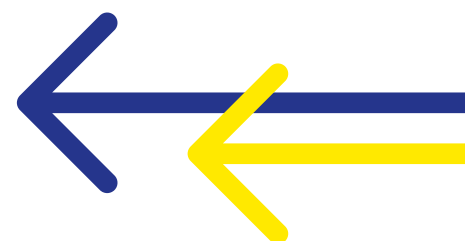


What can EURES do about labour shortages?

Your guide to supporting jobseekers and employers

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eures.europa.eu
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Introduction

Not only are labour shortages and surpluses in Europe commonplace, they are rising. As of today, 29 EURES countries report shortages, while 24 face surpluses. These imbalances affect everything from economic growth to individual livelihoods. Shortages can deepen regional inequalities and limit innovation, while surpluses can leave workers stuck in low-wage, insecure roles.

That's where EURES comes in.

EURES is more than a job board—it's a network that makes free movement real. We connect jobseekers to opportunities and employers to talent. One of our most effective tools? Matching across borders.

Transnational matching helps tackle labour shortages and surpluses. It enables employers to find qualified candidates across borders and supports jobseekers in finding meaningful work, even if that means looking beyond their home country. For instance, while Ireland needs plumbers, Finland, Greece, Portugal, and Spain have more plumbers than jobs. A skilled plumber in one of these countries could find better prospects in Ireland.

The annual EURES report on labour shortages and surpluses is your go-to resource for understanding these dynamics. It's the only report that offers a Europe-wide view of labour market imbalances—and it's designed with you, the EURES Adviser, in mind.

Use it to spot trends, identify opportunities, and support jobseekers and employers more effectively. Whether you're advising someone on moving abroad,

helping an employer fill a vacancy, or planning a cross-border recruitment event, the report can support all your next steps.

By applying the insights in this guide, you'll help build a more balanced, resilient European labour market—one that works for everyone.

*Irene Mandl, Head of Unit, Information and EURES,
European Labour Authority*



How do surpluses affect jobseekers?

Labour surpluses in a given occupation can create real challenges for jobseekers. When too many people are qualified for only a few available jobs, competition intensifies, wages stagnate, and career growth stalls.

Imagine a group of newly qualified graphic designers in a country where demand is low. Despite their skills and creativity, only a handful may find work in their field—often under conditions that don't reflect their potential.

But there's a solution. By identifying transnational mobility matching potential, EURES helps jobseekers look beyond borders. When we support mobility from surplus to shortage regions, we don't just ease pressure on local labour markets—we help individuals find meaningful, stable employment in the roles they trained for. It's a win-win for jobseekers and employers alike.

What is transnational mobility matching potential?

Transnational mobility matching potential refers to the measurable opportunity to connect jobseekers in one country, where a specific occupation is in surplus, with employers in another country where the same occupation is in short supply.



How can I identify transnational mobility matching potential?

The [transnational mobility matching potential dashboard](#) is your interactive gateway to the data behind the EURES report. It brings labour market imbalances to life and supports you in identifying transnational mobility matching potential.

