



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

VP/2011/006

Preparatory Action

"Your first EURES job"

BUDGET HEADING 04 03 13

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In view of the large number of enquiries, please do not telephone.

Questions should be sent by e-mail only to: empl-vp-2011-006@ec.europa.eu

*To ensure a more rapid response it is helpful if applicants send their queries in
English, French or German*

The English version of the call is the original

1. Introduction

The effects of the economic crisis across Europe on employment have been particularly marked for young people, with prospects deteriorating from 2008 levels. The labour market for **young people** in the European Union (EU) remains depressed and continues to show worrying developments in half of the Member States. This is a major cause for concern as around 5 million young people cannot find a job.

The Commission addressed the challenges facing the recovery of the EU in its Europe 2020 strategy¹. "Youth on the Move" is the flagship initiative aimed at enhancing the performance and attractiveness of EU education systems and the overall levels of education and training so as to improve entrance to the labour market. The corresponding communication² sets out key new actions to foster youth transitions in the labour market.

One of these actions is an innovative intra-EU job mobility preparatory action called **"Your first EURES job"**, approved by the EU budgetary authority, the European Parliament and the Council following a proposal by the European Commission. "Your first EURES job" can contribute to boost the workers' freedom of movement as set out in the Treaty of Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, Art 45). It can in particular enhance youth labour mobility across Europe **given the fact of being a targeted market-based facility which aims to help young people and employers to fill open bottleneck vacancies in accordance with economic needs.**

Young people and SMEs³ are the core target groups. Looking for a job (if a jobseeker/job changer) or a workforce (if an employer) in another EU Member State should become as easy as searching in one's own country. "Your first EURES job" aims thus to help both young people to find a job in any of the EU-27 Member States and companies to recruit from another EU Member State. The preparatory action will provide advisory, job search, recruitment and financial support to both young jobseekers and job changers aged 18-30 willing to work in another EU Member State and businesses (SMEs in particular) recruiting young European mobile workers and providing them with an integration programme⁴.

2. Economic, policy and operational background

2.1 The economic outlook in Europe⁵

The economic recovery in Europe, which started in mid-2009, has remained fragile. Although the latest data, covering the period up to April 2011, confirm that the EU labour market confidence is improving and is even showing signs of recovery in some

¹ COM(2010)2020 of 3.03.2010, "Europe 2020: a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth"

² COM(2010)477 final of 15.09.2010, p. 11

³ SMES = Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

⁴ Without prejudice to the application of transitional measures by some EU-25 Member States to EU workers from Romania and Bulgaria.

⁵ "Labour Market Fact-Sheet, DG EMPL, June 2011

Member States, notably Germany, the overall situation remains weak and difficult especially for young people.

The unemployment rate in the EU as a whole seems to have begun a slow (9.4% in April 2011), but it is still persistently high in some EU Member States. The youth unemployment rate stays markedly higher than that for the other age groups and also appears much more uneven and volatile. In November 2010 the youth unemployment rate in the EU reached its highest level at 21 %. Meanwhile, it has declined to 20.3% in April.

Youth unemployment continues to show upward trends in eleven EU Member States. The unemployment rate at country level ranges from 6.9% in the Netherlands to 44.4% in Spain. Eighteen Member States still have a youth unemployment rate above 20%, including six above 30% (Ireland, Greece, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia).

As regards labour demand and in spite of some cross-country variations, overall employment expectations remained on the positive side (industry, services, retail trade). According to data up to April 2011, there is an improvement in workplace activity in Europe via temporary work agencies and online job demand.

2.2 Policy drivers to tackle youth unemployment at EU level

The Europe 2020 strategy is aimed, on the one hand, at addressing the short-term needs deriving from the current economic crisis (exit strategies) and, on the other, at preparing the European economic model for the 21st century challenges of globalisation, ageing and climate change. The objective is to develop a sustainable and competitive economy based on knowledge and innovation fostering high employment and social inclusion.

EU policies and instruments should contribute to achieving the target of an employment rate of 75% for women and men aged 20-64. Youth employment in particular is an EU policy priority enshrined in the Europe 2020 strategy.

