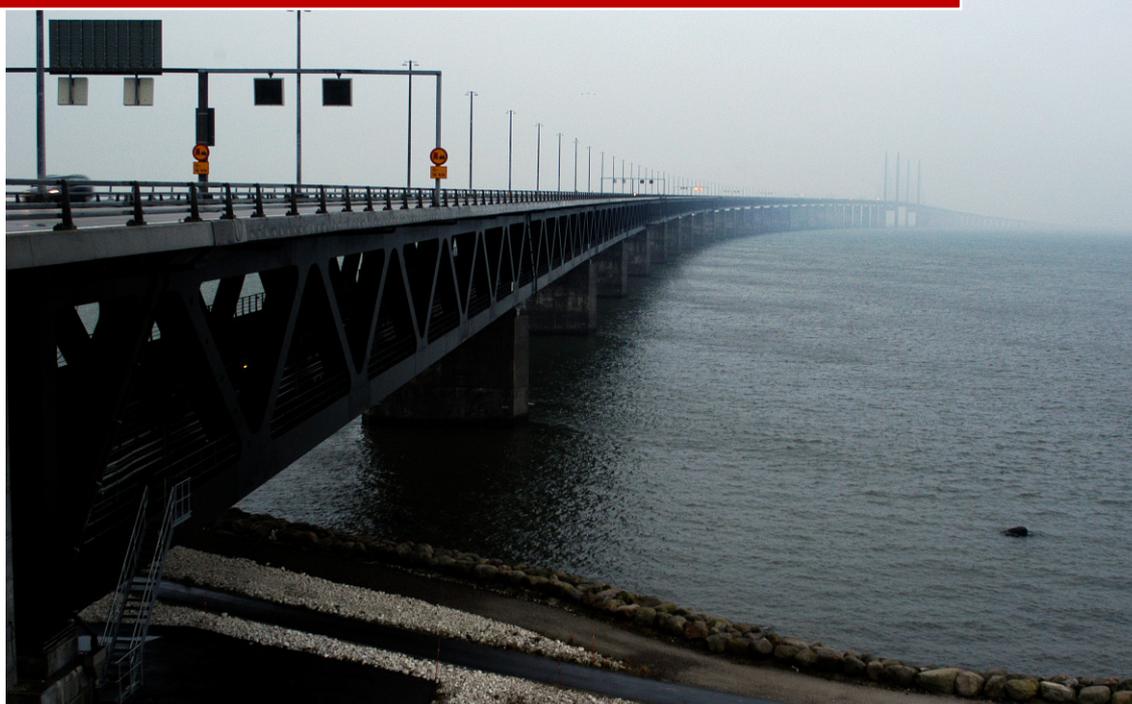


# OVERALL REPORT

## Information services for cross-border workers in European border regions



Association of European Border Regions



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**Annex I: Overview of information services related to cross-border labour market in European border regions**



## 1. Introduction

The topic of **labour market mobility** is of particular importance in border regions, as it is part of the every-day life of citizens to cross the border, either to get to their work places or for leisure purposes. The problems related to different social security and tax regulations are particularly challenging in border areas that are confronted with complex and steadily changing legal, administrative, social and economic conditions. Information on standard solutions is in this case not sufficient, as individual situations require individual information and advice.

There is a lack of reliable data. Therefore, it is difficult to say how many workers cross a European border several times per week in order to get from their homes to their work-places. According to a study commissioned by the DG Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission that was published in the beginning of the year 2009, the number of cross-border commuters amounted in the EU (including EEA/EFTA) in the year 2006/2007 to about **780.000 workers**. According to this study most commuting streams are centred in North West Europe, but also in the Scandinavian countries and some border areas along the new internal borders (e.g. between Estonia and Finland, Hungary and Austria or Slovenia and Italy) the level of cross-border labour mobility is considerable.<sup>1</sup>

The level of cross-border labour mobility depends on different factors. **Wage differences** and **better job opportunities** are an important incentive for a potential frontier worker to look for a job on the other side of the border. Well developed regional and cross-border **transport connections** and good knowledge of the **language** of the neighbouring country are also important factors facilitating cross-border labour mobility. Moreover, the examples of the Danish/Swedish border area or the German/Dutch border area show that differences in **housing and / or living costs** can also have a positive impact on cross-border mobility.

However, cross-border workers in European border areas are still confronted with considerable difficulties resulting in particular from **different social security and taxation laws**, different pension schemes and also from different education systems. It can not be expected that these differences will be eliminated in the foreseeable future by harmonising all relevant legislation within the EU. And, this is not desired by the Member States, even with the completion of the Single Market. Accordingly, it has to be rather taken into account that due to the dynamic changes in national legislations, new situations will arise that can produce additional uncertainties as regards cross-border labour mobility.

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<sup>1</sup> See "Scientific Report on the Mobility of Cross-Border Workers within the EU-27/EEA/EFTA Countries – Final Report" (Brussels 2009) elaborated for the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs by MKW Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH and Empirica Kft., p. VII

The **uncertainties** about the consequences of cross-border commuting and the lack of information on social security regulations, taxation and the acknowledgment of diploma are still important obstacles to cross-border labour mobility. Accordingly, the number of cross-border workers could most probably be higher, if potential cross-border workers could receive better information about possible risks and particularities of working in another country. Even though in most European Border areas information on standard situations can be obtained relatively easy via brochures and web portals, the situation can become extremely complicated if the situation of a worker somehow differs from the standard situation. Moreover, due to the complexity of the legal framework and the language used by the public administrations, not all potential and already employed cross-border workers are really aware of their **social security rights** and obligations.

#### EXAMPLE CASE:

#### EUROREGION DANUBIUS (BG/RO)

“Significant problem is people’s fear who do not know the relevant labour and social legislation of the country they want to work. They also do not know which institutions or organizations to address in order to obtain reliable information, more in particular about the labour vacancies and the conditions under which they can be occupied”

Lili Gancheva – Executive Director

The project: Improving information for cross-border workers in European border regions implemented with the financial support from the European Union provides the opportunity to exchange experiences in this field within the network of the Association of European Border Regions and to elaborate new ideas and recommendations referring to cross-border labour mobility.

## 2. Main objectives and project activities

The present project focuses particularly on the labour market mobility barriers for border regions, which are handicapped in comparison with more central areas. More to the point, it is often extremely difficult for border regions to be heard in the capital cities.

The project can be divided into three phases:

- **Phase 1: Baseline study and exchange of experience**
- **Phase 2: Analysis of the current situation and formulation of recommendations**
- **Phase 3: Dissemination and Communication**

The first phase focused on the collection and analysis of information. In particular, which forms of advisory services for cross-border workers already exist in Europe, how they function and which results and perspectives exist for these information infrastructures, were

examined. While comparing and selecting the available information the project applicant and its supporters concentrated in particular on the following questions:

- **Which information services are available in European border regions (for employers, workers and job seekers) in the context of cross-border labour market?**
- **What information is particularly requested as regards cross-border labour market?**
- **How many workers cross the border for work in European border areas and how many of them use the available information services?**
- **What are the main challenges and problems regarding the cross-border labour market?**

Based on the received information and the exchanges with experts in the second phase the project activities focused on the elaboration of concrete recommendations and proposals for the improvement of the advisory services for cross-border workers. These specific recommendations are addressed to political decision makers at European and national level. They are included at the end of the report and should be distributed to representatives of European institutions, border areas and other interested partners of the AEER.

The third phase should focus on dissemination and communication of the project results. The activities in this last phase have the aim to improve the level of information in border areas as regards the cross-border labour market. Cross-border workers should be able to get high-quality and reliable personal advice. More needs to be done to avoid unpleasant surprises, which are then taken up by the press to argue about the pitfalls of Europe. Moreover, it has to be avoided that employees do not accept job offers from the other side of the border because of high uncertainties, thus affecting their freedom of movement. Accordingly, together with the final report the activities in the last phase of the project should underline the added value of cross-border labour market and raise awareness for the particular information and service needs of employees, employers and work seekers crossing the border.

### **3. Information and service needs of cross-border workers**

According to the above-mentioned study commissioned by the DG Employment and Social Affairs, the lack of information has still a negative impact on cross-border labour mobility. Potential cross-border workers are in many cases not really aware of their social security rights and obligations on the other side of the border. Moreover, in some border areas citizens are **not sufficiently informed about the working conditions** in the other country. As consequence, they have a rather prejudicial attitude towards an employment in the neighbouring country. For example, in a survey carried out on behalf of the EURES Bavaria-

Czech Republic<sup>2</sup> only 9% of the interviewed Bavarian employees considered employment in the Czech Republic as a realistic alternative. The main reason for this negative attitude is the lower wage level in the Czech Republic. In fact, it doesn't necessarily have to be the case. For example, in the construction sector some workers from Germany receive on the other side of the border a higher wage than at home. But, the **public at large is not informed** about such cases. **Job security** and the **language knowledge** are further factors that play an important role.

The employees on the Czech side of the border show in principle more interest in employment on the German side. Almost 50% of the Czech workers that participated in the survey considered employment across the border as a realistic alternative. However, also on the Czech side the demand for a German workplace tends to go down.

Information and advisory services for cross-border workers can promote a positive attitude towards cross-border mobility. Here, it is of particular importance to **meet the particular information needs** of employees, employers and job seekers, who are confronted with much more questions and problems when they cross the border. The five scenarios listed below demonstrate very clearly how differentiated and complex the information and service needs can be in regions with a high level of cross-border labour mobility.

