

When can you start?

A practical guide to recruiting in Europe



Social Europe



European Commission

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European Commission
Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Unit C.4

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Foreword

A word from **BUSINESSEUROPE**

The recent financial and economic crisis has hit European companies unprecedentedly hard. At the same time, employers have made remarkable efforts to keep their employees. This is partly due to the much valued skills and competencies of the employees.

The challenge of finding the right talent for the job is becoming more pressing for European employers in several countries. Even during the crisis, hundreds of thousands of vacancies co-existed with high unemployment rates. **BUSINESSEUROPE**'s members report on important skills shortages within STEM¹ but also within a broad range of occupations including nurses, plumbers, electricians, etc. Within the EU, these specific shortages differ from one country to another.

As the economy starts to pick up, it is crucial that companies have access to skills and competencies that match their needs. For this, we will need efficient labour markets with geographical and occupational mobility.

The free movement of workers is a cornerstone of the European project and fundamental for a well-functioning single market. Such mobility will also lead to employers having a greater pool of workers to recruit from and the individual worker benefitting from a greater range of job opportunities. Adding to this, it will enable workers to get to know new working methods and lead to an exchange of knowledge, languages, and techniques within the EU. Moreover, countries with high levels of geographical mobility have been shown to also have high levels of job mobility.

¹Science, Engineering, Technology, Mathematics

Currently the level of geographical mobility in the EU is very low at just over 2%. This shows the need to address the obstacles to exercising the right of free movement. It should be easy to pick up a job in another Member State.

EURES plays an important role in enabling transparent, integrated and easily accessible labour markets and education information systems. Through this network, jobseekers and employers are connected to the public employment services in the entire EU. This role should be further promoted so that the services of EURES could be better exploited by employers. In the EURES web portal, more than 432 000 CVs of jobseekers are currently registered, but just over 21 000 employers.

It is therefore important to increase the visibility of EURES and to strengthen the dialogue with employers on how to improve the attractiveness of its services.

Cooperation and exchange of know-how between public employment services, as well as partnerships with private employment agencies, could help increase the efficiency in the provision of job matching services, counselling and career guidance. Enabling the capabilities of our work force to come to full use will be imperative - not least since that population is set to shrink.

Efficient employment services and smoothly operating networks are required for a successful implementation of flexicurity policies. By facilitating the creation of new jobs and supporting people during transitions, it enables a smoother labour re-allocation.

This handbook should help employers to make better use of the EURES network. We hope that it will contribute to promoting

geographical mobility on European labour markets, including timely job to job transitions as well as transitions from unemployment to employment.

BUSINESSEUROPE is convinced that employers and employees throughout Europe have everything to gain from an efficient allocation of labour across the borders of Member States.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philippe de Buck', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Philippe de Buck
Director General
BUSINESSEUROPE
www.businessseurope.eu

A word from an employer

From the time our company was founded, we have put a lot of effort into recruiting hotel, cruise and technical staff from around Europe. We believe the company benefits as a result of having European staff, and allows us to carry on our tradition of attentive service. I think we are now one of the last cruise companies to actively recruit from around Europe.

We started cooperating with EURES Finland about eight years ago. Now we also have enlarged our cooperation to include EURES Sweden, and EURES France. EURES has helped us to source many staff, mainly via the online promotion of our vacancies. The EURES Advisers always provide excellent support to our recruitment team when we travel to their countries; after all these years they know exactly what we are looking for and are able to source very qualified candidates. We have also found them to be extremely professional and reliable when it comes to informing potential candidates about working for our company.

We recruit all year round, and are committed to interviewing every candidate in person. This, of course, can prove quite costly and time-consuming. By recruiting through EURES in Finland, Sweden and France, we are not only put in contact with candidates, but saved the cost of going through private recruitment agencies. The cooperation with EURES has been extremely beneficial for us; they offer a personalised and professional service that is hard to find elsewhere. In the future, we hope to extend this cooperation to working with more members of the EURES network.

Patrick Sanlaville
Recruitment Manager, Fleet Personnel
The Yachts of Seabourn, United Kingdom
www.seabourncareers.com

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The European labour market - and what it offers

- A changing labour market means the skills you need may be beyond national borders;
- The European labour market allows you to recruit from the 31 EEA² countries;
- There are few administrative formalities associated with recruiting from throughout Europe;
- There are numerous mobility networks which can help you get the best out of the European labour market.

The European labour market: today and tomorrow

The single European market became a reality in 1992 and represents one of the European Union (EU)'s greatest achievements. As a result, the free movement of goods, capital, services, and workers are rights guaranteed to all citizens within the EU-27, EEA and Switzerland. With the establishment of an open European labour market, citizens can move freely between states to live, work and study in another country.

The European labour market is constantly evolving and will face a number of challenges in the coming years. New technologies are changing the way employees work. Companies operating across a wider geographical area are placing a greater emphasis

²The EEA (European Economic Area) countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. While Switzerland is not in the EEA, Swiss nationals have the same rights as EEA nationals.

on multitasking and teamwork, increasing the need for highly-skilled workers. An undeniable and ongoing shift to a low-carbon economy will demand new skills. Additionally, 'generic' skills such as communications and analysis will become increasingly important.

The population of European citizens at working age will peak in 2012, heralding an increased demand for skills, and increased competition for the 'right' employees. To remain competitive, employers will need a workforce with the right balance of knowledge, skills and abilities.

Europe in the year 2020 is envisioned to see the creation of seven million new, and 73 million 'replacement' jobs. The services sector will account for three-quarters of total employment. The European labour market will need to be ready to face these dramatic changes.

To ensure you have a workforce equipped to face the obstacles ahead, it may be necessary to look beyond national borders. Mobility provides a means of matching skills to the needs of a rapidly evolving labour market.

What does an open European labour market mean for your business?

Recruiting employees from across Europe is considerably easier than it was even a few years ago. There are a number of ways of not only reaching out and beginning to recruit from other European countries, but also knowing how to attract the right employees.

The European labour market enables workers to move to another country without most of the administrative burdens that are

generally associated with moving abroad. The free movement of workers entitles European citizens to:

- Look for a job in another country;
- Work in another country without requiring a work permit;
- Stay in that country, even after the employment has finished;
- Enjoy equal access to employment, working conditions and all other social and tax advantages that locals enjoy.

As a European employer, you can take advantage of the European labour market to:

- Fill difficult, specialised, or hard-to-fill vacancies;
- Complement your existing workforce with employees of different backgrounds and skill levels;
- Use the local knowledge of European employees to expand your client base.

European mobility networks – at your service

A number of networks dedicated to European labour mobility are available to provide support to employers. Whether you are a small business considering recruiting from abroad for the first time, or an established company looking for more information, the following services can be of help.

Your Europe

A practical guide to doing business in Europe, the Your Europe portal provides information on starting and managing a business. Additionally, employers can find details on recruiting, staff welfare, and financial support.

Visit ec.europa.eu/youreurope/business

The 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.

Visit www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu

European Small Business Portal

Find out what the European Union is doing to boost small business, in Europe and globally. This website provides information on and for small- and medium-enterprises, including policy issues, practical advice, and local contact points.

Visit ec.europa.eu/small-business

EURES

EURES is the European Job Mobility network coordinated by DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, providing job matching and recruitment services to all the EEA countries and Switzerland.

Visit eures.europa.eu



Why recruit from abroad?

- Certain skills and competences may only be available beyond national borders;
- Recruiting from abroad can be as easy as recruiting domestically;
- Mobile workers are often highly motivated workers, and bring new perspectives and skills to the workplace;
- Don't forget to consider aspects such as administration and integration of new employees.

There are a number of reasons to recruit from elsewhere in Europe, whether you have exhausted domestic options, or are simply hoping to introduce new skills and levels of experience into your team. Whatever the needs of your company, the working population of Europe boasts an incredible variety of languages, backgrounds, and areas of expertise.

Looking outside of your own country for candidates can open your workplace up to new languages, alternative specialisations, and fresh approaches.

The availability of skills and competences

Many sectors, particularly over the last few years, have faced shortages of employees in some countries and a surplus in others. This means that certain skills and competences may only be found elsewhere in Europe.

In some cases, this has led to direct cooperation between countries to ensure the needs of the labour market were met. For example, when Denmark faced a shortage of employees in

the medical sector, the workers were found in the high number of Italian medical graduates.

Similar instances have occurred in the construction and engineering sectors. For several years, Ireland had a need for these workers which could not be filled by looking within the country; hence workers from elsewhere in Europe were required to meet demand.

Regardless of the sector, it is not always possible for employer needs to be met by the working population of one country. Recruiting from throughout Europe allows vacancies to be filled, markets to be expanded, and a business to become more competitive.

It is as easy as recruiting domestically

In the EEA countries and Switzerland, free movement is a fundamental right of all citizens. This means that, as a European employer, you can recruit from all these countries. You can apply normal recruiting procedures, and the use of online technologies such as Skype and video conferencing allow interviews to be carried out with minimal cost.

The workers of some countries still face certain conditions that may restrict their movement. This applies to recent members of the EU and could last for a transitional period of up to seven years. More information can be found by consulting eures.europa.eu

Candidates for regulated professions may need to register with an appropriate authority to ensure their qualifications are recognised. Consult enic-naric.net for more information.

Mobile workers are motivated workers

Employees who make the choice to leave their country to gain experience or set up a new life elsewhere have an inherent motivation and eagerness to succeed. Whether their move is for a long or short period, they realise that there are important benefits to spending time in another European country and are generally doing so in order to benefit their professional experience.

It is true that some workers may be moving abroad out of necessity rather than desire. However, this does not mean they'll lack the motivation to perform well at their jobs and integrate into their new workplace.

Overall, the added value to a company is clear. Workers from around Europe bring with them fresh approaches, outlooks, and can be a great benefit to business.

Things to consider when recruiting

There are a number of considerations to take into account before making a decision to advertise a job vacancy throughout Europe.

In the following pages we have listed some steps that should be taken into consideration:

- before commencing the recruitment process;
- throughout recruiting from abroad;
- after recruiting from abroad.

Before recruiting from abroad

- Contact your local public employment service to discuss your needs – in case the candidates you require can be found closer to home;
- Prepare a detailed candidate profile, considering the skills, competences and qualifications you need;
- Outline the objectives, benefits, risks and costs of recruiting from abroad. Include specific deadlines, allowing for extra time;
- Contact local authorities, such as a foreigners' registry board, to find out if any extra steps are required;
- Research registration procedures, working permits (if required), and transitional rules governing the free movement of workers within the EEA;
- Consider what a new employee will need on arrival: will it take them long to find accommodation or housing? Can you provide support and guidance in this?
- What about language barriers? Consider how you will communicate with them if they lack fluency in your language. Some candidates may find phone interviews particularly difficult;
- Recruitment practices differ from country to country, as do formalities between employers and candidates. Don't let this affect your judgement of their ability to do the job;
- Finally, if you need more advice, consult your local EURES Adviser. They can provide you with more information on all of the above.

Throughout recruiting from abroad

- As a first step, you should consult the EURES Job Mobility portal. Here you will find all the information you need to begin your search;
- Next you need to advertise your vacancy. The types of skills you are looking for will determine how and where you promote your vacancy, so choose a recruitment partner carefully. Some employers find it useful to form a cooperation with universities or Chambers of Commerce, for example;
- Research the country you are targeting to know where and how to find the people you need. A recruiting partner with expert local knowledge can be of great use here;
- Consider preparing a company presentation for your candidates, which promotes your company and outlines the support available to foreign employees. This could also be placed on your website;
- Check references thoroughly. Remember that a candidate's referee might not speak your language. You will get a better response if you contact your candidate's former employer in their own language;
- Consult your current employees. What would they need and expect if they were moving to another country for work? If possible, involve successfully integrated foreign employees in the process;
- Offer relocation assistance wherever possible. A business that invests in its people benefits through a better performance;
- Request feedback on your recruitment process, from both your partner and your current employees.

After recruiting from abroad

- A welcome pack is a useful addition to your formal induction. It could include information on the local area, such as transport links, a map to the workplace, and practical details such as setting up a bank account;
- Allow your new employee time off to register with a local authority, or obtain a social security number or health insurance, for example;
- Though you do not have responsibility for every aspect of a new employee's integration, you should be particularly flexible for those with families. They may need extra time to look for schools and housing;
- Prepare current employees. Explain your reasoning and host a social occasion to allow everyone to get to know each other;
- Assigning a mentor to guide the new employee will ease them into the working culture, routines, and social aspects;
- Make sure the contractual arrangements reflect the fact that foreign employees are entitled to the same working conditions as other EEA citizens;
- Spend extra time familiarising new employees with the health and safety regulations of your company;
- Training is vital. You may need to adapt your current training programme to the needs of your new employee. Consult EUR-Assist, a simple web-based tool tailored to help employers integrate workers. Visit: www.eur-assist.eu;
- Ensure you and your employee are clear on what is expected throughout the duration of their contract. Honesty at the beginning will help to eliminate misunderstandings later on.



About EURES

- EURES - the European Job Mobility network, operates in all the EEA countries and Switzerland;
- EURES provides information, advice, recruitment/ placement services, and job matching for the benefit of workers and employers;
- EURES is supported by a network of over 800 Advisers and hosts a comprehensive job mobility portal.