Apart from "Youth on the Move", a second flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 strategy with a direct impact on employment is "An agenda for new skills and jobs"⁶ which aims to enable the workforce to adapt to professional transitions in a modernised labour market through the acquisition of new skills.

The Employment Guidelines⁷ which are part of the Europe 2020 strategy highlight, among other objectives, the need to foster policies promoting labour **mobility**, and in particular the removal of barriers to occupational and geographical mobility of workers.

⁶ COM(2010)682 final of 23.11.2010

⁷ COM(2010)193 final of 27.04.2010

2.2.1 Labour mobility

Labour mobility is a strategic tool to address economic and social challenges and to reduce labour market imbalances. It includes all forms of job mobility, whether *occupational* (within the job, from job-to-job) or *geographical* (between regions or countries). In the case of geographical mobility, the freedom of movement for workers in Europe is a right enshrined in the Treaty of Functioning of the European Union (Art 45).

Employment opportunities in Europe are not fully exploited, because even though 12% of Europeans are aware of them, only 3% have actually used them. A majority of Europeans (60%) think that people moving within the EU is good for European integration, 50% think it is good for the labour market and 47% think it is good for the economy. Likewise, 34% of Europeans think that their chances of finding a job abroad are better than in their own countries⁸.

Labour market data⁹ show that even in this post-downturn period, Europe has pockets of labour shortages and excess of skilled labour, i.e. there are many job vacancies that remain unfilled due to the lack of a suitable work force¹⁰. Current imbalances in the EU labour markets are partly due to a lack of labour mobility within the Union. **Your first EURES job" is well placed to become a key labour market intervention tool aimed at supporting targeted mobility activities to fill bottleneck vacancies (vacancies for which a market failure has been identified).** This action can also enhance matching between specific target groups (young people and employers) and help countries to address their labour market shortages and surpluses by becoming, according to economic cycles, suppliers and/or receivers of mobile workers.

One of the target groups with the highest tendency to become mobile are young people (knowledge of languages, appeal of innovative work experiences, no family responsibilities, etc). Working in another EU Member State and living in a different cultural environment can be particularly attractive for gaining new skills and competences. Young mobile workers can also be a precious source of innovation in enterprises, more flexible for mobility and often more positive towards change. Yet there are still many obstacles which hinder free movement in practice. Young people are often willing to work abroad but do not take up job opportunities in other countries either because they are not aware of them or because of the costs and insecurity of moving abroad¹¹. A recent European survey shows that 53% of young people in Europe are willing or keen to work in another EU Member State, but lack of cash discourages many of them from taking a first step towards this by spending part of their education abroad¹². Labour mobility can thus provide them with more and better job opportunities, through notably job matching and financial support to move and take up a job in another EU Member State.

⁸ "Geographical and labour market mobility", Special Eurobarometer, 337, June 2010

⁹ Further info URL: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=81>
European Vacancy Monitor and European Job Mobility Bulletin

¹⁰ "A new strategy for the single market", report by M. Monti, 9 May 2010, p.57

¹¹ Ibidem

¹² Flash Eurobarometer on Youth on the Move (n° 319 A + B), May 2011

Successful job matching in the labour market depends also on labour demand and on job openings made available by employers. "Your first EURES job" is a action open to all employers, irrespective of the business size or economic sector. Yet, SMEs can benefit from financial support given their smaller size and usually more limited potential for recruiting mobile workers. SMEs represent 99% of enterprises in the EU and account for about 70% of new jobs through entrepreneurship, start-ups and innovation¹³. Even in the case of vacancy bottlenecks, SMEs do not usually employ staff from abroad and so often lack the necessary support and training services to integrate workers from other EU countries. Obstacles relating to the costs of hiring abroad e.g. relocation or training costs mostly affect smaller companies. Assistance schemes are often cost-intensive and rarely implemented by SMEs. According to employers, intra-EEA mobility is primarily hampered by language and socio-cultural issues and language courses are seldom made available¹⁴.