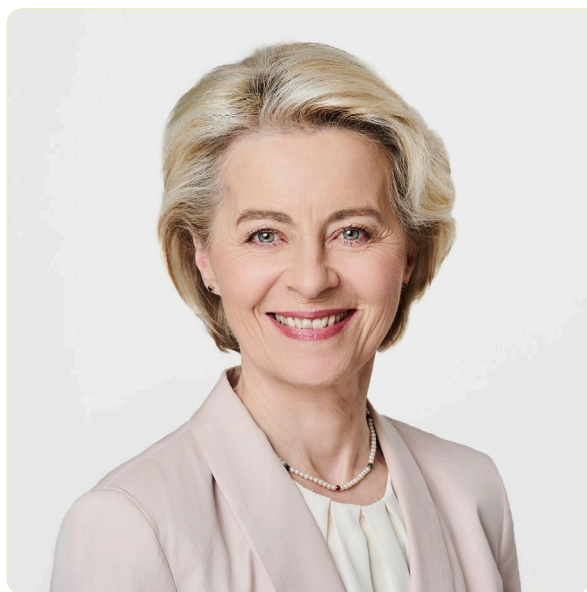
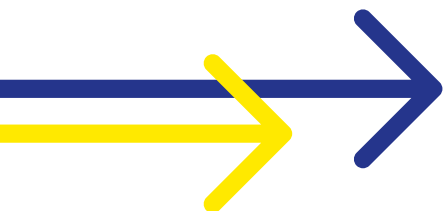
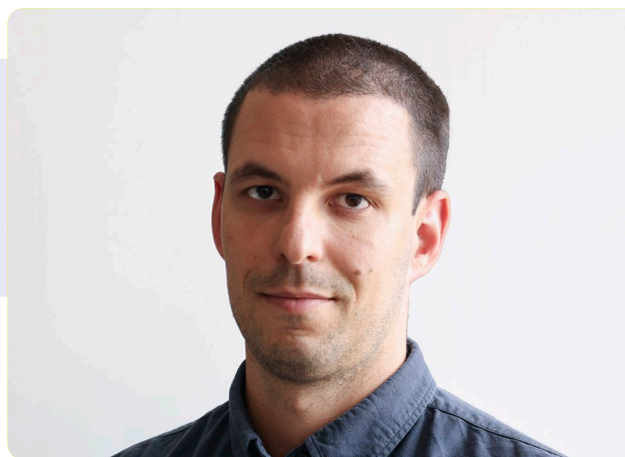
With just a few clicks, you can explore where shortages and surpluses are occurring across Europe in 2024, broken down by country, type of imbalance, and occupation.

Whether you're advising a jobseeker or supporting an employer, this tool helps you identify where transnational mobility matching potential exists and how to act on it.

The dashboard draws on administrative data submitted by EURES National Coordination Offices to the European Labour Authority. It's designed to help you turn data into action, supporting smarter, faster, and more targeted mobility solutions.

The transnational mobility matching potential dashboard is a tool which supports intra-EU mobility by focusing on the potential matches of shortage and surplus occupations across countries.

Jakub Kostolny, EURES Data Analysis Officer, ELA



In the peak of the tourist season, restaurants and bars in Europe are running reduced hours because they cannot find staff. Hospitals are postponing treatment because of lack of nurses. And two thirds of European companies looking for IT specialists cannot find them. [...] At the same time, millions of parents—mostly mothers—are struggling to reconcile work and family, because there is no childcare. And 8 million young people are neither in employment, education, or training. Their dreams put on hold, their lives on stand-by. This is not only the cause of so much personal distress. It is also one of the most significant bottlenecks for our competitiveness.

2023 State of the Union Address by President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen

How can EURES tackle these shortages and surpluses?

EURES is a network of humans for humans. Our collaborative spirit is key to our success in facilitating labour mobility throughout Europe. Perhaps you have identified a shortage in your country—why not reach out to your EURES colleague where the same occupation is reported as surplus to discuss collaboration? You may

find a solution to facilitate transnational matching, such as by organising an E(O)JD, hosting a webinar on living and working conditions or even connecting employers and jobseekers directly! Such joint efforts help your clients, and your national labour market!!

We use the EURES report to draft a national publication on shortages on the Dutch labour market and surpluses in Europe.

