Keep things simple and get to the point. Norwegian business culture is somewhat informal compared to that in other European countries.





AUSTRIA



Official language - German



Government - Federal parliamentary republic



Population - 8.8 million



Capital - Vienna



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +43



Internet code - .at

WHY GO TO WORK IN AUSTRIA?

Compact yet varied, traditional yet modern, cultured yet adventurous, Austria is rich in lifestyle options; from the elegance of Vienna in the east to a flavour of the Mediterranean in the south and the beauty of the mountains in the west. The country is a Mecca for winter sports enthusiasts, and is a renowned historical, musical, and cultural hot spot.

Austria is a great place to work for qualified personnel. There is also consistent demand for workers in tourism, as well as in the hotel and catering sector.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Vacancies are published in newspapers or online. In general, you need to write a covering letter and send your CV. The company will consider the applications and contact a selection of candidates for interview. For management jobs, you may be invited for an assessment.

Tips for job applications

Application documents should be written in German unless the vacancy notice stipulates another language. Applications are frequently sent by e-mail or online. It is also common practice to send applications to firms that have not advertised a vacancy (known as applying speculatively or 'on spec').

If you apply spontaneously, take the initiative to make sure that if there are no current vacancies, your application will be stored in a database of potential candidates. If the company needs someone, this database is often the first to be consulted by the HR department.

Writing your CV

Your CV should be brief, concise, and clearly laid out, presenting the essential facts. It must be adapted to the job offer and should preferably consist of a maximum of two A4 pages.

Previous periods of employment should be arranged chronologically, beginning with your first job, and ending with your most recent one, or vice versa. This also applies to the part covering your education and training.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

Yes, employers are used to applicants enclosing their photo with their covering letter.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, a company will ask explicitly if they require one.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

A lot of companies ask for the European CV/Europass.

Writing your covering letter

Find out the name of your contact person in the company (e.g. the HR manager) and address him or her by the correct title (e.g. Dear Dr Müller). Refer to the job advert or a telephone call in your letter. Draw attention to three of your strongest points (professional experience, professional and personal qualifications, motivation, and commitment) and explain why you are the ideal candidate for the position. Request a personal interview.

Making contact by phone

When you contact a company by phone, it is important to know the name of your contact person. Ask for them by name. Prepare a short, clear, personal presentation, explain what kind of job offer you are calling about and try to make an appointment for an interview. Avoid a noisy background or people talking to you when you are calling, especially if you are using a mobile phone.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Yes, copies of your educational and training certificates should be enclosed (your school-leaving certificate, latest vocational training certificates, additional qualifications, labour certification or at least confirmation of periods of work). All certificates should be translated into German, except when you are applying for a job in an international company.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

Most jobs are filled within one to three months. However, for specialist jobs (in management or those that require a lot of experience), candidates will need to go through several interviews and possibly take part in an assessment. In some cases, job offers announce that the contract will start six months later.

Preparing for an interview

If there are a lot of candidates, companies tend to organise pre-selections or tests. For key positions or management jobs, assessment centres are often used.

Employers are looking for candidates who match the profile described as closely as possible. They expect applicants to show how their qualifications and experiences fit with this profile, talk about their professional and personal strengths and weaknesses, and answer questions about their motivation, social skills, and prospects as an employee. You also have to be prepared for questions about your CV (e.g. if you have changed jobs a lot).

You can generally expect employers to be looking for a dialogue in which they can learn more about you, your qualifications, and your expectations of the job. There will also be room for your questions about working hours and days, activities, and job content. The atmosphere is friendly, but objective and impartial.

Candidates should be well-informed about the company: what it does or produces, its size, whether it is centralised or decentralised and whether it is based abroad, as well as about its image and philosophy.

Verbal communication is important, notably articulation and presentation in line with the job applied for (clear motivation for the job, social skills, teamwork skills, authority and leadership

skills, stress resistance, flexibility). Pay attention to non-verbal communication: punctuality, attitude, eye contact, gestures, and facial expressions.

The interview usually takes about one hour. A video conference may be used, but Skype is used only in exceptional circumstances and when recruiting for academic positions.

Who will be there?

The following people may attend: the head of the department offering the job, HR manager, and a representative of the employees' council.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, it is standard to shake hands.

Is there a typical interview structure?

In a normal interview, it is obligatory that questions relate to the conditions described in the job ad and aim to find out if you have the right skills and qualifications. For the sake of objectivity, all of the applicants should be asked the same questions. However, the employer may ask for more information on an individual basis or according to the candidate's responses.

When is a question out of bounds?

Federal legislation on equal treatment forbids discrimination on the grounds of age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. The law regulates all the procedures for the publication of job offers, application procedures and the relationships between employer and employees. You do not have to answer questions about pregnancy, family planning or illness and diseases. Discrimination against disabled people is forbidden. Be aware that some employers may not be aware that they are asking prohibited questions.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

If requested, you should be able to supply references from former employers, translated into German, to confirm your qualifications and experience.

A copy of your latest and most advanced diploma should be handed to the company at the latest during the interview. Letters of recommendation are only used when you apply for an academic post. If proof of good conduct is required, this will probably be mentioned in the job ad.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Normally there is room to negotiate pay and working conditions, except in the public sector, where there are fixed pay scales. Negotiations take place with the head of the department that offered you the job.

In general, wages are expressed in monthly terms, including holiday pay and Christmas bonuses. Other non-statutory benefits need to be negotiated individually. For some jobs, the employer will offer you a fixed minimum remuneration and add a variable remuneration that depends on your performance or results at work. For the jobs where it is common to receive a tip from customers (e.g. guesthouses, hotels, etc.), you are often offered a low minimum wage. The tip is considered to be a way of increasing your wage, depending on your own efforts.

There is often room to negotiate your hours of work, flexibility about times and work locations, adapting working time to childcare (kindergarten) availability, etc.

Is a trial period likely?

You may be asked to undertake a one-day work trial. The employer must pay you for it.

How long is the standard probationary period?

One month at the most. During this period, the contract can be ended at any point without any reason being given.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, but if you can prove financial hardship, public employers may offer you financial help for the application procedure.

When will I hear the result?

Employers expect you to contact the company by phone for information on the results of the interview after a specific time. Companies will not always take the initiative to inform you of the results.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

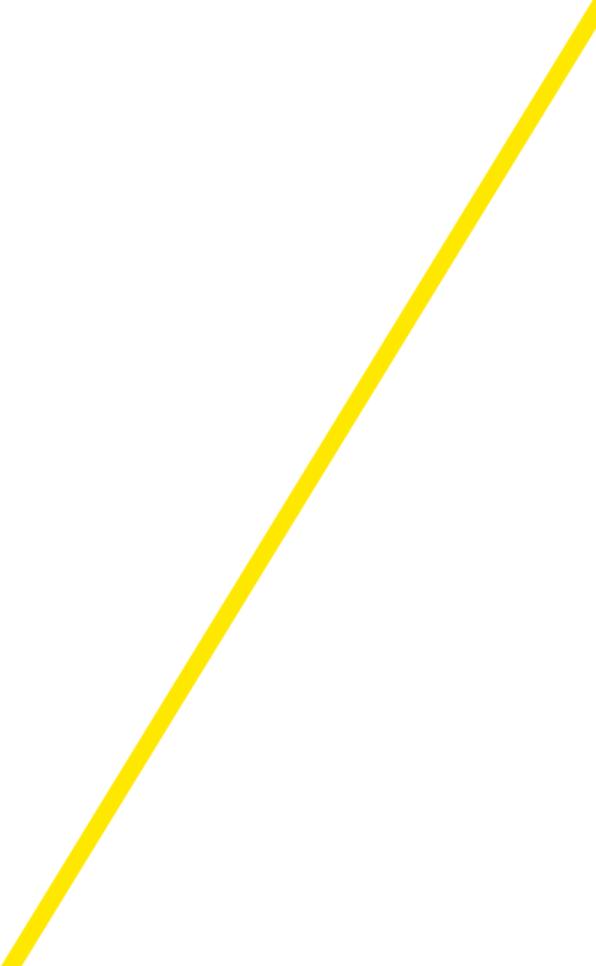
If you have not been selected, you can ask for more information. If you can prove that the law on equal opportunities was not respected, an official intervention is possible.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Employers take punctuality very seriously. Do not arrive late and only postpone or cancel the meeting if you have a valid reason. In such cases (e.g. illness), employers expect you to inform them in advance and to arrange a new appointment for an interview yourself.

Dress-code tips

Dress code depends on the job, the sector, the position, customer contact, representation, company culture, etc. It is important to be authentic when presenting yourself. For men who are applying for responsible positions, a suit is still obligatory. A tie is no longer required.