The fact that more than half of young people are willing to move for work is positive news for European labour markets. Increasing intra-European job mobility rate by providing young people with easier access to more employment opportunities and support to employers in recruiting the talents and skills they are looking for can prove extremely helpful **to tackle the issue of unfilled job vacancies across Europe and therefore contribute to the general Europe 2020 employment rate objective.**

2.2.2 EU actions and instruments to foster intra-EU mobility

Young European citizens already have several EU mobility programmes and schemes at their disposal to help them gain the necessary qualifications and skills to improve their participation in the labour market. A number of mobility programmes have been developed in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP)¹⁵: e.g. Erasmus, Erasmus Student Mobility for Studies and Placements, Leonardo da Vinci Training Actions, etc. These programmes provide young people with access to study and training opportunities.

The Youth in Action programme¹⁶ provides non-formal learning activities (e.g. European Voluntary Service) in other EU Member States. The objective is to enhance young people's competences and employability and to strengthen their EU citizenship awareness. Moreover, those young people who intend to become entrepreneurs and to acquire relevant skills for managing a SME can also spend time working in another EU country with an experienced entrepreneur with the support of the "Erasmus for young entrepreneurs" preparatory action¹⁷.

Unlike those programmes or schemes, **"Your first EURES job" has been tailored to provide young people with a job in another EU Member State and to help them counter obstacles to labour mobility.** Traineeships or in-work learning

¹³ "Guide for training in SMESs", DG EMPL, 2009

¹⁴ Study "Innovative actions to provide good company practice on worker mobility for SMES and PES", KMU Forschung, 2008

¹⁵ Further info URL: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm

¹⁶ Further info URL: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.php

¹⁷ Not exclusive for young people. Further info URL : <http://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu>

activities to enhance young people's employability are not within the remit of the preparatory action. The only EU network providing information, advice, guidance, job matching and job services for workers and employers as well as for any citizen wishing to take advantage of the right of free movement of workers in the European Economic Area¹⁸ is EURES.

Set up in 1993, EURES is a co-operation network between the European Commission and the Public Employment Services (PES) of the European Economic Area countries and other partner organisations. Switzerland also participates in EURES co-operation. EURES has a network of more than 850 EURES Advisers and an extensive portal providing relevant information on labour markets and job vacancies across Europe¹⁹.

2.2.3 The added value of "Your first EURES job"

EURES objectives were defined in 1993²⁰ as being a fundamental tool in providing information and ensuring the virtual transparency of labour markets through the clearance of vacancies and CVs. However, its potential as a job matching and job placement tool – with a view to improving labour market performance and consequently the overall European employment situation – can be further exploited. Lessons from the recent economic downturn provide evidence that there is a need to develop EURES in terms of reaching out, broadening and going to potential client groups to provide intermediation services in real time.

Given the high youth unemployment rates in Europe, the added value of "Your first EURES job" is that the provision of targeted job placement and financial support to both young jobseekers and employers can help to further address labour market imbalances, boost youth participation in the labour market and foster economic growth.

"Your first EURES job" will not deal with job mobility as an end in itself but rather as an instrument to boost economic development and enhance employment rates and young workers' employability. It has also the potential to limit the negative effects of labour mobility obstacles affecting young people and employers. The preparatory action can furthermore fulfil the objective set out in the Treaty of Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, Art 47) which specifies: *"Member States shall, within the framework of a joint programme, encourage the exchange of young workers"*.

The objective of "Your first EURES job" is definitely not to encourage brain-drains or limit the number of vacancies for national jobless people, but rather to provide young people with more job opportunities and companies with a gateway to find abroad the skills lacking in their respective national labour markets to overcome vacancy

¹⁸ European Economic Area = EEA (The EU-27 Member States and also Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein)

¹⁹ EURES info URL: <http://eures.europa.eu>

²⁰ Commission Decision of 22 October 1993, modified subsequently by Commission decision 2003/8 of 23 December 2002 implementing Council Regulation 1612/1968 as regards the clearance of vacancies and applications for employment

bottlenecks. A foreign workforce can make businesses more innovative and competitive and help them to take more advantage of opportunities on the international marketplace.

