

**Expert sessions for (potential) cross border workers -
Tailor made advisory service by competent authorities for
employees and job seekers**

The Netherlands

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Name of the organisation	EURES Cross-border partnership (<i>GrensWerkt</i>) Scheldemond
Type of organisation	Other
Address	Piet Heinstraat 77, 4461 GL Goes, The Netherlands
Web page	www.GrensWerkt.eu
Contact person	Name and surname: Sarah O'Brien Job position: Cross border coordinator E-mail: Sarah.Obrien@uwv.nl
Member State	Netherlands
GOOD PRACTICE - GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title of the good practice	Expert sessions for (potential) cross-border workers - Tailor made advisory service by competent authorities for employees and job seekers.
Topic of the good practice	Other Promotion of fair mobility, sustainable employment and reduction of the risk of undeclared work in the cross- border region.
Geographical focus	Cross-country (please specify) The Netherlands and Belgium
Duration	2018 - ongoing The expert sessions were first introduced as a pilot project in 2018. Due to their success and the high satisfaction rate both from job seekers/employees and experts, they have

	<p>become an integral part of the EURES cross-border services. The service is still provided within the framework of the ESF+ cross-border partnership structure and from 2024, it is planned to be provided as a structural service by EURES.</p>
<p>Summary of the good practice</p>	<p>Expert sessions are organised by EURES advisors to (mostly newly employed) cross-border workers or people who plan to become cross-border workers. During these sessions, experts from the competent authorities provide advice on the personal situation of workers regarding taxation, social security, labour law (in particular employment contracts), pension system, living and working conditions, and other matters to be taken into account when employed on the other side of the border.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES</p>	
<p>Background/context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ EURES Scheldemond has observed that in the border territories between Belgium (West Flanders, East Flanders and Antwerp) and the Netherlands (Zeeland and West Brabant), jobseekers are often overwhelmed by the number and complexity of the issues regarding cross-border work. These issues can arise due to differences in national practices, social security systems, taxation rules, legal systems, pensions, labour law, health or the recognition of qualifications. Additionally, cross-border public transport poses another challenge for cross-border workers, as it may be less developed than in-country transport. ▶ Seeing that many jobseekers halt their job-seeking activities across the border early in the orientation phase, often perceiving the limitations of cross-border work instead of the possibilities, EURES launched a pilot project of sessions with experts in 2018. These sessions consisted of an in-depth individualised service of information and guidance provided to 23 cross-border jobseekers around the issues at stake. ▶ The pilot sessions were implemented in an area with limited access to information services located between Antwerp and West Brabant, as well as East-Flanders and Zeeland. As the pilot proved to be successful and

	<p>highly appreciated by the participants and experts, EURES has continued to offer the service after the end of the pilot.</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<p>General objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Promotion of fair mobility and reduction of the risk of undeclared work in the cross-border region. <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Providing (potential) cross-border workers a wide perspective of the implications of labour mobility; ▶ Providing (potential) cross-border workers solutions for the challenges they may face in connection with cross-border work; ▶ Supporting jobseekers to become cross-border workers.
<p>Main activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In the expert sessions, individualised advice and guidance are provided to cross-border workers and jobseekers by experts from the competent authorities about matters to be considered when employed on the other side of the border. ▶ The experts come from organisations that are members of the EURES Cross-border Partnership entities and from other competent administrations. ▶ The process of organising the sessions starts with the selection of the participants based on the problems they face in the cross-border employment context. Depending on the problems identified, EURES Scheldemond invites the experts from the competent institutions, and send them the questions raised by the user in advance. The sessions are usually organised in one morning and the participants meet the experts individually, in short but very specific interviews. Each participant has four or five specialised meetings during the session. The meetings are private, only the expert and the user participate, allowing the users to explain their situation with a high degree of confidentiality. Subjects on which questions can be raised include