POLAND



Official language - Polish



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 38 million



Capital - Warsaw



Currency - Polish złoty (PLN)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +48



Internet code - .pl

WHY GO TO WORK IN POLAND?

Poland is blessed with natural beauty, with its 500 km Baltic Sea coast, extensive lakes district and dense forest covering nearly a third of its territory to the mountains in the south.

It is also the only country in Europe to have confidently withstood the widespread financial and economic crisis. Efforts have been made lately to attract international capital and investors to launch new ventures in Poland.

The country has a dynamic and growing ICT sector, with a demand for developers, web designers, software engineers and database administrators. International companies, meanwhile, need people with language skills to work as helpdesk agents, call-desk agents, customer service advisers, content reviewers, game testers, project managers, and financial and logistical specialists.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Jobs are advertised by public employment services (regional and local labour offices), private employment agencies, in newspapers and on online job portals.

Tips for job applications

The most usual application method is to send a CV and covering letter. The employer usually asks for applications to be sent via e-mail or regular mail. In some cases, there are also dedicated IT tools that must be used to apply to a particular employer or employment agency in Poland.

When sending an application electronically, make sure to indicate which vacancy you are applying for, preferably in the subject line.

When applying spontaneously, the jobseeker should also send a CV together with a covering letter. They should also be prepared for an interview.

Writing your CV

The CV should be as concise as possible – it should not exceed one or two A4-size pages of white paper.

The CV should be accompanied by a signed document that gives your consent for your personal data to be processed. The document must include the following wording:

'I hereby express my consent to have my personal data included herein processed for the purposes of the recruitment process in accordance with the Act of 10 May 2018 on the protection of personal data (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 1000) and in accordance with Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council No 2016/679 of 27 April 2016 on the protection of

natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (GDPR).'

What information should I include in my CV?

- **Personal data:** name and surname, address, contact telephone and e-mail
- **Experience:** all types of work that have allowed you to gain experience that relates to the new position
- **Education**
- **Professional qualifications and additional skills**

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

A photo is an advantage, but it is not obligatory.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

There is no preference for handwritten CVs, although covering letters are generally handwritten.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

It is accepted, but not widely used.

Templates of CVs and covering letters are available on the Portal of the Public Employment Services in the folder 'For the unemployed and job seekers', or on the Europass website.

Writing your covering letter

The covering letter should be a maximum of one A4 page and should justify why you have applied for the job. It should be more personal than the CV.

Making contact by phone

In telephone contacts, applicants should introduce themselves and state why they are calling. Do not ask anybody to call on your behalf, and be prepared to note down information that you receive from the employer.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Only attach copies of your certificates, diploma, etc. to your CV when the job vacancy requests them. Employers take these into consideration when deciding whether or not to invite you for an interview.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

It usually takes up to a month or two, depending on the employer.

Preparing for an interview

Applicants should gather as much information as possible about the company before the interview. They should be prepared to show their motivation and discuss what they can do, what they know and who they are, as well as have questions of their own.

Employers focus on whether a candidate has appropriate professional experience and knowledge, and whether they are self-reliant and able to think creatively. They look for communicative people with a positive attitude.

Who will be there?

Usually two representatives of the employer are present at the interview. If there are tests, the candidate may be alone or attend a group session.

Do we shake hands?

The employer or recruiter will decide whether to shake your hand. You should not take the initiative.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Usually the meeting takes 45 minutes to an hour. If there are tests, it can take 2 to 3 hours. In general, each interview has a specific structure.

- **Introduction:** the first part of the interview is informative. The person conducting the interview informs the applicant about the conditions of the meeting, the job, range of duties, etc. and tries to build a good atmosphere.
- **Exploration of work experience:** in this stage, the recruiter will ask factual questions to gain information. These will focus on work experience, education, skills, competences, etc.
- **Interpretation of facts:** this stage consists of an interpretation of facts collected during the second stage. The interviewer asks applicants about how they feel their educational and work experience relates to the job in question. This helps to reveal a candidate's motivation, attitude, and the value they attach to the job.
- **Personal opinions, thoughts, points of view:** during this stage, candidates give their personal opinion and show the way they think in relation to work decisions made (the employer or person who conducts the interview asks questions about the motives for personal decisions).
- **Summing up:** in this stage, candidates can ask questions on topics that have not been covered. The interviewers should give information about the subsequent stages of the recruitment process.

Prepare for tricky questions, such as the following:

- What will you be doing in 5 years' time?
- How would you solve a conflict at work?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- What are your salary expectations?

When is a question out of bounds?

There are laws against discrimination on the grounds of sex, age, disability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation, political beliefs, religious affiliation, and trade union membership. An applicant has the right to refuse to answer discriminatory questions.

Questions about your sexual preferences, political allegiance, pregnancy, or religion are not acceptable.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

References are not commonly used. Instead, submit confirmation of your employment in written form and documents connected with your education. If you wish to submit references anyway, cite former employers or teachers as referees. You normally do not need letters of recommendation, although these can be helpful if written by a prominent employer. Jobs in the public sector require a statement that applicants have no criminal or tax offence record.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Terms of remuneration are fixed in:

- company agreements or collective bargaining agreements (made by the employers with active company trade union organisations);

- pay regulations (in the case of employers with at least 20 employees who are not subject to a company agreement or a collective bargaining agreement); and/or
- employment contracts.

Employees are usually paid per unit of time worked (hour, day or month) or, in some cases, per unit of work completed (piecework). The employee is paid at least once a month, on a fixed pre-arranged date.

Candidates should negotiate their pay with the employer before signing the contract.

Bonuses depend on the results achieved. During holiday leave, an employee receives the normal pay agreed on in the employment contract. Non-statutory benefits may include meal vouchers, a pension scheme, health insurance, a Christmas bonus, a reward for special achievements and performance, and an encouragement of personal development, especially in the private sector.

There is limited room for negotiation in the public sector.

Is a trial period likely?

Employers prefer to ask for a one to three month probationary period rather than a one-day work trial.

How long is the standard probationary period?

See above.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Not usually. This should be negotiated.

When will I hear the result?

Within one or two weeks. If you do not, call the employer.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

If you were told that you would be contacted after the interview and the deadline has passed, call and ask for the result of the interview. There is nothing wrong with asking. It proves that you are interested in the job.

If you are not offered the job, you may ask for the reason for this decision. Try to find out what factors made them decide to reject you. This may help you in the future.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Always be on time; respect your interviewer's time.

Dress-code tips

Dress professionally for a job interview, even if the work environment is casual.

For men: a suit in an unobtrusive colour, a long-sleeved shirt and tie, dark socks, and conservative leather shoes; little or no jewellery; a neat, professional hairstyle; not too much aftershave; neatly trimmed nails; and a portfolio or briefcase.

For women: a dark suit with a skirt long enough so you can sit comfortably, coordinated blouse, conservative shoes, neutral tights; a modest amount of jewellery (no dangling earrings or arms full of bracelets); professional hairstyle; make-up and perfume in moderation; clean, neatly manicured nails; and a portfolio or briefcase.



PORTUGAL



Official language - Portuguese



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 10.3 million



Capital - Lisbon



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +351



Internet code - .pt

WHY GO TO WORK IN PORTUGAL?

Mainland Portugal and its archipelagos – the Azores and Madeira – are very popular worldwide tourist destinations. Besides tourism, services are the largest employers. Manufacturing employs less than 20 % of the workforce. It is based on traditional products such as textiles, clothing, footwear, cork, wood products, beverages, ceramics, glass, fish canning, metalworking, oil refining and chemicals. However, in the past two decades, the country has increased its role in Europe's automotive, pharmaceutical, aircraft production and IT sectors, and has a world-class mould-making industry.

Less than 2 in 10 young people are out of work, although wages are still below the average EU level. Nevertheless, there is an increasing demand for specific employees including seasonal tourism and agriculture workers; customer service, shared service centre and business processing outsourcing workers (mostly professionals with language skills that are difficult to find in Portugal); medical doctors and nurses; and specialist engineering and IT workers.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Job vacancies are mainly posted on online job websites (private and public) and, increasingly, on LinkedIn (for qualified profiles). There are a few job websites where you can find opportunities for non-Portuguese speakers. Traditional advertising methods are still commonly used as well: newspapers, job centres, private employment agencies, professional and trade union associations, supermarkets, municipalities, parishes, and other public facilities.

Due to the current labour market situation, there are many open job vacancies. However, if you want a specific job in a specific company, then you should be proactive: apply spontaneously, place adverts, post CVs on dedicated job websites and at university careers offices, use social media (namely LinkedIn) and even set up a web page/online portfolio or profile.

In a country where more than 90 % of firms are small, personal contacts are still one of the most effective means of finding out about vacancies and reaching a potential employer. If you have a social network in Portugal, don't be shy to use it.

