

## POSITION PAPER

# FIEC position on the proposal for a Regulation establishing an EU Talent Pool

On 15 November 2023, the European Commission published the Skills and Talent Mobility Package<sup>1</sup>, including a proposal for a **Regulation establishing an EU Talent Pool**. This initiative was presented in the framework of the European Year of Skills.

The EU Talent Pool aims to **facilitate the recruitment of jobseekers from non-EU countries** through an **online platform** that will match job offers from employers in the EU with jobseekers from third countries. One of its goal is **to address labour and skills shortages in the EU**.

Construction is one of the sectors the **most affected** by labour and skills shortages in the EU<sup>2</sup>. This is reflected in the list of EU-wide shortage occupations annexed to the proposal, which includes a large number of construction-related occupations. FIEC therefore **welcomes** the European Commission's initiative to establish an EU Talent Pool, which would help employers to recruit third-country nationals in a safe and secure way, especially for occupations where shortages are high.

On 13 June 2024, the Council of the EU adopted its [position](#) on the proposal for an EU Talent Pool.

## Key messages

- FIEC **welcomes** the European Commission's proposal for a Regulation establishing an EU Talent Pool.
- The EU Talent Pool should be **easily accessible** to employers and the use of the Platform should **not be an administrative burden**.
- FIEC believes that **the EU Talent Pool IT Platform could be merged with the existing EURES** matching tool to create a single platform for the recruitment of EU and third country jobseekers. This will provide clarity and coherence for all stakeholders.
- National and European **sectoral social partners should be more closely involved**, in particular in the management of the platform and the definition of the list of shortage occupations.
- FIEC recalls that **labour and skills shortages must be a top priority** on the European and national agenda. Labour shortages hinder competitiveness and growth and can only be solved by political action at all level.

<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_23\\_5740](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_5740)

<sup>2</sup> EURES report on labour shortages and surpluses 2023, page 53.

## Member States participation in the EU Talent Pool (article 3)

FIEC supports the voluntary nature of the participation in the EU Talent Pool. Member States which decide to participate in the initiative should notify their decision to the Commission 9 months in advance. It is important to give Member States the choice to participate in the Talent Pool **depending on their labour market needs**.

In its position, the Council of the EU introduces the possibility for Member States to **withdraw** from the initiative. While FIEC understands the logic behind this addition, providing stability for participating employers is important. Therefore, Member States wishing to withdraw **should inform the social partners and employers participating in the EU Talent Pool in due time**.

## Scope of application (articles 2) and participation of employers in the EU Talent Pool (article 13)

FIEC welcomes the scope of application of the regulation, defined in article 2. The Commission's proposal applies to jobseekers from third countries residing outside the Union and **employers in the participating Member States**, according to the European definition of an employer<sup>3</sup>.

Employers interested in participating in the EU Talent Pool should contact the EU Talent Pool National Contact Point to request the transfer of their vacancies to the EU Talent Pool IT Platform. There are some conditions. The job vacancies should fall within the list of EU-wide shortage occupation which is set in Annex or be relevant for a Talent Partnership.

FIEC would like to emphasise that **the transfer of job vacancies to the EU Talent Pool IT platform should be easy, simple and should not be an administrative burden for employers**. It is important for the success of the initiative to provide **clear information** to employers, and in particular to SMEs, on the process following a match between a job vacancy and a jobseeker.

In addition, in order to ensure a high level of participation of employers, the EU Talent Pool National Contact Points should make sure that **information** regarding the launch of the platform and how it works is **available** to all types of companies. For example, it could be done through online communication campaign. Employment public services should also be informed and able to guide employers. Sectoral social partners need to be involved to support the launch of the Platform.

FIEC also welcomes the provision requiring employers participating in the EU Talent Pool to respect the legislation and to ensure the protection and fair recruitment of third country nationals. The EU Talent Pool should promote **fair recruitment and mobility** within the EU.

## EU Talent Pool IT Platform (article 5)

The proposal foresees that the EU Talent Pool IT platform will be the tool which will bring together and support the matching of jobseekers' profiles from third countries with job vacancies of EU employers. The platform will have to feature a number of IT components.

In this respect, FIEC believes that it would be more coherent and simpler if **EURES**, coordinated by the European Labour Authority (ELA), hosts the EU Talent Pool. Indeed, EURES is available to employers in the EU and enable job matching. A **single platform** will be simpler and will

---

<sup>3</sup> An employer is any natural person or legal entity, including temporary work agencies, for or under the direction and/or supervision of whom the employment is undertaken. Article 2(e) of Council Directive [2009/52/EC](#) (Employer Sanctions Directive).



EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION  
INDUSTRY FEDERATION

FIEC - European Construction Industry Federation

Avenue des Arts 20, BE-1000 Brussels - +32 2 514 55 35 - [info@fiiec.eu](mailto:info@fiiec.eu)

Transparency Reg. 92221016212-42 aisbl Nr Enterprise: BE 0688919.140



facilitate the access to the Talent Pool for employers, especially for SMEs which often have limited human resources.

