

Attracting skills and talent to the EU¹

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Policy document summary

The attraction of skills and talent to the EU from the countries around the world remains one of the challenges for internal labour market functioning and for maintaining the EU's global competitiveness. The Commission Communication recognises that in order to mitigate labour shortages and address existing demographic challenges related to the shrinking working-age population as well as the occupational shortages in specific sectors and regions, the EU-level and Member State action needs to go beyond the mobilisation of the domestic workforce and/or facilitation of intra-EU mobility. Moreover, the Communication highlights that the EU faces challenges in attracting skills and talent that would keep up with digital and green transition the EU set to achieve. On this basis, the Communication introduces policy measures organised under three pillars that aim for building a sustainable EU policy on legal migration that would respond to the aforementioned challenges and contribute to keeping the EU globally competitive in terms of attraction and retention of talents.

Disclaimer

This brief overview is intended to summarize the essential points from the EU institutions' policy document that are relevant for research performing and innovation institutions, without providing the full extent of information available in the original document. The focus of the overview is put on initiatives regarding circulation of highly qualified staff, especially researchers, relevant to the European Research Area. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission.

To achieve the goal of building a sustainable EU policy on legal labour migration, the Commission Communication introduces policy measures grouped around the following three pillars: *legislative*, *operational* and *forward-looking* pillar.

- **Legislative pillar** - Given the increased level of the competition for skills and talent on international level on the one hand and the existing obstacles of the admission of jobseekers from third countries caused by long and complex EU immigration procedures on the other, the Communication identified that efforts are needed to simplify the procedures for the admission of workers to the EU, the mobility within the EU of workers from non-EU countries that are already in the EU and to improve their rights and their protection from labour exploitation. For this purpose, the Commission proposed a recast of two directives - **the Long-Term Residents Directive** and **the Single Permit Directive**.
- **Operational pillar** - The increased competition for skills and talent has also been reflected in the failure to connect and match skills and talent from third countries with the potential employers in Member States. On this basis, under the operational pillar, the Commission introduced concrete steps for development of **Talent Partnerships** with key partner countries and the main features of an **EU Talent Pool** initiative. The Talent Partnerships is conceived as an initiative that shall involve participation of the EU Member States and key partner countries and a tailor-made

¹ You can access the original document here: [European Commission. \(2022, April 27\). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Attracting skills and talent to the EU \(COM\(2022\) 657 final\).](#)

approach to addressing labour market needs of all actors involved. Moreover, the initiative is inclusive and concerns all skill levels, diverse economic sectors and various types of mobility. EU Talent Pool initiative is set out to be the first EU-wide platform and matching tool designed to attract the nationals of non-EU countries into the EU's labour market. Based on the Commission Communication, the candidates from third countries will be selected based on specific skills level criteria and migration requirements, following a screening of candidates' credentials.

- **Forward-looking pillar** – Besides the need to attract highly skilled workers (process that shall be facilitated by the the revised EU Blue Card Directive), the Commission specifies the need to attract and retain medium- and low-skilled workers in the long-term. Among different sectors that exhibit shortages, the Communication prioritises the attraction of **long-term care workers** from non-EU countries as an action that shall show clear benefits of acting at the EU-level. In addition, besides the long-term care workers, the Commission identifies another priority for action – promotion of **youth mobility schemes**. The Communication introduces the idea of an **EU Youth Mobility Scheme** that would aim at offering the skilled young people from non-EU countries the possibility to come to the EU to reside, work, develop their skills and travel for a limited period of time. The Commission pledges to conduct a feasibility study on the development of a European Youth Mobility Scheme to test the possibility of making “reciprocal agreements or arrangements with non-EU countries regarding admission conditions and rights, while leaving the possibility for Member States to set quotas for admitted young people coming to the EU“ (p. 20). Finally, under the forward-looking pillar, the Commission also set out measures to support foreign **innovative entrepreneurs and star-up founders** by enhancing their admission and business creation within the EU single market. The Communication recognised that attracting and retaining the innovative entrepreneurs and start-up founders in the EU is essential for achieving the green and digital transition as well as boosting thr EU's economic development.