<p><b>Information and service needs of employees that cross the border every day or once a week for work</b></p>	<p>Reliable and individual information on social security schemes in the neighbouring country (including unemployment, disability, sickness and maternity benefits as well as other benefits, old-age pension, health care system, taxation rules etc.)</p> <p>If necessary, information on available language courses and support in finding the right language course</p> <p>Information and support in finding accommodation if the employee is not returning every day home</p>
<p><b>Information and service needs of employees that work in the country of origin and move to the neighbouring country</b></p>	<p>Reliable and individual information on all changes as regards social security system, family benefits, private insurances, taxation rules etc.</p> <p>If necessary, information on available language courses and support in finding the right language course</p> <p>Information on the housing market, rental contracts, child care and school system in the other country as well as language courses for family members etc.</p>

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the final report of the project "Imagekampagne Gute Arbeit" implemented by the EURES Bavaria-Czech Republic ([www.eures-by-cz.eu](http://www.eures-by-cz.eu))

	Information on all formalities that new residents have to complete (e.g. registration at the city hall, new number plates for the car etc.)
<b>Information and service needs of job seekers</b>	<p>Access to job advertisements of employment centres on the other side of the border</p> <p>Reliable information, if the qualifications and diploma will be acknowledged in the same way as at home</p> <p>If necessary information on language courses and support in finding the right language course</p> <p>Practical hints and instructions referring to application documents, job interviews and job contracts in the other country</p> <p>Reliable and individual information on working conditions in the other country (wage levels in different sectors, job security, working culture etc.)</p> <p>Information on social security schemes, health care system, taxation rules in the other country</p> <p>If necessary, information and support in finding accommodation in the other country</p>
<b>Information and service needs of employers looking for staff on the other side of the border</b>	<p>Access to the information sources of the local job centres and support in finding appropriate candidates</p> <p>Information on job portals and job fairs most popular in the other country</p> <p>Practical hints concerning recruitment possibilities and job interviews in the other country</p>
<b>Information and service needs of entrepreneurs that plan to set up a new business on the other side of the border</b>	<p>Information on administrations responsible for authorising business start-ups in the respective sector in the other country</p> <p>Information on all formalities and criteria that have to be fulfilled in order to run a business in the other country, particular fiscal regulations, advantages of a location in a business park etc.</p> <p>Support in finding personnel for the new business in the other country</p> <p>If necessary, information and support for employees that have to move to the other country in order to work in the new branch office</p>

## 4. Experiences and examples

The cooperation network EURES, set up by the European Commission in 1993 plays a particularly important role in border areas, where citizens cross the border on a daily basis on the way to work, to an interesting leisure activity or for shopping. Currently, there are over **20 EURES cross-border partnerships** involving **more than 13 countries** that provide specific advice and information to job applicants, employees and employers in border areas and promote cross-border labour mobility. While solving mobility obstacles, these partnerships can draw on the expertise and knowledge of public employment, social security and vocational training services as well as employers' associations, trade unions and other institutions from both sides of the border. For example, in the Great Region (Saarland, Lorraine, Luxembourg, Wallonia, Rheinland-Pfalz) the EURES network receives significant support from the **Resources and Documentation Centre** ([www.frontalierslorraine.eu](http://www.frontalierslorraine.eu)), an association established by the Regional Council of Lorraine, which has the aim to facilitate cross-border mobility through the provision of relevant information. The centre has already elaborated a wide range of publications on cross-border labour mobility in the Great Region. Some of them examine the obstacles to free movement of workforce in the region and present some possible solutions. Others are specific guides and brochures addressed to cross-border workers that cover all relevant legal, fiscal and socio-economic aspects.

The experiences of **EURES cross-border partnerships vary from one border area to another**. While in some regions, as result of considerable levels of cross-border commuting, the need for specific information and legal advice is quite high, in other European border regions the activities referring to cross-border labour market are rather sparse due to the low demand. In the latter case, EURES partnerships are important **instruments for the monitoring** of the respective cross-border employment areas providing support at regional level when developing new strategies and perspectives for the regional labour markets.

The EURES cross-border partnerships are not the only organisations providing support and advice to cross-border workers. In particular, in border areas with significant levels of cross-border commuting there are also other services available that help citizens to find adequate answers to their manifold questions that arise when they decide to live, work or set up a business in the neighbouring country. For example, with the support of the **Nordic Council of Ministers** particular **Border Service Centres** were set up that provide personal assistance and guidance to cross-border workers that have to cope with specific administrative, legal and fiscal requirements. One example is the Bor-



Morokulien, Source: Värmland County

der Service Centre in Morokulien ([www.gtm.nu](http://www.gtm.nu)). From 2002 to 2007 **more than 40.000 individuals** asked the employees of the centre for support in cross-border issues. Apart from consultancy the centre tries to solve existing obstacles and barriers to cross-border mobility. For this purpose, a special board with representatives from the administrations has been established that meets several times a year with the aim to discuss most urgent problems and work out solutions. The proposed solutions are forwarded to the responsible political bodies. Similar services are provided by **some Euroregions (e.g. Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig, EUREGIO)** that provide consultancy and advisory services within their own projects focusing on the facilitation of cross-border labour mobility.

An additional example is the **INFOBEST information centres** in the Upper Rhine area that provide information on many different topics that can be of interest for citizens that decide to work and / or live in the neighbouring country (e.g. school education and vocational training, marriage and family, employment, unemployment, family benefits, fees, taxes and custom duties etc.). There are four INFOBEST offices in the Upper Rhine area. In the beginning their activities were financed from the INTERREG programme. In the meantime, the offices are **not dependent on EU funding** any longer as they are financed by several public and private institutions from the region that support the idea of cross-border mobility. Also the French state offers financial support for the INFOBEST offices.

National authorities and institutions are important partners and supporters of EURES and similar information services have an important impact on the promotion of the idea of labour market mobility. For example, **Maison de l'Emploi et de la Formation du Pays de Saint-Louis/Trois Frontières et du Pays du Sundgau** in Alsace encourages the job applicants from Alsace to look also for a job in the neighbouring countries, and has thus initiated different activities promoting cross-border labour mobility. In cooperation with partners from Germany and Switzerland the Maison de l'Emploi has established a **cross-border working group** dealing with different aspects of cross-border labour market. Moreover, it has initiated **language courses** for job applicants in order to overcome the linguistic barrier, it has organised **job fairs** with the participation of German and Swiss employers and it has **enhanced the exchange of information** and contacts between labour market actors in France and the neighbouring countries. More details on its activities as well as other good examples are included in the annex.

## **5. AEBR survey – methodology**

At the beginning of 2012, the Association of European Border Regions asked its members and partner institutions to provide data and interesting reports concerning cross-border labour market mobility. The first survey was primarily aimed at the review of the situation within the scope of counselling available for cross-border employees and knowledge about key obstacles and barriers that limit the free flow of employees within the European Union. The first call of the AEBR for sending information met with a response from only 20 mem-

bers and partner organisations. The materials provided by them were, in truth, valuable, but the data contained therein was difficult to systemise and analyse in a comparative manner. For this reason, at the end of May 2012, the AEBR developed a survey that was later sent to the Association's members and partners. The questions in the survey focused on the following issues:

- **Analysis of framework conditions of cross-border cooperation in the sphere of the labour market on both sides of the border,**
- **Examination of the degree of cross-border mobility on the labour market in specific cross-border regions and the key obstacles and barriers affecting such mobility,**
- **Definition of common strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and possible threats related to cross-border labour market mobility and formulation of specific suggestions and recommendations on this basis.**

By the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2012, the Secretariat General received about 34 completed surveys, and the majority of them were handed over by entities from cross-border areas in North-West Europe. If one adds to these resources the information received by the AEBR during the first survey conducted at the beginning of 2012, the scope of the project spanned over approx. 40 border and cross-border regions altogether. They were divided into four groups depending on the level of cross-border mobility on the labour market existing in their territories and the kind of border<sup>3</sup>. It needs to be emphasised that the assigned level of cross-border mobility on the labour market was only partially determined on the basis of statistical data, as huge importance was also attached to qualitative features and own assessment provided by the regions and counselling points for cross-border employees. In the majority of cases, it was not possible to obtain statistical data about the number of cross-border employees in the regions subject to the survey, because such information is not gathered at a regional level. To tell the truth, data collected at the national level with regard to the number of employees from neighbouring countries provides vital points of reference for the assessment of the number of cross-border employees, but they are not always reliable. Some border regions quote data based on the study of cross-border mobility on the labour market that was published in 2009 upon the order of the European Commission and which illustrated essential tendencies and the potential for an increase of the flow of employees who regularly move across borders in the European Union. A positive example among the examined cross-border regions is the Greater Region of Saar-Lor-Lux with about 200,000 registered cross-border employees.<sup>4</sup> The Interregional Post for Labour Market Monitoring was established to follow the situation on the labour market in the border areas and to gather relevant data.

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<sup>3</sup> The distinction is as follows: old internal borders, old external borders, new internal borders and new external borders.

<sup>4</sup> See: CRD EURES Lorraine: Freins à la mobilité des travailleurs frontaliers dans l'espace Lorraine, Luxembourg, Rhénanie-Palatinat, Sarre, Metz, 2011, p. 6.

## **6. Strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to cross-border mobility on the labour market in various border regions**

The labour markets in European cross-border regions face serious challenges. In Scandinavia and the majority of countries in North-West Europe, the lack of labour force is becoming more and more acute due to on-going demographic changes. Cross-border regions in Southern Europe struggle with the results of the economic crisis and the ensuing debt, which have led to rapid growth of the number of unemployed in those countries. Cross-border cooperation may be an important element of the regional strategy for labour markets wishing to help overcome the present difficulties. For instance, the demand for a labour force in some areas can be satisfied, even temporarily, with the help of employees coming from a neighbouring country, particularly if this country, in turn, lacks adequate resources in terms of work places. Also the paradox situation of labour shortage in particular fields where there is a high long-time unemployment requires more flexibility and mobility in border areas. Cross-border cooperation helps to create new ideas, acquire new entities supporting the development of proper labour market concepts and expand one's own economic reach. A high level of mobility on the labour market also means the intellectual enrichment of both employers and employees in the border regions thanks to the inevitable confrontation with new ways of thinking, mentality and approach to certain issues. What is also valuable is the possibility to draw upon the professional knowledge and experience of people from a neighbouring region.

Broadening the search for work to include cross-border labour market in general increases the chances of actually finding work which in turn amongst other goals helps to retain local talents and the youth for the region. Permanently focusing on the cross-border labour market also opens up opportunities for information and advice activities for jobseekers who have not previously crossed the border for work. And also for ex cross-border workers when they are confronted with changes in for example the level or duration of their benefit rights acquired during their career in the neighbouring member state.