What is EURES?

EURES is the European Job Mobility network coordinated by the Directorate-General of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission. Operating in all EEA countries and Switzerland, EURES is integrated in national public employment services.

EURES is supported by a network of over 800 EURES Advisers working within national public employment service offices. The network provides job matching services to employees wishing to work elsewhere in Europe, and to employers wishing to recruit from throughout Europe. The joint resources of the EURES member and partner organisations provide a solid basis for the EURES network to offer high quality services for both workers and employers. EURES also hosts a job mobility portal, providing online job matching tools, as well as information on living and working around Europe.

As a European employer, EURES can provide you with access to the European labour market, and facilitate your recruitment of skilled candidates from across 31 countries. For more information on EURES' services to employers, see the chapter titled 'What can EURES do for your business?'

EURES exists to provide three main types of services: job matching and recruitment, information, and advice.

Job matching and recruitment

The most important of its services, EURES provides job matching for jobseekers and recruitment services to employers. EURES can help you to find the most qualified candidates to fill your vacancy by collecting CVs, short-listing candidates, and assisting in interview arrangement. For jobseekers, EURES can help in the matching of qualifications to vacancies, as well as guiding candidates throughout the application process.

Information

EURES is a resource for information on national labour markets. This information is available free of charge to any employer, jobseeker, or interested person via the EURES portal or local EURES Advisers. You can find out national labour market statistics, as well as the sectors in which there is a demand or surplus of workers.

Advice

For employers new to recruiting from throughout Europe, EURES can provide advice in a number of areas. This may include:

- Where to find the qualified candidates you need;
- How to advertise and promote a vacancy;
- The administrative aspects you will have to consider;
- How and where to conduct interviews with potential employees;
- What is required of you in helping a new employee to settle in your country.



What can EURES do for your business?

- A free and personalised European recruitment and job matching service;
- A network of experienced EURES Advisers working all over Europe;
- A job mobility portal for advertising vacancies and meeting the best candidates.

The purpose of EURES is to provide recruitment and job matching, and information and advisory services to workers and employers in all the EEA countries and Switzerland. EURES' services are available to any type of employer, regardless of sector, size, country of origin, or needs.

Tailored and professional advice from a network of EURES Advisers

Over 800 EURES Advisers across Europe are available to provide advice, information, and job matching services to employers from all sectors. EURES Advisers can help you to find the best candidate for your company, through short-listing candidates and forwarding relevant CVs for your assessment. Your local EURES Adviser can meet with you at your offices, discuss your needs and the candidate profiles you are looking for, and talk you through the recruitment process.

Additionally, if you have questions regarding practicalities such as the recognition of qualifications of your future employees, or the transference of social security or health insurance, your EURES Adviser can either provide all necessary information, or point you in the direction of relevant resources.

EURES events – real and virtual

Each year, EURES hosts a number of events, from conferences, working groups and seminars, to the European Job Days. Details of all events can be found on the EURES portal or by contacting your local EURES Adviser.

The main goals of a European Job Day, held all over Europe each year, are to provide a setting in which jobseekers and employers can meet, and information on living and working conditions throughout Europe can be exchanged. As an employer, you can participate in a European Job Day by setting up a stand and talking to jobseekers about particular vacancies in your company. Many employers use these events as an opportunity to pre-screen candidates, collecting CVs and identifying those who will be contacted at a later stage. European Job Days can be themed around a particular sector or target group, or be general events open to all. If you want to participate, be sure to contact your local EURES Adviser for more information.

EURES is also currently developing a series of virtual events. These will take the same format as the European Job Days, but each event will be accessible online by employers all over Europe. Notifications of virtual European Job Days will be given on the EURES portal, at which stage employers can register. Participating in a virtual event will allow your company to present general information, advertise and promote vacancies, and set up interviews with qualified candidates. Pre-screening of candidates can also take place throughout the event, with the assistance of EURES Advisers.

Advertise and promote a vacancy

If you wish to advertise and promote a vacancy in another country, EURES can help you, whether or not you have a specific country in mind. You should first register the vacancy with your

local public employment service office, or with the corresponding database. The vacancy is then transferred to the EURES portal, where it will be visible to jobseekers all over Europe. If requested, national EURES services can also advertise your vacancy at events such as European Job Days.

A portal with over 500 000 registered jobseekers

EURES hosts a comprehensive job matching portal at eures.europa.eu. Creating a free My EURES account on the portal means you have access to a resource for advertising vacancies, candidate searches, and finding information on recruiting throughout Europe.

Recruiting

The EURES portal allows you to search for candidates matching your specifications, organise their profiles, and contact them directly. Here's an explanation of some of the features you may find useful:

My Candidates will make it easier for you to find the right candidate for your vacancy. Check out useful hints and tips, run a quick search based on the desired occupation and desired location of the jobseeker, run an advanced search based on various search criteria and view a candidate's CV in all available languages. Once a few potential candidates have been found, you can send them short messages requesting more information or arranging a time to talk, create and manage search profiles, and save and organise candidates for easy access to their details.

Advertise a job helps you to post a vacancy on the EURES portal and in national databases that are linked to the EURES portal.

Throughout 2011, the EURES portal will also see the launch of **Match & Map** – a job matching tool that will show you exactly where to find the workers you need. Match & Map automatically matches the information given in a user's profile to the vacancies, and the result is a graphical map of Europe showing you both workers and vacancies.

Information and advice

The EURES portal also provides a number of pages offering information and advice on national labour markets, on the steps you need to take when recruiting from abroad, and on working conditions in other countries.

Recruiting abroad provides you with some useful information for before, during and after the recruitment process.

The Events calendar shows upcoming events of interest in a chosen region. Keep track of recruitment fairs or general mobility information sessions with EURES Advisers.

Get help is for anyone using the portal that runs into technical difficulties. The EURES Contact Centre team is standing by to answer your queries via phone, email, or VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol).

Living & working contains practical, legal and administrative information on mobility. Look up current trends in the European labour market by country, region and sector of activity.

Links will direct you to other websites dealing with European labour mobility, including national Public Employment Services, as well as a range of publications that will provide guidance during the recruitment process.

EURES in cross-border regions

EURES has an important role to play in cross-border regions – that is, areas in which it is common for people to live in one country and work in another. Today, more than 600.000 people commute across borders to work and therefore are coping with different national practices in terms of administrative and legal issues.

There are currently 20 EURES cross-border partnerships involving 13 countries spread throughout Europe. These partnerships bring together the expertise of local public employment services, vocational training institutions, and local authorities to provide advice, information and recruiting tailored to employers operating in cross-border regions. For more information, visit 'EURES in cross-border regions' on the EURES portal: eures.europa.eu.



Recruitment throughout Europe

Hiring from abroad has innumerable advantages for companies of all sizes. Whether your company is unable to find local workers with particular experience, expertise, or language skills, or whether you are thinking of expanding into new markets, recruiting from throughout Europe can act as a catalyst for new ideas and the growth of your business.

With new workers come new ideas, cultures, and skills. While these factors are of obvious benefit for a business, there are aspects to consider. Where to look for new candidates, how to retain them, and how to integrate them are just a few points that apply in all situations. And of course, each country follows different recruitment procedures and has a different work culture.

A good starting point may be the experiences of other employers. In the following pages you will find case studies from 31 European countries. Each case study presents an account of an employer's experience in recruiting from other European countries – the challenges they faced, the solutions reached, and the benefits to their business.

Austria



Population 8 356 707 (2009)

EURES Advisers 18

Accessing EURES in Austria www.ams.at

Labour market statistics

www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/labour_market

National information resources

www.austrocham.com

‘European workers can complement the local workforce, especially where there is a lack of local skills and knowledge’

Group interview with members of Palmers Textile & ZARA Österreich
Clothing
Vienna, Austria

The employer

Palmers Textile and ZARA Clothing, located in Austria, are some of the largest retail chains in the world. Each company has over 650 staff members, and hires nationals from almost every country across Europe.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Palmers and ZARA both have their specific reasons for hiring from abroad, but both agree that certain skills are available in Europe that are not always available locally. With regards to the retail industry in particular, industry specific knowledge plus language skills are quite important, but not necessarily found within Austria’s borders. Such a lack can be complemented by recruiting from throughout Europe.

- Within a company, hiring from throughout Europe provides existing workers with the opportunity to experience new cultures.
- Ensure that the foreign worker you hire intends to remain in the country for the required period of time.

How do you recruit?

ZARA Clothing views hiring from abroad as an opportunity for its existing staff to experience new cultures. Although it always initially tries to promote existing workers from within the company, if there is a lack of specific knowledge it looks to its branches in other countries. Here, often, there will be employees who are waiting for an opportunity to move abroad. Then the search is opened to throughout Europe. Palmers Textile, which has been recruiting from throughout Europe since its establishment, places emphasis on the importance of specialist knowledge of the textile field. As this is quite a niche area, often their search takes them to various other European countries. Both companies typically hire from abroad to fill vacancies in the fields of product development, quality management and design; and always, there is heavy emphasis placed on the importance of languages.

What challenges did you face?

Both companies agree that, as beneficial as it is, there are certain fundamental challenges in recruiting from abroad. These include aspects such as the necessity of providing support to employees in the relocation process, to their discovery that new employees often intend to return to their own country – sometimes after a very short time period. However, once someone has been retained, the process of integration of European with domestic staff has proven to be straightforward. Both companies admit that having numerous existing foreign employees, makes the process simpler. This reduces the risk of a new arrival feeling too much like an ‘outsider’.

What advice do you have for other employers?

For companies who are considering hiring Austrian workers, ZARA encourages German language skills to be listed as a requirement, along with some basic understanding of Austrian culture and habits. This is of particular importance for 'client-facing' roles. Additionally, Palmers Textiles recommends that employers recruiting from throughout Europe first clarify how long the employee intends to stay in the country. This ensures that both employee and employer are going into the arrangement with the same expectations.

Belgium



Population 10 708 433 (2008)

EURES Advisers 41

Accessing EURES in Belgium

www.actiris.be; www.leforem.be; www.vdab.be

Labour market statistics <http://statbel.fgov.be>;

www.vbo-feb.be; www.belgium.be

National information resources

www.cci.be; www.socialsecurity.fgov.be;

www.meta.fgov.be

'My European staff are polite, friendly, and motivated'

Interview with Ms Wilma Elsen Doorn, Owner

Hotel Oberhausen, Burg-Reuland

www.hoteloberhausen.info

The employer

Hotel Oberhausen is a small countryside hotel, located in the Hohes Venn-Eifel Nature Park on the border with Germany.

Currently employing a number of nationalities, the business has great need for a European staff.

- Time and effort should be put into finding the very best candidate.
- Be honest with prospective employees; ensure they have all the information about the job before they make the move.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

'It is very difficult to find interested workers locally', said Ms Elsen Doorn, owner of Hotel Oberhausen. Most of the local population are farmers, and other residents are not necessarily agreeable to shift work, or working weekends. 'As an example, most people who are trained as cooks choose to work in places where the hours are more regular,' she continued. The answer for Ms Elsen Doorn has been recruiting from throughout Europe, and therefore now has a staff she finds 'extremely polite, friendly and motivated'.

How do you recruit?

Hotel Oberhausen has been operating for 30 years, and has been employing workers from abroad since its inception. It originally began when guests at the hotel would ask Ms Elsen Doorn whether their children or other family members, who were learning German, would be able to work at the hotel in order to practice speaking the language. Ms Elsen Doorn also collaborated with German public employment services who helped her in placing a few Polish workers at the hotel. Then, as the years have gone by, word of mouth has helped Hotel Oberhausen gain a reputation as being a desirable workplace; therefore they receive steady applications throughout the year.

What challenges did you face?

Ms Elsen Doorn has not faced any problems with integration of foreign workers with local staff. Problems have only arisen when the employee doesn't fit the job description, and if they are not motivated enough for the hotel business. Thus, she finds that it is very important to take the time and effort to identify the best possible candidate for the position.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Ms Elsen Doorn stresses the importance of being honest with prospective employees. 'Don't promise them things you know will not happen'. Be specific and transparent about the nature of the job, the working hours, and the duties involved. She explains, 'We are always pleased when qualified people are interested in joining our business, but honesty is very important. You must be upfront about what you expect of them, so there are no misunderstandings along the way'.

Bulgaria



Population 7 623 395 (2008)

EURES Advisers 11

Accessing EURES in Bulgaria www.az.government.bg

Labour market statistics www.nsi.bg

National information resources www.bcci.bg

‘The recruiting of international trained professionals is not only necessary for the present, but is also a long term investment’

Interview with Mr Nikolay Kaloyano

Chairman of the Board of Directors of Balkanstroy Jsc, Sofia

www.balkanstroy.com

The employer

Balkanstroy is a joint-stock company, established in 1994 by specialists with professional experience in exploration and construction. The company, which has been ranked in the top three construction companies in Bulgaria, has over 1 000 employees.

- For companies that desire growth in international markets, attracting and working with qualified professionals and experts from abroad is the key.
- Culture and ethnicity are not barriers to working relationships; on the contrary, it greatly broadens the horizons of all employees.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

For a large company like Balkanstroy, its vision for future sustainable development in international markets is dependent on attracting and working with well trained and qualified professionals from relevant countries. Therefore, one of its main corporate priorities is to attract highly qualified people, who can help the company realise its goals.