As announced in the *Youth on the Move* Communication, "Your first EURES job" is to become part of EURES, but this can only happen once the EURES legal basis has been modified to integrate the new preparatory action and the corresponding implementing rules. This has been laid down in the Communication "An agenda for new skills and jobs" which states:

"The Commission in cooperation with Member States will also by 2012 reform EURES and its legal basis, to develop its matching and placement capacity at the service of the European Employment Strategy and to expand it to support "Your first EURES job".

2.2.4 The role of labour market organisations

Against this background, labour market organisations play a crucial role in increasing the levels of employment as well as in easing and securing smooth transitions to achieve the Europe 2020 objectives. Employment guideline number 7 of the European Employment Strategy specifies as follows: *"Employment services should be strengthened and open to all, including young people and those threatened by unemployment with personalised services targeting those furthest away from the labour market"*

In an increasingly transitional labour market, labour market organisations (public, private or third sector employment services) are key actors in facilitating and securing labour transitions. They can operate as **"job mobility and transition agencies"**, both at national and intra-EU level, and provide a broad range of client services.

A particularly difficult transition for young people is the **transition from education or training to the first job**. Depending on the type of education and/or training completed, young people may have no or little prior experience and thus may not have immediately relevant qualifications for an employer. Europe therefore needs measures to smooth the transition from education to work and also new ways to support those who find it difficult to get a foothold in the labour market.

3. The preparatory action "Your first EURES job"

3.1. Legal and operational framework

The preparatory action will be implemented within the meaning of Article 49(6) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) N° 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (legal basis). A total budget of 4 million EUR has been earmarked by the EU budgetary authority for the year 2011 (budget line 04 03 13).

"Your first EURES job" respects the principle of subsidiarity because its objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, either at the national level, or at regional or local level. Because of the scale and effects of the proposed preparatory action these objectives can better be achieved at Union level.

The preparatory action will be implemented out by labour market organisations, under the coordination of the European Commission and in accordance with a pre-established operational framework. Applicant organisations should have the necessary intra-EU labour market expertise to boost youth labour mobility in Europe and operate as "*Your first EURES job mobility agencies*" with the meaning set out in section 2.2.4 above.

The "Your first EURES job" operational framework and implementing guidelines are laid down in the enclosed Guide which is an integral part of this call for proposals. Applicant organisations are invited to read the document carefully.

3.2. Objectives, geographical scope and expected results

"Your first EURES job" **overarching priorities** are to contribute to fill bottleneck vacancies with available youth workforce at EU level and to foster youth job mobility across the EU-27 Member States.

Other overall **objectives** of the preparatory action are the following:

- (1) provide young people with more job opportunities across Europe, contribute to improving the functioning of the EU labour markets and fulfil the employment target of the Europe 2020 strategy as well as the objectives of the flagship initiative "Youth on the Move";
- (2) bridge the gap between labour supply (young people) and labour demand (employers) at EU level by pooling applicant organisations' resources (staff, vacancy databases, labour market expertise and advisory competences) and making them available to the target groups;
- (3) complement and strengthen the role played by the EURES network in promoting and supporting intra-EU job mobility, including fighting massive youth unemployment as a result of the crisis;
- (4) test its operability and added value.

As regards the **geographical scope** of "Your first EURES job", the preparatory action should ideally apply to young people and businesses (SMEs in particular) across all EU-27 Member States, according to identified labour market needs. This means that applicant organisations are free to implement recruitment and job placement activities between any EU Member States, with incoming and outgoing mobility dependent on labour demand and supply opportunities.

In order however to ensure easy access of target groups to "Your first EURES job", applicant organisations should have a meaningful European dimension i.e. be capable

of providing customer-oriented information and services in at least 7 EU Member States. This can (see eligibility criteria in section 5.1.), for example, be achieved by:

- using the applicant organisations' network of agencies or branches
- or working in partnership with other EU stakeholders, including cooperating with other EU networks relating to the objectives of this call and where applicant organisations may already participate (e.g. EURES)
- or by using a combination of several

Whenever possible, information should be provided in the languages of the countries concerned.