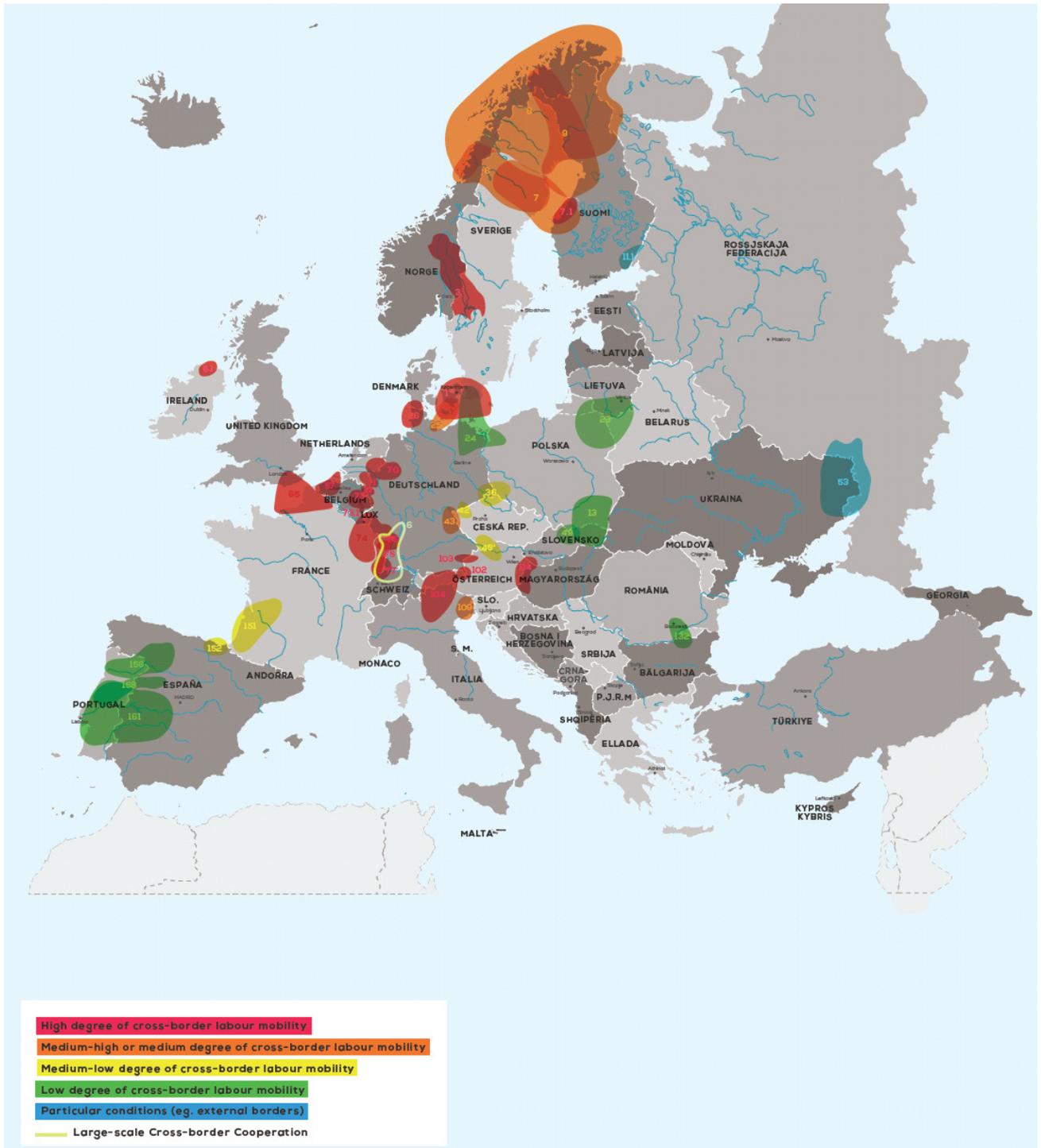
The level of cross-border mobility on the labour market is highly diversified in the European Union. The greatest flow of employees is observed in the border regions in North-West Europe and in the western part of Scandinavian countries. One can also note a significant number of cross-border employees at the "old" external borders of the Union (e.g. between Austria and Hungary, Austria and the Czech Republic or Italy and Slovenia), and the numbers are expected to increase in the future. It is definitely possible that more and more citizens of the "old" European Union member states will start to travel to work to the "new" member states, particularly if the gaps in salary rates are reduced.

Special framework conditions for cross-border mobility on the labour market are observed at the external borders of the European Union. In such places, crossing of the border every day for work is, in most cases, virtually impossible due to the specific regulations concerning entry to and exit from the territory of a given country. However, these borders were also

included in the survey conducted by the AEBR so that it would be possible to point to the necessary introduction of special regulations for the inhabitants of border regions.

The tables below present, in short, the strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats, described by the regions' authorities in the context of cross-border mobility on the labour market in response to the AEBR survey. The border regions were divided into four groups according to the level of cross-border mobility on the labour market and the type of border.

**Map of border regions participating in the project indicating the level of cross-border commuting**



<b>Mobility:</b>	<b>High or medium-high level of cross-border mobility on the labour market</b>
<b>Type of border:</b>	<b>“Old” internal borders<sup>5</sup> of the European Union, including Switzerland and Norway (North-West Europe and Scandinavia)</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highly mobile workforce</li> <li>- Long tradition of cooperation and openness towards neighbouring countries</li> <li>- Strong network of cross-border cooperation</li> <li>- High involvement of cross-border partnership structures</li> <li>- High professional competence and valuable specialist knowledge (know-how)</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequent lack of command of foreign languages</li> <li>- Local transport structures not always optimally constructed</li> <li>- Insufficient usage of opportunities created by cross-border mobility by employers, and employees</li> <li>- Insufficient agreement of public administration bodies with regard to overcoming obstacles limiting mobility</li> <li>- Fluctuation of currency exchange rates (e.g. in the case of Switzerland and Northern Ireland)</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intercultural environment</li> <li>- Integrated economic area</li> <li>- Advancement and expansion of established cooperation and partnership structures</li> <li>- Close cooperation between economic and educational institutions</li> <li>- Cross-border transfer of knowledge vital from the economy’s perspective</li> <li>- Formation of industrial clusters in certain areas</li> <li>- Support for young talents within the region and the retainment of their bond with the region</li> <li>- The development of projects focused towards retraining and / or competence recognition</li> <li>- The continuation of information and advice activities through traditional, new and social media methods</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demographic changes</li> <li>- Struggle for the acquisition of labour force</li> <li>- Emigration of the high potentials within the labour force</li> <li>- Lack of qualified employees</li> <li>- Information services for cross-border employees provided by various institutions and offering discordant information</li> <li>- Increased level of bureaucracy for employees due to differences in social security and taxation systems</li> <li>- Self sustainability of established cooperation and partnership structures in the future is not always clear.</li> </ul>

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<sup>5</sup> „Old“ internal borders are defined as borders between two Member States of the EU 15.

<b>Mobility:</b>	<b>Medium or medium-low level of cross-border mobility on the labour market</b>
<b>Type of border:</b>	<b>“Old” external borders<sup>6</sup> (e.g. Italy/ Slovenia, Austria/ Slovakia, Germany/ Czech Republic)</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong networks of cross-border cooperation</li> <li>- High degree of motivation and competence of professional employees</li> <li>- Increasing offer of counselling services, primarily as part of the EURES-T partnership</li> <li>- Openness to the possibility of finding employment in a neighbouring country</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In some cases formal EURES T partnerships were dissolved and informal cooperation is not sufficient</li> <li>- Often insufficient command of the language of the neighbouring country</li> <li>- Inflexibility of educational systems</li> <li>- Often lack of optimum network of local cross-border transport</li> <li>- Lack of adequate knowledge about legal regulations concerning the labour market in the neighbouring country</li> <li>- In some cases, lack of intercultural competences</li> <li>- Insufficient support for the development of the integrated labour market at the political level</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater transparency of the labour market</li> <li>- Strengthening of cross-border cooperation with regard to support for economic growth and entrepreneurship</li> <li>- Increasing the provision of counselling for mobile employees</li> <li>- Formation of an integrated labour market offering new possibilities for employers and employees</li> <li>- International agreements aimed at the simplification of cross-border cooperation on the labour market</li> <li>- Young professionals that gained experiences in the neighbouring country bring to the home country new ideas and know-how</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large differences in salaries and contrasts in living conditions may be conducive to the introduction of dumping salary rates and improper working conditions if adequate information cannot be obtained and the minimum standards are not clearly stated</li> <li>- Even if the number of unemployed on both sides of the border differs greatly, in some areas, similar shortages of properly qualified jobseekers can be observed today</li> <li>- Emigration of young people to urban agglomerations</li> <li>- Undermined position of young EURES-T partnerships in the course of formulation of new regulations for financing concepts</li> </ul>

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<sup>6</sup> „Old“ external borders are defined as borders along a EU 15 member state and a member state that joined the EU in 2004 or later (EU 12 member state).

<b>Mobility:</b>	<b>Rather low level of cross-border mobility on the labour market</b>
<b>Type of border:</b>	<b>“New” internal borders<sup>7</sup> (e.g. Poland/ Lithuania, Poland/ Slovakia), and, some, “old” borders in South-West Europe (Spain/ Portugal)</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Functional networks of cross-border cooperation</li> <li>- High degree of motivation and competence of professional employees</li> <li>- Numerous local initiatives (e.g. Euroregions, EGTC)</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structural problems on the labour market</li> <li>- Youth unemployment</li> <li>- Insufficient innovative work placements</li> <li>- Often lack of an optimum network of local cross-border transport</li> <li>- Insufficiently developed cross-border cooperation in the sphere of the labour market</li> <li>- Relatively few counselling opportunities for mobile employees</li> <li>- Not attractive salaries in comparison with other European countries</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthening of cross-border cooperation with regard to support for economic growth and entrepreneurship</li> <li>- Further increase in the provision of counselling for mobile employees</li> <li>- Formation of industrial and educational clusters in the border areas</li> <li>- Common cross-border monitoring of the labour market</li> <li>- Make use of best practices and solutions previously identified and used in other cross-border regions</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emigration of young people to other countries or to urban agglomerations</li> <li>- Weaker position of local workforce and jobseekers in comparison to international competition</li> <li>- Demographic changes</li> </ul>

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<sup>7</sup> „New“ internal borders are defined as borders between two new member states (member states that joined the EU in 2004 or later)

<b>Mobility:</b>	<b>Rather low level of cross-border mobility on the labour market</b>
<b>Type of border:</b>	<b>External borders of the European Union (e.g. Finland/ Russia) and borders in Eastern Europe outside of the European Union (e.g. Russia/ Ukraine)</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Established and new networks of cross-border cooperation</li> <li>- High degree of motivation and competence of professional employees</li> <li>- Openness to new solutions and proposals as part of cross-border cooperation</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structural problems on the labour market</li> <li>- Formal obstacles for mobility due to border controls (lack of special regulations for the inhabitants of border regions)</li> <li>- Often lack of an optimum network of local cross-border transport</li> <li>- Relatively few counselling offers for mobile employees or hindered access to information</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthening of cross-border cooperation with regard to support for economic growth and entrepreneurship</li> <li>- Formation of industrial and educational clusters in the border areas</li> <li>- Improvement of international competitiveness</li> <li>- Simplification of regulations concerning the crossing of borders</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emigration of young people to other countries or to urban agglomerations</li> <li>- Weaker position in comparison to international competition</li> <li>- Demographic changes</li> <li>- Differences in living conditions and the salary level can lead to an imbalance on the regional labour markets</li> <li>- Lack of information about minimum standards in the neighbouring country may be conducive to the offering of improper working conditions</li> </ul>

## 7. Key obstacles limiting cross-border mobility on the labour market

The development of an integrated labour market is one of the main tasks executed as part of promoting actual cross-border cooperation. However, cooperation in this sphere is a complex matter and frequently meets with many practical obstacles that go beyond the context of foreign relations. In such a case, it is necessary to analyse and solve the problem on the national and EU level. Cooperation with regard to education, professional training and the labour market is also of key importance for the goal of European integration and for all EU regulations that are to facilitate the mobility of employees and their families, students and other persons across state borders. Border areas constitute points of contact when it comes to the issues of progress in integration and the finding of practical solutions aimed at the removal of obstacles limiting mobility.<sup>8</sup>

### EXAMPLE:

#### EUREGION OF MAAS-RHEIN (B/DE/NL)

“Despite clear EU guidelines, cross-border employees still have to cope with many problems every day, because the official procedures are unclear or disproportionately complicated.”