How do you recruit?

However, the company faces some challenges hiring from abroad, including the situation whereby international, well-trained experts and professionals prefer to work from their native country as consultants, rather than relocate to Bulgaria. This can be attributed to two reasons: first, there are restrictions imposed on Bulgaria by other EEA countries in terms of labour mobility; secondly, there is lack of information on the opportunities and needs of the Bulgarian labour market.

What challenges did you face?

As a result, Balkanstroy often has to content with the limited knowledge and a lack of interest from European employees. This of course leads to a lack of applications. In addition, native Bulgarians often choose to live and work abroad completing their studies which means that employers, such as Balkanstroy, 'are definitely hard pressed to find, attract and keep skilled employees'.

However, Balkanstroy's experience with its European staff has been largely positive. 'Culture and ethnicity are not barriers to working relationships; on the contrary, it greatly broadens the horizons of both existing and new employees'. While language barriers could potentially pose an obstacle to integration, Balkanstroy does not view this as an insurmountable problem.

What advice do you have for other employers?

For companies oriented towards external and international markets, Balkanstroy's view is that the employment of international trained professionals is not only necessary for the present, but is a long term investment. In order to achieve a stable position and grow in international markets, recruiting European nationals who are experts in their countries can help achieve rapid and positive results.

Of course, Balkanstroy is also very satisfied with its local employees: 'Bulgarians are people with a rich and broad general culture. We have specialists across numerous fields, all of whom have excellent practical training'.

Cyprus



Population 798 045 (2010)

EURES Advisers 10

Accessing EURES in Cyprus www.pescps.dl.mlsi.gov.cy

Labour market statistics www.mlsi.gov.cy

National information resources www.ccci.org.cy

‘Universities and training institutions are valuable recruiting partners’

Interview with Mr Lakis Panagiotou, Human Resources Manager
Louis Hotel Group, Nicosia, Cyprus
www.louishotels.com

The employer

The Louis Hotel Group is made up of seven Cyprus-based and 11 Greece-based hotels, popular with tourists from all over the world. In the high season, approximately 2,500 staff members are employed by the Group, up to 50% of which are from elsewhere in Europe.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

The Group started recruiting from elsewhere in Europe in 1992, after it became clear they wouldn't find the staff they needed in their local areas. Mr Lakis Panagiotou, Human Resources Manager of the Group, stated that the small islands on which the hotels are located are home to a number of farmers, but very few are willing to work in hotels.

- In some countries or regions, there are just not enough local workers to meet demand.
- Universities and training institutions provide access to thousands of students and graduates hoping to gain professional experience abroad.
- In reality, integration presents very few obstacles.

How do you recruit?

The Louis Hotel Group then turned to a number of universities and training institutions throughout Europe to establish recruiting partnerships. Today, representatives of the hotel group still travel to the Netherlands and Germany, among other countries, to take part in recruitment events and give presentations to students and graduates interested in seasonal work abroad. Mr Panagiotou believes this cooperation is extremely beneficial for a number of reasons: 'It is extremely cost effective', he states. 'Unlike private agencies who charge for their services, there is no fee involved in cooperating with educational institutions. Also, we meet thousands of qualified young people who are keen to move abroad, even if only for a few months. Sometimes, depending on our need and their desire, contracts can be extended for longer periods'.

Using educational institutions also allows the Group to recruit large numbers of employees at one time – particularly useful when the high season is approaching. Typically, Mr Panagiotou states, attending a recruitment fair at a university will see 50 to 60 CVs being collected.

What challenges did you face?

Mr Panagiotou reports that there are typically very few problems when it comes to integrating new staff with domestic staff.

Cypriot workers are reportedly quite friendly and willing to engage. English is a requirement of the job, which ensures that all employees can communicate with each other, and each new staff member undergoes a three-day induction covering practicalities of the job, to working in a multicultural workplace.

What advice do you have for other employers?

For any employers in similar positions, who need to look beyond local areas and national borders to create a suitable workforce, Mr Panagiotou recommends following in the steps taken by the Louis Hotel Group, and establishing a partnership with institutions around Europe because 'such a cooperation means we are sure of getting the best people'.

Czech Republic



Population 10 424 336 (2008)

EURES Advisers 14

Accessing EURES in Czech Republic www.eures.cz

Labour market statistics www.czso.cz

National information resources www.komora.cz

‘Provide equal treatment and equal opportunities which will naturally result in an improved overall company culture and atmosphere’.

Interview with Mr Daniel Hora, Human Resources Manager
BlueLink International CZ (formerly Team Trackers), Prague
www.bluelinkservices.com

The employer

BlueLink International CZ, formerly Team Trackers, is a customer contact centre based in Prague. Its multinational team of over 300 employees process all types of queries and requests, including calls, emails, faxes, and text messages.

- Providing equal treatment and equal opportunities to foreign workers ensures the presence of foreigners in management teams and supporting functions, leading to an improved overall company culture.
- Ensure that while integrating foreigners into local staff, preferential treatment is not shown to foreigners, at the expense of the local staff.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

In the customer service business, quality and efficiency are the key success factors. Mr Hora, Human Resources Manager, says that, 'The quality of the service delivered by a contact centre agent has multiple aspects – the content of the information must be correct, the information has to be communicated in a perfectly understandable manner and, on the top of that, the style of the communication should reflect what is considered as appropriate in the language or culture of the customer'. To ensure this flow of information between customer service agents and customers, BlueLink I. CZ recruits from abroad. In their experience, European workers bring valuable language skills and an approach to communications that meets clients' expectations. Native speakers automatically know the right tone, language, and speed to use when addressing citizens of their country.

How do you recruit?

BlueLink I. CZ started recruiting from throughout Europe by publishing advertisements on online platforms. Now, the company employs nationals as contact centre agents from approximately 30 countries, enabling it to serve its customers in 20 languages. These employees are sourced either locally, from the expatriate community, or directly from abroad.

BlueLink I. CZ today has eight years of experience with managing a multinational and multicultural environment. From the management point of view, the company continuously and successfully looks for a balance between providing new arrivals extra care, especially during the initial adaptation, while simultaneously not causing resentment among the domestic workforce. This is achieved through the equal treatment of the entire workforce, with equal opportunities for all. This, explains Mr Hora, is what the company credits with the successful integration of new employees.

What challenges did you face?

When recruiting from throughout Europe, BlueLink I. CZ encountered a couple of issues. These were mainly the cost of advertising on particular sites, and the uncertainty as to whether or not job advertisements are worded correctly. They wanted to be sure the postings accurately reflected the position, thus attracting the right candidates. This is where EURES came in useful, by providing advice and by placing advertisements for them on the portal.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Mr Hora has a few suggestions for other companies looking to hire from abroad. 'In terms of recruiting – my first advice would be to link with EURES and check your job specifications with them. In terms of integrating new colleagues, provide equal treatment and equal opportunities. This will naturally result in the presence of foreigners in the management and supporting teams, such as IT and HR, and consequently, an improved overall company culture and atmosphere'.

Denmark



Population 5 543 819 (2010)

EURES Advisers 27

Accessing EURES in Denmark www.eures.dk

Labour market statistics www.dst.dk

National information resources
www.danishexporters.dk

'New blood reinvigorates a business'

Interview with Ms Tine Horwitz
Head of Consortium for Global Talent
Copenhagen, Denmark

The employer

The Consortium for Global Talent, run by a Danish citizen and her Finnish colleague, is an organisation working exclusively for the 15 largest Denmark-based companies, from shipping and oil, to IT, to breweries. They work closely with the Human Resource departments of all 15 companies, helping to ensure an easy transition for all new employees.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Tine Horwitz, the Head of the Consortium, explains that Denmark is not well-known abroad as a popular working destination, and this is an image her organisation fights to dispel. 'The problem is that in Denmark there is a high cost of living, and quite high tax rate, which often discourages workers', she explains. 'However, Denmark can offer good jobs, with excellent salaries and living

and working conditions, and we want to make people aware of this’.

Recruiting workers from throughout Europe means that new approaches, ideas and innovations are introduced, making Danish companies more competitive on the global market. It encourages domestic employees to develop a ‘global mindset’ and, of course, helps employers to find workers with skills and qualifications of which there is a shortage in Denmark.

How do you recruit?

As these companies recruit highly qualified candidates for very specific positions, sometimes it is just not possible to fill vacancies by looking in Denmark only. At the moment, the companies hire predominantly from the UK and Poland within Europe, as well as globally.

- A ‘global mindset’ is an advantage for any business.
- Employers must be sure to properly prepare their existing workforce.
- Do not give new arrivals false expectations – be realistic about what is being offered.

As Danish is a difficult language to learn, many of the companies working with Consortium for Global Talent strive to ensure that all meetings, no matter who is in attendance, are held in English. This benefits both the current employees, helping to improve their English language skills, and the new arrivals, hopefully making them feel more welcome.

‘Cultural workshops’ also prove an excellent idea, and can serve to give new employees a comprehensive introduction to Danish culture and life.

What challenges did you face?

It is vital that the expectations of new employees are met. Ms Horwitz encourages all employers to be realistic about what they are offering, and what working in Denmark is like. 'If people arrive with certain expectations, because an employer has been so keen to bring them here, both sides will be disappointed. Ensure new employees are prepared, and know what awaits them when they arrive'.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Ms Horwitz emphasises that the crucial step for employers to take when recruiting from throughout Europe and beyond is to ensure that firstly, Danish employees are properly prepared. 'Integration will be eased if a current domestic workforce is open to the idea, and ready to welcome new employees'. An idea might be to have in place a 'buddy-buddy system', matching a Danish worker with a foreign worker, or a mentoring system, meaning that every new arrival has someone from whom they can seek advice while settling in. A new initiative of the Consortium's is the organisation of after-hours academic events, such as lectures or seminars, followed by time for socialising between employees. Ms Horwitz believes that the more an employer can do to encourage the building of relationships between Danish and international employees, the better it will be for the company.

Overall, Ms Horwitz speaks enthusiastically about the benefits of recruiting from throughout Europe. 'New ideas and approaches mean a more competitive business'.

Estonia



Population 1 340 675 (2008)

EURES Advisers 5

Accessing EURES in Estonia www.eures.ee

Labour market statistics

www.stat.ee/labour-market

National information resources www.koda.ee

‘Hiring from abroad can provide the opportunity to make positive changes in your company’

Interview with Ms Maris Palu, Personnel Specialist
Amhold Estonia, Tallinn
www.amhold.eu

The employer

Founded in Estonia in 1992, Amhold is an engineering and design consulting company, working both in the private and public sector. The company currently has approximately 50 employees, out of which 10% are from abroad.

- International employees allows a company to serve international customers with ease.
- There are numerous channels by which to identify potential foreign workers.
- Encourage ‘out of the box’ ideas from European employees; it can be a good way of improving company processes.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Since Amhold is a multinational company and its projects are executed abroad, it looks for employees who can speak the requisite foreign languages. As a result of its hiring from throughout Europe, most of the meetings held in client's countries are conducted in the country's native language. Ms Palu said, 'This is important in order to achieve a better connection with our customers'.

How do you recruit?

Amhold first began its international recruitment by contacting school and university career centres, and referring to its alumni lists to identify potential employees. The company also made use of international organisations such as ERASMUS and AIESEC, which they found very helpful, as well as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs. At the same time, Amhold actively advertised vacancies on EURES, and other local recruitment portals.

What challenges did you face?

The main problem faced by Amhold when recruiting from abroad was setting up interviews with potential employees. 'In Estonia, Skype is widespread, and we have other video conferencing technologies as well, but not all candidates have access to the Internet. Hence, we need to travel to their country, or they need to visit us'.

Another challenge was the currency exchange, since the salaries listed in the job ads were in local Estonian Kroon, not in Euro. While Amhold usually recruits from abroad for specific positions, the company is very open to providing internship opportunities to talented and motivated applicants who may lack the required skills.

Before Amhold commences recruiting, the company's management identifies the positions that need to be filled, and what kind of profile they need to fill them. They consider what they

can offer the new employee, while establishing the expectations of the employee. Throughout the process, they place emphasis on being open-minded about new cultures and open to positive changes. As an example, if the person they hire has numerous ideas which they traditionally consider 'out of the box', they don't dismiss the idea immediately; rather, they encourage dialogue as to whether this new idea would work.

What advice do you have for other employers?

According to Ms Palu, of course there can be conflict, but it is most important to be cooperative and work as a team. Hiring from abroad can provide an opportunity to make positive changes in your company. Additionally, Ms Palu speaks very highly of Estonian workers. 'They are hard, versatile workers who can produce work of excellent quality'.