*Irma Vijverberg, Head of Dutch
EURES National Coordination Office*

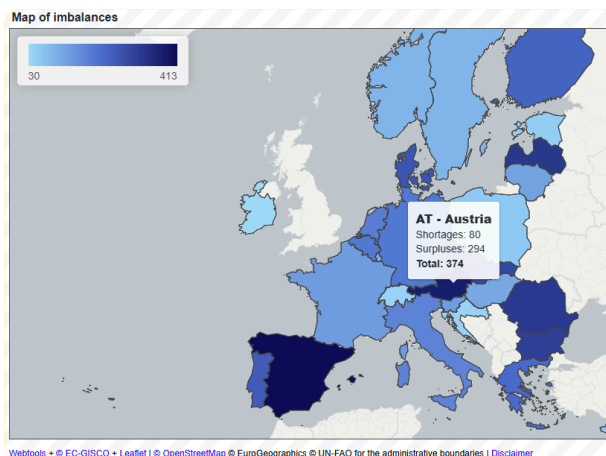
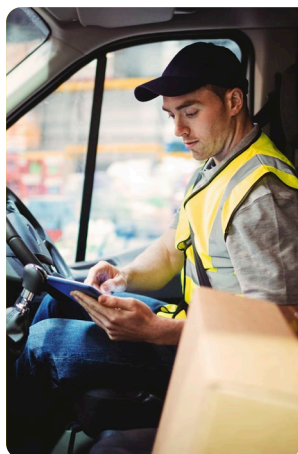
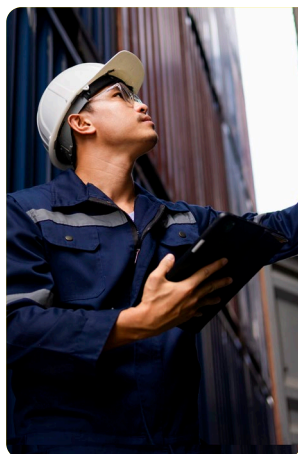


How can I use the report's information to support jobseekers?

Imagine you're a EURES Adviser in Spain. In Spain, truck drivers are currently a surplus occupation, meaning they may have difficulties finding work and those who are working face a higher risk of unemployment. If a jobseeker in this role comes to you for help, you can turn to the [shortages and surpluses dashboard](#) to explore where their skills are in demand. In this case, 20 countries are reporting shortages of truck driv-

ers. You can then search for truck driver vacancies in these shortage countries on the EURES portal to discuss with the jobseeker.

By guiding jobseekers toward countries where their desired occupation is needed, you're not just helping them find a job; you're helping them find stability, better working conditions, and a more secure future.



How can I use the report's information to support employers?

[80% of EU employers](#) report that they struggle to recruit workers with the right skills.

When vacancies remain unfilled for too long, the impact on employers can be significant, affecting productivity, growth, and innovation. In some cases, persistent vacancies can even affect an employer's reputation, making it harder to attract talent in the future.

Let's say an employer in Belgium is struggling to recruit qualified bus and tram drivers. With the EURES report on labour shortages and surpluses or dashboard, you can

quickly identify countries where bus and tram drivers are in surplus: Austria, Finland, Greece and Spain. This gives you a clear starting point to look for candidates. As a EURES Adviser, you can use this insight to offer tailored guidance, propose targeted recruitment campaigns, and even reach out to EURES colleagues in surplus countries to coordinate matching efforts. This targeted recruitment will be more cost-effective and save time for the employer. It's a smart, data-driven way to connect the right people with the right opportunities.

Transnational matching in action

In 2021, Anders Carlsson Eklund and Rob Floris, EURES Sweden, received several queries from veterinary clinics, one being Evidensia requesting support recruiting from Europe. Anders and Rob brainstormed how they could do this and identified transnational mobility matching potential between Sweden and Spain—Spain having reported a surplus of veterinarians.

The pair reached out to Spanish EURES Adviser Eva Octavio de Toledo Gutiérrez for her support in creating two information events for prospective movers. With Eva's support, Anders and Rob organised two information sessions with a Spanish-speaking veterinarian who had found work in Sweden. They also participated in an E(O)JD 'Health professionals, veterinarians and teachers for Sweden'—as a result of the two sessions and the E(O)JD they intended to employ eight veterinarians.

[Read the full story here.](#)



Who is most impacted by labour shortages and surpluses?

