

A career in Europe starts at school: EURES Slovakia provides professional and verified opportunities for students

Slovakia

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Name of the organisation	Central Labour Office, Social Affairs and Family
Type of organisation	Labour Office
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Topic of the good practice	Youth and students: apprenticeships and the first job in the EU and EEA
Geographical focus	Nation-wide
Duration	05/12/2021
Summary of the good practice	► EURES Slovakia has developed a comprehensive and long-standing nationwide practice aimed at supporting young people - particularly final-year secondary school pupils and university students - in their transition from education to the labour market. The initiative focuses on providing practical, reliable, and accessible information about apprenticeships, internships, and employment opportunities in EU. ► The core of the practice is direct outreach in educational institutions across Slovakia, where EURES advisers deliver tailored information sessions adapted to the needs, study fields, and career expectations of students. These sessions provide a structured overview of opportunities abroad, including apprenticeships and seasonal work. Students are guided through recruitment processes, employer expectations, and

application procedures, gaining practical knowledge that supports their entry into the European labour market.

- ▶ A key feature of the practice is the strong emphasis on promoting safe mobility. Students are introduced to verified job offers available through the EURES network and are trained to identify trustworthy employers and avoid fraudulent or misleading offers. In addition, the practice provides essential information on living and working conditions in different EU/EEA countries. This includes topics such as labour rights and obligations, social security coordination, cost of living, accommodation, and administrative requirements linked to mobility. By addressing both professional and practical aspects of working abroad, the initiative helps students form realistic expectations and reduces the risks associated with insufficient preparation.
- ▶ Another important component is the promotion of European recruitment opportunities. Students are informed about and encouraged to participate in international job fairs, recruitment events with foreign employers, and EJDs, which allow direct interaction with employers from across Europe. This significantly enhances access to real employment opportunities and supports active engagement in the labour market.
- ▶ The practice also systematically integrates information about the EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS). Students learn about the financial and practical support available through the scheme, such as contributions for job interviews abroad, relocation costs, language training, and recognition of qualifications. By increasing awareness and understanding of TMS, the initiative helps reduce financial barriers and makes international mobility more accessible to a broader group of young people.
- ▶ Overall, the practice contributes to strengthening young people's employability, increasing their awareness of safe mobility pathways, and supporting informed decision-making about their future careers. It combines

	information, guidance, and access to concrete opportunities within a single, coherent outreach model, aligned with European priorities on youth employment and fair labour mobility.
OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES	
Background/context What challenge, need or gap were you trying to solve or respond to? Why was this issue relevant or urgent in your context (sector, region, country)?	▶ Across Slovakia, many young people - particularly secondary school graduates and university students - face significant challenges when transitioning from education to the labour market. One of the key gaps identified is the lack of accessible, practical, and trustworthy information about employment opportunities abroad, including apprenticeships, internships, and entry-level jobs within the EU and EEA. While interest in working abroad is high among young people, their knowledge is often fragmented, based on informal sources, or influenced by misleading online content and unverified job offers. ▶ This situation creates increased vulnerability to fraudulent recruitment practices, unrealistic expectations, and uninformed decision-making. Young people frequently lack awareness of their labour rights, working conditions in other countries, and the administrative requirements linked to mobility. In addition, they often have limited understanding of how to identify reliable employers, how recruitment processes function in an international context, or how to prepare effectively for working and living abroad. ▶ The issue is particularly relevant in the Slovak context, where regional disparities in employment opportunities persist, and certain areas experience higher levels of youth unemployment or fewer local career prospects. Students in less economically developed or rural regions often have less access to career guidance services and fewer opportunities to engage directly with employers, especially from abroad. As a result, their chances of accessing safe and quality mobility opportunities are more limited. At the same time, the European labour market offers a wide range of opportunities for young people, including