Finland



Population 5 371 531 (2010)

EURES Advisers 30

Accessing EURES in Finland www.mol.fi/eures

Labour market statistics

www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_tyolama_en.html

National information resources

www.keskuskauppakamari.fi

‘Versatility is a resource’

Interview with Ms Milma Arola, Recruitment Consultant
City of Helsinki Personnel Centre
www.hel.fi

The employer

The City of Helsinki employs 39 000 people across 35 city departments, with responsibility for the provision of basic services to the city’s citizens and local authorities, including social and health care, education, and transportation, to name a few. Currently, approximately 5% of employees of the City of Helsinki are from outside Finland.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Milma Arola, a Recruitment Consultant for the City of Helsinki, states that employees are hired from abroad according to the sectors that have the greatest demand. Typically, this covers nursing, language teaching, and city services such as cleaning and catering. Overall, a versatile workforce is seen as a significant resource, so the recruitment department aims to increase the

number of foreigners moving to Helsinki to work for the city. As Ms Arola explains, 'Having an international staff means that services can often be provided to immigrants living in the city in his or her mother tongue'.

How do you recruit?

For all new employees, the City of Helsinki organised preparative training in their country of origin, including Finnish language lessons, general information about living and working in Finland, and a detailed job description, including information on opportunities for advancement. The City also went the extra mile, and arranged housing for every worker, as well as support for finding day care or schools for young family members.

- Ethical recruiting is important – avoid recruiting from countries with a lack of workers in particular sectors.
- The employer needs to take a certain amount of responsibility for its new employees.
- A versatile and international workforce is a definite strength.

The City also takes part in recruitment fairs, primarily in Estonia, where recruiters have the opportunity to meet workers and discuss the opportunities available to them. In many cases, explains Ms Arola, workers choose to live in Estonia but work in Finland. The City is involved in the "Attractive Finland" project which aims at recruiting nurses willing to move to Finland from other European countries. 'This project gives us the opportunity to meet officials from countries such as Poland and Hungary. These people represent government ministries, local trade organisations, and universities, where we can find out about the local labour market situation, and in which sectors there is a surplus of workers'. In 2010, the City participated in Finland Day fair event in Budapest, which was organised by EURES.

What challenges did you face?

The biggest problem faced throughout the recruitment process is that all workers need to have some understanding of Finnish. Some positions require only a basic understanding; others, particularly in the health and social care sectors, demand a good level. A second challenge can be that of the recognition of qualifications of workers from outside of Finland: 'Many positions require a degree and the recognition of these degrees can often be problematic. The City can offer the organisation of supplementary education if the difference between degree and required degree is not too great', explains Ms Arola.

With regards to integration, the City of Helsinki takes on board a lot of responsibility for the successful integration of their new workers because, 'We want employees to be as comfortable as possible'. This includes providing Finnish language classes and opportunities for further skills training, as well as the establishment of an information desk where foreigners receive assistance and advice on administrative and practical issues.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Overall, Ms Arola emphasises the importance of ethical recruiting, meaning that the City of Helsinki does not actively recruit from countries that suffer a lack of workers in that particular field. 'Having a diversified workforce has been enormously beneficial to us, but as an employer we must remember we have a responsibility to recruit for the good of both the country of origin and the country of arrival'.

France



Population 62 277 432 (2008)

EURES Advisers 24

Accessing EURES in France

www.pole-emploi-international.fr

Labour market statistics www.insee.fr

National information resources www.ccip.fr

'Hiring from abroad makes the situation a 'win-win' for both parties'

Interview with Mr Raphaël Gallay, Owner Les Chalets de la Serraz, La Clusaz www.laserraz.com

The employer

Les Chalets de la Serraz is a hotel and restaurant located in the Aravis Mountains of France. The hotel currently has 12 employees, including staff from throughout Europe.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Mr Raphaël Gallay, the owner of Les Chalets de la Serraz, takes pride in the 'melting pot' nature of the hotel, and is convinced that 'hiring workers from abroad is a real benefit because everyone has different talents and a professional background'.

- Hiring from abroad is a 'win-win' for all parties.
- Integration is easier when there is a common language spoken by all members of the team.
- EURES can help, since it understands the difficulties faced in hiring both local and international staff.

How do you recruit?

The hotel first started working with the French public employment service Pôle Emploi in Annecy and Chambéry, to identify qualified local and international staff. After then establishing contact with EURES Finland, they decided to focus their search on Finnish employees. Consequently, a Finnish Commis de Cuisine joined the team for the summer season of 2010. Mr Gallay was extremely pleased with her work: 'The situation was a 'win-win' for both parties, and we have continued to hire from abroad ever since'.

What challenges did you face?

Mr Gallay generally looks to European staff, particularly Finnish, as he finds them motivated, dedicated and punctual. Thus far, Mr Gallay has not encountered any challenges recruiting staff from around Europe. He did note, however, that the fact that staff had a language in common was instrumental for the integration process. 'The domestic staff and the management team all speak English, which is proving a great advantage'.

Since the hotel business is, by nature, very seasonal, Mr Gallay feels that recruiting employees from around Europe provides the added value his company requires. He explains that they come with more flexibility, and generally an increased level of sincerity and commitment, because they are eager to do well in their new country.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Mr Gallay has found that the best way to make contact with new employees is to contact a EURES Adviser. His advice to other companies is to do the same: 'EURES Advisers are extremely proactive, and understand the difficulties faced by organisations in hiring local and European staff'.

Germany



Population 81 757 600 (January 2010)

EURES Advisers 129

Accessing EURES in Germany www.zav.de

Labour market statistics www.arbeitsagentur.de

National information resources

www.ba-auslandsvermittlung.de

'An international workforce is essential for expansion'

Interview with Mr Thomas Eichner, Manager of HR Development for Central Europe - Land's End, Mettlach - www.landsend.com

The employer

Originally an American company, Land's End specialises in mail order and retail business for casual clothing. The company has branches all over Europe and beyond, and is currently expanding further. As of October 2010, Land's End's Central European headquarters in Germany had 490 employees from all over Europe, and recruitment was ongoing for hundreds more.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

The expansion of Land's End means that employees who are familiar with other cultures and markets are vital for the new workforce. Thomas Eichner, Manager of HR Development for Central Europe, states that Land's End started recruiting from abroad for specific positions as soon as they confirmed they would be expanding; in particular the marketing, copywriting, customer service, and creative development areas. Mr Eichner believes, 'Globalisation is essential for success. An international

team means we can negotiate more effectively with our business partners in the different countries, and this makes us more competitive’.

- Having an international team means enhanced competitiveness in terms of understanding local markets.
- Conduct research on the recruitment processes of different countries, to find out the best way of contacting people.
- A good recruiting partner is essential.
- The employer has a responsibility to facilitate integration of international with domestic staff.

Employing people from throughout Europe means that the company has, firstly, staff who speak the local languages, but more importantly, who can provide a unique insight into the culture of that country. ‘As we are a clothing company, we need to know how people dress in certain countries in order to be successful - what they like, what they don’t like, and what they need’, he continues.

How do you recruit?

Before commencing the recruitment process, there are a number of aspects that should be taken into account. Mr Eichner explains that initially it was difficult to know how exactly to recruit from elsewhere in Europe. He and his colleagues did not know the recruitment processes in different countries, nor the best contact channels. ‘It is definitely a learning process. You have to be fast in recruitment, and realise it can be time-consuming and expensive’. His advice is that research should be done in advance, and that the right partner should be located as early as possible – preferably an organisation who knows the best way of approaching prospective employees in different countries.

What challenges did you face?

Once new employees have been recruited, the integration of international with domestic workforces must be tackled. This can of course be challenging, but for Land's End the process is smooth. A company culture of respect, trust and open communication means it can be relatively easy to settle in new employees. Mr Eichner states that any issues were caused by small misunderstandings that could not have been foreseen – but some challenges are inevitable. Land's End believes the employer has an important role to play in easing in new employees. In their case, they organise 'German' lessons which not only address language, but also serve as an introduction to German culture and habits that may be unfamiliar to new arrivals. Opportunities for social interaction are also important: 'We hold team barbeques, as well as country-themed weeks, which allow for new employees to introduce German staff to their food, their customs, and their language'. In their experience, Mr Eichner and his colleagues have found such events help to smooth integration by giving people some common talking points.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Mr Eichner's advice for employers considering recruiting from throughout Europe is to inform domestic staff early and bring them in on discussions and ideas for recruitment. He recommends asking them what they would expect from a new employer if they were moving country – helping to both better settle new arrivals but also prepare domestic staff. Additionally, it is of great importance to ensure that employers are well-informed about labour laws and administrative aspects. Issues such as social security and health insurance should be investigated so that if a candidate asks questions, the information is at hand. Mr Eichner warns that it can be challenging to locate and access information on some countries, and this is where having a good recruitment partner is essential.

Greece



Population 11 282 751 (2009)

EURES Advisers 24

Accessing EURES in Greece www.oaed.gr

Labour market statistics www.statistics.gr

'We can learn so much about different cultures just by working together'

Interview with Mr Polychronis Papangelis, Owner
Climax Bar and Restaurant, Pelion
www.climax.gr

The employer

The Greek bar and restaurant Climax is situated in one of the most utopian sites in Europe, the mountain Pelion, in the south-eastern part of Thessaly in central Greece. The restaurant hosts both locals, as well as tourists from a variety of countries. Currently, Climax has approximately 12 staff members, of which almost one third are from throughout Europe.

- Recruiting from across Europe is ideal when you have international customers.
- Training new staff members properly ensures that they feel welcome and aids in integration.
- Hiring from abroad also provides an opportunity for local staff to learn new skills.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Nationality is not a factor when recruiting for Mr Papangelis. Of greater importance is the experience gained abroad, and the motivation of new arrivals to learn about Greek cuisine and the Greek way of life. 'This motivation means we have had no problems thus far with integrating European workers and local employees,' said Mr Papangelis.

How do you recruit?

Climax's first experience with recruiting from abroad started when Mr Papangelis was working in Germany. 'When I moved back to Greece, I encouraged German friends to come over with me'. Climax's consequent growth has led to recruitment from all over Europe. 'We recruit staff from across Europe to better serve our international customers. But this is not the only reason – what is interesting about our international employees is that everybody is different'.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Climax fully trains all new staff and recommends that other employers are careful to do the same. It is essential that everyone feels welcome, and all staff members' practical needs are taken care of. 'We try to help the employee to get their social security papers, and we also try to provide a phone and an internet connection, so that the employee feels comfortable on arrival'. Additionally, Mr Papangelis has high praise for praises the Greek values of tolerance which makes integration easier. 'By accepting and learning about different cultures, we can learn so much from each other simply by working together!'

Hungary



Population 10 038 188 (2008)

EURES Advisers 35

Accessing EURES in Hungary www.afsz.hu

Labour market statistics <http://portal.ksh.hu>

National information resources

www.tradepartner.eu/commerce/hungary

‘People who come here are interested in the Hungarian way of life, so integration is not a problem’

Interview with Ms Malgorzata Randé, Director
International Language Centre, Budapest

The employer

The International Language Centre (ILC) in Budapest teaches English and Hungarian to a range of students, the majority of which are adults. The ILC hires only native speakers to teach English; Hungarian staff are responsible for the administrative operations, and Hungarian language teaching.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

This need for native speakers is very important to the school. Typically the teachers are quite young, and stay for a relatively short period of time. Ms Randé says that a position in the ILC is therefore useful for students or graduates who are looking for experience, or looking for their first job abroad. ‘For people who do not want to settle long term in Hungary, they can accept a short-term position to get to know the country and the language before moving on’.

How do you recruit?

The recruitment process is straightforward. All advertising and promoting of vacancies is done online, via the school's website and various other relevant online platforms. Interested applicants, mainly from the UK, send in their CV and interviews are conducted typically by phone or Skype. As Ms Randé explains, 'The situation in Europe today is such that there are never problems with visas or work permits. It's easy for someone from the UK to come and work in Hungary'.

- Short-term contracts are useful for young people looking for their first job abroad.
- Today, it is incredibly straightforward to hire staff from another European country.
- Social events for staff and clients are easy to organise and are good 'icebreakers'.

What advice do you have for other employers?

The ILC holds regular social occasions for both teachers and their students, in the spring and winter. Such events not only encourage Hungarian and new staff to mix outside of work hours, but also allow new teachers to meet their students and gain a glimpse into Hungarian life. 'Generally', explains Ms Randé, 'Hungarians are quite culturally aware, and international staff are here because they are interested in Hungarian life so integration of the two groups is not complicated'. As for languages, she adds, Hungarian staff in the school have a good level of English. Some English teachers try to learn Hungarian but many do not – as it is a difficult language to learn in a short time frame.

In conclusion, Ms Randé is happy with the mix of Hungarian and European staff her school has to offer. 'The fact that we have only native speakers teaching English makes a big difference for our students, and it is something we advertise proudly'.

Iceland



Population 317 630 (2010)

EURES Advisers 3

Accessing EURES in Iceland www.eures.is

Labour market statistics www.statice.is

National information resources www.vi.is

‘Workers from abroad are extremely dedicated, and have no problems integrating with local staff’

Interview with Mr Björn Ingi Stefánsson, Owner - Kriunes Hotel, Reykjavik

The employer

Kríunes Hotel is located in the Reykjavik area, currently employing approximately eight staff members from various European countries.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Mr Björn Ingi Stefánsson, the owner of Kriunes Hotel, said that although Iceland is currently facing a recession, and there are a large number of people who are unemployed, the hotel has problems finding staff locally.

- European workers are often needed to fill vacancies that can't be filled locally.
- Foreign workers can be extremely dedicated, and bring linguistic skills.
- Ensure that you let foreign workers know whether you need them for the short term or long term.