The Commission will endeavour to ensure that the preparatory action covers the broadest possible territory of the European Union. For the sake of fair treatment, applicant organisations should also be ready to inform and support, if so requested or needed, those young jobseekers/job changers and employers interested in "Your first EURES job" but established in EU Member States which have no services or other facilities involved in this preparatory action. The contacts could be made in writing, by telephone or online, using at least the languages covered by the applicant organisations' projects.

Candidates are encouraged to communicate already in their applications which countries, other than those covered by the above eligibility requirements, they will be able to cover via the use of other facilities such as IT tools (for example call centres, videoconferences facilities, Skype possibilities, etc.) in order to inform and help young people and employers.

Selected projects in the frame of this call for proposals should thus support and finance

- young European mobile workers²¹ (aged 18-30) in finding a job and moving to another EU Member State;
- employers (SMEs in particular) by covering part of the costs borne with an integration programme for their newly recruited young mobile workers

The expected **result** should be the job placement²² of around 2200 young people in EU Member States²³ other than their country of residence throughout the duration of selected projects (see section 9).

²¹ The term "*Workers*" is given a broad definition: it includes any person who undertakes genuine and effective work for which he is paid under the direction of someone else. It also includes jobseekers and people retaining the status of workers. It does not cover third country migrant workers. For all these definitions, see COM(2010)373 of 13.07.2010: "Reaffirming the free movement of workers: rights and major developments".

²² Filling of a job vacancy from the perspective of the jobseeker

²³ Estimate made on the basis of an average job placement cost of max. EUR 1800

4. Purpose of this call for proposals

The present call for proposals is aimed at selecting and financing a maximum of **four** public, private or third sector employment services (as stand-alone organisations or in partnership) from the EU-27 Member States to implement the preparatory action "Your first EURES job" as defined in this call and in the enclosed Implementing Guide.

4.1. Role and structure of applicant organisations

Applicant organisations should act as job brokers, i.e. provide intermediation employment services targeting young jobseekers, job changers and employers. They should also be experienced in EU transnational job mobility activities – notably inward and outward workforce flows - involving a large number of young people and enterprises.

As far as the role of applicant organisations is concerned, these must be "general employment services", i.e. organisations whose main mission is the provision of employment services to all types of jobseekers, job changers and employers covering a variety of occupations and jobs in different economic sectors. They should in particular have experience in recruitment, job matching and job placement activities. Partners should also ensure to the maximum extent possible the provision of "general employment services".

Applicant organisations should furthermore have a thorough knowledge of EU labour markets and the necessary resources and management capacity. They should be able to integrate the requested activities into their business model with a view to supporting and distributing low-value grants to young European mobile jobseekers and recruiting businesses, SMEs in particular. A project coordinator/manager must be nominated.

4.2. Participation

Applicants to this call cannot be individuals. Partner organisations can be from the same country and/or from different EU Member States, provided they can ensure a transnational service offer.

Moreover, in the case of a partnership, the application should be submitted by one single applicant organisation. This organisation will sign the grant agreement with the Commission, receive and manage the grant from the Commission and be responsible for implementation and reporting to the Commission on the progress of the overall preparatory action. It will also ensure monitoring and evaluation. The Commission will deal only with the applicant organisation.

4.3. Tasks and resources of the applicant organisations

The "Your first EURES job" preparatory action should not give rise to major modifications in the usual transnational advisory, job matching and job placement

activities undertaken by applicant organisations. **Quite a number of activities as set out under items (1), (2), (3) and (6) hereinafter should be in accordance with their usual business model.**

The objective is thus to develop the preparatory action in line with the existing infrastructure, tools or service provision model of those organisations with the least possible number of changes.

Please note that the creation of a common "Your first EURES job" vacancy database or other facilities is not planned in this phase of the preparatory action.