Tips for job applications

It is almost impossible to meet all the requirements set out in some job adverts. Do not be put off by this; if you meet most of them, do not hesitate to apply. Portuguese employers can be flexible on this matter.

As a rule, applications require a covering letter and a CV (although the letter may be omitted and/or replaced by an e-mail if it is not explicitly requested).

When applying by e-mail, include the covering letter directly in the body of the e-mail. Only the CV should be attached. Write short paragraphs, and avoid informal symbols and abbreviations commonly used in e-mail and text messages. When applying by post, the covering letter should be no longer than one A4 side and typed.

Application forms are also widely used in Portugal, for applicants with or without qualifications, and come in many varieties (increasingly in an online format). Some are fairly standardised, while others focus mainly on previous professional experience and invite open-ended replies. Standard questions cover personal information, education, experience, and knowledge of languages.

Take care to respect deadlines, particularly if you are applying from abroad. And aim to submit your application early, in order to participate from the beginning of the selection process and make sure that the company has not already chosen another candidate.

Spontaneous applications can be quite effective. Many Portuguese companies will store CVs they receive (in compliance with General Data Protection Rules) and look through these first when they have a vacancy, to save on the time and cost of placing adverts.

Writing your CV

Prepare your CV in Portuguese if possible. It should be clear and short (no more than two pages) and adjusted to each application. Generally, Portuguese CVs present information in reverse chronological order (starting with experience and qualifications acquired more recently).

The functional model (for professionals with broad experience) and the infographic model (on one page, particularly for young people with less professional experience) are also increasingly used.

What information should I include in my CV?

The following points should be mentioned on a CV:

- **Personal details:** address, telephone or mobile number, e-mail address, LinkedIn page, Skype address, etc.

- **Professional experience**
- **Education:** highest level of schooling
- **Vocational training:** training courses and internships, and membership of professional associations (where applicable)
- **Other skills:** foreign language and IT skills, driving licence (particularly when it is a requirement of the offer)
- **Leisure activities/personal interests (optional)**

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

The inclusion of a passport-sized professional-style photo on a CV may be a plus for many employers, although it is neither general practice nor mandatory, as a rule.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

Handwritten applications have been abandoned in recent years, although a few employers may still ask for them. You may want to check this if you have a preliminary phone contact.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Portuguese employers are used to accepting the Europass CV format. However, they prefer the Portuguese style CV, in reverse chronological order, or a functional CV, on two pages maximum. Infographic CVs (no more than one page) have become increasingly popular, mostly if you have little or no experience.

Some employers are also open to creative CVs (as long as they are informative). These may help you to stand out from the crowd.

Writing your covering letter

Covering letters, either in response to an advertisement or presenting an unsolicited application, are normally short and simple – and never more than one A4 page. The content should highlight how your experience, qualifications and expectations correspond to the professional profile sought by the employer.

Making contact by phone

Call only if this approach is suggested in the advert. If you do so, try to speak Portuguese and introduce yourself clearly. Ask who you should speak to and address them by name. Have your CV to hand and be ready to introduce yourself and answer questions. Prepare your own pertinent questions and note down any interview arrangements. When setting up an interview, ask which documents you need to bring with you.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Not unless it is mentioned in the advert. Take a copy with you to the interview, however. If your application is successful, documents may be requested when formalising the contract.

When taking copies of diplomas or qualifications to the interview, be selective, and be aware that Portuguese employers may be unfamiliar with your country of origin's education and training system and the relevant knowledge and skills content. Documents such as the Europass diploma supplement or certificate supplement may be more useful.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

Job adverts may indicate the job is to start 'as soon as possible', but a selection and recruitment procedure may take up to two months on average. Low-skilled or temporary jobs can be filled in a week or two.

Preparing for an interview

Interviewers place the most value on professional experience, vocational training and knowledge of the company and its main sector of activity.

You should take certain documents to the interview, such as copies of your CV, diplomas, evidence of previous experience (certificates of employment), recommendations from former employers and other documents you think may be useful.

An interview typically takes no longer than 30-45 minutes. When applied, tests may take half a day, breaks included.

Who will be there?

Generally one interviewer and no more than two, as a rule. With two, you will likely have someone from the HR department and someone from the technical department/team that you will be working for.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, you should shake hands upon invitation.

Is there a typical interview structure?

There is no typical structure, although you might expect questions on:

- personal background (where you were born, where you studied, family, etc.);
- your CV: your educational/career background, professional experience and other activities/hobbies;
- your motivation with regards to the company and the job; and
- your personal and social skills (open questions about yourself, your attitudes, your strengths and weaknesses).

At a second stage, the interviewer will give you more information on the company and the role. At this point, you may ask about autonomy and responsibility levels, travelling requirements, working hours, expected wage, etc.

At the end, the employer will usually share with you when you can expect to be informed of their decision. You should then thank them for the opportunity to meet.

Recruitment interviews using Skype and other video conferencing platforms are becoming more and more common, and are likely to be used for the first selection with international candidates.

For long-term positions, the recruitment process may include two or more interviews.

When is a question out of bounds?

Questions about religious affiliation, political preferences and sexual orientation are considered to be strictly private matters. There is, however, a general perception that these are more frequently addressed (though in a subtle way) than in some other European countries.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

It is not yet common practice in Portugal to ask for references or to go through letters of recommendation, although some employers might see these as a plus. If this is the case, they will ask for them, either in the original advert or after having an interview with you.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Pay is usually expressed on a monthly basis. Remember that in regular work contracts in Portugal, you are paid for 14 months per year (i.e. including holiday pay and Christmas bonuses, usually paid in May/June and November/ December respectively). The exception to this is mainly when you are recruited by a multinational company, where pay is usually negotiated as an annual package that includes subsidies and other fringe benefits.

Annual (or quarterly) productivity bonuses are increasingly part of the remuneration policies of medium to large companies, mostly multinationals (they also depend on your role and responsibilities within the company). There may also be scope for a bonus payment at the end of the year depending on profits or revenue. However, this is still not general practice in the majority of microenterprises and SMEs – which make up more than 90% of the employers in Portugal.

Other benefits might include: improved health insurance cover or medical services, in the case of larger companies; and a mobile phone and company car, mostly for sales roles and senior staff (managers and directors), although this practice is declining.

Is a trial period likely?

It is very likely. Portuguese labour law foresees probationary periods in the most regular types of contracts. In addition, many employers prefer to use short-term (e.g. 6-12 month) contracts to trial an employee.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The legal probationary period varies according to contract length and complexity of the role. For short-term contracts, it may be up to one month. For permanent contracts, it is usually between three and six months.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

This is not common practice, unless the employer is desperately looking for your specific skills, professional qualification, or profile. However, if you are an EU/EEA citizen and comply with certain eligibility requirements, then EURES' targeted mobility schemes can provide support in this area.

When will I hear the result?

Unfortunately, it is not unusual to receive no reply to an application. Once you are interviewed, you might ask when you can expect to be informed of the decision. If the employer does not respond within this period, a polite reminder phone call will show your interest in the job. You should not be too insistent though.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

It is not very common to ask for feedback following an interview, but it may be seen as a sign of interest from your end.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Try to arrive at least 10 minutes before the interview.

Dress-code tips

Dress for the occasion. Even if smart dress is not important for the job, it will show your professionalism and respect for the employer or interviewer. Avoid too much make-up or jewellery, piercings, visible tattoos, and radical hairstyles.



ROMANIA



Official language - Romanian



Government - Presidential republic



Population - 19.5 million



Capital - Bucharest



Currency - Romanian leu (RON)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +40



Internet code - .ro

WHY GO TO WORK IN ROMANIA?

Romania boasts a range of beautiful natural attractions including the Danube delta, the Black Sea coast, and the Carpathian Mountains. The county is also home to the painted monasteries of Bucovina (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the historic region of Transylvania, where tourists can enjoy beautiful medieval towns, well-preserved churches and amazing castles while finding out more about local culture and traditions.

Romania has attracted considerable foreign investment and seen rapid growth of its private sector in recent years, partly thanks to it having one of the lowest tax rates in the EU (a flat tax of 16 %). Wages have increased over the last few years, particularly in the medical, education and construction sectors, while the country's unemployment rate is lower than the EU average.

Romania has a large industrial and agricultural base, although these sectors are declining in favour of commerce, ICT, and tourism. According to employer organisations, there is a demand for medical professionals, ICT workers, tourism personnel, unskilled and qualified workers, electricians, and welders.

LOOKING FOR WORK

The public employment service (ANOFM) advertises job vacancies on its website (anofm.ro) and social media page ([facebook.com/fiiinformat](https://www.facebook.com/fiiinformat)). Job vacancies can also be found on the websites of private employment agencies, in newspapers and on online job portals.

