

Position Paper



# EU Talent Pool

MAY 2024



## **Background:**

Employers throughout the EU are grappling with significant labour and skills shortages, driven by a multitude of factors, including demographic changes and structural skills mismatches, which highlight the need for comprehensive solutions. Economic migration emerges as a potential avenue to alleviate these shortages, complementing efforts to upskill workers and boost labour market participation, including among unemployed and inactive individuals, and legally resident third-country nationals.

Overall, the proposed EU Talent Pool is viewed positively by Maltese businesses, offering a promising framework within the EU's economic migration policy. Its focus on shortage occupation lists at both national and EU levels is deemed relevant.

The success of the Talent Pool however will depend on the level of engagement by EU employers as well as candidates in third countries. For this reason, the Pool will need to be made publicly well known and designed in a way that is simple for end users. One must keep in mind that significant labour shortages exist in low skill categories for which interested applicants may require additional support and guidance to access and navigate the platform. Limited access to the internet in third countries could also be an important factor. Cooperation between the European Commission, national contact points and recognised or licensed private employment services in third countries, could be a way of mitigating these challenges.

## **Specific Comments:**

### **Participation (Article 3)**

The MBB notes that the transfer of job vacancies to the platform will be facilitated through national contact points, aligning with existing practices seen on platforms like EURES. It believes that the regulation should allow employers to easily indicate their willingness to publish job vacancies in the Talent Pool alongside their existing national job posting processes, potentially through an "add-on" function within those processes.

### **Definitions (Article 4)**

The European Commission's proposal includes a definition of an employer, encompassing private employment agencies, temporary employment agencies, and other labour market intermediaries. It commends enabling the participation of private and temporary agencies in the Talent Pool to provide broader search possibilities for applicants by companies. However, the MBB suggests that companies acting as

employers and private employment agencies serving as labour market intermediaries should be distinguished. Moreover, the MBB stresses the necessity of close collaboration between public and private employment services to ensure the effective application of rules and fostering trust in the operations of the Talent Pool among all stakeholders.

### **EU Talent Pool IT platform (Article 5)**

MBB supports the creation of the Talent Pool's IT platform, emphasizing the importance of technical interoperability between national systems and the Talent Pool platform to ensure effective functioning and reduce administrative burdens and costs. Furthermore, integration with other relevant EU instruments and services such as ESCO and Europass is also deemed essential.

### **EU Talent Pool Steering Group (Article 9)**

MBB supports the inclusion of EU cross-industry social partners in the Steering Group but suggests that they should be full and permanent members rather than observers. Moreover, MBB recommends considering the ad-hoc involvement of relevant EU sectoral social partners in the Steering Group, particularly regarding discussions related to shortage occupations and updates to the EU list. This would ensure a comprehensive representation of stakeholders and facilitate informed decision-making.

### **EU Talent Pool National Contact Points (Article 10)**

The MBB appreciates the inclusion of relevant employment and immigration authorities in the National Contact Points, emphasizing the importance of coordination between these authorities for the effective functioning of the Talent Pool. Additionally, MBB proposes mutual learning and peer review activities among Member States to facilitate the identification of shortage occupations.

### **Registration and access of job seekers from third countries (Article 11)**

The European Commission's proposal mandates that job seekers create their profiles via the Europass profile builder to register on the EU Talent Pool IT platform. The MBB acknowledges that employers may face challenges in assessing the qualifications and skills of third-country nationals and therefore the Europass format can be a means to introduce some uniformity to the recruitment process.

Additionally, MBB highlights the importance of facilitating the recognition and understanding of qualifications and skills through proposals outlined in the Commission recommendation on the recognition of third-country qualifications.

### **List of EU-wide shortage occupations (Article 14)**

The European Commission's proposal suggests determining the list of EU-wide shortage occupations through a delegated act. This list comprises occupations common to a significant number of participating Member States, as notified by National Contact Points, as well as occupations contributing to the EU's green and digital transitions.

MBB supports the establishment of an EU shortage occupation list for the Talent Pool to provide clarity to third-country nationals about available job offers. It reiterates the importance of Member States having the flexibility to decide which shortage occupations to add or remove based on their specific needs. It advocates for a demand-led approach, allowing Member States to include any occupation over time, not limited to national shortage occupations, in alignment with their national immigration laws. This approach would provide flexibility to address labour market needs and enhance coordination with national legislation.

### **Accelerated immigration procedures (Article 19)**

The European Commission's proposal does not introduce a new dedicated entry point for third-country nationals arriving in the EU via a job advertised in the Talent Pool. However, participating Member States may opt to implement accelerated immigration procedures to facilitate faster recruitment of registered jobseekers selected from the Talent Pool, with a proposed timeline aligned with the single permit directive's four-month benchmark.

MBB underscores the importance of expediting administrative processes and visa issuance following successful matches to enable timely residency and work commencement.

#### **Links to more information:**

[Commission proposes new measures on skills and talent to help address critical labour shortages \(Europa.eu\)](#)

[Questions and Answers on the Skills and Talent Mobility Package](#)

For questions or more detailed information please contact EU Affairs Manager Daniel Debono and Policy Advisor Michele Agius on [infobrussels@mbb.org.mt](mailto:infobrussels@mbb.org.mt)

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