The applicant organisations will be responsible for the activities listed below. They should be able to:

(1) Information, guidance and recruitment activities

- take appropriate actions to raise awareness among young people and employers of the advantages of the "Your first EURES job" preparatory action (see also item (6) below)
- provide **free of charge**²⁴ multi-channelling services (e.g. front-office, back-office, e-services) to jobseekers, job changers and employers
- apply national labour law to the employment services provided under "Your first EURES job"
- demonstrate knowledge of sources and the ability to collect information related to intra-EU labour mobility for both young jobseekers and employers (e.g. workforce available, social security entitlements, recruiting sectors, etc)
- assist jobseekers and employers before, during and after recruitment e.g. writing of CVs, job search assistance, selection of job applicants, preparation of interviews, information on living and working conditions in the country of destination, pre-departure training²⁵, mentoring and support, etc.
- co-ordinate with national EURES network members so as to ensure exchange of information, CVs, job vacancies, etc. and install a referral system between EURES national systems and "Your first EURES job"

(2) Job vacancy and CVs handling

- make use of available job vacancy and CV databases and focus on bottleneck and hard to fill job vacancies so that "Your first EURES job" can optimise its support to youth employment
- define bottleneck sectors in which recruitments will be given priority
- foster and accept registrations and CVs of new young jobseekers or job changers and vacancies from new employers interested in benefiting from the "Your first EURES job" preparatory action

²⁴ Article 29 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states that: "everyone has the right of access to a free placement service". The Charter is addressed to institutions, bodies, offices and agencies as well as member States when they implement Union law.

²⁵ Please refer to sections 5.3.7.1 to 5.3.7.3 of the Implementing Guide

- ensure that "Your first EURES job" vacancies are translated into the EU language(s) requested by the employer

(3) Job matching and job placement facilitation

- have a thorough knowledge of EU labour markets and be active job matching brokers (through e.g. bilateral/multilateral recruitment activities) with a view to ensuring as many successful and sustainable job placements as possible

(4) Financial support to target groups²⁶

- provide financial support for young mobile jobseekers and SMEs as defined in the enclosed "Implementing Guide"
- be equipped with the necessary management, accounting and financial monitoring systems to ensure prompt and effective payments to target groups

(5) Resources

- have qualified staff to implement "Your first EURES job" activities. They should act as a gateway or resource persons for customers. A project coordinator/manager will be responsible for the overall implementation of the preparatory action. S/he will be the contact person with the Commission.

(6) Data collection and monitoring tools

- have at their disposal and manage appropriate measurement and data collection tools to monitor implementation progress and results
- complete and submit the quarterly monitoring fact-sheet to the Commission as specified in section 9 of the "Implementing Guide" (Appendix IV)

(7) Quality control and evaluation

- adopt the necessary measures to ensure high quality output and comply in general with the provisions of the "Implementing Guide"
- ensure that target groups comply with their obligations and the applicable "Your first EURES job" guidelines
- carry out a small-scale evaluation to assess the overall outcomes of the "Your first EURES job" activities as specified in section 9 of the "Implementing Guide"

(8) Information and communication

- develop a communication plan and make use of the graphic and publicity guidelines provided by the Commission with a view to ensuring the visibility of "Your first EURES job" (re. section 4.5 of the Implementing Guide)
- participate in virtual or live job fairs and other employment events (e.g. European Job Days)

²⁶ Young people and employers (SMES)

- be ready to cooperate in the activities of the EU awareness raising campaign for young people and SMEs promoted by the Commission in 2012-2013²⁷
- ensure the dissemination and exploitation of results (e.g. through web communication, media, information material, etc.)
- collect success stories, endorsements, etc. and get agreement from the participants on presentation in communication activities

(9) Reporting

- abide by the reporting obligations specified in both the "Implementing Guide" and the grant agreement signed with the Commission

(10) Networking

- contribute actively to enhancing cooperation, team building and networking among the "Your first EURES job" selected applicant organisations
- participate in Steering Group meetings organised by the Commission in Brussels during the contractual period (please see below).

Applicant organisations should be in a position to implement the activities and employment services above with a view to ensuring the highest possible number of quality job placements. If a maximum of four applicant organisations are selected, each organisation should be able to support a minimum of around **500 job placements across different EU Member States**. This estimate may vary upwards as SMEs' applications for funding remain optional (for more details, please refer to the enclosed 'Implementing Guide').