The websites of major companies usually include a career section for those who are interested in applying. Employers in Romania are obliged to notify the public employment service of all of their vacancies and if they intend to recruit international workers.

Tips for job applications

The most common application method is to send a CV and covering letter.

Any application should meet the job requirements and provide a first impression of the applicant's profile. Follow the instructions mentioned in the job vacancy description and tailor the application to each employer. Application documents should be written in Romanian unless the vacancy description stipulates another language.

In the covering letter (maximum one page), describe your reasons for applying for the job concerned. A covering letter is important for highly skilled posts and less important for jobs that require a low level of qualifications/education.

Employers or recruiters may organise more than one interview and it is common for the first of these to be conducted by phone. In such cases, the recruiter asks for more information about the candidate's skills, abilities, and professional experience.

Writing your CV

The entire CV should be no more than two pages long. A reverse chronological resume is preferred (with the most recent job listed first).

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

No, but you can include one if you want to.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, printed applications are preferred.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

While the Europass format is not yet widely used, the public employment service and EURES Romania recommend this format, and public institutions have begun to request it. You can download the form from the Cedefop Europass website or fill it in online.

Making contact by phone

Phone contact should be made to set an appointment for an interview. Prepare a clear, personal presentation and explain what kind of job offer you are calling about.

You can also call if you sent your CV a few weeks ago and have not had a reply. Introduce yourself, remind the employer that you recently submitted a CV and mention which job you are interested in. Prepare your questions in advance and be concise.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

You should not attach your original education diplomas or employment references to your job application; instead, bring them to your job interview. Other documents (e.g. proof of linguistic competence and computer skills) are also important.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

Two to four weeks in general, but it depends on the company's selection process and your availability.

Preparing for an interview

Many companies propose a phone interview before deciding if they want to meet you face to face. In this case, it is important to prepare as you would for a proper interview, and express your personality clearly from the start.

Applicants should gather as much information as possible about the company before the interview. They should be prepared to show their motivation and discuss what they can do, what they know and who they are, as well as have questions of their own. The recruiter will expect a professional attitude and will have a frank discussion with you. Focus on the details of your CV. Employers know that the skills and abilities section of a CV is usually somewhat exaggerated.

When meeting an employer in person, bring your CV as well as any other supporting documents: high school diploma, university degrees (authenticated), training certificates, criminal record, medical examination certificate, certificates or references from previous jobs, etc.

Who will be there?

Commonly, a representative of the HR staff in charge of the recruitment process, the head of the department for which the company is recruiting and, in some cases, the general director/president of the company.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, it is polite to shake hands with all of the people participating in the interview.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Once the recruiter has decided to meet you in person, the interview can last from 30 minutes to 2 hours. The interview is usually job-oriented, but there is an increasing tendency to cover personality, skills and attitude, intelligence, and general behaviour as well. All aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication are important.

The structure of the interview may be as follows:

- small talk to put you at ease;
- presentation by the recruiter and the applicant;
- questions about your experience, skills and knowledge; verification of information in the CV;
- the recruiter informs you about the requirements and main duties of the job and about the company in general: which sectors it operates in, its achievements, etc.;
- your questions, related to the job, working conditions, etc.

You are advised to prepare questions before the meeting, but be flexible and try to think of others that may come up during the interview.

The atmosphere should be open, relaxed, and communicative. Make sure you adopt a professional attitude and that you explain your motivation for the job.

When is a question out of bounds?

National legislation on equal treatment forbids discrimination on grounds of age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. Discrimination against disabled people is also forbidden.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Employers normally ask for references or letters of recommendation.

Proof of good conduct (i.e. whether you have a criminal record) and a medical certificate are usually requested. Normally you need to be able to present these documents for every job.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

There is normally room to negotiate pay and working conditions, except in the public sector, where there are fixed pay levels.

You can negotiate the pay, the non-statutory benefits, and other benefits, particularly if you have a lot of experience related to the position that you are applying for. Pay is usually expressed as a monthly rate.

Holiday pay and annual bonuses are negotiated separately. If offered, the most common non-statutory benefits are meal vouchers, holiday pay and private medical insurance. The pay level should start from the minimum gross salary (as established each year by the government) and increases depending on your work experience and education, and the complexity of the job. Usually the HR department is responsible for the negotiation.

Is a trial period likely?

A trial period is possible, as part of the probationary period (see below).

How long is the standard probationary period?

The Romanian labour code mentions a probationary period for work contracts concluded for an indefinite period (up to 90 days for non-managerial posts and up to 120 days for managerial roles) and for work contracts with a determined period (from 5 days to 45 days, depending on work contract duration). For people with disabilities, the probationary period is a maximum of 30 days.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, the employer will not usually cover these costs.

When will I hear the result?

The recruiter will inform you at the interview whether or not you have been accepted or when you will be contacted again.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

If you were told that you would be contacted after the interview and the deadline has passed, call and ask for the result of the interview. Employers do not usually inform unsuccessful candidates of the interview outcome. However, it is acceptable to call the employer for feedback.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Punctuality is very important; you must respect the interview schedule. If you cannot arrive in time for the interview, you should give notice as soon as possible.

Dress-code tips

Be decently and respectably dressed. Smart-casual is normally sufficient, although a suit is recommended in the business world.

Any further advice?

Try to find out as much as possible about the company, people, and corporate culture. Prepare well for the application process, and be positive, realistic, and honest during the interview.

SWITZERLAND



Official languages - French, German, Italian, Romansh



Government - Representative direct democracy



Population - 8 million



Capital - Bern



Currency - Swiss franc (CHF)



Member EU or EEA - EFTA



Phone code - +41



Internet code - .ch

WHY GO TO WORK IN SWITZERLAND?

Switzerland is a multilingual country with a wealth of beautiful landscapes that offer a range of winter and summer sightseeing and sport activities. The Swiss labour market is known for its stability and low unemployment rate. Switzerland is also ideal for highly qualified employees, as the quality of life is very high and salaries are substantial. This also applies to skilled international workers and executives.

Switzerland has one of the most competitive economies in the world thanks to its highly developed service sector. Chemical and pharmaceutical production and mechanical engineering/metals are the two main branches of the industrial sector and have a strong export focus. The watchmaking industry is Switzerland's third largest exporter and is renowned worldwide for its high quality, tradition, and innovation.

The main drivers of the Swiss economy are its small and medium-sized enterprises, which account for two thirds of all jobs. However, a large number of multinationals have their headquarters in Switzerland and are also major economic players.

Over a quarter of permanent employees in Switzerland are foreign nationals, and many more are short-stay workers or cross-border commuters, due to the geographic position of the country.

Switzerland is one of the highest spenders on research and development in the world. Highly skilled workers in engineering and technology, pharmaceuticals, consulting, banking, insurance and IT, business and system analytics are in great demand on the Swiss labour market.



LOOKING FOR WORK

Besides newspapers and the Internet, in Switzerland it is common to ask people in your personal network if they have contacts in a company who can let you know about staff needs. Based on this information, you can write a simple application letter.

Tips for job applications

Written application forms are widely used to recruit staff for specialised profiles and management functions. For less-skilled profiles, initial contact is usually made by phone or via the Internet. Do not send documents that give the impression of having been prepared for general use. Never mention references or letters of recommendation in your covering letter or CV.

Another way of seeking work is to submit a speculative application (i.e. contacting an employer without knowing whether a vacancy actually exists). In this case, make your covering letter as specific as possible. It should be accompanied only by your CV. Certificates of employment and diplomas should be provided only if requested or should be taken to the interview. Prospective employers will tend to disregard speculative applications in the form of standard letters.

Writing your CV

The CV should be a maximum of two A4 pages and tailored to the position.

What information should I include in my CV?

Your CV should include the following:

- **Personal details:** full name, address, telephone number, date of birth and nationality.
- **Experience:** professional experience and any work experience obtained during your training.

- **Education:** school, higher education, and vocational training. Try to specify which Swiss degrees or other qualifications your diplomas correspond to.
- **Additional information:** knowledge of languages, computer skills, specific aptitudes, and personal interests (leisure activities, clubs, etc.)

In Switzerland, great importance is attached to work certificates, in which the former employer expresses their level of satisfaction.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

Yes, a professional photo is welcome because it shows how you would represent your potential employer.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

Applications are usually sent via e-mail.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Although the Europass format allows information to be presented in a clear and coherent manner, the Swiss job market prefers a CV with a reverse chronological order or functional order.

Writing your covering letter

The covering letter should encourage the personnel officer to take a closer look at your application. It must be typed and should not exceed one A4 page in length.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

State the reasons why you are interested in the job and the enterprise, as well as the skills and experience you could bring to the company. End the letter by suggesting a personal interview.