The majority of obstacles limiting mobility are obviously registered in those regions that

#### EXAMPLE: EUREGION OF SALZBURG – BERCHTESGADENER LAND – TRAUN- STEIN (AT/DE)

“Pursuant to the third part of the German social policy code (3. Sozialgesetzbuch), support for the participation of citizens in professional qualification training sessions in Austria is not possible, although it would frequently be easier to complete them there, or there is no comparable offer available in their own region.”

have the highest numbers of cross-border employees. They also display the highest demand for information, particularly with regard to the issues related to social security allowances and taxes, which can be extremely complex and complicated in the case of cross-border employees. **Differences in the systems of social allowances and tax systems** are serious obstacles limiting mobility for many potential cross-border employees, because, frequently, lack of vital information raises the fear of potentially unfavourable results of working abroad. Even if there are relevant statutory regulations at the European level, and if one checks the impact of the status of a cross-

border employee on persons who are such employees, **the relevant official bodies often have great doubts about the interpretation and application of existing regulations** at the national level. More often than not, national regulations in the sphere of social policy and allowances insufficiently deal with the situation of cross-border employees. In many cases, it

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<sup>8</sup> See: AEBR (Ed.): Bildung, Berufsausbildung und Arbeitsmarkt. AEBR's working document published on the occasion of the annual conference in Karlovy Vary on the 27<sup>th</sup>/ 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2003.

is, therefore, hard to reconcile them. In some cross-border regions also providing accurate information remains a challenge due to the frequent changes in relevant regulations within the member states.

**EXAMPLE:**

**EAST BORDER REGION  
(IE/UK)**

“Since there is no reliable statistical data, no public funds are assigned to the solving of problems faced by employers and employees in the border regions.”

The existing counselling points in border regions may offer the benefit of their experience in solving specific problems and can suggest solutions to the occurring problems. However, they are not vested with the appropriate decision-making powers. On the other hand, proper units at the national level do not consider solving the problems of border areas as a priority, particularly due to the fact that the number of cross-border employees constitutes an insignificant percentage of all employees. Frequently, the necessary **statistical data** about the number of cross-border employees is missing, and thus the national bodies do not pay this matter adequate attention. In addition, the proper bodies of countries affected by this problem do

not cooperate with each other within a sufficiently broad scope. It may happen that the office will direct persons looking for help or answers to specific questions to information posts in the border regions, but those posts will not have power in the sphere of social allowances and social help and thus have to direct the client to the proper office in the neighbouring country.<sup>9</sup> In such a case, the client may be confused by the entire situation and become more and more frustrated.

It is not uncommon that close cooperation between offices, similarly to looking for work abroad, is hindered by **insufficient command of the language of the neighbouring country**. In the AEBR survey, nearly all border regions that provided answers pointed to the lack of proper language skills as one of the key obstacles limiting mobility. In order to be able to work professionally abroad, it is often necessary to be familiar with the official language of one's place of employment. At the stage of looking for work, it is also necessary to have appropriate linguistic skills, because information about vacancies and recruitment conditions are usually formulated only in the official language of the given country. This discourages many potential cross-border employees from trying to look for employment in a neighbouring country, and thus they do not take advantage of the opportunities offered by the labour market across the border. Furthermore, one should not fail to mention **prejudices, insecurity about the working conditions in a neighbouring country and fear of discrimination**, which also stop people living in the border areas in European countries from looking for employment in neighbouring countries.

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<sup>9</sup> See: Infobest Palmrain (Ed.): Jahresbericht 2011 (Annual Report 2011), Village-Neuf 2012, pp. 6-7.

There is still the problem of **mutual recognition of qualifications and professional and scientific titles**. There is, in truth, the European Commission's Directive addressing this issue, but it only covers a limited number of professions. Thus, there may arise the risk that an employee in a neighbouring country will be able to work only below his real qualification, because the diploma gained in the country of origin will not be fully recognised in the country of employment. Professional training abroad may also be hindered if national legislation does not include a provision allowing one to complete practical professional training at a company across the border. This obstacle was successfully overcome, for example, in the Strasbourg-Ortenau Eurodistrict, where a relevant bilateral agreement was concluded by partners from Germany and France.<sup>10</sup>

**EXAMPLE: BASQUE COUNTRY (ES) – AQUITAINE REGION (FR)**

“The cultural differences and problems with communication often lead to conflicts between employees and public administration bodies. There is no background knowledge about the international law applicable in specific situations.”

A factor of elementary importance for the promotion of cross-border mobility on the labour market is the availability of reliable and understandable information that may be applied to the employee's individual situation. This issue became evident in the results of the AEBR survey, where **the lack of sufficient information and insufficient transparency of principles governing the labour market** were classified as essential obstacles limiting professional mobility. Following the formation and reactivation of cross-border partnership unions of states under EURES-T and similar networks, appropriate structures providing cross-border employees, jobseekers, students and

employers with reliable information about all matters that are important to them (e.g. pensions, labour law, family allowances, income tax, unemployment benefits, sick leave payments etc.) were established in many border areas. The fact that this is possible should be largely considered as a result of effective collaboration of all key stakeholders operating in the spheres of social care and regional labour market. The existence of these networks may positively affect a jobseeker's readiness to make the decision to work on the other side of the border by focusing on the positive aspects surrounding working on the other side of the border versus the negative effects of unemployment for the individual and the economy. The provision of information services reduces concerns and insecurity of the potential cross-border employees. Without these cross-border partnership structures the established cross-border exchange and cooperation is undermined which, in turn, affects the quality and reliability of information available for jobseekers/potential cross-border workers, cross-border employees, ex cross-border workers and employers.

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<sup>10</sup> See: CRD EURES Lorraine: Freins à la mobilité des travailleurs frontaliers dans l'espace Lorraine, Luxembourg, Rhénanie-Palatinat, Sarre, Metz, 2011, p. 17.

### 8. Recommendations and proposed solutions

The table below sums up the suggested possibilities of solutions aimed at the reduction and elimination of obstacles limiting mobility that are described in Chapter 7. It also includes recommendations whose application would help to improve the quality of information provided to cross-border employees from European border regions. Since there are considerable differences within the European Union with regard to the level of cross-border mobility on the labour market and the situation on such markets in different border regions, these recommendations should, in the first place, be treated as reference points for relevant entities operating in European border regions and as a reference framework for the formulation of specific solutions adapted to the needs of a given region.

Recommendations and proposed solutions	
<p><b>Lack of information or insufficient information</b></p>	<p>The existing information posts for cross-border employees must continue their present activities in the future. To this end, it is necessary to ensure the availability of sufficient financial resources.</p> <p>The existing counselling networks and offers in this field must be sustained, so that it would be possible to provide reliable single-source information for cross-border employees in the future.</p> <p>Apart from internet portals and standard sources of information, like manuals and brochures, individual counselling must also be available. Standard solutions frequently cannot be applied to the specific situation of an individual cross-border employee.</p> <p>The digitalisation of administrative procedures cannot hinder access to information for certain groups of people, e.g. those without access to the Internet or those without sufficient command of a language.</p> <p>Information must be easily accessible to citizens of the border regions, so the counselling posts should be located as close to the state borders as possible.</p> <p>A staff speaking the language of a neighbouring country to a sufficient degree, will facilitate communication between public administration bodies and the citizens of a neighbouring country.</p> <p>The establishment of a network with other border regions strengthens the regions' position. Moreover, while creating a joint online platform or / and a joint task force experiences and existing solutions from different border areas can be exchanged.</p> <p>Organised ventures, such as cross-border advisory days, conferences and employment fairs, as well as the attendance of advisors at similar events, may help to increase the level of awareness surrounding the availability of the established counselling opportunities amongst job-</p>

	<p>seekers and potential cross-border workers. The organisation of these events as well as the attendance by advisors increases the opportunity for the general public to receive information about finding employment in the neighbouring country which in turn will have an effect on the reduction of psychological bottlenecks and prejudices.</p>
<p><b>Differences between social care and tax systems</b></p>	<p>Regional “round tables”, organisation of work teams and task forces may help to develop practical proposals of solutions to problems existing in border regions and determine the manners of interpretation and application of specific legal regulations.</p> <p>The systematic cooperation of relevant official bodies in neighbouring countries is a vital factor for achieving results that would be visible to the citizens. One should also note that even posts that rarely deal with issues related to the situation of cross-border employees should have necessary information about mobility obstacles and their solution.</p> <p>In order to increase the motivation of public bodies to strengthen cross-border cooperation, one should organise joint initiatives and undertake educational measures. Only direct communication will help shorten the time of development of administrative issues and reduce the frequently high level of bureaucracy.</p> <p>Regular training sessions and courses in relevant legal regulations valid at the national and EU level may help to decrease the doubts of proper administrative units concerning the manner of interpretation and application of specific regulations. Since these issues are subject to constant and often considerable changes, such training sessions and courses must be held regularly.</p> <p>Cross-border cooperation at the political level is an important condition for drawing national bodies’ attention to the issue of obstacles limiting mobility and the attempts to overcome them.</p> <p>Bilateral agreements will help to create special and unique regulations applicable to the situation of cross-border employees without the need to unify standard legal solutions in the respective countries. Sometimes, it’s just necessary to agree on how to implement the applicable law in order to find a solution.</p>
<p><b>Cultural differences, inadequate command of the language, problem of mutual recognition of qualifications and diplomas</b></p>	<p>Special promotional campaigns may help to make the learning of the language of a neighbouring country more attractive.</p> <p>An adequate educational offer with regard to learning the language of a neighbouring country should be already available at the kindergarten level. One should also promote bilingual schools, classes and other institutions providing education in this system.</p> <p>One should prepare special language courses for mobile employees</p>