	apprenticeships, traineeships, and jobs in sectors facing labour shortages. However, without structured support and guidance, young people are often unable to fully benefit from these opportunities. There is therefore a clear need for initiatives that bridge the gap between education and the labour market, improve awareness of existing mobility tools, and promote safe, informed, and fair labour mobility. ▶ Another important gap relates to the limited visibility and understanding of existing EU instruments designed to support mobility, such as the EURES network and the EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS). Many young people are not aware that they can access free advisory services, verified job offers, or financial support for job interviews, relocation, or language training. ▶ This lack of awareness creates additional barriers, particularly for those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. In this context, the need for a structured, reliable, and nationwide approach became urgent. Providing students with direct access to expert guidance within their educational environment helps ensure equal opportunities, reduces exposure to risks, and supports informed career choices. Addressing these challenges is also fully aligned with broader European priorities aimed at improving youth employment, closing skills gaps, and promoting fair and safe labour mobility across the EU.
Objectives What were the main goals of this practice (e.g. better compliance, faster processing, improved worker protection)? (Please limit to three) Who or what were these goals intended to help or change? (Please limit to three)	▶ To increase awareness and understanding of safe and fair labour mobility within the EU/EEA. The goal is to ensure that young people are informed about their rights and obligations when working abroad, are able to recognise trustworthy employment opportunities, and understand the risks associated with fraudulent or unverified job offers. By promoting verified EURES services and job vacancies, the practice aims to strengthen worker protection and reduce vulnerability.

► **To improve young people's access to verified employment opportunities and practical career guidance.**

The initiative seeks to equip students with up-to-date and relevant information on apprenticeships, internships, seasonal work, and first full-time jobs across Europe. It also supports them in understanding recruitment processes, employer expectations, and application procedures, thereby facilitating a smoother and more effective transition from education to employment.

► **To promote equal access to mobility opportunities by reducing informational and financial barriers.**

A key objective is to ensure that all young people - regardless of their regional or socio-economic background - have access to the same quality of information and support. This includes raising awareness of tools such as the EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS), which provides financial assistance for interviews, relocation, language training, and recognition of qualifications, thereby making mobility more accessible.

These objectives are intended to support and influence three main groups:

► **Young people (students and graduates):**

Particularly final-year secondary school pupils and university students who are preparing to enter the labour market. The practice aims to improve their employability, decision-making capacity, and readiness for working abroad.

► **Educational institutions:**

Schools, vocational training centres, and universities benefit from strengthened cooperation with EURES, enabling them to provide students with relevant labour market information and career guidance linked to real opportunities.

	► The wider European labour market: By preparing informed and job-ready candidates, the practice contributes to better matching labour supply and demand across EU/EEA countries, supporting sectors with labour shortages and promoting fair and efficient mobility.
Main activities What were the main steps or actions you carried out to put the practice into effect? Were any tools, materials, partnerships, or processes created?	► The practice is implemented through regular school outreach coordinated with career counsellors, with EURES advisers arranging individual sessions across regions. These in-person presentations target mainly final-year students and provide practical information on apprenticeships, traineeships, seasonal work, and first jobs in the EU/EEA. ► Students are guided on recruitment processes, employer expectations, and safe job search, with a strong focus on verified EURES vacancies and fraud prevention. Sessions also cover living and working conditions abroad, including rights, obligations, and administrative steps. ► Opportunities such as European (Online) Job Days and international recruitment events are promoted, alongside the EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS), explaining available financial support. Supporting materials include presentations, leaflets, and small promotional items (e.g. pens, pencils), enhancing engagement and visibility.
Funding/organisational resources	The practice is implemented within the standard responsibilities of EURES Slovakia advisers and does not require dedicated external funding. All activities are carried out during regular working hours as part of institutional tasks. The main organisational resource is the existing network of trained EURES advisers, who coordinate outreach activities directly with schools in their regions. The initiative relies on established cooperation with educational institutions rather than formal project structures. Costs associated with the practice are minimal and relate primarily to local travel within cities or regions when visiting schools. Additional materials, such as basic informational