	<p>taxes, social security, labour law, contracts, pensions, living and work conditions, and other matters of interest when working across borders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ After each expert session, each participant complete a survey for evaluation purpose. After the session, all involved parties, colleagues and stakeholders receive a report of the session.
<p>Did you previously provide information about this particular good practice under the European Platform tackling undeclared work?</p> <p>(if yes, is it possible to provide the year and the title of good practice or a link of the good practice in ELA Virtual library)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Funding/organisational resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Since 1 April 2022, the practice is funded by the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+). ▶ Before 1 April 2022, EaSI funding for social innovation was used. ▶ From 2024 the service will continue with funding from the PES/EURES Netherlands.
<p>PARTICIPATION</p>	
<p>Stakeholders involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ European Group of Territorial Cooperation EGTS Linieland of Waas and Hulst ▶ Flemish Service of Employment and Vocational Training (VDAB) ▶ Institute for Employee Insurance (UWV) ▶ Interregional trade-union council IVR Schelde Kempen ▶ Social Security Bank/Bureau for Belgian Affairs (SVB/BBZ) ▶ Combined Taxation office, team GWO ▶ Recruitment agency Den Doelder Recruitment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Chamber of Commerce of East Flanders
Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Potential cross-border workers and jobseekers ▶ Cross-border workers (newly employed)
Final beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cross-border workers and jobseekers ▶ Experts from competent authorities ▶ Employers who employ cross-border workers
GOOD PRACTICE CRITERIA	
Achievements/ Results and outcomes (Alignment of good practice with the priorities of the Call (if not applicable, alignment with the field of EU labour mobility))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In 2018, the pilot of the expert sessions was carried out in the region situated between Antwerp and West Brabant and East-Flanders and Zeeland with 23 users. In the first session 6, in the second 8, and in the third session 9 participants took part. According to their feedback, participants felt that they have gained more insight in what awaits them. A participant said that they received information from a variety of parties and the information received all complement each other, making him feel helped 360 degrees, ▶ In 2019, 3 sessions were organised with 37 (future) cross-border workers in total. In the first session 13, in the second 12, and in the third session 12 participants took part. ▶ In 2020, 4 sessions were organised with 39 (future) cross-border workers in total. In the first session 10, in the second 10, in the third 9, and in the fourth session 10 participants took part. ▶ In 2021, 4 sessions were organised with 36 (future) cross-border workers in total. In the first session 10, in the second 7, in the third 10, and in the fourth 9 participants took part. ▶ In 2022, there was one session organised for 7 (future) cross-border workers on 25 March. ▶ In 2023, one session was organised for 11 participants, and another session was foreseen for December.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The service is planned to be continued in 2024. ▶ Each session was conducted by five experts from the competent authorities. The expert sessions support individuals interested in working in another country by ensuring that motivated jobseekers or newly employed cross-border workers do not have to worry about whether they have all their legal and financial affairs in order. ▶ The service reduces the risk of undeclared work, helps eliminate perceived cross-border obstacles and promotes fair mobility. ▶ The sessions help the experts from the administrations to improve their knowledge of the characteristics of cross-border employment. ▶ In the long run, the informative expert sessions ensure a better information of cross-border workers.
<p>Recognition (has this good practice been recognised on regional, national or EU level)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Cost effectiveness (the degree to which the practice was successful in reaching objectives and producing clear and measurable outcomes at the lowest possible cost)</p>	<p>The initiative is cost effective as the only costs incurred are related to the involvement of the experts and the venue where the sessions are organised.</p>
<p>Transferability (how the experience from this practice could be transferred to other contexts i.e. what would another Member State/group/sector need to have or put in place for this measure to be successful in their country/group/sector)</p>	<p>The service can be transferred to other cross-border areas in the EU. The possibility of mainstreaming the service to other cross-border regions will be explored.</p>
<p>Sustainability (how the practice is sustainable from a social, financial or environmental perspective)</p>	<p>The service ensures that workers in all sectors are informed on their rights and obligations, contributing to sustainable employment and fair mobility.</p>
<p>Innovativeness (innovative features of the good practice)</p>	<p>The initiative did not have a particular focus on innovativeness.</p>

Digitalisation (Design, development and/or utilisation of digital tools, policies or plans for digitalisation, business processes and data digitalisation, data sharing digital initiatives, the use of digitalisation to facilitate the access to data in real time and detection of fraud and error, etc.)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the expert sessions were organised online through the Videobutler online meeting platform.