Making contact by phone

In the tourism, construction, and cleaning sectors, this is the best way to get a job.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

If specified in the advertisement, include a copy of your highest-level diploma with your covering letter. However, never include this if you apply spontaneously. Hand it over at your first meeting at the company or on request.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

Anything from one week for jobs in hotels and restaurants, to several weeks for management jobs in public administration or a multinational company.

Preparing for an interview

Research the company in advance: find out about the composition of the management board, the number of employees, the economic sector in which it operates, its competitors and its customers. Look up its environmental policy, its attitude to fair trade and the existence of a social or ethical charter. Be aware of its image overall, and as an employer.

The most common interview questions related to your personal competences are questions about your strengths and weaknesses, your flexibility and geographical mobility, your availability and salary expectations.

Interviewers take into account your knowledge of the language used for the job, clothing, politeness, tone of voice and the respect shown to the interviewers. Make sure you are well prepared and can give positive answers to tricky questions.

It is important to give specific examples of situations that refer to the answers required and prove that you really do have experience with these cases (situation, task, action, or result). For job offers that require knowledge of different languages, the interviewers might switch to one of these languages during the interview, so be honest on your CV when indicating your language proficiency.

Who will be there?

This depends on the job. Assuming you are invited for a face-to-face interview, you are likely to meet your prospective manager and possible representatives from the HR department and other interested parties. In small companies, it may just be the employer.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, shake hands with everyone present at the interview.

Is there a typical interview structure?

An interview has a very specific structure: the interviewer introduces himself/herself, sets the time frame for the interview and its goals, and gives a brief presentation of the company and the job. They then ask candidates to present themselves and explain their motivation. After that come more detailed questions. At the end of the interview, applicants are asked to state their salary expectations and, if they are still interested in the job, a new meeting may be scheduled.

A minimum of two interviews is usual. Each takes 90 minutes on average (under an hour for less-skilled jobs).

If the interviewer is an HR professional, about half of the questions will focus on your social and personal competencies. Use the opportunity to show your motivation for the job and try to highlight all of your skills and strengths.

The candidate must show a real interest in the job, be frank and honest, and listen actively. They should ask at the first interview if taking notes is possible. They should also wait to be invited to ask their own questions.

When is a question out of bounds?

The following subjects are considered private: sexuality, intention to marry, political allegiance, pay in previous jobs, state of health and forced resignation from previous jobs. Nevertheless, some employers may ask a female candidate about her family plans.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

You should be able to provide names of people who can act as referees, if asked. Letters of recommendation are rarely used, except when work certificates are not available. If you need proof of good conduct, this is usually mentioned in the job announcement.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

To negotiate a good contract and working conditions, you should be familiar with normal practice in the sector and not be too fussy. Some existing labour agreements stipulate binding minimum working conditions and wages for entire industries (hospitality, construction, etc.) or individual companies. In the public and semi-public sectors, there is little room to negotiate.

For minimum and low-wage jobs, it may be possible to agree an increase of about 5-10 % of the company's proposal. For management jobs, it is often the candidate who makes the first proposal on pay. For this to be acceptable, it is important to know the sector and company habits. Remember that there are big regional differences in pay in Switzerland. In many enterprises, women are paid at least 15 % less than men.

A 13th month's wage is considered a normal part of remuneration. Some companies even offer a 14th month's wage. Bonuses are only given if you achieve your targets.

Pay in Switzerland is quite high but does not include many non-statutory benefits, except for top management jobs. The most common non-statutory benefits that you can negotiate are: part of your travel to work may be considered as work time, medical insurance, additional employer contributions to a retirement fund and a company car. These benefits are negotiable except when they have already been negotiated in general agreements between employer associations and trade unions.

Is a trial period likely?

Work trials are common for low-skilled jobs. For hotel and cleaning jobs, a one-day trial is usual. This must be paid. You can refuse a trial only if the employer asks you to do it unpaid. Assessments may take one or two days, but you will not be paid for them.

How long is the standard probationary period?

At the start of any contract there is a probationary period, which is often used as a test period. This can last for three months at most. During this period, you can resign or be fired immediately as long as contractual leave times are respected.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

In general, employers do not cover your travel costs. Out-of-state interviews can be costly, so a phone screening or initial Skype interview might be suggested.

When will I hear the result?

You will hear by phone, letter, or e-mail. Only when you have written confirmation can you consider the procedure to be concluded.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

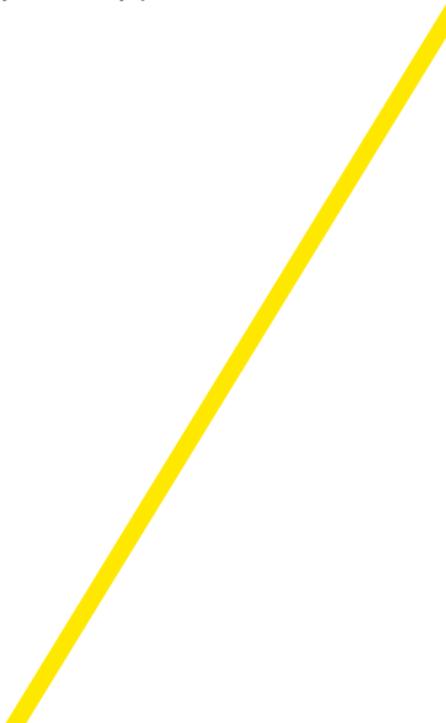
The employer does not expect you to follow up on the interview or test results, but you can always say that you would like to have feedback and see how the employer reacts.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Arrive a little in advance of the interview. You can expect the employer to be on time as well.

Dress-code tips

Find out about the dress code for the sector and the job and do not overdress. Flashy clothes and jewellery are only appropriate for particular jobs such as sales for jewellery or luxury products.





SLOVENIA



Official language - Slovenian



Government - Parliamentary republic



Population - 2.1 million



Capital - Ljubljana



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +386



Internet code - .si

WHY GO TO WORK IN SLOVENIA?

Slovenia appeals to hikers and skiers thanks to its beautiful landscapes and enviable climate. Lying on the south of the Alps, it boasts sunny alpine meadows covered in wildflowers, a good stretch of balmy Mediterranean coastline and lush forest coverage on 58 % of its territory.

Slovenia is export-orientated and its economic performance since 2014 has been good. The labour market is short of mechanical, electrical and electronics engineers; medical professionals; software developers; catering staff; heavy goods vehicle drivers; and welders. Humanities graduates, designers, architects, and unskilled workers are among those facing the most difficulties finding work.

LOOKING FOR WORK

As well as advertising job vacancies online, in the media or through recruitment agencies, public sector employers and companies with majority state ownership are obliged to notify the employment service of all vacancies. They also indicate if they wish to recruit international workers from EEA or non-member countries.

The employment service of Slovenia publishes vacancies on its website, the EURES portal and other media. Jobseekers can also register in the employment service CV database, which enables employers to get in touch with suitable candidates.

'We are also very aware of the importance of face-to-face contact and participate yearly in the largest job fair in Slovenia, which is held in Ljubljana. This year, around 6 000 jobseekers visited the fair. The EURES village hosted EURES Advisers from seven countries. The presentations on job opportunities in Austria and Germany were very well received. Jobseekers are now ready to make the move!'

Mateja Grajzar, *EURES Adviser, Slovenia*

Tips for job applications

Most job applications comprise a covering letter and CV. Adapt the content of these documents to the employer's expectations and the job requirements, and use facts and examples to outline what you can bring to the position.

An application is usually written in Slovenian, but for workers from other countries, it may be written in another language, most frequently English, German, or Italian, especially for cross-border positions or when applying for a job in an international company.

When making a spontaneous application, consider the following opening suggestions:

- 'I have been a customer of yours for a long time and I think I know your field of work very well. That is why I would like to join your company.'
- 'Perhaps in the near future you will need a colleague with the experience and abilities that I have. Please allow me to introduce myself.'

Writing your CV

Your CV should consist of a maximum of two A4 pages. Previous periods of employment should be arranged in reverse chronological order. This also applies to the section that covers your education and training.

Go on to list your professional training, employment experience, skills, achievements, and knowledge of foreign languages. Explain why you believe you could be useful.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

No, with the exception of jobs that include direct contact with clients.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

This is extremely rare.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, especially for applications from abroad. The instructions and the web application for creating a CV are available on the Europass and EURES portals.

Writing your covering letter

Your covering letter should make the employer want to invite you for an interview. It should not go into too much detail about experience and qualifications; this is provided in the CV.

Use the covering letter to explain why you are applying for the vacancy and point out why the employer should choose you over the other applicants (what you can bring to the company).