‘Generally, it is extremely difficult to hire Icelanders for the positions we have available,’ said Mr Stefánsson. Although Icelanders are good workers, he has found they are generally not keen on taking on low-skilled jobs.

How do you recruit?

A few years ago, when faced with a labour shortage, Mr Stefánsson visited a local recruitment agency in Reykjavik. Kríunes was specifically looking for new employees to work in the hotel’s service areas, such as the kitchens, the front desk, and general management and upkeep of premises. At the agency, Mr Stefánsson was told that there were a lot of European nationals available; both residing in Iceland and abroad, whom he could speak with.

What challenges did you face?

The hotel was specifically looking for potential employees who were intending to stay in Iceland for a longer term, i.e., at least three to four years. Also very important for Kríunes Hotel was that the employees have a good level of English, since most roles are customer-facing, and require interaction with hotel guests. He was soon able to hire numerous staff members from abroad, and was very satisfied with the experience.

‘I have found workers from throughout Europe to be excellent; they want to do things well, and are open to learning new skills. In addition, since they are generally saving up to move back home, they look for a steady income from a steady source,’ continued Mr Stefánsson. And of course, international workers bring a mix of languages and cultures which is of great benefit for a business.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Mr Stefánsson has some advice for other Icelandic companies looking to hire from abroad. 'If you are looking for employees who will stay with your company for a while, ensure that you state that upfront, because a lot of people are primarily looking for seasonal work or a brief period of working in another European country'. However, with respect to the employees that do stay there for the long term, Mr Stefánsson has nothing but praise. 'The workers we have hired from abroad are extremely dedicated, and have had no problems at all integrating with local staff'.

Ireland



Population 4 459 300 (2009)

EURES Advisers 15

Accessing EURES in Ireland www.fas.ie

Labour market statistics www.cso.ie

National information resources

www.een-ireland.ie/eei

‘Sometimes you have to look beyond national borders to get the employees you need’

Interview with Ms Caoimhe Keogan, HR Business Partner
Google European headquarters, Dublin

The employer

Google is known worldwide as the largest and most popular internet search engine. Google’s European headquarters currently have a staff of 1 500 employees representing over 40 nationalities. The headquarters house multiple teams including engineering, online sales, marketing, finance and human resources - so the company requires employees of all backgrounds and skill levels.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Caoimhe Keogan, HR Business Partner within Google, explains that since the sales and engineering teams in particular recruit such a varied range of people, it is often necessary to look outside of Ireland in order to fill the requirements. She has found that the key benefit of recruiting from abroad is that it gives employers wider access to skills and experience. ‘For sales and customer

support, we need native language skills from many different countries. We need to be able to communicate with all our users, advertisers and partners, who speak a variety of different European languages'. In the Google engineering teams however, it is not so much an issue of native language skills, but of securing the best and brightest engineering talent available. Innovation, creativity, and excellence in technology are key to the work of Google and, as Ms Keogan explains, 'We have to look both in and out of Ireland to ensure we get the best people possible'.

- Online recruitment via social media sites has made the process of recruiting from throughout Europe increasingly simple.
- The involvement of existing staff in the recruitment process can generate new ideas and new contacts.
- Ensure new international employees have information on fundamental issues such as tax rates and health insurance.

How do you recruit?

It was always the plan to recruit from throughout Europe. The typical required employee profile was that of graduates with a minimum of two to three years' experience, and it was found that advertising online was the best means of recruitment. Social networking sites such as LinkedIn were used to great effect here – Google found that most jobseekers and employers use these sites nowadays.

Overall, they reportedly experience very few problems when hiring staff from throughout Europe. Ms Keogan explains that they actively involve all current employees in the recruitment process, and use their employees' networks to reach out to others. 'If we want to expand our Nordic sales team, for example, we will ask our Nordic workers to contact friends, family, ex-classmates and colleagues'.

When it comes to integration, Google's experience has been a good one. 'The international workplace is one of the most attractive aspects of working at Google', says Ms Keogan. 'Most of the graduates we meet are keen to work in a diverse team so the process of mixing European and Irish staff has been straightforward'. The company also hosts a range of social activities planned around national holidays or festivals such as St Patrick's Day or Oktoberfest. As an added bonus, the office observes the public holidays and work week of different European countries: 'We adjust to the needs of the market we are serving'.

What challenges did you face?

She does emphasise that employers need to consider practicalities such as the time and cost involved. Will interviews be conducted by telephone, video conference, or in the offices? Will candidate travel be reimbursed? And, importantly, the standard notice period in each country needs to be considered. In Ireland, new hires can often be ready to start within one month; when hiring from Germany, for example, up to three months notice needs to be factored in.

What advice do you have for other employers?

One important point however applies to all countries – employers need to look into practical and administrative aspects. Although levels of assistance will vary depending on the size of the employer, the employer should ensure a few basics: that their new employees understand the taxation regime in that country; that information on accessing healthcare or registering for a national identification number, for example, is given.

Ms Keogan speaks enthusiastically about Google's recruitment experiences. 'Broadening the recruitment focus increases your chances of finding the best people. For Google, catering to an international market, having an international workforce means we can better understand what our users need'. She also states that people may not realise how easy it is today to recruit from around Europe: 'It is nowhere near as difficult or costly as it was, especially with the use of online platforms and social networks'.

Italy



Population 60.4 million (2010)

EURES Advisers 65

Accessing EURES in Italy

www.lavoro.gov.it/lavoro/eures

Labour market statistics <http://en.istat.it/lavoro>

National information resources

www.chamberofcommerce.it

‘International synergies are fundamental for success of a business and the comfort of a client’

Interview with Mrs Sara Di Giacomo,
Front Desk and Human Resources Officer
Art & Show e RTM s.r.l., Castelnuovo del Garda, Verona

The employer

Art & Show and R.T.M. provides entertainment, sports, fitness, and catering services to holiday destinations throughout Italy and abroad. The organisation is today present in hotels, campsites, and resorts in north-east Italy, as well as other places around the world.

- A European staff is often a necessity to satisfy client needs.
- Different nationalities may have different talents – a mixture can provide an excellent balance of qualities.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Due to the international nature of their business, Art & Show requires a truly multinational staff. Employees come from all over Europe, and beyond. Mrs Di Giacomo, as Human Resources Manager of Art & Show, is responsible for finding and recruiting talented and qualified staff to join the team, which varies in size from eight people throughout the winter months to up to 400 in spring and summer (from March to September).

The company, realising that they need an international staff to fill client demands, decided to create a company policy for the hiring of staff. This means that in the spring and summer months, current employees must reflect specified breakdowns: 30% Italians, 30% Dutch, 20% Danish, 10% German, and 10% other nationalities, including Swedish, Austrian, Polish, and Hungarian. Mrs Di Giacomo explains that the reasoning behind such a policy is to accurately reflect the needs of their clients.

How do you recruit?

In Italy it is rare to find employee candidates who speak both English and German fluently, the two primary working languages of Art & Show. This means that, for this organisation, languages are the main added value of having a European staff. They first started hiring from abroad with postings on free job matching websites, and continue to use online platforms as their primary resource for finding qualified staff.

What challenges did you face?

Art & Show also post vacancy notices in cities throughout Europe where interviews are held – 22 European cities in total. Though this method is very effective, Mrs Di Giacomo explains that this is also an important challenge of recruiting European staff – the company faces a lot of expenses in travelling all over Europe to hold interviews. For this reason, an additional presence on free online platforms can be a simple and cost-effective means of recruiting.

Art & Show works primarily with young employees which means the process of integrating international and domestic staff is, most of the time, smooth and problem-free. The company holds a week-long training course for every new employee, introducing them to the company, their colleagues, and familiarizing them with their job description.

What advice do you have for other employers?

For other employers contemplating expanding their team and recruiting a European workforce, Mrs Di Giacomo's says that a multinational and multicultural staff can provide an important balance of skills in a workplace: 'Italian workers are very creative, sociable and expressive, but may lack language skills, for example. These can be introduced by bringing in other nationalities. What one group lacks, the other balances in terms of experience, qualifications, and talents'. She explains that such synergies are vital, particularly in the entertainment industry. 'A balance such as this is important for meeting the client's needs'.

Latvia



Population 2 217 969 (2010)

EURES Advisers 6

Accessing EURES in Latvia www.nva.gov.lv/eures

Labour market statistics www.csb.gov.lv

National information resources www.chamber.lv

‘Having a European workforce promotes tolerance and understanding of other cultures’

Interview with Ms Aiga Veckalne, Area Manager of Hungarian, Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Russian and Slovenian Branches
Skrivanek Group, Riga
www.skrivanek.lv

The employer

Skrivanek, a translation and language teaching organisation with offices in 14 countries, depends on having a diverse team in order to best serve their clients. The Latvian office employs 25 full-time office-based staff, and up to 300 freelancers for language teaching, proofreading, translation and interpretation services.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Aiga Veckalne, Area Manager of six branches of the Skrivane Group, explains that while languages are an obvious benefit of having a European team, she also highly values the diversity of mentalities and approaches to work: ‘Having an international team means that people can learn to work together, therefore gaining an increased understanding and tolerance of other cultures’.

The field of work of Skrivanek means that recruiting from throughout Europe is vital. They require native or near-native speakers of a number of languages, particularly English which is a main focus of their language school. They offer both long and short term contracts and have learned to be flexible according to the availability of their employees. 'Some people can only stay for a few months,' explains Ms Veckalne, 'so they are most appropriate for proofreading positions, for example. Others stay for much longer – we have one man who came from Romania to teach English with us, and he has been here for seven years'.

How do you recruit?

Skrivanek recruits primarily through online platforms and via partnerships with Chambers of Commerce. Ms Veckalne explains that they find the use of online community platforms, such as those targeted specifically at translators, very useful, allowing them to go straight to the groups who would be most interested in their vacancies. Once contact is established, they conduct interviews mostly through the use of Skype, which proves quite cost-effective.

They also use contacts provided by Chambers of Commerce located in Riga. 'We cooperate with the UK, Danish and German Chambers of Commerce who inform us if a citizen of their country has arrived and is looking for work. Currently we have a few German interpreters working for us who were hired via the Chamber of Commerce'.

- Diversity makes for a more colourful, interesting and tolerant workplace.
- Help should be given to ensure new employees are as comfortable as possible.
- Chambers of Commerce can make valuable recruiting partners.

What challenges did you face?

With so many nationalities working together, Ms Veckalne states that there have been issues of integration that need to be tackled. 'New employees arrive with their own perspectives and their own way of looking at things – which on one hand can be extremely valuable, and on the other does give rise to misunderstandings. If people are not comfortable speaking English, they may naturally tend to stick to people from their own country, preventing real integration'. To help combat this problem, Skrivanek organises regular 'cultural evenings' around a particular country theme. These events are also open to the public, free of charge, allowing them to see firsthand how the staff interacts, and the diversity of the workplace. Recent evenings have included Polish, Finnish and Italian nights, with native food, art, music and 'interactive' language lessons hosted by one of the organisation's teachers. These evenings provide an excellent opportunity for language and cultural promotion.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Ms Veckalne recommends that other employers who are thinking about recruiting from around Europe consider two important aspects: firstly, tolerance of any cultural differences is a necessity; and secondly, to provide as much help as possible while new employees settle in. 'We have to be sure to take the time to explain Latvian labour laws, for example, which may differ very greatly from their own', she explains. 'We take many aspects of life here for granted, not realising for newcomers it may be confusing or strange'.

Overall, however, the Skrivanek Group has benefitted from having a multinational team: 'It makes the office an undeniably interesting and colourful place to work'.

Liechtenstein



Population 35 789 (2009)

EURES Advisers 1

Labour market statistics www.as.llv.li

National information resources www.lcci.li

‘Most of our employees are cross-border workers’

Interview with Ms Brigitte Schnakenbourg, Head of International HR Services - Ivoclar Vivadent AG, Vaduz - www.ivoclarvivadent.com

The employer

Ivoclar Vivadent AG, with a staff of 750 people working from the Liechtenstein headquarters, is centre for the production of high quality dentistry products. In addition to engineering and manufacturing, the headquarters is the site of research and development, sales, marketing, HR and financial services.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Approximately 25 nationalities currently work out of the headquarters, including Spanish, French, Swiss, Austrian, and German. In fact, 80% of the company's employees are from abroad. Ms Brigitte Schnakenbourg, Head of International HR Services, explains that this has always been the case. 'Liechtenstein has a small population which makes it standard practice to hire people from elsewhere in Europe. Priority is given to candidates with the right qualifications here in Liechtenstein, but if we cannot find what we need within our borders, we look around Europe'.

How do you recruit?

Their recruiting process is straightforward – vacancies are advertised online, primarily through the company website, and interviews are held in the company headquarters.

What challenges did you face?

Liechtenstein is a slightly unusual case. Unlike surrounding countries, obtaining a residence permit is not a simple process – only 28 are issued per year. More common, therefore, is to live in a bordering country such as Switzerland or Austria and commute each day to work. This is in fact a very popular option among thousands of European citizens and there are considerable benefits to this approach for both employees and employers. Families do not have to be relocated, administrative burdens are lessened, and employers do not have to put too much cost and time into integrating and settling new workers.