	<p>and people looking for work, which would potentially increase their chances to find employment in a neighbouring country.</p> <p>Cross-border educational and training initiatives expand the horizons and help to increase the competences of every entity involved.</p> <p>Bilateral contracts and agreements will help to fill in any existing legal loopholes and create new opportunities for interns, trainees and employees.</p>
<p><b>Insufficient level of labour market integration</b></p>	<p>Common monitoring of the labour market and reliable statistical materials provide a basis for the preparation of integrated strategies for the labour market. The availability of appropriate data enables a response to the currently emerging tendencies.</p> <p>In order to optimise cross-border transport connections, it is necessary to prepare common concepts for the organisation of local transport.</p> <p>Cross-border political dialogue, as well as dialogue between organisations gathering employees and employers, is indispensable to jointly overcome the constantly emerging challenges, such as changes in the demographic structure or lack of a qualified labour force, to the benefit of the entire region.</p> <p>There needs to be a network delivering services concerning mobile work that covers services for all stages for mobility and all involved groups. Focusing only on recruitment is not enough. A single organisation – for example only the public employment services – will not be able to cope with the complexity of the subject and the differing interests.</p>

## 9. Final Remarks

More than **one third of the EU population**, more than 200 million citizens including those in neighbouring regions at the external borders of the EU, live in cross-border areas, where crossing the border on their way to a leisure activity, a cultural event or to work, is part of their daily life. The possibility to work or employ personnel across borders opens new opportunities for employees and employers that benefit in manifold ways from the know-how and experiences of the neighbours on the other side of the border. In particular cases, the labour shortage in specific branches can be, at least temporary, overcome through workers from the neighbouring country, especially if they can not find adequate jobs in their own land. Moreover, taking into account demographic change and its expected negative impact on national labour markets, cross-border cooperation can help to develop new regional strategies taking into account the **development trends within the cross-border areas, not stopping at the edge of the border.**

Even if cross-border labour markets offer many additional opportunities, the number of cross-border commuters could still be higher. Due to **missing reliable information on the consequences of getting a job at the other side of the border**, in many cases citizens in border areas do not take into account searching for a job in the neighbouring country. They fear that they would not have the same rights as at home, being the bureaucratic burden much higher. Moreover, there are still many practical obstacles to cross-border labour mobility that have not been solved yet, and which require much commitment and efforts by responsible public bodies. These obstacles are mainly related to differences between national social security and taxation systems, which are not always compatible. The European Commission has also fostered with its manifold initiatives the coordination of social security systems in the EU. In some cases, a clear legal framework was created in order to facilitate the mobility of workers within the EU. But in many others it is still not clear how to implement the European legal framework in practice. The responsible national bodies and administrations are usually not located at the border, and are consequently not sufficiently aware of the problems that frontier workers have to face. Consequently, the national regulations not always take adequately into account the circumstances of frontier workers.

Euroregions and other structures of cross-border cooperation can help to improve the information flows between citizens in border areas and national bodies and administrations dealing with social security and taxation issues. In fact, in many border areas particular cross-border networks and partnerships have been initiated to bring together all relevant stakeholders from both sides of the border in order to propose adequate solutions to mobility obstacles (eg. EURES T-networks or specific networks in euroregions dealing with cross-border labour market mobility). An important task of these cross-border networks and partnerships is also to provide all relevant information to employees and employers in border areas as regards working conditions, social security and taxation rules as well as job offers in the neighbouring country. This information can hardly be provided in a standardised form via internet, as the problems faced by frontier workers are very individual and constantly changing. **Personalised advisory services are, accordingly, of particular importance for current and future frontier workers.** They improve the accessibility of citizens to sometimes complex information, and in this way have a positive impact on cross-border labour mobility along European borders. They encourage labour mobility - however without idealising the reality- and promote the idea of cross-border labour market. **Accordingly, these cross-border networks and their advisory services must be maintained.** Information is a key element, when it comes to the promotion of labour mobility in Europe. Without the provision of reliable information to frontier workers and without the exchange of information between all relevant stakeholders it's difficult to achieve satisfactory results as regards the creation of a real cross-border labour market.

In fact, cross-border labour market is both **a challenge and an opportunity**. It is a challenge, as there are still many prejudices and practical obstacles that usually can not be solved at regional level, and have no priority at national level. But it is also an opportunity for employees, employers and public administrations in border areas to get to know new methods, approaches and ideas, to exchange know-how, and to find new ways in promoting entrepreneurship and growth. **In any case, it is a basic building block of EU integration and, as such, it should be further facilitated.**

## Annex I: Overview of information services related to cross-border labour market in European border regions

### 1. Cross-border initiatives and partnerships

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
<b>Northern Europe and Baltic Sea</b>				
DK/SE Öresund Region	<p>EURES Cross-Border Öresund <a href="http://oresundsinfo.org">http://oresundsinfo.org</a></p> <p>Øresund Direct <a href="http://www.oresunddirekt.se">www.oresunddirekt.se</a></p>	<p>EURES Cross-Border Öresund provides information to applicants, workers and employers on job opportunities, working conditions, tax/welfare conditions as well as information on supply / demand of labour.</p> <p>The service Øresund Direct provides information related to living in a border area (work, family, education, public transportation, culture, society etc.). The service started as an INTERREG project. Now it is financed by regional and national authorities.</p>	<p>Following the inauguration of the Øresund bridge in 2000 the number of commuters has steadily risen. Today, about 20.000 people commute daily between the two countries (mainly from Sweden to Denmark). This number will remain high, as due to the demographic change in particular the Danish side of the region becomes dependent on labour supply from the neighbouring countries.</p>	<p>Øresund Direct produced a series of cartoons providing information on rules referring to old-age pensions, maternity leave and family benefits in order to facilitate the access to this complex topic</p> <p><a href="http://www.youtube.com/oresunddirekt">http://www.youtube.com/oresunddirekt</a></p>
NO/SE Värmland / Hedmark	<p>Border Service Grensetjänsten <a href="http://www.grensetjansten.no">www.grensetjansten.no</a> <a href="http://www.gtm.nu">www.gtm.nu</a></p>	<p>Stimulate and to make economic growth possible through provision of information, elaboration of solutions to border obstacles and coordination. The service provides access to a network of experts in the two countries (e.g. customs and taxation authorities, labour organisations). It is funded by local, regional and national authorities on both sides of the border.</p>	<p>According to official statistics there were 26.000 commuters from Sweden working in Norway in 2008. The number of commuters living in Norway and working in Sweden amounted in 2008 to about 1.000 workers.</p>	<p><u>An Interreg IVC BRAIN FLOW sub-project</u></p> <p>The aim is to exchange experience between existing Border Information Centres and to prepare the establishment of a future Border Information Centre on the Lithuanian-Polish border.</p>

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
FI/NO/SE North Calotte Area	EURES Crossborder Tornedalen <a href="http://www.crossbordertornedalen.net">www.crossbordertornedalen.net</a>  Border Service North Calotte initiated by the Nordic Council of Ministers	EURES advisors provide information regarding available positions, educational institutes and general information related to the Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and Russian social security and taxation systems.  North Calotte Border Service provides citizens and companies with competent information, advice and guidance in cooperation with the border agency networks that are established already.	According to a poll conducted in 2009 a few more than 1000 people are daily or weekly commuting across the Swedish-Finish border. There is also mobility to the Norwegian labour market at an estimated 80 day and weekly commuters.	<u>Mobility campaign 2003 of EURES Crossborder Tornedalen</u>  During the campaign a comic book was produced. The main target of the comic "Kick some action to mobility" was to promote the free movement of the labour.
FI/EE Euregio Helsinki Tallinn	Only informal and local cross-border cooperation regarding labour market.  <a href="http://www.euregio-heltal.org">http://www.euregio-heltal.org</a>	Cross-border migration and commuting (labour and students) has been tripled within 2-3 years. Common labour market is developing.	People who are travelling between both capitals are measured at approx. 20 thousand workers. Main flow is from Estonia to Finland due to better employment opportunities and higher wages.	Main challenges are regarding the necessity of transport facilitation, the different wage levels and labour costs, the diversity of labour legislation and the role of trade unions. And still the incompatibilities between the two national taxation systems make life difficult for commuters and enterprises.
PL/LT Euroregion Nemunas	EURES Bialy Las (informal cross-border partnership)  A cross-border information center is being planned.	In the scope of the informal partnership EURES Bialy Las joint conferences and information campaigns are organised. EURES advisors provide general information on job opportunities and working conditions in the other country.	There is no data available on the number of cross-border commuters. The number is rather low due to the lack of information and structural weaknesses on both sides of the border.	The Euroregion Nemunas is partner of an INTERREG IVC sub-project that has the aim to elaborate a study analysing the possibilities of the establishment of a cross-border information center for citizens in this border area.

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
DE/PL Euroregion Pomerania	Information Points of the Euroregion Pomerania <a href="http://www.pomerania.net">www.pomerania.net</a> <a href="http://www.pomerania.org.pl">www.pomerania.org.pl</a> EURES advisors	The contact and information points provide information focusing on different aspects of cross-border cooperation. They also support citizens in finding partners for joint cross-border activities.	The commuter flows between the two border areas are still rather weak and of minor importance at the political level.	Up to now there is lack of information on the labour markets on both sides of the border, the labour demand and supply as well as the working conditions. A joint labour market monitoring could help to better utilise the opportunities of a cross-border labour market and to identify the possible risks.
DK/DE Fehmarnbelt Region	Fehmarnbelt-Office <a href="http://www.fehmarnbelt-portal.de">www.fehmarnbelt-portal.de</a>	Provision of advice and practical information to job seekers and cross-border workers as regards the living and working conditions in the other country, social security and taxation system etc.	The number of cross-border commuters between Denmark and Germany was estimated for the years 2006/2007 at some 3.200 employees. Most of them are employed in Denmark. More recent estimations from the year 2011 state that there are about 9.100 cross-border commuters employed in Germany or Denmark (the majority in Denmark).	<u>INTERREG-Project: VET Qualification System</u> The project has the aim to develop binational curricula for particular professions in the Fehmarnbelt-Region
DK/DE Region Sønderjylland - Schleswig	Infocenter of the Region Sønderjylland – Schleswig <a href="http://www.pendlerinfo.org">www.pendlerinfo.org</a> <a href="http://www.region.de">www.region.de</a> EURES Sønderjylland – Schleswig <a href="http://www.eures-kompas.eu">www.eures-kompas.eu</a>	Both services provide advice and information about working and living options in the other country, cross-border differences, particularly in the social systems, and legislation north and south of the border.  The Infocenter of the region has the aim to promote mobility in the Danish-German cross-border region. Started as an Interreg project, it is now fully financed by the communities in the border region.		The website <a href="http://www.pendlerinfo.org">www.pendlerinfo.org</a> offers information and help for cross-border workers. The Infocenter organises regularly workshops in cooperation with Danish and German employment agencies and unemployment insurance representatives, in-service training of employees and gives personal counselling. It provides personal counselling on all labour market issues for authorities, commuters, employers and service providers. It provides guidance to the appropriate authorities.