	leaflets and promotional items (e.g. pens, pencils), are already available within existing resources and therefore do not generate any additional costs, while continuing to support effective communication and engagement.
PARTICIPATION	
Stakeholders involved Organisations or entities actively contributing to the design, implementation, monitoring, or support of the good practice (e.g. labour inspectorates, social security institutions, trade unions, employers' associations, or other).	▶ The practice is implemented primarily through cooperation between EURES Slovakia advisers and educational institutions across the country, including secondary schools, vocational schools, and universities. Schools play a key role in facilitating access to students, typically through career counsellors or guidance staff, who coordinate and schedule the sessions. ▶ EURES advisers are responsible for the design and delivery of the activities, as well as for providing expert guidance, up-to-date labour market information, and access to verified job opportunities. In some cases, the practice is complemented by the involvement of foreign employers and other EU networks (EUROPASS, EUROPE DIRECT), who participate in selected sessions.
Target groups Main groups or categories that the practice is directly aimed at, who should receive its services or who engage with it (e.g. employers, mobile or posted workers, labour inspectors and social security officers, or other).	▶ The practice is primarily aimed at young people in education, especially final-year secondary school students, vocational school pupils, and university students who are preparing to enter the labour market. These groups represent individuals at a critical transition stage, where access to accurate information and guidance can significantly influence their career decisions and opportunities. ▶ A particular focus is placed on students with limited access to reliable labour market information, including those from regions with higher unemployment or fewer local job opportunities. The practice ensures equal access to guidance regardless of socio-economic background, study field, or geographic location.
Final beneficiaries Individuals or groups that ultimately benefit from the outcomes of the practice,	▶ The practice ultimately benefits young people entering the labour market, particularly those who decide to work, train, or gain experience abroad. By receiving

even if they are not the direct target or user (e.g. mobile or posted workers, vulnerable workers at risk of exploitation, employers benefiting from clearer rules or reduced admin burdens, or other).	reliable information and guidance at an early stage, they are better prepared to make informed decisions, exercise their rights, and avoid risks such as fraudulent job offers or poor working conditions. ► A key group of final beneficiaries are young mobile workers, including those from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds, who gain safer and more equal access to international labour opportunities. The initiative also contributes to reducing their vulnerability to exploitation by strengthening awareness of fair labour mobility and verified recruitment channels. Employers across the EU/EEA also benefit indirectly, as the practice helps provide better-informed, prepared, and motivated candidates, improving job matching and recruitment outcomes, particularly in sectors facing labour shortages.
GOOD PRACTICE CRITERIA	
Achievements and outcomes What specific results did the practice achieve? (e.g. How many workers or employers were reached, number of publications created? What processes became faster?) What kind of broader benefits did it bring? (e.g. Did it improve understanding of rights and obligations, enhance cooperation between authorities, or reduce legal uncertainty and inconsistent application of rules?)	► The practice has delivered clear and measurable results over recent years. On average, over the past four years, EURES Slovakia has visited approximately 122 schools annually, reaching around 6,000 students each year through in-person information sessions across the country. The results show a steady upward trend, as the number of participating schools and students has gradually increased compared to the initial years of implementation. This reflects growing interest from educational institutions as well as increasing demand from students for reliable information about working abroad and mobility opportunities. ► The practice brings several wider benefits beyond its immediate objectives. It significantly improves young people's understanding of their rights and obligations when working abroad, including labour conditions, social security coordination, and administrative requirements. By providing clear, verified, and practical information, it reduces the risk of misinformation, legal uncertainty, and exposure to unfair or exploitative working conditions. The initiative also strengthens cooperation between