- Cross-border mobility is an increasingly popular option for employers and employees.
- Recruiting cross-border workers means a minimum administrative burden.
- A small population means looking beyond national borders is a must.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Ms Schnakenbourg says that, as a result of most employees being cross-border workers and the team being so international, integration in the company is not a problem. If required, new arrivals are provided with information about living and working in Liechtenstein to help them get settled, but the company policy is to treat every employee the same, regardless of nationality. 'We hire the most qualified candidate for any particular position. Europe is an easy place to move around, so nationality is not normally a consideration'.

Lithuania



Population 3 358 115 (2008)

EURES Advisers 5

Accessing EURES in Lithuania www.ldb.lt/eures

Labour market statistics www.stat.gov.lt

National information resources www.chambers.lt

‘Expanding to the wider European market is rather difficult with a one-nationality team’

Interview with Mr Haroldas Brozaitis, Director
Public Policy and Management Institute, Vilnius
www.vpv.lt

The employer

A public policy analysis and evaluation centre, this organisation provides advice to public sector agencies, government, and non-governmental organisations. In addition to the 36 staff members in-house, the Institute employs approximately 20 further associated external experts and a network of several hundred of policy analysts.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

The nature of the work undertaken by the Institute is greatly benefitted by having a European staff.

Mr Brozaitis, Director of the Institute, explains that workers from other European countries represent a great added value for his business for three main reasons. Firstly, they offer different cultural perspectives on public policies and this is important when

working on public sector capacity building projects; second, they have a thorough understanding of regional and domestic contexts; and, third, they have the linguistic competences necessary to conduct in-depth research in the field. Mr. Brozaitis also adds that his company started recruiting from other European markets because it had difficulties in finding employees with the required sets of competences in the Lithuanian workforce.

How do you recruit?

European employees are typically hired for very specific temporary assignments. Afterwards, depending on the Institute's impression of them, they may get offered the chance to become permanent experts.

- Recruiting from throughout Europe brings knowledge and expertise to your business.
- Difficulties in recruiting due to distance can be overcome by organising recruitment trips.

What challenges did you face?

Mr Brozaitis acknowledges that the initial stage of recruiting employees from abroad is not easy. Using communication tools such as Skype, for instance, helps only to a certain extent and can never fully replace in-person contact. In order to address this challenge, the Institute has started combining frequent business-related travel commitments around Europe with opportunities to schedule interviews with potential candidates.

Once a new staff member joins the company, the integration process is usually quite successful, although it might be slightly slow at the beginning. According to Mr Brozaitis 'Lithuanians are highly qualified, hard-working professionals with a good work ethic; they therefore help new staff feel at ease'.

A further challenge for the Institute is the fact that Vilnius is geographically located at the periphery of Europe and young professionals looking for a European career are naturally attracted to locations such as Brussels, London, Paris or Amsterdam. Nonetheless, they make allowances for people working by phone or online.

What advice do you have for other employers?

‘Although we only started recruiting workers from other EU countries very recently, our experience tells us that expanding to the wider European market is rather difficult with a one-nationality team’, says Mr Brozaitis. ‘Internationalisation brings about both professional and cultural benefits to a business. So I would not hesitate in recommending the experience to others’.

Luxembourg



Population 472 649 (2010)

EURES Advisers 11

Accessing EURES in Luxembourg www.eureslux.org

Labour market statistics

www.statistiques.public.lu/fr/economie

National information resources www.cc.lu

'Workers from around Europe bring different cultures and new experience'

Interview with Mr Amodeo Dominique, Director
CD Publicité Lux
www.cdpublicitelux.net

The employer

CD Publicité Lux is an agency operating in the cross-border region between Luxembourg, France and Belgium, specialising in the commercial and merchandising sectors. The company employs about 90 workers mainly coming from France, Belgium, and Luxembourg.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Mr Amodeo Dominique, the Director of the company, explains it is essential that all employees have a good working knowledge of Luxembourgish, French, and German. This is because most of their business is carried out with clients across the border, and it is therefore essential that they offer services in all languages. 'Workers from France, Belgium, or other European countries, bring enormous added value - of a different working culture, a

different approach to doing business, and, of course, languages. The sales experience they have gained in their home countries is very important and contributes a lot to our business', says Mr Dominique.

How do you recruit?

CD Publicité Lux started recruiting workers from abroad as they happened to receive a surplus of applications from jobseekers of border countries that had the right qualifications and language skills needed. Additionally, as Luxembourg is quite a small country, Mr Dominique adds that it is sometimes difficult to find all the necessary staff within national borders, whereas workers from around Europe typically get hired to fill permanent positions. Mr Dominique also explains that the integration process in the work place is generally smooth and straightforward, probably due to the fact that employees hired from other European countries come from quite similar cultures.

- Workers from other EU countries bring added value to a workplace in terms of cultures and languages.
- A good knowledge of local and working languages is essential.

What challenges did you face?

The workers of CD Publicité Lux have a busy schedule, with shifts often taking place outside of regular working hours. This means that hiring workers from other European countries can help to fill these shifts, without having to extend the working hours of the staff already in place.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Ultimately, Mr Dominique believes that 'What matters is the skills and experience people are bringing to the work place – where they are from is not important!'

Malta



Population 412 996 (2010)

EURES Advisers 5

Accessing EURES in Malta www.euresmalta.com

Labour market statistics www.nso.gov.mt

National information resources

www.maltachamber.org.mt

‘A multilingual workforce is an undeniable asset to any organisation’

Group interview with members of the Malta Hotel & Restaurant Association (MHRA), San Gwann
www.mhra.org.mt

The employer

The MHRA (Malta Hotel & Restaurant Association) is made up of the hotels and restaurants located throughout the island of Malta. Together, they employ thousands of staff from both local areas, and from around Europe.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Though each member had its own specific reasons for looking beyond local resources, the consensus was that sometimes the skills and number of people required cannot be found within national borders. The small population of Malta means that employers frequently have to look elsewhere in Europe to find the people they need.

How do you recruit?

The general appeal of an international workforce is considered by members of the MHRA to be the mix of skills and experience it brings to a company. The Palace Hotel located in Sliema, for example, employs 15 different nationalities and finds the mix of cultures, opinions, approaches to work, and different languages, hugely beneficial. Likewise, Joseph Vella of the Preluna Hotel & Spa, employing ten different nationalities, states that he sees the mix of languages as the main advantage to recruiting from throughout Europe. A greater number of languages mean a greater number of staff who can communicate easily with guests.

- Multiple languages are a huge benefit.
- Initial integration problems can generally be smoothed over with time and patience.
- Make sure employees know exactly what is being offered.

What challenges did you face?

Joe Attard of the Imperial Hotel notes that at one time, they had 25 students from eight countries on work placement, and integration in the first few days was difficult. Carl Anastasi of the Ramla Bay resort, which employs up to 15 different nationalities in peak season, reported that it does take time for people to get used to each other. This could be in terms of both differing working styles and differences in day to day habits. Once any initial misunderstandings are resolved and lessons learned, the integration process is generally seen to be smooth, and the entire company benefits from the mix of people.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Members of the MHRA do advise that any employers considering recruiting from throughout Europe ensure that the employee knows exactly what is being offered. Moving to another country for work can be an overwhelming experience, so it is the employers' responsibility to ensure that they are very clear with the job description, and the package being offered. Thorough planning will help to avoid the risk of misunderstanding upon the arrival of the employee.

Overall, however, the experience is recommended. As stated by Joe Attard of the Imperial Hotel, recruiting from throughout Europe means that 'local workers gain exposure to other cultures, and learn a lot about how their workplace is seen by others. The mutual exchange of information and knowledge is very important for a business'.

The Netherlands



Population 16 623 800 (2010)

EURES Advisers 19

Accessing EURES in the Netherlands

www.werk.nl/eures

Labour market statistics www.cbs.nl

National information resources www.kvk.nl

‘Mobile workers are generally committed and motivated’

Interview with Ms Marjolein van Bodegom, Recruiter
Cygnific, Amsterdam
www.cygnific.com

The employer

Cygnific is a call centre based in two locations in the Netherlands. The Amsterdam headquarters and the office in Enschede together host 700 employees who work exclusively for airlines, particularly KLM, providing customer service and sales support to a clientele based all around Europe, and beyond.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Currently the centre has 42 different nationalities, and can provide services in 11 languages. Aside from the clear linguistic benefit of having a European staff, Marjolein van Bodegom, Recruiter for Cygnific, says that European workers can generally be counted on for high level of commitment. ‘If an employee moves to a different country for employment, they are starting a new life. This means they are motivated to do well at work –

they are not staying for a few weeks, but, in some cases, for the foreseeable future’.

How do you recruit?

Cygnific regularly operates recruitment campaigns around Europe, with specific focus on Scandinavian countries. As a first step, they use a public recruitment partner to locate and select qualified candidates. Once a selection of candidates has been shortlisted, Cygnific conducts phone interviews, online e-assessments and finally, organises a final stage group interview with the remaining candidates. This last stage is done on location in their country of focus and involves both group work and one-on-one interviews. Candidates are always told at this time whether not they have been successful. Ms van Bodegom adds that they find it useful if a representative of their recruiting partner is also present to observe the proceedings, and provide support.

What challenges did you face?

Ms van Bodegom emphasises the amount of planning and time required to carry out such a thorough recruitment process. ‘There is a long administration process, requiring considerable time for planning. We check and double-check applications, we have to organise paperwork, ensure the e-assessments are working, and book hotels and travel for the on-site interviews’. However, despite the effort required, such a process ensures only the best and most qualified candidates are hired as call centre representatives.

- Employees who move to a new country are committed to succeeding.
- European languages are necessary for a European market.
- A several step recruitment process ensures the best people are hired.

As for the integration of new employees in such a multicultural company, Ms van Bodegom explains that the character of the company is international and open – meaning integration is trouble-free. New employees have the opportunity to meet and form friendships throughout their training, allowing them to meet other new arrivals.

Additionally, the company has recently launched an online forum for employees providing information on life in the Netherlands. This platform allows employees to get in touch with each other and exchange hints and advice for settling in to a new country.

Most employees coming to Cygnific have similar backgrounds and levels of experience, which also aids integration. It is desired that call centre staff have some sort of background in tourism or with airlines, but the primary requirements are fluent English, and ‘soft skills’ such as empathy, powers of persuasion, and the ability to lead a conversation. ‘Our e-assessment in particular is designed to ensure the people we hire have the qualities we need’, says Ms van Bodegom. ‘Customer service and sales might sound straightforward, but it is very important that our staff know how to speak to clients’.

What advice do you have for other employers?

For employers interested in hiring a European workforce, Ms van Bodegom believes on-time planning is the most important aspect to remember. ‘Figure out what you need, and when you need it by. The recruitment process takes time, but ultimately proves extremely worthwhile’.

Norway



Population 4 768 212 (2008)

EURES Advisers 29

Accessing EURES in Norway www.eures.no

Labour market statistics www.ssb.no

National information resources www.chamber.no

‘We recruit based on competence, not nationality’

Interview with Ms Ingrid Marie Hellevik, HR Leader
Statoil, Stavanger www.statoil.com

The employer

International energy company Statoil operates in 34 countries, with approximately 20 000 employees worldwide. Currently, there are approximately 78 nationalities working in Statoil. It has a corporate policy of recruiting locally in all locations, and employing a diverse workforce when it comes to age, gender, and nationality.

- An international competent workforce is necessary for operating internationally.
- Choose the best candidate for the job, based on competence, not nationality.
- Run mandatory training both on language and cultural understanding.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Statoil has always recruited internationally. The belief is that a competent international workforce is vital for the successful functioning of a business. Ms Ingrid Marie Hellevik, an HR Specialist at Statoil, explains that 'We want to recruit the best talent, and this is not only found in Norway'.

How do you recruit?

Statoil currently has a talent database with 130 000 applicants - over 50% of which are non-Norwegians. The company recruits internationally for all levels in the organisation. Ms Hellevik says that 'Our policy is to choose the best candidate for the job, based on competence, not nationality. By ensuring shared vision, values and ethics, we are able to build a bridge across nationalities and culture'.

What challenges did you face?

Statoil has, in the past, faced challenges when it comes to integration of employees. It now focuses on running mandatory training both in language and cultural understanding for Norwegians going abroad, and international candidates moving to Norway. Additionally, the proper verification of CVs, diplomas, and other educational qualifications can cause problems. As Ms Hellevik explains, 'It can be a challenge to compare studies and levels attained to the standards with which we are familiar. Will a Masters degree in Geosciences from Germany be on the same level as the same qualification from elsewhere in Europe?' Statoil takes the time to properly study applications, as false information on CVs can be a problem.

What advice do you have for other employers?

From the point of view of Statoil, a colleague from another country will bring a new perspective to the way you do business, and also contribute to reaching new markets – and new clients. A primary recommendation would be to focus on promoting cultural understanding and language training, which will greatly aid the integration process.

For international companies looking to hire from Norway or to do business in Norway, Ms Hellevik believes the Norwegian mentality of a 'flat' organisational structure can be very beneficial. 'The Norwegian work-life balance is a big advantage, as are the safe working conditions that Norwegians work towards establishing'.