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
<b>Central Europe</b>				
DE/PL Germany / Poland	EURES Oder-Odra (informal cross-border partnership)	In the scope of the informal partnership EURES Oder-Odra joint conferences, workshops, information campaigns and job fairs are organised. EURES advisors provide general information on job opportunities and working conditions in the other country.	No reliable statistical data on commuter flows along the Odra river is available.	<u>Project EUROJOB-Viadrina</u> The project has the aim to elaborate a guide on vocational training on both sides of the border in order to improve the comparability of qualifications and to promote the creation of a cross-border labour market.
DE/PL/CZ Saxony - Lower Silesia - North-west Bohemia	EURES TriRegio <a href="http://www.eures-triregio.eu">www.eures-triregio.eu</a>	General information and individual advisory services referring to: job and living conditions in the neighbouring country, job application in the neighbouring region, staff recruitment, social security issues (e.g. pension schemes, taxes, minimum wage etc.)	According to the official data in the year 2011 about 3.200 Polish and Czech citizens were employed in Saxony. The number of German and Polish employees in this border area amounted to ca. 3.700 employees. In Lower Silesia no statistical data is available.	<u>INTERREG-Project: Centre for cross-border cooperation of trade unions</u> The project has the aim to intensify the cooperation of trade unions in the border area to foster exchange of experiences and to initiate joint activities in the area of cross-border labour market and to fight illegal forms of employment. <a href="http://www.soljg.eu">http://www.soljg.eu</a>
DE/CZ Bavaria – South-west Bohemia	EURES Bayern-Tschechien <a href="http://www.eures-by-cz.eu">www.eures-by-cz.eu</a>	General information and individual advisory services referring to: job and living conditions in the neighbouring country, job application in the neighbouring region, staff recruitment, social security issues (e.g. pension schemes, taxes, minimum wage etc.)	As regards the area covered by the EURES Bayern-Tschechien the number of employees from Bohemia working on the Bavarian side amounted in 2008 to ca. 3.600 persons. In Bohemia ca. 770 persons from Bavaria were employed in 2008. Main obstacle are the still considerable differences in salary levels.	<u>Image campaign “Gute Arbeit” (Good work)</u> There are still many prejudices referring to working conditions in the neighbouring country, in particular on the German side. In the scope of the above-mentioned project a survey was carried out among well-known businesses on the Czech and German side that had the aim to improve the image of the potential employers on the other side of the border.

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
AT/CZ Austria – Czech Republic Euroregion Silva Nortica Euroregion Weinviertel	EURES-Advisors in the public employment institutions Advisors within the project ZUWINS <a href="http://www.zuwins.at/">http://www.zuwins.at/</a>	EURES-Advisors along the Czech-Austrian border cooperate on an informal basis. They provide employers, employees and job seekers with general information referring to: job opportunities in the neighbouring country and labour law. In the scope of the project ZUWINS advice and information on labour law in the neighbouring country is provided to employees. ZUWINS is a cooperation project of the Austrian and Czech Trade Unions Associations.	According to a survey carried out by the institute L&R Sozialforschung the opening of the Austrian labour market in 2011 had no significant impact on the situation on the labour market in the border area. However, the interest in obtaining information on job opportunities in the neighbouring country has increased.	<u>INTERREG IVA project “EXPAK”</u> The aim of the project is to develop joint regional actions, for example in such fields as labour market, education, training and mobility of the workforce. The project activities involve the launching of a cross-border online job-guide, joint monitoring of the labour market, the organisation of regional labour market conferences etc. <a href="http://www.expak-at.cz">www.expak-at.cz</a>
CZ/PL/SK Czech Republic / Poland / Slovakia	EURES Beskydy <a href="http://pl.eures-tbeskydy.eu">http://pl.eures-tbeskydy.eu</a>	EURES contact points provide information about living and working conditions, information about trends on the labour market, promote exchange of vacancies among these regions. Also all key facts are covered: taxation, social system, recruiting of workforce from the other side, information about how to start own business across the border etc.	As it can be found in information leaflets from EURES Beskydy, flows across borders in terms of commuters in this region are considerable. (about 6.800 commuters). Main direction of flows is CZ-SK (3.600 workers) and PL-CZ (ca. 3000 workers).	As part of EURES T Beskydy, the following events have been for example organised on the Polish side: Cross-Border Education and Entrepreneurship Fair in Prudnik, Cross-Border Job, Entrepreneurship and Education Fair in Cieszyn, Conference on the labour market situation in the Polish-Czech-Slovak cross-border area.
PL/SK Euroregion Tatry	EURES Dunajec (informal cross-border partnership)	No official points or institutions are created, and this project is more aiming at enabling persons interested in employment on the other side of the border to use the services offered by the public employment services and to promote transnational contacts between labour offices.	It is an informal cross-border partnership in the Polish-Slovak cross-border area. Main activities regarding labour and mobility issues are implemented by the Regional Labour Office in Cracow.	In order to strengthen the cross-border labour market cooperation joint actions are implemented within the European Territorial Cooperation Programme Poland-Slovakia. <a href="http://www.praca-plsk.eu">www.praca-plsk.eu</a>

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
PL/SK Carpathian Region	EURES Karpaty (informal cross-border partnership since 15 November 2005)	Apart from the exchange and dissemination of information on the labour markets the cooperation also includes joint projects, conferences and information days. Also brochures are printed including information on the labour markets along the Polish-Slovak border.	Main direction of Polish workers from Podkarpackie Voivodeship: Great Britain and German-language countries. In Slovakia number of people commuting to their work abroad regularly has increased. Main direction: Czech Republic and Hungary, still not Poland	The website: <a href="http://www.pswwp.wup-rzeszow.pl/">http://www.pswwp.wup-rzeszow.pl/</a> provides information on the living and working conditions in both countries, on job offers in the neighbouring region as well as the recruitment procedures in the neighbouring country. Further links: <a href="http://www.karpacki.pl">www.karpacki.pl</a>
<b>North West Europe</b>				
IE/UK Ireland / Northern Ireland	EURES Ireland – Northern Ireland <a href="http://www.eures-crossborder.org">www.eures-crossborder.org</a>  Online cross-border mobility information service <a href="http://www.borderpeople.info">www.borderpeople.info</a>  Cross-border advice and information project <a href="http://www.borderwise.ie">www.borderwise.ie</a>	Assist in the removal of barriers for job seekers, workers and employers who are seeking employment, working or employing on the island of Ireland.  The Border People website acts as a 'one-stop shop' for people who commute across the border in detailing entitlements, rights etc. for these people in their unique status on the island of Ireland.	According to a study carried out in 2010 there are ca. 5.500 frontier workers in the North West region. Findings show the stronger flow of commuters from South to North with almost twice as many Southern residents employed in Northern Ireland (8.53%) compared to Northern residents employed in Southern Ireland (4.56%).  As regards the entire border area in Ireland it's estimated that there are about 23.481 frontier workers.	The EURES Cross Border partnership has been heavily involved in rolling out a new service to those who wish to live and work in N Ireland. The Qualifications Comparison Service offers individuals from outside Northern Ireland the opportunity to have their qualifications compared against the UK equivalent.  Interesting links: The Centre for Cross Border Studies <a href="http://www.crossborder.ie">http://www.crossborder.ie</a> Online guide to cross-border activities in Ireland <a href="http://www.borderireland.info">http://www.borderireland.info</a> East Border Region <a href="http://www.eastborderregion.com">www.eastborderregion.com</a>

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
BE/FR/UK Hainaut / West-Vlaanderen / Nord-Pas-de-Calais / Kent	EuresChannel <a href="http://www.eureschannel.org">www.eureschannel.org</a>	EuresChannel was developed to promote the cross-border employment mobility in the French-Belgian-English border region. Therefore EuresChannel helps both employers and employees with their knowledge in this field.	It was estimated that about 28.000 workers from France were employed in the Belgian provinces Hainaut and West-Vlaanderen in 2008. The number of French residents working in Belgium has increased sharply in the last years. For example, in the province Hainaut the number of French workers increased by 82,6 % between 1999 and 2006.	Each organisation within the partnership as well as organisations outside of the partnership have their own expertise on cross-border issues. This provides a challenge for the future and central theme when looking into the possibility of funding from other European programmes. The partnership is seen as a permanent structure which ensures that the key target groups are approached collectively by experts within the network.
BE/NL Euregio Scheldemond	EURES Scheldemond <a href="http://www.euresscheldemond.info">www.euresscheldemond.info</a>	The partnership Eures Scheldemond involves public employment services, employers' organisations, employees' organisations and the five provinces in the cross-border region. The target groups are employers, entrepreneurs, jobseekers and employees who are confronted with issues associated with living and working in another Member State.  Also the Bureau for Belgische Zaken provides information on living and working conditions in Belgium and the Netherlands.	Cross-border commuting has a significant relevance due to the demographic changes. In 2006/7 according to European Commission report there were 4,600 cross-border workers. Zeeland is increasingly confronted with an ageing population and a low birth rate. The population within the regions of Antwerp and East- and West-Flanders is increasing, which could provide a solution.	The partners of Eures Scheldemond have established a Round Table that analyses the problems and obstacles to labour market mobility and tries to find appropriate solutions. However, there are still many relevant bottlenecks, which will not be solved in the near future. Accordingly, there is a general agreement in the region that the continuation of the current activities is a necessity.  Other interesting links: <a href="http://www.werkenoverdegrens.eu">www.werkenoverdegrens.eu</a> <a href="http://startpuntgrensarbeid.benelux.int/">http://startpuntgrensarbeid.benelux.int/</a> <a href="http://www.svb.nl/bbz">www.svb.nl/bbz</a>