	public employment services (EURES) and educational institutions, creating a more systematic link between education and labour market needs. This contributes to better alignment between skills development and real employment opportunities across Europe. ► Furthermore, the practice promotes more consistent use of trusted EU tools and services, such as the EURES portal and the Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS), helping to standardise access to verified job opportunities and support mechanisms. By preparing informed and job-ready candidates, it also improves the overall functioning of the European labour market, enhancing job matching, supporting sectors with labour shortages, and contributing to fair and efficient labour mobility across EU/EEA countries.
Cost effectiveness How did you keep costs low while still achieving results? (e.g. Did you reuse existing tools, automate processes, or share resources across teams?) Can you show that the outcomes were worth the investment? (e.g. Did small changes lead to big improvements, or were expensive tools avoided?)	► The practice is highly cost-efficient as it relies entirely on existing EURES structures, staff, and resources. Activities are carried out within regular working hours, without the need for additional funding, dedicated projects, or external tools. Established cooperation with schools eliminates administrative burden, while existing materials and promotional items are reused. Costs are limited mainly to local travel, yet the reach remains high - around 6,000 students annually. This demonstrates strong value for money, as minimal investment leads to significant impact in terms of awareness, preparedness, and safer labour mobility outcomes.
Transferability What are the key features that make this practice work well? (e.g. a digital platform, clear guidelines, a joint inspection process, or strong coordination) What would another country or organisation need to make this work for them? (e.g. certain laws, IT systems, or staff training)	► The practice is highly transferable to other EU/EEA countries, as it is based on simple, adaptable, and low-cost principles. It relies on existing EURES structures, direct cooperation with educational institutions, and in-person outreach that can be easily replicated in different national contexts. No specialised tools or additional funding are required. ► The model can be adjusted to local labour market needs, education systems, and target groups while maintaining its core elements - school engagement,

	promotion of verified job opportunities, and mobility guidance. Its flexibility and cost-efficiency make it suitable for wide adoption across regions.
Sustainability How is the practice sustainable from a social, financial or environmental perspective? What makes this practice able to continue over time? (e.g. It is now part of regular work or has been built into law or procedures?) and how are you making sure it lasts beyond the pilot or project phase?	► The practice is sustainable as it is fully embedded in the regular activities of EURES Slovakia and carried out within existing institutional structures. It requires no dedicated external funding and relies on established human resources, partnerships with schools, and reusable materials, ensuring long-term financial stability. ► Socially, it responds to continuous demand from students and educational institutions for reliable labour market guidance. Its integration into everyday work, combined with strong cooperation with schools, ensures continuity beyond any project phase. The model's simplicity, low costs, and adaptability allow it to be maintained and expanded over time without additional burden.
Innovativeness What makes this practice new or different in your field or country? (e.g. Is it the first of its kind, or does it combine actors who don't usually work together, or activities not performed before?) How does it improve older or less effective approaches? (e.g. By reaching more people, using data better, or simplifying complex procedures)	► The practice is innovative in the Slovak context as it systematically brings structured, expert labour mobility guidance directly into schools, combining career orientation with verified international job opportunities. Unlike traditional approaches that rely on passive information channels, this model uses proactive, face-to-face outreach tailored to students' needs and study fields. ► It also uniquely integrates multiple elements - safe mobility education, access to verified EURES vacancies, and promotion of the Targeted Mobility Scheme (TMS) - into one coherent service. This approach improves earlier methods by reaching a wider audience, providing practical and trustworthy information, and strengthening students' readiness while reducing risks linked to misinformation or unsafe recruitment
Digitalisation What kind of digital tools or platforms were used in this practice? (e.g. online	► The practice uses a combination of simple and accessible digital tools to enhance outreach and engagement. These include presentations, interactive

portals, automated case tracking, data sharing, digital databases or other)

How did these tools help in reaching your goals? (e.g. Did they save time, facilitate access to data in real time, reduce errors, help detect fraud, or improve coordination between authorities?)

tools such as Kahoot quizzes, and online platforms like the national EURES portal (www.eures.sk), the European EURES portal, and the European (Online) Job Days platform. Additional sources include websites of public employment services in other countries.

- Digital content such as videos of successful client stories and employer visits (e.g. traineeships in Greece and Spain) and social media promotion further support communication. These tools improve understanding, increase engagement, provide real-time access to verified vacancies, and make information more interactive, attractive, and easy to retain for students.