Poland



Population 38 125 758 (2008)

EURES Advisers 45

Accessing EURES in Poland www.eures.praca.gov.pl

Labour market statistics www.stat.gov.pl

National information resources

www.chamberofcommerce.pl

'Foreign workers have proven themselves to be engaged and hard working'

Interview with Ms Agnieszka Stanczyk, Director of Human Resources
Polimex-Mostostal SA, Poland

The employer

Polimex-Mostostal is a Polish firm founded in 1945 specialising in engineering construction. The company provides an array of services for several related sectors including chemical, petrochemical, energy, construction and environment conservation.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Employing 7 195 individuals, the company works as both a general contractor and as part of a consortium with sub-contractors and technology partners. The required size of the workforce means that looking both within Poland and beyond for staff is a necessity. Currently, the majority of employees are Polish but there are also workers from countries both within and outside of the European Union, including Lithuania and Romania.

- Foreign workers often undergo a transition period, which companies can help make easier.
- Despite being new to hiring from abroad, thus far European employees have proven to be engaged and hard working.

Agnieszka Stanczyk, Director of Human Resources for Polimex-Mostostal, says that they are relatively new to recruiting from abroad, but that so far the experience has been a fruitful one. 'Recruits from around Europe with whom we have been working to date place a lot of value in the stability provided by the company. We have found them to be engaged and hard working, even though the move is not always an easy one'.

How do you recruit?

The new employees typically come to Polimex-Mostostal through the company's branches or in neighbouring countries. Generally they perceive the opportunity to work in a different country as a chance to gain experience they cannot find in their home countries. In each case, there is of course a transition period during which the employees have to become accustomed to the productivity levels and the standards that the company requires.

Rather than actively promoting the company through advertising or employment agencies abroad, Polimex-Mostostal has relied on their positive reputation to engage foreign workers. The result has been that the European employees have actively sought out open positions in the company. After applying for the vacancies, their qualifications have to be verified through the same processes that are applied to Polish nationals, though some leeway is given in terms of language skills.

What challenges did you face?

Ms Stanczyk stressed that despite the geographic proximity of the countries new employees typically come from, the move to Poland is not always an easy one - for employer or employee. Cultural adjustments can be particularly burdensome. 'It is undeniable that international workers have the added task of adjusting to cultural nuances that are different to those in their home country'.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Bearing in mind these challenges, the advice is for the employer to provide as much assistance as possible in order to make the employees comfortable. This can range from providing detailed information on life in Poland, to arranging social occasions for staff, depending on the capacity of the employer. Either way, the support of the employer is vital.

Portugal



Population 10 622 413 (2008)

EURES Advisers 25

Accessing EURES in Portugal www.portal.iefp.pt

Labour market statistics www.ine.pt

National information resources

www.port-chambers.com

'Recruiting from throughout Europe came quite naturally'

Interview with Ms Magda Ferro, International Relations Officer
Catholic University of Portugal, Lisbon
www.ucp.pt

The employer

The Catholic University of Portugal in Lisbon consists of 18 faculties, schools and institutes, and in 2007 was ranked one of the top 20 universities in the world. At present, the staff nationalities are primarily Portuguese, Spanish and Romanian.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

The diversity of the subjects taught in the University means that staff of all disciplines, backgrounds, and experience levels are a necessity. Ms Magda Ferro, International Relations Officer, explains that, to provide the best quality education to students, a multicultural staff is a definite advantage. Employees from around Europe bring varied approaches, specialisations and methods to the workplace, stimulating discussions and the exchange of ideas.

How do you recruit?

Ms Ferro explains that it was not a conscious decision of the human resources department to start recruiting from throughout Europe. At first, it started by chance: 'We had PhD students from around Europe who were very successful, so they ended up as teachers. And now, it comes quite naturally'. The University advertises vacancies via their website and, for applications elsewhere in Europe, typically conducts interviews via Skype which helps to limit any costs. 'We don't treat foreign candidates any differently to Portuguese candidates', says Ms Ferro. 'The interview process is very straightforward and we have never encountered any great difficulties'.

- Always have a trial period before giving a permanent contract.
- Recruiting from throughout Europe can eventually come as naturally as recruiting domestically.

What challenges did you face?

The nature of a University means that staff, particularly teachers, tend to work independently of each other. This can of course make integration quite difficult – not due to different nationalities, but due to the relatively isolated manner of the work. Ms Ferro says, therefore, that they have had absolutely no problems to speak of – staff, when they do meet, get along fine. 'By nature, the Portuguese are flexible and able to adapt easily to new circumstances, which of course aids integration'.

What advice do you have for other employers?

To employers who are considering recruiting from throughout Europe, Ms Ferro recommends always starting with a trial period. 'Do not give a permanent contract immediately', she advises. 'Let people get used to their new surroundings, see how they work, and see how motivated they are. A trial period can help to ease everyone in – both employer and employee'. Also, where possible, the employer should aid integration of new and domestic staff. Overall however, recruiting from throughout Europe is not something to be worried about; as stated earlier, in the case of the University, it can come quite naturally.

Romania



Population 22 215 421 (2010)

EURES Advisers 39

Accessing EURES in Romania www.anofm.ro

Labour market statistics www.insse.ro

National information resources www.ccir.ro

‘Recruiting a workforce from other European labour markets is the best way of filling regional or national skills gaps’.

Interview with Ms Madelina Marco, Managing Director
Intercantieri Vittadello, Bucharest
www.intercantieri.com

The employer

Intercantieri Vittadello operates in the construction and building industry, involving both private and public sector projects. The company operates across borders, managing engineering and construction work and employing 250 staff members.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

For Ms Marco the greatest advantage in hiring employees from other European countries is the skills, experience and competences they bring. Intercantieri originally started recruiting from throughout Europe purely to supplement the skills they were missing within Romania. ‘We work with some of the most advanced construction technologies in the world’, she explains, ‘which require the type of know-how that is difficult to find. This is why most of our engineers and project managers are from throughout Europe, where techniques for building and the use of

technology we strive to implement is at a much more advanced stage'. Due to the highly specialised sector the company operates in, employees from other European countries generally get hired for very specific positions, ranging from civil engineering, to designers and electricians.

- The needs of a business should take precedence over any prejudice against hiring from abroad.
- A comfortable employee will produce the best results.

How do you recruit?

Intercantieri Vittadello started recruiting from throughout Europe by advertising vacancies in European newspapers, and opening competitive selection procedures. To date, their experience has been very positive.

What challenges did you face?

Ms Marco, however, points to the fact that usually foreign workers go through a 'period of adaptation' before they manage to fully integrate and settle into the new workplace. 'At the beginning, they might not feel comfortable with the working environment, or may feel that the expectations they had about the workplace have not been fulfilled. Nonetheless, I do not consider these as issues; it is quite normal for new employees to feel like this sometimes. We, as the employer, have a responsibility to make sure they are satisfied, and we need to find ways of facing any problems that might arise'.

What advice do you have for other employers?

In the case of Intercantieri Vittadello, new employees are offered support in finding accommodation, and, depending on their level, attractive packages. 'We know we have to provide as much support as possible in order for them to be happy and, by extension, perform well at their jobs. We also meet them out of

office hours if possible, organising social occasions, and are sure to keep up a constant dialogue with them'. Overall, the integration of newcomers with local staff has never been a problem, especially due to the fact that all employees speak English and there are therefore no major communication barriers.

Ms Marco firmly believes that recruiting a workforce from other European labour markets is the best way of filling regional or national skills gaps; hence, companies who have specific business needs should put their requirements ahead of any hesitation they may have in recruiting new employees from around Europe.

Slovakia



Population 5 429 763 (2010)

EURES Advisers 26

Accessing EURES in Slovakia www.eures.sk

Labour market statistics <http://portal.statistics.sk>

National information resources <http://web.scci.sk>

‘Hiring workers from Europe has the great benefit of not generating unnecessary administrative burdens’

Interview with Mr Daniel Bacik, Director and HR Manager
PLUSAcademia, Bratislava
www.plusacademia.sk

The employer

PlusAcademia is an international language school based in the centre of Bratislava. With a staff of about 65 employees, including full-time, part-time, free-lance and temporary teachers, the organisation has been recruiting English and German native speakers since 1997.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Mr Bacik, who has direct responsibility for recruiting European employees, says the greatest benefit of hiring employees from throughout Europe for his school is, of course, the languages they bring. Having native speakers raises the quality of the language courses the school is able to deliver. Additionally, he adds that a ‘more international and multicultural staff’ creates a stimulating environmental, which might make the difference between PlusAcademia and other competing schools.

Teachers from abroad need to be fully qualified, hold relevant international teaching diplomas, and, at best, have one or two years of teaching experience, in order to be considered for a position within the school. Recruitment from other European countries increased after Slovakia joined the European Union; 'hiring English native speakers from Europe has the great benefit of saving us the extensive resources needed to provide for a work permit to non-EU nationals', says Daniel.

- An international workplace brings multiculturalism and aids competitiveness.
- It is crucial to understand, first of all, whether or not European employees are really interested in the jobs being offered.
- Newcomers should be put in direct contact with local staff outside of the workplace.

How do you recruit?

The school advertises its vacancies through relevant international platforms, such as websites aimed at teaching English as a second language. It also publishes its openings in newspapers native to its target country. Additionally, PlusAcademia relies on universities throughout Bratislava to make contact with potential candidates. In fact, as Mr Bacík says, 'many of our part-time teachers are also employed in the university'.

What challenges did you face?

The school has had both good and bad experiences in recruiting from throughout Europe. 'Some teachers coming here from elsewhere in Europe have been unreliable. Despite our efforts, including providing them with support services, accommodation, and transport, a few have left the job after a very short period'. He goes on to explain that the reasons behind this were varied. 'Some were just searching for some experience; some were passing through and were never planning on staying long.

However, we learned from this experience and have changed our strategy. Now we are more thorough in asking for references, taking the time to ensure that they are the right people for us'.

What advice do you have for other employers?

In their experience, European teachers have had no problems integrating in the workplace. PlusAcademia makes sure that newcomers are in contact with Slovak teachers or other, more experienced, European employees, so that they have a source of support should the need arise.

Slovenia



Population 2 054 199 (2009)

EURES Advisers 8

Accessing EURES in Slovenia www.ess.gov.si

Labour market statistics www.stat.si

National information resources <http://eng.gzs.si/slo>

‘European employees come with valuable local knowledge’

Interview with Ms Sonja Klopčič

Competence Development Manager, Trimo Group, Ljubljana
www.trimo.si

The employer

The Trimo Group is directly present in 27 countries, has 14 offices worldwide and specialises in the production and sales of materials for the construction industry, including prefabricated steel buildings. In the Slovenian headquarters in Ljubljana, 480 employees of at least seven nationalities work primarily in engineering and sales, serving businesses all over the world.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Sonja Klopčič, Competence Development Manager for Trimo in Slovenia, says that the primary benefit of having a European workforce is the local knowledge they bring with them.

‘Employees from around Europe know their market, they have valuable local insights, and they can help us choose the right approach when it comes to marketing’. Being able to rely on these resources means the company can save considerable time and money in their promotion and public relations activities.

How do you recruit?

The company recruits for very specific positions in both engineering and sales; engineers are required to have at least five years' experience in the construction industry, while sales people need a business-to-business sales background. Trimo uses a combination of channels for recruitment – via online platforms, magazines and other publications, and recruiting partners.

What challenges did you face?

Ideally, new employees will have a mix of both engineering and sales experience, which means finding the right people can often be a challenge. They faced initial difficulties in knowing how and where to find the best people, as well as how to attract qualified candidates once they had been located. As they became more experienced at locating and attracting candidates, the process became easier. Ms Klopčič says the use of a recruiting partner is therefore a great asset. 'A cooperation with experts who can advise you can make issues such as organising social security, health insurance, and other administrative issues considerably simpler; not to mention knowing where to look for new employees in the first place'.

- A European workforce can provide information on different European markets.
- Internal publications can help to introduce new employees to a company.
- It is often difficult to know where to find the right people – so a recruiting partner can help.

What advice do you have for other employers?

When it comes to welcoming new employees to the workplace, Trimo has a number of methods of aiding integration. Firstly, all employees are required to speak English, so a common means of communication is ensured. All new arrivals are given one week's initial training, covering a range of topics from their job descriptions, to their rights and conditions in the workplace. Additionally, Trimo publishes both a corporate magazine in four languages, and a monthly newsletter in English. The authors of the newsletter are located in several countries around Europe, as well as in Slovenia, and all employees are encouraged to contribute. Such publications, says Ms Klopčič, tell people what is going on in the company, and allow new employees to introduce themselves via a contribution'. Overall, the company has experienced very few problems in integration. 'Slovenian workers are generally flexible and responsible', explains Ms Klopčič. 'The international feel of the company creates a positive and dynamic atmosphere'.