### List of EU-wide shortage occupations (articles 14 and 15)

The European Commission establishes in Annex a list of EU-wide shortage occupations. The Annex can be **amended** by delegated acts of the European Commission. FIEC would like to recall the importance of **consulting the European sectoral social partners** when the list is amended. The European sectoral social partners have a good understanding and knowledge of the shortage occupations in the Member States and can provide valuable comments and suggestions.

In addition, FIEC welcomes the fact that **the list can be updated by the Member States**. FIEC supports a dynamic approach with an update at least every six months, as in the Council's position.

This is important to ensure that **the list reflects the needs of employers**. In particular, national sectoral social partners know best their national labour market. They should be informed and consulted by their Member State participating in the EU Talent Pool when it decides to add or remove shortage occupations according to its national needs and objectives (article 15, paragraph 1). In this respect, FIEC would like to reiterate its recommendation from the FELM project: "*When Member States open their labour markets for third-country national workers in specific sectors such as construction, national sectoral Social Partners should be fully involved in the assessment and evaluation of the labour market situation which is the basis for such a decision*"<sup>4</sup>.

In the longer term, the European Commission should **assess the impact of opening the EU Talent Pool to all occupations**.

### Information provision (article 17)

Information on the EU Talent Pool and the functioning of the platform should be **easily accessible**. Employers should be able to find all information related to the recruitment of third-country nationals. Information should be **kept up to date**.

The list of EU-wide shortage occupations must be available and participating employers should be **notified of any changes**.

National and European social partners will play a key role in making information available to all employers throughout the territory of a participating Member State.

### Immigration procedures (article 19)

Article 19 provides for the possibility for Member States to "*put in place accelerated immigration procedures to allow for a faster recruitment of registered recruitment of registered jobseekers*" once they have been selected for a job vacancy. FIEC **welcomes this possibility** and sees **safe and efficient immigration procedures** as a key element for the success of the platform.

### Involvement of Social Partners (article 9)

FIEC and its national Member Federations would like to stress that **sectoral social partners must be closely involved in the process of implementing and running of the EU Talent Pool**. This would be a key factor in the success of the initiative. Sectoral social partners are in

---

<sup>4</sup> [Joint FIEC-EFBWW project](#) « Better Functioning of the European labour Market (FELM) » – Recommendations, page 6



EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION  
INDUSTRY FEDERATION

FIEC - European Construction Industry Federation

Avenue des Arts 20, BE-1000 Brussels - +32 2 514 55 35 - [info@fiec.eu](mailto:info@fiec.eu)

Transparency Reg. 92221016212-42 aisbl Nr Enterprise: BE 0688919.140



direct contact with employers. As mentioned above, they know better their needs and the difficulties they face in recruiting workers.

Article 9 of the Commission's proposal stresses that only participating Member States are members of the EU Talent Pool Steering Group and that cross-industry social partner organisations at European level can only have the right to participate as observers. **FIEC would like to emphasise that European sectoral social partners should also be able to participate in the Steering Group.** It is in particular the case for sectors facing strong shortages all over Europe, such as construction.

One of the tasks of the Steering Group is to support the preparation of the list of EU-wide shortage occupations. As explained, **the sectoral social partners should be involved in the preparation of the list by being represented in the Steering Group.**

Finally, FIEC would like to recall that the involvement of the social partners is also key to ensuring that there are no abuses or fraudulent practices in the recruitment of third-country nationals. FIEC has on several occasions stressed the importance of fair and equal treatment of migrant workers and sees the involvement of sectoral social partners as a safeguard.

## **Recommendations to address labour and skills shortages in the construction industry**

FIEC recognises that the EU Talent Pool could help to address the issue of labour and skills shortages by facilitating the recruitment of third country national workers. However, FIEC would like to highlight that labour shortages have many causes. Relying on workforce from outside the EU can not be the only solution. The lack of attractiveness of the sector, the new needs arising from the twin transitions or the low participation of women can explain the labour and skills shortages in the construction.

Labour and skills shortages are an **obstacle to EU competitiveness and growth** and it is crucial that this issue is put high on the European and national agenda. In addition to the implementation of the EU Talent Pool, FIEC specifically recommends that the EU and Members States support initiatives aimed at:

- **Activate under-represented groups such as women and young people.**
- **Support the upskilling and reskilling of workers, involving paritarian bodies where present.**
- **Financing and increasing the attractiveness of VET.**
- **Making the construction sector more attractive.**
- **Facilitating the intra-EU mobility of workers**, in particular through the coordination of social security systems and the recognition of qualifications.



FIEC - European Construction Industry Federation

Avenue des Arts 20, BE-1000 Brussels - +32 2 514 55 35 - [info@fiec.eu](mailto:info@fiec.eu)

Transparency Reg. 92221016212-42 aisbl Nr Enterprise: BE 0688919.140