Labour market imbalances don't just affect economies—they shape people's lives. Women, for instance, are significantly overrepresented in surplus occupations, but make up just 29% of workers in widespread shortage occupations. This imbalance increases their risk of unemployment and limits access to more secure jobs.

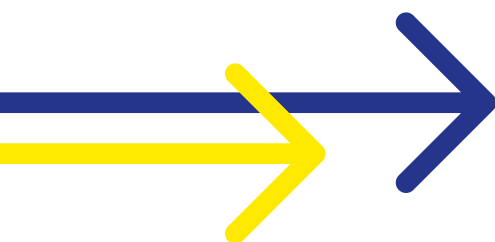
Young people and early leavers from education face similar challenges. They are often concentrated in surplus occupations—occupations where too many candidates compete for too few jobs. This makes them especially vulnerable to labour market shifts and economic downturns.

Each edition of the EURES report on labour shortages and surpluses explores the profile of workers in both shortage and surplus occupations. By using this data, EURES Advisers can help jobseekers in surplus roles consider training or career changes toward in-demand occupations. This not only improves their employment prospects but also helps rebalance the European labour market.

Where can I find EURES Advisers to collaborate with?

Check the [‘Who is who?’](#) page on the Extranet to find and connect with EURES Advisers.





Organise a targeted E(O)JD

Does your organisation engage in E(O)JD events?

If you've identified transnational mobility matching potential, collaborating with fellow EURES Advisers to organise a targeted E(O)JD can be a powerful next step.

Why base an E(O)JD on transnational mobility matching potential?

Because it's data-driven and highly targeted. When you align your event with real labour market imbalances, you increase the chances of meaningful matches between jobseekers and employers.



Can you give an example?

Romania is currently experiencing shortages of waiters, cooks and restaurant managers while Portugal has reported a surplus in these occupations. A HORECA-themed E(O)JD between these two countries would be a smart, evidence-based initiative to address both needs.

How can we make the event more effective?

The Event Organisers could:

- ▶ Request that paid promotion support for the event be geographically targeted on Portugal and other countries reporting surpluses in waiters.
- ▶ Consider translating promotional materials into Portuguese to increase engagement and reach.
- ▶ Create reciprocal events: while Portugal reports a surplus in waiters, cooks and restaurant managers, Romania has a surplus of nursing professionals. The collaboration could be taken further by organising another E(O)JD to match nursing professionals in Romania with employers in Portugal.

Where do I start?

Start by identifying transnational mobility matching potential and reaching out to fellow EURES Advisers in the relevant countries.

Use the [‘Who is who?’](#) page to find contacts and begin planning your collaborative E(O)JD – from planning to evaluation the E(O)JD team will support you at every step.

[Apply to host an E\(O\)JD here.](#)

Glossary

Labour shortage

When there is a sufficient number of people with the required skills, but for various reasons an insufficient number of them take up employment in the occupation and location in question.

Labour surplus

When there is a higher number of people looking to take up employment in the occupation and location in question than there are jobs available.

Labour market imbalance

Labour market imbalance occurs when there is imbalance between the supply and demand in the labour market, which can be driven by the underlying skills mismatches, but can also be caused by other conditions such as overall labour supply and demand.

Skill shortage

A situation where the demand for a particular type of skill (or talent shortage) exceeds the available supply of that skill at the market-clearing rate of pay.

Transnational mobility matching potential

Transnational matching potential refers to the opportunity to connect jobseekers in one country where a specific occupation is reported as surplus with employers in another country where the same occupation is reported as shortage.

Further reading

- ▶ [EURES report on labour shortages and surpluses 2024](#)
- ▶ [The impact of labour shortages and surpluses on EURES services by 2030 | European Labour Authority](#)

Share your experience

If you have used the EURES report on labour shortages and surpluses or dashboard to support your work, let ECO know! Your good practice could be highlighted on EURES social media or extranet to inspire the network.

Email: eures-communications@ela.europa.eu