Making contact by phone

If you call about a job, be friendly and relaxed, have your questions prepared as well as answers to questions you may be asked, and be sure to close the conversation with optimistic and stimulating words.

The employer may wish to conduct an interview by phone or Skype if the applicant lives abroad. The employment contract will be discussed with suitable candidates and sent to the potential worker for review by e-mail.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

You should not attach your original education certificates or employment references to your job application; instead, bring them to your job interview.

In case your profession is a regulated one, check with the competent institutions about what procedures are necessary before you can start working.

Proof of linguistic competence, computer skills, documents about work experience and achievements in any competitions you took part in are also important.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

This can be anything from two weeks to a month or more. All newly employed workers must obtain a health certificate before they start their job.

Preparing for an interview

Consider a job interview as a business meeting. The employer's main purpose in a job interview is to determine whether you are the most suitable applicant for the job. Your aim is to present yourself in the best light.

The recruiter will focus on experience, motivation, and interpersonal social skills. Psychological, intelligence, aptitude, and psycho-metric tests can be used, especially for jobs requiring a high level of education. Employers might also view the profiles of candidates on various social networks.

Candidates should: prepare a list of their achievements; have an understanding of what the employer does in significant detail; speak about competences and practical experience gained through work; identify a realistic working ambition; and be able to communicate clearly and effectively.

Candidates should prepare for questions about their mid- and long-term career aims. Having a clear plan is important. Some Slovenian recruiters might also ask you to say what your pay expectations are.

Who will be there?

A single interview is usually enough for the employer to decide about the candidate, but further interviews may be required. The interview usually takes 15-45 minutes.

Tests are usually taken in groups and are handled by a psychologist. A group meeting may also be held initially to present the company and the posts.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, shake hands at the beginning and end of the job interview.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Introductions are followed by a short presentation of the company and the post. After that, the employer can interview the candidate to clarify information in the application documents. This is the stage where the candidate can show the original versions of documents sent as copies when applying for the job. At the end of this part, the jobseeker can ask questions. To end the interview, the interviewer usually tells the candidate how the process will continue. The atmosphere is business-like.

When is a question out of bounds?

The candidate only has to answer questions that are relevant to the job applied for.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Letters of recommendation are welcome and can be very helpful. A former employer, lecturer or tutor can write a letter of recommendation or you can give their contacts, so that potential employers can call them and ask for their impression of you. If proof of good conduct is needed, it is mentioned in the vacancy.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

There is an unwritten rule that during the interview it is the employer who should bring up the subject of pay, not the jobseeker. You can then state the range (minimum and maximum) that would be suitable for you.

The payment consists of a fixed basic wage and various bonuses (job performance bonus, bonus for work under special conditions, seniority bonus, etc.). Furthermore, the worker is entitled to the reimbursement of subsistence and commuting expenses. Workers are entitled to receive holiday pay once a year.

Employers are obliged to enrol their workers in a pension, invalidity, health, parental and unemployment insurance scheme. They are also required to deliver a photocopy of the registration to the employee within 15 days of commencing work.

Is a trial period likely?

Yes, you may be asked to undertake a work trial.

How long is the standard probationary period?

It varies, but is usually between three and six months long.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, this is not common practice in Slovenia. Ask your EURES Adviser about the possibility of getting funding from a mobility scheme (such as Your first EURES Job, Reactivate, national mobility schemes or any other available support).

When will I hear the result?

Employers usually tell candidates at the interview when they will contact them to let them know their decision.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

If the employer said that he/she would decide within a week, you can call them after one week, not sooner. It is not common to call for feedback after the decision has been made.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

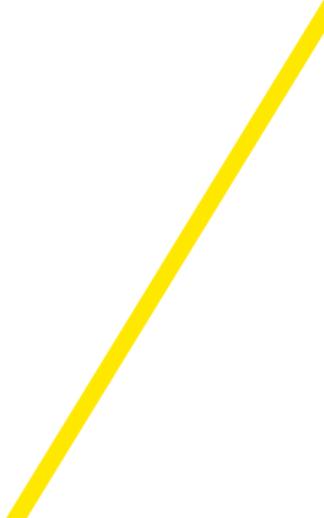
Punctuality is important. Arrive 5-10 minutes early.

Dress-code tips

Look business-like, neat, and clean. Shoes should be in good condition and hair neatly styled. What you choose to wear also depends on the job itself.

Any further advice?

Be original and honest. Don't interrupt the interviewer. Never say things about yourself that are not true (skills, qualifications, experience) and never say bad things about your former employers.





SLOVAKIA



Official language - Slovakian



Government - Parliamentary democracy



Population - 5.4 million



Capital - Bratislava



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +421



Internet code - .sk

WHY GO TO WORK IN SLOVAKIA?

Slovakia is a landlocked country in Central Europe. Even in such a small area, you will find everything from natural treasures and historical monuments to rich folk culture and modern entertainment in the busy city streets. The most attractive destinations are the capital of Bratislava and the High Tatras.

Slovakia is one of the world's major car manufacturers and a key producer of iron and steel. The chemical industry is advanced, paper and pulp processing enjoys a long tradition, and electrical engineering also deserves a mention. Sectors with the highest demand and multiple vacancies include mechanical engineering, IT, warehouse management and healthcare.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Job adverts are published on the Internet, in newspapers, and in regional papers. Online job portals, private recruitment companies and the public employment service (PES) show vacancies in Slovakia on their websites. These give all details of the jobs and requirements for applicants.

International, national, and regional job fairs provide direct contact with employers followed by potential job placement.

Tips for job applications

Follow the instructions given in the job vacancy advertisement. Do not send the same application to several employers. The usual practice is to send a covering letter explaining why you want to work for the company, attaching a CV and a copy of your diploma.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

It depends on the job position. A photo is becoming a common part of a CV, but it isn't a necessity.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, typed applications are fine. If handwritten, ensure that the script is legible.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

Yes, it is often used.

Writing your covering letter

A written job application is your first communication with a potential employer. Along with an attached CV, it is your calling card and personal advertisement, so you should prepare it carefully.

Pay attention to style, the quality of expression and correct spelling. Avoid phrases and statements that are empty or have no meaningful value.

The application should be persuasive and is meant to create interest in arranging an interview. It should be no longer than one sheet of A4 paper.

What information should I include in my covering letter?

- **Header:** State your contact details (forename, surname, title, address, phone number and e-mail address).
- **Under the header:** Write the name and address of the employer, the place and date. It is a good idea to state the name of the person in charge of recruitment.
- **Text:** The text of the application should contain the position you are applying for, where you heard about the offer, why you are applying for that particular position, a summary of your work experience and education, any knowledge and skills that the potential employer could make use of, and when you would be available to start work.
- **Conclusion:** At the end, write a polite sentence expressing interest in an interview. Sign the application by hand.

Making contact by phone

If the employer wishes to be contacted by phone, prepare for the call in advance and make notes of what you would like to say and what you want to ask. It is an advantage if you can send your CV to the employer before the call.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

It depends on the job you are applying for and if the employer requests them. In general, however, the originals of diplomas and certificates should be brought to the job interview.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

It depends on the employer's current situation (i.e. whether it is the creation of a new job or a replacement, and what type of position it is). The length of time can range from a few days to several months for multi-round recruitment.

Preparing for an interview

While you prepare for the interview, find out as much information as possible about your employer and the job you are applying for. Also prepare answers to the most frequently asked questions about pay, your vision and strengths/weaknesses. An employer's invitation to 'tell us about yourself' looks simple, but it's important to have a meaningful answer ready.

At the end of the interview, you can ask the employer questions so think about what you want to know.

Who will be there?

Depending on the job you are applying for, you can expect the presence of a human resources officer, an employer representative (your future colleague or supervisor) or a trade union representative.

Do we shake hands?

Shaking hands depends on the specific situation. Generally hands are shaken at the beginning and end of the interview.

Is there a typical interview structure?

In most cases, employers start by introducing the company, job position and what they expect from the new employee. They will then ask applicants to set out their reasons for wanting the job and to describe their knowledge and skills. The employer can also ask

applicants to take a test or fill out forms. At the end of the interview, the employer can give candidates the opportunity to ask questions.

The atmosphere is generally formal. Most of the interview time is dedicated to professional topics. The employer is not usually interested in personal aspects.

When is a question out of bounds?

Employers should not ask questions about your private life, religion, or political affiliation.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

Read the job advertisement carefully and follow the employer's application requirements. If the employer asks for references from previous employers, please obtain them or include the contact details of people who can provide references in your CV.

A criminal record check or criminal extract is usually required for civil or state servants, but may also be required for other professions.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

Salary conditions and benefits are a topic that an employer will discuss with the successful candidate. Both parties have the opportunity to present their requirements, so be prepared to discuss these.