4.4. Work organisation and follow up

The grant agreement to be set up between the Commission and the selected applicants will be managed by Unit C.4 "Employment Services, EURES" within the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion (DG EMPL) of the European Commission which will be responsible for the overall implementation of the preparatory action. The unit will nominate a project manager, whose contact details will be provided to the selected organisations.

DG EMPL will establish a Steering Group. It will be composed of representatives of the European Commission and representatives of the selected organisations. The Steering Group will meet on a regular basis as from the date of signature of the grant agreement.

It is planned to hold maximum four meetings in Brussels during the implementation of the preparatory action (one meeting every four months on average). The purpose is to provide guidance, co-ordinate, monitor and ensure the necessary quality standards of "Your first EURES job" service provision at European level. The group is responsible for examining progress results and key success and failure factors. Each

²⁷ In the frame of the flagship initiative "Youth on the Move"

organisation should be represented by the respective project coordinator/manager. The meetings will also provide the opportunity to enhance team building, networking and mutual learning.

4.5. Travel and subsistence costs

The costs of participation in the Steering Group meetings are to be budgeted in travel and subsistence costs included in the budget proposal of the applicant organisations. It is also recommended that applicant organisations make an estimate of their budget needs covering not only participation in communication or large public events at European level – around five events – but also other travel and subsistence needs required by their project.

4.6. Presentation of project proposals

Proposals will be submitted using application forms which are automatically produced via the SWIM submission tool (see practical details in section 12 below). While some information requested is mandatory, other forms may need to be completed and attached, usually either administrative documents or free format text descriptions (Section 13 below provides a checklist of the documents needed for a complete application.)

Two important SWIM annexes (section E of the SWIM application) are the "description of the action" and the "work-programme" of the project proposed. These two documents are aimed at providing complementary details on information already specified in the SWIM application and will be used to assess the proposal in accordance with the criteria laid down in the sections hereunder.

It is proposed to develop this information according to the following structure:

a) Description of the action (see section 13, check-list, point 17).

The proposal should demonstrate the applicant's understanding of the overall objectives of the call and its Implementing Guide as well as of the requested tasks. The proposal should also outline the specific objectives of the applicant organisation, the partners involved (if any) as well as the geographical scope/dimension and nature of their service provision.

Specifications on the strategy for reaching out to target groups and data on the expected quantified outcomes of job matching and job placement activities should be included with a brief explanation of how the proposal can contribute to boosting youth employment in Europe. It should also include a consistent list of identified labour bottleneck sectors in which recruitments will be given priority and a thorough justification of the chosen sectors. If the applicant organisation is managing similar European actions e.g. EURES or other programmes etc, it must clearly describe the activities to be carried out in the frame of "Your first EURES job" with the support of that/those similar action(s). Please note that there should be no double funding.

Moreover, the description should give details of the proposed information and communication plan (covering also publicity and dissemination).

In relation with the 'Award criteria' detailed in section 7 below, this document will provide information on both "the relevance of the proposal to the call objectives", "the impact of the proposal" and the "visibility of the action";

b) Work-programme of the project, timetable and budget estimate breakdown (see section 13, checklist, point 18).

Applicants should present the methodology of the proposed work, the coherence and consistency of the proposed activities against the set objectives and provide a description of: i) main tasks, resources, management, monitoring and evaluation tools to ensure the provision of quality services and the prompt payment of low value grants to target groups (please refer to section 4.3 above); ii) reasons and strategy to target chosen recruitment sectors, i.e. youth groups and vacancies with recruitment difficulties; iii) role allocation to partners, i.e. their effective contribution to the objectives of the project and resources, including the amount of their financial contribution; iv) proposed work timetable, and v) budget breakdown.

In relation with the 'Award criteria' detailed in section 7 below, this document will provide information on both the "quality of the proposal" and the "cost/efficiency of the operation".