Spain



Population 46 951 532 (2010)

EURES Advisers 53

Accessing EURES in Spain www.redtrabaja.es

Labour market statistics www.mtin.es

'It is something about the spirit of an international workplace that makes the difference'

Interview with Mrs Esther Comabella,
Consultant and Communication Officer
Innotalentum, Barcelona
www.innotalentum.com

The employer

Innotalentum is a talent recruitment consultancy focused on the identification of science and technology experts. The range of clients Innotalentum works with operate across a range of highly specialised areas, from information and communication technology, to multimedia, to energy and pharmaceuticals. The organisation is small, with only three full-time employees and they often rely on external consultants to assist with their programmes.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Esther Comabella, Consultant and Communication Officer for Innotalentum in Barcelona, explains that the organisation has established expertise in very specific areas. This means there are many different ways of approaching and managing their work, and therefore the main benefit of recruiting workers from abroad is that they 'bring to the table a different working mentality, new ideas, and varied approaches to doing business'.

Ms Comabella says that they often work with employees of other European nationalities, particularly German and English. 'Hiring foreign employees makes the environment much more dynamic. It is something about the spirit of the workplace that makes the difference. They introduce their culture to our consultancy and add value by bringing different approaches. Everyone has different skills which benefit our work'.

- The benefits of a European team are undeniable.
- It is important to have a constant dialogue with foreign employees, to ensure they are at ease.
- Integration must take place at both professional and social levels.

How do you recruit?

Ms Comabella explains that when Innotalentum started hiring workers from throughout Europe they had just joined a project initiated by the Department of Economic and Finance of the Region of Cataluña, aimed at attracting national and European high quality talents in the science and technology fields. This need for additional expertise is what prompted them to search for European employees for their own company.

What challenges did you face?

'From an administrative point of view we never experienced any particular problem in hiring European nationals; they do not need a work permit or any kind of legal documentation, so it is all very straightforward. Additionally, we are such a small team that managing change is definitely easier', specifies Ms Comabella.

In order to ease integration, Ms Comabella emphasises that it is extremely important to ensure that dialogue is always ongoing with new employees. Though this can be as simple as making sure someone is always available for help or advice, such a policy helps to avoid situations where new arrivals feel excluded

or uncomfortable in their new surroundings. In addition to making sure they can manage with the working language before they arrive, Ms Comabella adds that, 'It is essential to make sure they know how to access basic social services in the country, such as healthcare. Ultimately, the employer needs to provide as much support as possible, for integration both within the company and in the wider society in general'.

What advice do you have for other employers?

And, for other employers interested in recruiting from around Europe, Innotalentum's advice is to 'always prepare adequate support for the newcomers, whether through language lessons, skills training, or simply by providing information on the basic services they will need. In return, there is huge added value for the company'.

Sweden



Population 9 354 462 (2009)

EURES Advisers 48

Accessing EURES in Sweden www.eures.se

Labour market statistics www.scb.se

National information resources

www.sweden.se/eng/Home/Work/Labor-market

'Recruiting one person from abroad can help to establish a network in that country'

Interview with Mr Torgil Lenning, Director
Entrypark, Stockholm
www.entriypark.com

The employer

Entrypark is a platform aimed at helping students find opportunities to build on their experience and skill levels, whether via employment or education. It is therefore necessary that Entrypark be familiar with the lives and needs of students in different countries around Europe – hence the need for a European team.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

'The system of education in Sweden is not the same as that of Germany, or the UK, or Poland, for example. For us to be able to help students in those countries, we need employees with local knowledge'. At the moment, Entrypark employs 25 staff members and 17 different nationalities. Out of the team, only three employees are Swedish. The remainder of the team is made up

of Germans, Portuguese, French, Italians, British and Bulgarians, to name a few. Mr Lenning adds that a very positive side effect of this mixture is that staff members become quite creative about means of promoting their own countries, and are eager to discuss the qualities of their home to others. Additionally, Mr Lenning has found that recruiting from throughout Europe enables 'crowd-sourcing – that is, the means of finding ten people from one country by making contact with one'.

How do you recruit?

Entrypark started recruiting from throughout Europe by advertising via free online platforms and finds this is still the most effective method today. Once the process was started, former employees then began recommending Entrypark as an employer to personal contacts. 'Most of our employees are aged between 25 and 30 and stay from anywhere from six months to a few years. We have quite a high turnover as young people come here for good professional experience before moving on'. Another reason for the relatively high turnover is that, as Mr Lenning admits, 'sometimes young people are not ready to commit to a long period of time abroad. Staying for a year or two gives them a good feel for living elsewhere in Europe'.

- Young people aren't necessarily ready to commit to a long-term stay abroad – so a one or two year contract can provide a good compromise.
- What used to be a difficult process is now quite simple.
- 'Onboarding', or the process of welcoming and preparing an employee, is key.

What challenges did you face?

Initially Entrypark considered face to face interviews with all potential employees, which would mean flying them over to Stockholm. After assessing the cost and time this would involve, it was decided that a combined use of telephone and video conferencing interviews would be best. The problem with this method, explains Mr Lenning, is that there are limitations to such interview techniques that don't allow the employer to get a proper sense of the candidate's personality. Now, the company has established a process whereby the first two interviews take place by phone, and the third, and last, by video conferencing.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Mr Lenning's advice is that when recruiting workers from throughout Europe, several things are of utmost importance. Firstly, integration in Entrypark is not an issue because there is not one nationality in abundance – all are evenly represented. Secondly, perhaps the key piece of advice is that the employee be thoroughly prepared. Entrypark uses a learning management tool allowing the sending of information to new employees – from the ups and downs of life in Stockholm, to a detailed job description. 'We also hold two weeks of detailed and comprehensive training, twice a year for all new employees. This ensures the new arrivals feel as prepared as possible. This is what we call 'onboarding', and the approach pays off because it means we don't lose people ahead of time'.

And a final word of encouragement: 'When we started recruiting from throughout Europe in 2002, it was complicated. Neither us, nor the employee, nor the local authorities, knew anything about welcoming foreigners. Now, it is much easier. People come and go quite a lot and it is relatively straightforward to hire people from another European country – so do not be afraid'.

Switzerland



Population 7 785 800 (2009)

EURES Advisers 15

Labour market statistics www.bfs.admin.ch

National information resources

www.enterprise-europe-network.ch

‘Employment of international trained professionals is not only necessary for the present, but is also a long term investment’

Interview with Mr Jimmy Parmas, HR Officer
S&H Switzerland, Geneva
www.s-h.ch

The employer

Founded in 1990, S&H Group is a privately owned international IT consulting firm, with offices in Geneva, and Paris. Currently, S&H employs over 180 professionals from across Europe.

- Foreign workers can sometimes be available on shorter notice than local workers.
- Formalise the process of integrating local and domestic workers to ensure a smooth transition for all.
- Moving abroad is a big step for a worker, so ensure you do a ‘reality check’ about all aspects of suitability before you hire.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Hiring from abroad is very advantageous for S&H, especially when they are urgently looking for skill sets that are not available in Switzerland. 'People working overseas generally have shorter notice periods, and are therefore available much faster than local employees,' said Mr Parmas. Since Switzerland's notice period is three months, it does not allow for S&H to quickly hire locally when it has an urgent position to fill.

How do you recruit?

S&H first began to hire from abroad using an agency before continuing the process directly. It now commonly uses online platforms, including the EURES portal, to post job vacancies in all fields. As, typically, different nationalities have differing character traits, it has occasionally proved difficult to find the right person – but overall, says Mr Parmas, recruiting from throughout Europe has proven to be a satisfactory experience.

What challenges did you face?

Mr Parmas admits that the process of integrating international staff with domestic staff in S&H initially proved to be challenging. However, the process has now been made more efficient and thus has greatly improved integration.

What advice do you have for other employers?

For other companies looking to hire from abroad, Mr Parmas suggests performing a 'reality check' on all aspects of suitability before hiring, because of what is involved in the relocation of a new employee. And, for companies looking to hire Swiss workers, Mr Parmas can recommend the local workforce's seriousness, commitment to their company, and their work ethic and values.

United Kingdom



Population 62 041 708 (2010)

EURES Advisers 23

Accessing EURES in the UK www.direct.gov.uk

Labour market statistics www.statistics.gov.uk

National information resources

www.enterprise-europe.net

'Europe has a lot to offer'

Interview with Ms Sophie Vivian, HR Recruitment Administrator
Doosan Power Systems Global Headquarters, Crawley
www.doosanpowersystems.com

The employer

Doosan Power Systems is a company specialising in power plant solutions. The company headquarters are based in Crawley, West Sussex, and are home to around 350 employees of a variety of nationalities.

Why do you recruit from abroad?

Sophie Vivian, the HR Recruitment Administrator for Doosan Power Systems, explains that the mix of skills available around Europe means looking beyond national borders was an obvious decision. 'We don't like to restrict ourselves,' she says. 'We always need a number of specialists, particularly in engineering, and Europe has a lot to offer'.

How do you recruit?

In addition to hiring full-time staff, the company also has a comprehensive training programme for young graduates, as well as offering work placements to students not yet finished studying. 'We find qualified young people via a recruiting partner, such as EURES, who typically come from all over Europe. They work in all sectors, from a wide range of engineering specialties, to the business and commercial side'. Ms Vivian explains that the training programmes last for four years. The trainee spends the first two years moving between different areas of the company, in order to be able to judge where they would like to build a career. The last two years are spent gaining professional experience in their field of choice. Additionally, Doosan sponsors trainees for a chartership, in order for them to become registered engineers.

- Internship and training programmes for graduates help to attract the best and the brightest.
- A good recruiting partner is important for any company taking the first steps to hire from throughout Europe.
- Cultural awareness programmes can aid understanding and tolerance.

What challenges did you face?

Despite the mix of nationalities in the Doosan headquarters, integration has always gone smoothly. 'UK employees are typically hard working and culturally aware. We've always had a multicultural workplace and there are never problems', explains Ms Vivian. However, Doosan has recently started running cultural awareness workshops for new employees, in order to facilitate further understanding and acceptance between nationalities. These are typically one-day programmes, run by an external consultant, and the company hopes to continue and expand these programmes in the future.

What advice do you have for other employers?

Based on the experiences of Doosan, Ms Vivian would strongly recommend any employer considering recruiting from throughout Europe first establish partnerships with a network of recruiting partners. 'Someone who knows where to look, and how to target the people you need'. Additionally, it is important to take into account the notice periods required in different countries – some countries require very long notice periods which can affect the recruitment process. However, 'A good recruiting partner will know this. They can also provide advice on what is required in terms of relocating an employee. If they have families, they will need advice on schools; if they are new to the country, they will need advice on accommodation', she states. 'All these aspects need to be taken into account'.

Overall impression? 'Having an international European staff is one of the most positive aspects of this company'.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is there a charge for the EURES services?

There is no charge for any of EURES' services.

What requirements must I meet for publishing my vacancies on the EURES portal?

There are a few basic requirements you should meet. You should be in good standing with your tax and social security office, and have paid all fees. Of course, you need to be a legally registered employer. Further information can be obtained from your local EURES Adviser.

When employing a worker from another EEA country or Switzerland, should I apply the rules from the country of origin or country of current employment?

You should apply to rules relevant to the country in which the employee will be working.

Do new employees need to apply for a national tax identification number in order to start working? In most cases a valid passport or identity card is enough for a citizen to start working in another EEA country. However, they might need a number to start administrative procedures. This should be checked with the relevant authorities in your country.

Is it possible for me to take part in European Job Days throughout Europe?

European Job Days are an excellent way of meeting qualified jobseekers. The first step should be for you to contact your local EURES Adviser in your region for more details of potential events. Also keep an eye on the Events calendar on the EURES portal.

Can EURES arrange interviews with potential employees?

This depends on the capacities of the EURES offices in your country. Usually, EURES Advisers can make a first selection of the candidates and, if you would like to proceed, can arrange an interview in the local public employment service offices. Contact your local EURES Adviser for more information.

We wish to recruit professionals for our medical clinic. We have already selected the suitable candidates; do we need to have their qualifications recognised?

Before hiring a worker from another EEA country, it is advisable to find out if the profession is regulated in your country. In some countries, when nationals wish to pursue a regulated profession (doctor, nurse, pharmacist, etc) in another country, they have to submit the application for the recognition of qualifications to the competent ministry. Evidence of citizenship and educational qualifications should be included with the application. More information can be obtained by consulting your Ministry of Labour or equivalent, or of course talking to your local EURES Adviser.

Is it possible to hire workers from third countries through the EURES network?

At the moment EURES only operates in the EU and EEA countries. EURES Advisers may be able to recommend information sources for recruiting outside of these countries, but this will vary depending on the resources of your local public employment service office.

What information must not be included in the job offer? For example, can I specify the nationality of the worker?

You are allowed to specify the skills, background and experience of the candidate you are searching for, as well as any required languages. However, requesting a particular nationality, age or gender, for example is seen as discriminatory. Any such notices will not be posted on the EURES portal.

Thank you

To all 31 employers who kindly gave their time for these interviews, and to BUSINESSEUROPE and Yachts of Seabourn for their cooperation. Thank you also to the EURES Advisers and EURES Managers across Europe for their invaluable support.

European Commission

When can you start? A practical guide to recruiting in Europe

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

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The European labour market will face a number of challenges in the coming years. In order to be well equipped to tackle changes, employers may need to look Europe-wide for employees with the right mix of skills and qualifications. This publication is intended as a practical guide to recruiting in Europe for employers of all sizes and sectors.

This publication is available in printed format in all EU official languages as well as in Icelandic and Norwegian.

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