Please note that this option does not apply to all jobs (e.g. for some workers, the conditions are set in advance and can rarely be negotiated).

Is a trial period likely?

Based on legislation, there is usually a trial period.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The trial period usually lasts from one to three months.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

This could happen, but it is rare.

When will I hear the result?

One or two weeks after the interview.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

It is not common to ask for feedback about your interview. The result is announced to successful candidates by e-mail or by phone.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Make sure you know where the employer is based and where the interview will take place. If you arrive by car, make sure you know where to park.

Check in at the employer's reception at least 10-15 minutes in advance. Coming late or too early is not appropriate.

Dress-code tips

Tailor your outfit to the culture of the business and the job you are applying for. In general, you should make sure your clothes, shoes, hair, and nails are clean and neat, and you should also remember to smile. Avoid exaggerated make-up, lots of jewellery and perfume.



FINLAND



Official languages - Finnish, Swedish



Government - Presidential republic



Population - 5.5 million



Capital - Helsinki



Currency - euro (EUR)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +358



Internet code - .fi

WHY GO TO WORK IN FINLAND?

Finland appears at or near the top of global rankings for quality of life, education standards and economic competitiveness. Stability, security, and functionality form the basis of everyday life in the country. The high rate of technological innovations has shaped the labour market, while the country also hosts a variety of championships for unique and world-renowned pastimes such as air guitar and wife carrying. If you wish to relax and take some time to recharge your batteries then Finland offers a wealth of beautiful landscapes and clean, fresh air.

In terms of employment, there is a demand for skilled workers in the metal (welders, CNC operators, etc.), IT (coders, programmers, etc.), healthcare (doctors and nurses), hotel and catering (chefs, cooks, waiters, cleaners, etc.) and education (special education teachers) sectors.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Jobs are posted on the website of the labour administration (a link to which can be found on the EURES portal), on private jobsites and in newspapers.

Tips for job applications

Before starting to look for a job, it is worth checking that all of your certificates are up-to-date.

You should also update your CV or resumé. Make sure that you fill in the application carefully; if it is not complete, it might not be taken into consideration. The employer is likely to receive hundreds of applications. Try to stand out positively from the rest.

Before making an open application, look at the company's website to see what kind of career opportunities you can expect and how the employer usually hires new staff. If there is an electronic application form for open applications, completing this form is usually the employer's preference. If not, contact the employer by e-mail or phone. If you make the first contact by e-mail, call the company after approximately one week and ask whether the people in charge of recruitment have received your application and had time to consider it.

In smaller companies especially, there may not be enough staff to advertise vacancies, handle applications, organise interviews, etc. Therefore, it is worth contacting the employer directly and submitting an open application.

Writing your CV

Your CV should mention your most recent job first, then your education, with the oldest details last. It should be no more than two sheets of A4.

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

You can attach your photo to your CV if you like. Today, 75 % of applications include a photo.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, handwritten applications are not used at all.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The Europass format is a common European CV template that has been approved by the EU. It is suitable for people with either vocational or academic qualifications, and gives a clear picture of the applicant's qualifications and vocational skills. The template is available in many different languages. You can also create a CV on the EURES portal by uploading your Europass CV to your EURES online application.

The Europass format CV is rarely used in national applications, but may be used for international applications.

Writing your covering letter

A covering letter should not be longer than one page. Describe briefly why you are applying for the job and what makes you the best candidate.

It is advisable to name one or two referees (e.g. a former superior) and give their contact information; the employer may be interested in calling them for further professional background information. Also, remember to sign the letter.

Making contact by phone

It is quite common to contact the employer to ask for further details. Employers usually see this as an expression of interest. The job advertisement will often include the preferred method of contact (e-mail and/or phone) if you have any further questions.

If you do call, prepare beforehand. Think carefully about why you are applying for the position, what you wish to know and why you should be chosen.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Enclose copies of your diplomas only if this is stated in the job advertisement. Take original diplomas to the interview, as the employer may want to see them.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

It varies, although the period is usually longer in the case of international recruitment.

Preparing for an interview

If you are invited to a job interview, prepare for it carefully. Think beforehand about what the employer might ask you. You should also think about what you want to know about the job. Take all of your most important work and study certificates with you to the interview.

One of the first questions the employer is likely to ask is about your motivation: why you are applying for this job and why you should be chosen. Be prepared to clearly explain your motivation and make a list of your professional and personal strengths.

To make a good impression, visit the company's website before the interview to make sure you know basic facts about the company.

Who will be there?

It is normal that at least two people from the company will be at the interview.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, shake hands with everyone present.

Is there a typical interview structure?

The employer usually interviews between 3 and 10 candidates. They may make their decision after one interview or conduct further interviews or aptitude tests.

Interviews can be structured or unstructured depending on the employer. At the beginning of the interview, you will usually be asked to present yourself and explain why you are interested in the job; employers want to get an overall picture of you. The following interview questions examine your motivation, qualifications, and experience in relation to the job description. Questions about your strengths/weaknesses, values and attitudes are also common. Towards the end of the interview, the issues under discussion are likely to become more practical and related to the job (e.g. salary and working hours).

You also have the opportunity to ask questions. If you prepare a couple of questions about the job/company in advance, this will make a good impression.

Interviews are generally relaxed. Set out what you have achieved but try not to be over-confident. It is important that you show interest in the position by being active, listening carefully and asking for clarification if you do not understand what the employer means. However, do not interrupt the interviewer. Above all, be honest and do not criticise former employers.

If you are asked to take a psychological or aptitude test, you can take it as a good sign as it means that you are among the best candidates. You cannot really prepare for the tests; the best thing is to get a good night's sleep and to be honest. Do not try to pretend to be someone you are not.

When is a question out of bounds?

The non-discrimination act prohibits discrimination on the grounds of age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religious affiliation, political allegiance, state of health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics. The applicant does not need to answer questions dealing with his/her religious or political persuasion, illnesses, pregnancy, family planning or trade union activities. Employers can make precise enquires about health if good physical condition is vital in order to carry out the required duties of the job.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

You should mention in your application or your CV the names of a couple of referees the employer can contact. Make sure in advance that these referees are willing to recommend you, as references are usually requested. Some employers ask the applicants to enclose copies of any letters of recommendation in the application. Bring these to the interview, as many employers are interested in studying them closely.

It is usually mentioned in the advertisement if you need to prove that you have no criminal record. Only successful candidates will need to do this.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

In Finland, contracts are based on collective labour agreements. Almost every field has its own labour agreement. However, pay is sometimes negotiable. If it is, this is mentioned in the job advertisement, and candidates are usually asked to indicate their expectations in their application.

Pay is usually expressed in hourly or monthly terms. Holiday pay is based on the statutory requirement. In some fields or enterprises (especially in executive positions), you may negotiate annual bonuses, which are likely to be performance-related.

Extra benefits are very common in Finland and include luncheon vouchers, sports and cultural discount vouchers, and occupational healthcare. In some companies, you may be supplied with a leased car. Some advantages are negotiable. Consult your new superior, who can tell you the right person to negotiate these extra benefits with.

Is a probationary period likely?

A probationary period is usual, but not in all positions.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The length of the probationary period depends on the type of agreement but will be no longer than six months.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

Probably not, but for some positions it might be negotiable.

When will I hear the result?

Normally at the end of the interview the employer tells you when you can expect to get the results/follow-up.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

If you are not asked for an interview, you can contact the employer approximately two weeks after the application deadline (e.g. by sending an e-mail and expressing your continued interest in the job and making yourself available for a further interview/meeting).

Following an interview, if the employer does not contact you after one or two weeks, you can enquire about the results by phone or e-mail. If you are not selected, you can contact the employer and ask for feedback about your interview and application.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Punctuality is the norm in Finland, both for the candidate and the employer.

Dress-code tips

Dress neatly and appropriately. Normally smart casual is enough. However, a suit is still worn in some instances in the business world. When researching the company, you will get a sense of what the company is like.



SWEDEN



Official language - Swedish



Government - Constitutional monarchy



Population - 10.1 million



Capital - Stockholm



Currency - Swedish krona (SEK)



Member EU or EEA - EU



Phone code - +46



Internet code - .se

WHY GO TO WORK IN SWEDEN?

Sweden routinely comes top worldwide for health, literacy and human development, and its economy ranks in the top 10 most competitive globally. The Swedish people are known for neutrality and consensus building. Also known for its high taxes and generous welfare, income inequality is low and trade unions are powerful.