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
DE/NL Ems Dollart Region	Grenzpendlerberatung <a href="http://www.edr.eu">www.edr.eu</a>	Network of institutions regarding mobility in this region is well developed and includes employment agencies, German and Dutch employers' associations, Trade Unions, and the Ems Dollart Region office. Main objectives are: increase workforce mobility in the border region, break down barriers to mobility and provide important information on living and working conditions.	No precise data can be found but it is known that several thousand people commute daily across the border for work.	An interesting initiative is the 'cross-border business meeting' which takes place every two or three years. It offers entrepreneurs the opportunity to exchange thoughts and ideas, and to establish and improve contacts.  Further links: Bureau voor Duitse Zaken <a href="http://www.svb.nl/bdz">www.svb.nl/bdz</a>
DE/NL Euregio e.V.	Project: Grenzpendlerberatung <a href="http://www.euregio.de">www.euregio.de</a>	Main aim is to provide citizens with tailor made information & advisory services that cover all aspects of living, working and studying in the respective neighbouring country in an individualized way.	Estimated number: 7.500 commuters in the EUREGIO. There has been a large increase of frontier workers living in Germany and working in the Netherlands in recent years (Dutch citizens who moved to Germany and keep working in the Netherlands).	Publication of Top Ten list with description, analysis and possible legal solution of main cross border obstacles  Member of "Grenznetz", a cooperation network of 5 cross border regions and their legal experts dealing with legal cross-border obstacles.
DE/NL Euregio Rhein-Waal euregio rhein-maas-nord	EURES-Partnerschaft Euregio Rhein-Waal und rhein-maas-nord <a href="http://www.euregio.org">www.euregio.org</a> <a href="http://www.euregio-rmn.de/">www.euregio-rmn.de/</a>	The Euregio Rhine-Waal organises monthly consultation hours for border commuters with the Bureau voor Duitse Zaken, the Dutch and German tax offices, as well as the social insurance agencies. Information is provided free of charge.	Total amount of commuters in this region is 17.626 people according to European Commission report from the year 2006/2007.	<u>Interreg IVB project „Demarrage“</u>  The overall aim is to develop the transnational economic potential embedded in the territorial assets of the Rhine corridor by creating the necessary organisational framework, initiating business and also creating new jobs across borders.  Also in framework of Interreg IV A in field of cooperation reasonable focus is put on cross border labour market and commuters.

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
BE/DE/NL Euregio Maas-Rhein	EURES Maas-Rhein <a href="http://www.eures-emr.org">www.eures-emr.org</a>  Cross-Border Information Service Aachen-Eurode <a href="http://grenzinfopunkt.de">http://grenzinfopunkt.de</a>	The region has a bundle of organisations that provide advice and information about living and working conditions in the cross-border region.  The border information service opened in autumn 2012 should be the primary point of contact for employees, employers and job seekers. It should help to answer all questions related to taxes and social security.	There are about 35.948 frontier workers in the Euregio Maas-Rhine (the total population is about 4 Mill.). The main characteristic in this region is that there are three languages spoken which needs to be taken into account when dealing with cross border labour mobility issues.	TaskForce Net was created in the Euregio that deals with practical and legal obstacles to cross-border labour mobility.  <a href="http://www.emr-taskforce.eu">www.emr-taskforce.eu</a>
FR/LU/BE Lorraine / Luxembourg / Wallonia	EURES T PED <a href="http://www.eureslux.org">www.eureslux.org</a> <a href="http://www.frontalierslorraine.eu">www.frontalierslorraine.eu</a>	EURES T PED regularly publishes information on the labour market and on the conditions of living and working in the Great Region (Lorraine / Luxembourg / Wallonia). Main partners are: public employment services, employers' associations, trade unions, local authorities, federal states	The number of cross-border workers amounted in the Great Region in the year 2009 to 203.191 commuters. Nearly 55% of the commuters come from Lorraine. With 73% of the cross-border workers Luxembourg is the main country of destination. 50% of cross-border workers that are employed in Luxembourg come from France, 25 % come from Germany and also 25% come from Belgium. The number of cross-border workers commuting from Lorraine to Saarland has gone down over the past years.	Specific Task Force was created in the region Saar-Lor-Lux that focuses on legal obstacles to cross-border labour mobility. There is also a joint interregional body for the monitoring of the labour markets in the Great Region.  Further links:  <a href="http://www.saarland.de/91594.htm">http://www.saarland.de/91594.htm</a>  <a href="http://www.granderegion.net">www.granderegion.net</a>  <a href="http://www.info-institut.de/index.php/interregionale-arbeitsmarktbeobachtungsstelle.html">http://www.info-institut.de/index.php/interregionale-arbeitsmarktbeobachtungsstelle.html</a>
DE/FR/LU Saarland / Lorraine / Luxembourg / Rheinland-Pfalz	EURES Saar-Lor-Lux-Rheinland/Pfalz <a href="http://www.eures-sllrp.eu">www.eures-sllrp.eu</a> <a href="http://www.frontalierslorraine.eu">www.frontalierslorraine.eu</a>	17 partners working in Saarland, Lorraine, Luxembourg and Rhineland-Palatinate cooperate to facilitate labour mobility in the region. They involve in particular local authorities, ministries, trade unions and employers' associations.		

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
DE/FR PAMINA	INFOBEST <a href="http://www.infobest.eu">www.infobest.eu</a> <a href="http://www.eurodistrict-regio-pamina.com">www.eurodistrict-regio-pamina.com</a>	INFOBEST offices are contact points for everyone: citizens, associations, businesses, administrations and politicians. The offices are working on behalf of public and private institutions in France, Germany and Switzerland.	It is estimated that about 16.000 workers daily cross the border for work in the PAMINA region.	There are several initiatives and projects dealing with cross-border labour market. An important topic is the recognition of qualifications.  <a href="http://www.formation-pamina.fr/pamina/?page_id=28">http://www.formation-pamina.fr/pamina/?page_id=28</a>
DE/FR/CH Upper Rhine	INFOBEST <a href="http://www.infobest.eu">www.infobest.eu</a>  EURES Oberrhein <a href="http://www.eures-t-oberrhein.eu">www.eures-t-oberrhein.eu</a>  Maison de l'Emploi et de la Formation du Pays de Saint-Louis/Trois Frontières et du Pays du Sundgau	INFOBEST offices are contact points for everyone: citizens, associations, businesses, administrations and politicians. The offices are working on behalf of public and private institutions in France, Germany and Switzerland.  EURES consist of several national actors from all three countries, such as: public employment services, employers' associations, unions and local authorities. They give information and suggestions regarding living and working conditions, labour market, social security and occupational, social and tax law.  Maison de l'Emploi provides information to job seekers from France on job offers in Switzerland and Germany. It also regularly organises workshops focusing on employment possibilities in the neighbouring countries.	There are in total about 90.000 frontier workers in the Upper Rhine area. Main "receiving" country in the Upper Rhine area is Switzerland. Despite the economic crisis, the number of German and French workers employed in the neighbouring Swiss cantons went up by 7,8% in the years 2008-2010. In the beginning of 2011 in total 71.326 workers from Germany and France were registered in the Swiss cantons Basel-Stadt, Basel-Land, Aargau, Solothurn and Aargau. 50,9% of the workers were French and 48,6% German.	There are four INFOBEST offices. Each office works in close cooperation with the responsible bodies within the three different states and has accumulated a wealth of knowledge about the respective countries. INFOBEST Vogelgrun/Breisach developed a glossary for people who cross the border (a kind of cross-border dictionary)  Maison de l'Emploi is involved in many activities dealing with cross-border labour market. For example, it monitors the labour market in the whole border area, it has established in cooperation with partners from Germany and Switzerland a working group dealing with different aspects of cross-border labour market, it initiates language courses in order to overcome the linguistic barrier, it organises job fairs with the participation of German and Swiss employers, it enhances the exchange of information and contacts.

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
<b>Alpes and Danube Area</b>				
FR/IT French and Italian Alps	EURES Eurazur <a href="http://www.eures-urazur.org">www.eures-urazur.org</a>	The Eurazur partnership covers the territory of the Liguria region in Italy and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) region in France, specifically the département of Alpes Maritimes on the French side and the province of Imperia on the Italian side.	In this region total amount of commuters are approx. 2-3 thousand and main characteristics show, that flows from Italy to France are more intense.	The cooperation focuses on the exchange of information. Also some joint activities (for example joint recruitment forums) are organised.
DE/CH Germany / Switzerland	Grenzgänger Info e.V. <a href="http://www.grenzgaenger.de">www.grenzgaenger.de</a>  Aufenthalter Info e.V. <a href="http://www.aufenthalter.ch">www.aufenthalter.ch</a>	Both organisations provide individual advice and information on questions referring to taxation and social security system in the neighbouring country.	Switzerland is regarded as one of main destination areas in terms of European commuters and cross border labour and workers. The flow from Switzerland to Germany is with 2000 commuters insignificant, whereas in the opposite direction about 42 thousand people are crossing the border on their way to work.	Specific questions can be submitted via internet to experts on taxation and social security issues. The website offers a lot of publications and abstracts from legislative documents that are of relevance for frontier workers.
DE/AT/CH/FL Bodensee Region	EURES Bodensee <a href="http://www.eures-bodensee.ch">www.eures-bodensee.ch</a> <a href="http://www.infocenter.translake.org/">www.infocenter.translake.org/</a>	Main actors involved in cross border labour market issues are public employment offices, employers' associations, Trade Unions etc. The INFO Center of the EURES Bodensee provides all necessary information referring to working and living conditions in the neighbouring countries.	Total amount of cross-border workers in this region amounts to almost 40 thousand people. 30% of the commuter flow is from DE to CH, second largest flow is to Liechtenstein from CH and AT forming also nearly 30%.	In summer 2012 in cooperation with EURES Bodensee the regional television prepared a report focusing on the situation of cross-border commuters: <a href="http://www.regio-tv.de/video/210078.html">http://www.regio-tv.de/video/210078.html</a> Other links: <a href="http://www.translake.org">www.translake.org</a> <a href="http://www.jobs-ohne-grenzen.org">www.jobs-ohne-grenzen.org</a>

