



Commission proposes ambitious measures to strengthen fair labour mobility

Strasbourg, 15 September 2026

Today, the European Commission adopted the [Fair Labour Mobility package](#) to guarantee **clear social rights for everyone, everywhere in the EU**, regardless of where they choose to live and work.

The package will enable **workers** to prove and claim their social security and health insurance rights, and have their qualifications understood everywhere in the EU and formally recognised where the profession is regulated. New rules and tools will better protect mobile workers from abuse and remove slow and complex administrative procedures that hinder **companies** from recruiting talent or providing services across the EU. National **administrations** will benefit from more efficient cooperation to enforce workers' rights and to fight fraud.

Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** said: *"The single market must also become a genuine skills market with more opportunities for workers and businesses. And that is what this package sets out to do - tackling two of the Terrible ten barriers and making the most of the talent we have in Europe, and attracting more. Simplification and stronger enforcement go hand in hand - skills, recognition and protection will move seamlessly across borders. A win-win."*

The package includes a [Communication](#) on fair labour mobility and five legislative proposals:

- A [Regulation](#) establishing a European Social Security Pass;
- A "Skills Portability Act", a [Regulation](#) on digital and comparable qualifications;
- A [Regulation](#) to strengthen the European Labour Authority;
- An [amending Directive](#) on professional qualifications; and
- A [Directive](#) on qualifications of third-country nationals.

Once fully in place, the package will deliver an estimated €6 billion in benefits by 2040, by faster recognition of professional qualifications, real time verification of social security documents and other savings for business, workers and authorities, as well as by fraud avoidance.

Using digital documents across borders

The **European Social Security Pass (ESSPASS)** will enable people to request and receive social security documents fully online, including the [European Health Insurance Card](#) and portable document A1 for posted workers.

Through the [EU Digital Identity Wallet](#), people moving to another EU country will be able to store and present these documents digitally, while administrations will be able to verify them quickly and securely. This digital space will be available to people and companies across the EU by the end of the year.

Over 12 years, digitalisation could save up to €64 million for businesses, €69 million for healthcare providers, and €72 million for labour inspectors through faster cross-border verification. Digital signatures could avoid up to €277 million in fraud over the same period.

Helping skills and qualifications travel across borders

Qualifications will be **issued in a standardised digital format and be available in the EU Digital Identity Wallet**. This will make it easier to verify the authenticity of qualifications. The Commission also proposes to provide a new EU qualifications comparison tool, drawing on information from national qualifications databases. This will give employers and workers a simple, free way to understand and compare qualifications across Member States.

The Commission has also proposed updating rules for recognising professional qualifications in regulated professions. A **mandatory digital procedure** will make cross-border recognition for professionals such as doctors, nurses, engineers and teachers faster (five weeks instead of three months), cheaper and more secure, while maintaining high public safety, consumer protection and professional standards.

Through **common training frameworks**, the Commission will extend **automatic recognition** to more regulated professions, notably those registering shortages based on a preliminary list of 10 additional professions. Today, the Commission adopted the first such [framework for physiotherapists](#), one of the most mobile professions in the EU.

New rules will also **set common standards for recognising qualifications obtained outside the EU** for EU citizens and for third-country professionals working in the Single Market or applying from abroad. Such procedures take today 14 months on average, while the common standards will bring them to 4 months, cutting by as much as half the administrative costs of hiring for employers. For seven professions where EU-wide training standards already exist, qualifications delivered by accredited institutions outside the EU and reviewed by European quality assurance bodies will be recognised automatically. Member States keep full control over who is admitted to their territory and over the standards to practise a profession.

Strengthening the European Labour Authority

Once adopted, the Commission's proposed regulation will equip the [European Labour Authority](#) (ELA) with **stronger tools to support Member States in enforcing EU law**. It will allow ELA to improve its capacity to provide risk assessment for inspections to help national inspectorates better target controls. It also proposes to reinforce cross-border cooperation and expertise with dedicated national inspection liaison officers. It will further improve access to information on rights and obligations by providing grants to organisations that support people working in other Member States and employers providing services or recruiting across EU borders.

The proposal further expands the mandate of ELA to tackling abuses against third-country nationals working in the EU and combatting illegal employment. It will also simplify ELA's mediation procedure, helping Member States resolve cross-border disputes more quickly and avoiding litigation, thus reducing costs and uncertainty, and improving administrative cooperation.

Next steps

People will see the first practical benefits once the initiatives are adopted by the European Parliament and the Council and the main measures enter into force.

Social security documents will be digitalised in stages, starting with the portable document A1 for posted workers one year after the ESSPASS Regulation enters into force, followed by the European Health Insurance Card and other documents within three years.

Changes to qualifications and skills portability will also be phased in: simpler recognition of non-EU qualifications within two years of adoption, while digital qualifications in the EU Digital Identity Wallet and easier recognition for regulated professions within three years.

Once the revised mandate is adopted, ELA can begin implementing changes, with improvements expected over 2028–2030.

Background

In 2024, [14 million Europeans lived in another EU Member State](#), including over 10 million people of working age (3.9% of the EU working-age population). At the same time, 18% of respondents in a [recent Eurobarometer](#) survey said they would like to work abroad.

At the March EU summit, EU leaders called for measures to enhance worker mobility by improving the mutual recognition of professional qualifications and strengthening the portability of skills, including through digitalisation. This package delivers on the [One Europe, One Market](#) roadmap, which identified the fair labour mobility package and the skills portability initiative as priority deliverables for a more integrated Single Market.

For more information

[Questions and answers](#)

[Factsheet on European Social Security Pass](#)

[Factsheet on strengthened European Labour Authority](#)

[Factsheet on skills portability initiative](#)

[Communication on Fair Labour Mobility Package](#)

[ESSPASS Regulation](#)

[Regulation to strengthen the European Labour Authority \(ELA\)](#)

[Skills Portability Act](#)

[Amending Directive on professional qualifications](#)

[Directive on the recognition of qualifications of non-EU nationals](#)

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Quote(s):

"The single market must also become a genuine skills market with more opportunities for workers and businesses. And that is what this package sets out to do - tackling two of the Terrible ten barriers and making the most of the talent we have in Europe, and attracting more. Simplification and stronger enforcement go hand in hand - skills, recognition and protection will move seamlessly across borders. A win-win."

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission - 15/09/2026

"This package will profoundly change the single market for the better. For Europeans, it is about empowerment: your choice, your rights, your skills. People should be able to work across Europe with their social rights protected and their qualifications recognised faster. Businesses should be able to recruit the talent they need with less paperwork and fewer delays. Stronger cooperation between national authorities will help tackle fraud and abuse, so that those who break the rules cannot undercut workers and responsible businesses. Fair labour mobility must work for everyone, whether they decide to experience other parts of Europe or stay in their home country."

Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness - 15/09/2026

"With the new rules, the recognition of qualifications will be simpler and faster, including for skilled workers from outside the EU. In addition, we are giving the European Labour Authority the tools to tackle illegal employment and exploitation, including concerning third-country nationals. We are removing barriers for those who want to work legally in Europe - and closing loopholes for those who want to exploit them."

Magnus Brunner, Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration - 15/09/2026

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[Read-out of the weekly meeting of the von der Leyen Commission by Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, on the Fair Labour Mobility package](#)