The largest industries are engineering, telecoms, the automotive industry, and pharmaceuticals. Forecasts predict job losses in manufacturing, agriculture, and forestry, but job creation in public and private service industries and construction. For graduate jobs in journalism, competition is fierce. There has been less competition recently for qualified civil engineers, IT specialists, construction industry specialists, and medical professionals including doctors, midwives, and nurses.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Qualified candidates – especially in the IT and financial sectors – typically look for vacancies on company websites and online recruitment sites. It is also becoming common to apply for jobs spontaneously. The public employment service recruits mainly for unskilled work and works closely with recruitment agencies. Its website (see the EURES portal's Links page) is the largest for advertising vacancies in Sweden.

Tips for job applications

In most cases, a personal letter with a CV attached is required when you are applying for a job. Very rarely, a telephone call or a personal visit will suffice. Many companies only advertise vacancies on their websites.

Please read job adverts carefully to find out how to apply. It is also important to check the advert carefully to see what the requirements and preferences are. If you do not meet the requirements, it is seldom worthwhile applying. However, it is not always as important to have the qualifications described as preferred or recommended.

For all written applications, be sure to relate the information to the job you are applying for. The application should be brief, neat, and informative. Write dynamic applications tailored to the requirements in the advertisement.

The Swedish Public Employment Service regularly organises webinars, some in English, about how to apply for jobs, write a CV or be successful in a job interview. Current events are marketed on the Swedish Public Employment Service's website and on Facebook. The details of more providers of EURES services can be found on the EURES portal.

Candidates usually get in touch with the contact person for more information about a job before they apply. It is also common to contact the trade union representative for information about salaries.

Large companies usually send an acknowledgement of the receipt of your application, often with advice on when you may expect to be contacted. If you do not hear for a while, you can call them yourself.

In most cases, you need to be able to read and understand Swedish in the workplace in Sweden (there are some exceptions, for example in occupations requiring specialist skills). You can teach yourself Swedish online at [learningswedish.se](https://www.learningswedish.se).

Writing your CV

A CV should be a maximum of two pages.

What information should I include in my CV?

- **Personal details:** name, address, phone number, e-mail address, date of birth, marital status and possibly nationality
- **Educational background:** formal school education and courses
- **Work experience:** perhaps with a brief description of work duties and company/companies
- **Other information:** other attributes that may be of interest (e.g. positions of responsibility, driving licence, computer skills)
- **Language skills**
- **Leisure interests**
- **References:** preferably from two different people, of which at least one should be a previous employer

Information on education and work experience should contain dates and should be listed in reverse chronological order (i.e. the most recent information first).

Is it standard to include a photo on the CV?

It is not standard, but sometimes the employer may ask for one.

Is there a preference for handwritten applications?

No, handwritten applications are not used in Sweden.

Is the Europass format CV widely used and accepted?

The Europass CV is a standard, ready-made template that makes it easier for employers in other countries to understand your certificates and qualifications. It is not used often, but employers accept it.

Writing your covering letter

The covering letter should be very short, no more than one side of A4, and state clearly the job for which you are applying. It is important to describe the qualifications and personal attributes you have that make you the right person for the job in question. Leave all details and dates concerning previous experience for your CV.

Making contact by phone

Taking the initiative to call or write to an employer you would like to work for is common and is usually seen in a positive light.

While it is essential to be polite during telephone calls, attitudes generally are fairly informal. Sweden is not a country where you use titles in conversation.

Do I need to send diplomas with my application?

Certificates or testimonials should only be enclosed if requested in the advert. The employer may request that you bring a copy of your diploma to the interview.

Usual length of time between publication of the vacancy and start of the job

From one week to several weeks, although in some sectors, such as the service and the hotel/restaurant sector, the procedure can be much shorter.

Preparing for an interview

Make sure you prepare yourself well for the interview. Try to find out as much as you can about the company. You will have to answer questions about your education, previous employment, and leisure interests. It is also common to be asked to describe your strengths and weaknesses, and how they may impact on the job for which you are applying, and about your family situation, leisure interests, etc. You will also be expected to ask questions of your own at the end of the interview. Think in advance about what questions you would like to ask.

An interview normally takes about 90 minutes. Sometimes you may be called to a second or even a third interview and/or asked to take tests of various kinds, depending on the type of job in question. If you are prevented from attending an interview, you must inform the employer as soon as you can and ask if it is possible to make a new appointment.

Who will be there?

One to three people as well as a personnel officer, or other employer representative. A union representative and/or future work colleague will often take part in the interview.

Do we shake hands?

Yes, definitely. This is usual practice.

Is there a typical interview structure?

Usually you are asked to start the interview by introducing yourself (be brief); next you tell the employer why you have applied for the job and what you know about the company. Be relaxed but attentive.

Common questions include: Do you find it easy to learn new things? How do you react to criticism? Are you a problem-solver? How do you tackle a problem? What are you proud of? Can you tell me something really good that you have done? What do you expect to be doing in five years' time? What do you think a good colleague should be like? Describe a situation where you made a mistake and what you learnt from it. How would your friends describe you? How would your manager describe you? How do you function in a group? What are your strong and weak points? How do you handle stressful situations? Why should we employ you?

During the first interview you can ask what an ordinary working day is like, when you will hear the result of the interview, when the job starts, if there is an introductory programme, etc. Do not talk about pay at the beginning of the application procedure. Wait until the employer raises the subject.

When is a question out of bounds?

There are anti-discrimination laws (on gender, religion, ethnicity, disability). You can decide if you want to answer these types of questions during an interview. Questions that are not relevant for the job (your age, whether you have any children, your origin) are private.

Should I supply references, letters of recommendation or proof of good conduct?

If you have up-to-date referees, give their details on your CV. Otherwise, write: 'References will be provided on request'. A former employer is most often used as a reference. The reference supports your application and describes you and your ability to work.

Letters of recommendation are needed and can help you. Bring them when you attend the interview. They should be written by a former boss, team leader or HR officer. If you don't have work experience, you can provide a letter of recommendation from a teacher or a sports leader.

Negotiating your pay and benefits

The more qualified the role, the more leeway there is to negotiate the salary. Most employment conditions in Sweden are regulated by collective agreements, with the result that there is little room for individual negotiations, at least for lower-skilled jobs.

Pay on a monthly basis is the most common. For management positions there may be scope to negotiate non-statutory benefits; these would be discussed with the HR department.

For jobs in government and with children, proof of good conduct is required. This will be stated in the ad or the employer will inform you.

Is a trial period likely?

You may be asked to do a one-day work trial, but you have the right to be paid for this.

How long is the standard probationary period?

The standard probationary period is six months.

Will the employer cover my costs for attending an interview?

No, this is not usual, but if you are highly specialised it might be possible.

When will I hear the result?

If you haven't heard anything within two weeks, you should contact the recruiter and ask when you can expect feedback.

Getting feedback and further follow-up

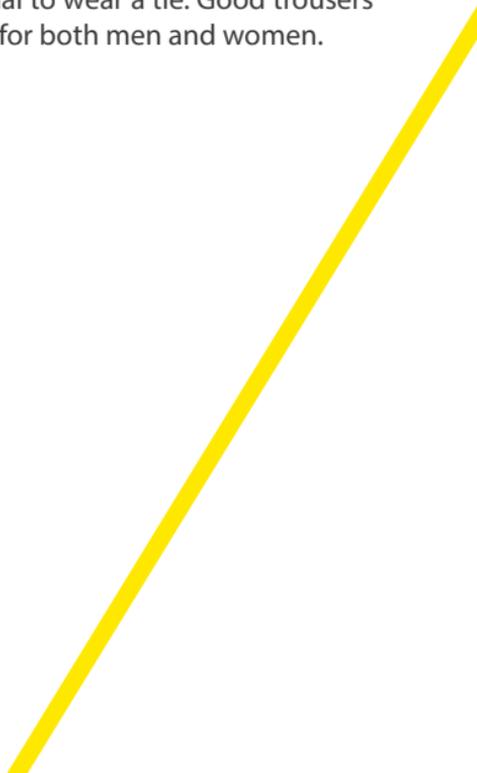
It is always possible to contact the employer after the interview and ask about the next step in the application process. If you did not get the job, you can ask for the reason.

How early should I arrive for the interview?

Be on time. Five minutes early is always OK. You should never be late for an interview in Sweden.

Dress-code tips

There is no need to dress too formally for most jobs but be sure you are clean and tidy. It is no longer usual to wear a tie. Good trousers and a jacket are always acceptable – for both men and women.



Getting in touch with the EU

In person

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en

On the phone or by email

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696 or
- by email via: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en

Finding information about the EU

Online

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website at: https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en

EU publications

You can download or order free and priced EU publications at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publications>. Multiple copies of free publications may be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local information centre (see https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en).

EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1952 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en>) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, both for commercial and non-commercial purposes.

You can download our publications or take out a free subscription at

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/publications>

If you would like to receive regular updates about the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion sign up to receive the free *Social Europe e-newsletter* at

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