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
DE/AT EuRegio Salzburg – Berchtesgadener Land – Traunstein Inn-Salzach-Euregio	EURES advisers in the region  Grenzgängerverband Oberösterreich	The EURES advisers on the German and Austrian side work very close together even if there is no formal EURES T partnership any longer. Joint consultations are organised and joint publications for cross-border commuters elaborated.  Grenzgängerverband is an organisation in Austria representing the interests of cross-border commuters and providing advice and information to them.	In the region Salzburg – Berchtesgadener Land about 4.800 workers commute from Germany to Austria. The flow in the opposite direction is about 2.200 people.  Within the Inn-Salzach-Euregio the exact data is not available, but the estimations are similar.	Joint projects are implemented in cooperation with the universities in order to bring together the regional employers and the graduates.  Interesting links: <a href="http://www.euregio-salzburg.eu">www.euregio-salzburg.eu</a> <a href="http://www.inn-salzach-euregio.at/">www.inn-salzach-euregio.at/</a>
DE/AT/CH/I Region of Alps	EURES TransTirolia <a href="http://www.eures-transtirolia.eu">www.eures-transtirolia.eu</a>  European Jobguide <a href="http://www.ejg.info">www.ejg.info</a>	EURES TransTirolia is a European Union initiative promoting cross-border labour mobility in the regions North, East and South Tyrol and the Swiss canton Graubünden.	Between Austria and Italy the number of commuters is estimated at about 1000 persons. According to the European Commission about 7000 workers commute from Austria to Switzerland.	The webpage <a href="http://www.ejg.info">http://www.ejg.info</a> (European Jobguide) provides information on vacancies, application procedures as well as living and working conditions in the Alpine countries.  This homepage can be used as initial information source and helps to find appropriate experts and institutions dealing with specific questions.
IT/SI Friuli Venezia Giulia - Slovenia	EURES Euradria <a href="http://www.euradria.org">www.euradria.org</a> PATRONATI (eg. INAS, ENAS, INCA)	EURES advisers offer consulting services to all persons interested in cross-border mobility.  Main task of the “patronati” is to protect the rights of any person living in Italy and give information and assistance about questions concerning employment, social security rights etc.	The number of frontier workers from Slovenia and Croatia crossing the border with the region of Friuli Venezia Giulia on daily or weekly basis was estimated in the year 2009 at 10.000 commuters (seasonal peaks estimated at 15.000 workers).	<u>INTERREG IIIA-Project PROMO</u> <a href="http://www.promo-eu.eu">www.promo-eu.eu</a>  Main objective was to disseminate information and promote cross-border labour mobility and to exchange experiences of public authorities.

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
AT/HU Austria / Hungary	EURES Pannonia <a href="http://www.eures-pannonia.hu">www.eures-pannonia.hu</a>  Project IGR <a href="http://www.igr.at">www.igr.at</a>	Main aims are to help employees or employers to find work or workforce in the neighbouring country and provide full support and information on the circumstances of living and working in the neighbouring countries.  Also within the project "Future in the border area" information is provided to employees and employers on working conditions, taxation and social security systems in both countries.	Work of the partnership affects nearly 2 million inhabitants and, on the basis of the preliminary surveys, more than fifteen thousand commuters.	In 2011 a short animated spot on the EURES Pannonia was published on the internet: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKkcAAKW4F4&amp;feature=youtu.be">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKkcAAKW4F4&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>  INTERREG IVA Project: EXPAK AT-HU focusing on cross-border labour market cooperation: <a href="http://expak-at.hu">http://expak-at.hu</a>
HU/SK Hungary / Slovakia	EURES Danubius <a href="http://eures-t-danubius.hu">http://eures-t-danubius.hu</a>	Special emphasis is put on the co-ordination of the labour market training programmes in the cross border region, and on supplying information on the conditions of working and living there.	In this region more than 10 thousand workers are regarded as commuters, and almost 90% of them are Slovakian citizens working in Hungary.	Recent activities included: specialised working meeting of representatives of EURES-T Danubius, information forum for employers, specialised working meeting – "Acting together for cross-border cooperation".
<b>South West Europe</b>				
ES/PT Galicia / Norte	EURES Galicia-Norte <a href="http://www.eures-norteportugal-galicia.org">www.eures-norteportugal-galicia.org</a>	EURES T Galicia-North Portugal was created in order to facilitate access to information about job offers and demands in the border area. The network also provides information on living and working conditions on both sides of the border.	In 2011, about 1.000 Portuguese workers commuted to the province of Galicia. In the opposite direction about 600 Spanish workers commuted to the region of Norte. However, while considering the number of workers with permanent residence in the neighbouring country the numbers are higher (ca. 6.000 Portuguese employees in Galicia and 1.600 Spanish employees in North Portugal).	EURES Galicia-Norte regularly publishes a bulletin including information on legislative changes, situation on the labour markets in the regions Galicia and North Portugal and on the cross-border labour market cooperation. Also detailed statistical data on the number of frontier workers is collected.

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
ES/PT Castilla y León / Norte Castilla y León / Centro	EURES Castilla y León Comité Sindical Interfronterizo	In the region of Castilla y León there are 9 EURES information points. In the border area there are information points in Salamanca and Zamora. EURES advisers provide information and advice to job applicants, employers and employees.	Due to the crisis in the construction sector in Portugal there has been a sharp increase in the recruitment of Portuguese construction workers in Spain. In Castilla y León about 5.000 Portuguese workers were employed in the construction and transport sector in 2006.	<u>Project IBERMOVILITAS</u> <a href="http://www.ibermovilitas.org">www.ibermovilitas.org</a> Main objective of the project was to promote mobility of citizens residing on both sides of the border through better cooperation between job centres and regional authorities on both sides of the border, dissemination of information on labour market mobility and elaboration of new approaches to active labour market policy.
ES/PT Extremadura - Alentejo	EURES Portugal Institute for Employment and Vocational Training, Regional office in Alentejo	Even if there is no official cross-border structure, the EURES advisers on both sides of the border cooperate very closely in order to disseminate information and to promote cross-border labour market mobility.	The topic of cross-border labour market mobility is of considerable relevance in the regions of Extremadura and Alentejo. However, there are still many obstacles hampering the development of a cross-border labour market. They refer amongst others to insufficient exchange of data, differences in tax and social security legislations and also to the lack of information on the opportunities and challenges going along with employment or setting up a business in the neighbouring country.	<u>Project IBERMOVILITAS</u> <a href="http://www.ibermovilitas.org">www.ibermovilitas.org</a> Main objective of the project was to promote mobility of citizens residing on both sides of the border through better cooperation between job centres and regional authorities on both sides of the border, dissemination of information on labour market mobility and elaboration of new approaches to active labour market policy. The project covered all regions along the Spanish-Portuguese border.

Country / border area	Name	Objectives / aims	Facts	Good practice, future challenges
ES/FR Basque Country / Aquitaine	Labour Office in the Basque Country „Lanbide” and Association Hemen Elkartea <a href="http://hemen.free.fr">http://hemen.free.fr</a>  EURES advisers in the region	The cooperation of public employment offices should be strengthened in order to facilitate cross-border labour mobility and to better coordinate the labour market strategies along the border.	The number of cross-border commuters is estimated at about 3000 people in this border area.	A specific manual for the citizens focusing on the living and working conditions on both sides of the border was published:  <a href="http://www.bidasoa-txingudi.com/down/manual_es.pdf">www.bidasoa-txingudi.com/down/manual_es.pdf</a>
<b>South East Europe</b>				
GR/BG Euroregion Nestos- Mesta	<a href="http://www.greece-bulgaria.eu/">http://www.greece-bulgaria.eu/</a> <a href="http://users.otenet.gr">http://users.otenet.gr</a>	The Association of Border Region "Nestos" (ABRN) and within this association six "Common Working Groups" have been created also to deal with employment issues across the border. Also in both regions on both sides of border information from EURES advisers is accessible, but no EURES branch is located in border area.	200 commuters from Greece- level of out -commuting is low. 5,600 commuters from Bulgaria working in Greece - level of in-commuting workers is medium. Income differences between the two countries are an important factor. The Greek construction business seems to be specifically focused on Bulgarian workers commuting to Greece. So the distribution of commuters is not widely disperse. In case of skilled work or services, where a degree is a prerequisite, it is difficult to recognise a degree in Greece. Therefore, cross-border commuters work in low skilled or seasonal positions even if they possess a degree.	In Greece particularly the estimated number of unreported cases is high, that does not allow to produce clear data on cross-border commuting. But main challenges for future are as follows: enhancing competitiveness by promoting entrepreneurship, establishing networks of cooperation and investing in human resources, reconcile differences between requirements for degree and skills, develop and support educational and training facilities, and promote best-practice transfer.

## 2. European and transnational initiatives

Country / border area	Name	Objectives, projects, facts
<b>Europe</b>		
European Union	Your Europe Advice	<p>The “Your Europe” portal is a useful source of information on such subjects as citizens’ rights, social security, living abroad etc. Citizens can contact a team of independent legal experts that provide free and personalised advice, clarify the European law and explain how citizens can exercise their EU rights.</p> <p>For more information see: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/citizensrights/front_end/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/citizensrights/front_end/index_en.htm</a></p>
European Union	SOLVIT <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/solvit">http://ec.europa.eu/solvit</a>	<p>SOLVIT is an on-line problem solving network in which EU Member States work together to solve without legal proceedings problems caused by the misapplication of Internal Market law by public authorities. There is a SOLVIT centre in every European Union Member State (as well as in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). SOLVIT Centres can help with handling complaints from both citizens and businesses.</p>
European Union	TRESS <a href="http://www.tress-network.org">www.tress-network.org</a>	<p>trESS stands for Training and Reporting on European Social Security. It is a four-year project funded by the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) and coordinated by Ghent University.</p> <p>The aims of trESS are fivefold: to increase the knowledge about the European coordination of social security systems among the members of the target group (social security administrations and institutions, social partners, NGOs, judges, lawyers and others professionals having an interest in the coordination regulations); to establish strong networks rooted at national level among these people; to report on implementation problems encountered in the EU Member States; to undertake both legal and statistical analysis with regard to topics connected with social security coordination; and to provide analytical support to the European Commission in relation to the application of EU social security coordination law.</p>

Nordic Council of Ministers		
Nordic Countries	Hello Norden	The information service Hello Norden aims to facilitate freedom of movement for private individuals in the Nordic region. This is done by providing information to facilitate their decisions on, for example, moving, working, studying and setting up a business in a neighbouring Nordic country. Hello Norden's information staff are responsible for the information on moving, studying and working in the Nordic region which is found under "Resources" on the website norden.org. The pages on norden.org replace the information which was previously to be found on the website hallonorden.org, but Hello Norden's activities continue unchanged.
Nordic Countries	Nordic Social Insurance Portal <a href="http://www.nordsoc.org/">http://www.nordsoc.org/</a>	This portal has been set up by the social insurance authorities in the Nordic countries. The gateway is directed at persons who move to/take up work or study in another Nordic country. The portal is designed to provide guidance on which country's legislation a person is subject to in different situations. Information is also available on which benefits a person is entitled to. By going to the portal you can find the right authority in the right country and the contact links to the relevant authorities.
Nordic Countries	Nordisk eTax <a href="http://www.nordisketax.net">www.nordisketax.net</a>	Nordisk eTax provides information for residents of a Nordic country that have income or assets in another Nordic country. Nordisk eTax has been developed as a result of collaboration between the Nordic Council of Ministers and the tax administrations of Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Iceland. These tax administrations are jointly responsible for the contents.

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