Sections 5 to 7 below outline the criteria that will be used to evaluate proposals submitted to this call. For each proposal received:

- first, its eligibility will be checked using criteria from section 5 below,
- second, if eligible, selection will be checked using criteria described in section 6 below and
- third, if selection criteria are fulfilled, the proposal will be assessed comparatively to the other proposals and in accordance with the award criteria described in section 7 below.

5. Exclusion and Eligibility criteria

5.1. Eligible organisations

To be eligible, applicant organisations

- Must be legally established in one of the 27 EU Member States

- must be in conformity with Articles 93(1), 94 and 96(2)(a) of the Financial Regulation (see section 13, check-list, point 3)²⁸
- can be public, private²⁹ or third sector employment organisations with a legal profit or non-profit status, whose main mission is the provision of general employment services to all types of jobseekers, job changers and employers covering a variety of occupations and jobs in different economic sectors (see section 13, check-list, points 1, 4, 6)
- should have a meaningful dimension i.e. organisations with national agencies or branches, or working in partnership with other EU stakeholders, including cooperating with other EU networks relating to the objectives of this call and where applicant organisations may already participate (e.g. EURES) in at least 7 different EU Member States (see section 13, check-list, point 1)³⁰
- must demonstrate the capacity to provide transnational employment information and support to young people and businesses in other EU Member States having no “Your first EURES job” services, branches or partners (see section 13, check-list, point 1)³¹

5.2. Eligible applications

To be eligible, applications must:

- be submitted electronically on-line with the SWIM application and by post in 3 hard copies (1 original and 2 copies) by the deadline indicated in section 11 below .
- be complete and include all requested supporting documents as indicated in the checklist (see Section 13)

5.3. Eligible proposals

To be considered as eligible for funding under this call, proposals must

- be fully carried out in the Member States of the European Union

²⁸ The situations referred to include bankruptcy, compulsory winding-up, being under court administration, in an arrangement with creditors or any other similar proceedings; convictions of professional misconduct; non fulfilment of social security or tax payment obligations; convictions of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity; declared in serious breach of contract in relation to activities funded by the EU budget; subject to conflict of interest; guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the required information.

²⁹ In accordance with interpretation of cases C-41/90 and C-55/96

³⁰ See section 3.2 above

³¹ Idem

- comply with the European Union's rules for co-financing and guarantee a cash co-financing of **5%** of the total eligible costs
- demonstrate that the proposed activities are not being financed twice from two different sources within the EU budget - particularly in cases where applicants are already participating in EU preparatory actions or other programmes (see section 13, check-list, point 10)

Proposals which do not comply with the above criteria are not eligible and will be rejected.

6. Selection criteria

Only organisations with the necessary financial and operational capacity may be awarded a grant.

6.1. Financial capacity

Applicants must demonstrate they have the financial capacity to carry out the action: the applicant must have access to solid and adequate funding to maintain its activities for the period of the action and to help finance it as necessary.

The financial capacity of the applicant must be confirmed by the provision in the proposal of the following items:

- declaration on honour (includes financial capacity to carry out the activity) (see section 13, check-list, point 3)
- proof of turnover in the last financial year at least equivalent to 100% of the grant requested (see section 13, check-list, point 14)
- annual balance sheets and profit and loss accounts available from the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed for the applicant (see section 13, checklist, point 15)

The verification of financial capacity will not apply to public bodies.

6.2. Operational capacity

The applicant must have the operational resources (technical, management) and the professional skills and qualifications needed to successfully complete the proposed action, as well as the ability to implement it. The applicant must have a strong track record of competence and experience in the field and in particular in the type of action proposed.

The operational capacity of the applicant must be confirmed by the provision in the proposal of the following items:

- A list of the main projects carried out in the last three years relating to the objective of the call. In the case of work done for the European Commission, applicants must also indicate the reference number of the contract and the department for which the contract was performed (see section 13, check-list, point 9);
- The CVs of the proposed project co-ordinator and the persons who will perform the main tasks, showing all relevant professional experience (see section 13, check-list, point 11);
- A declaration by the project co-ordinator certifying the competence of the team to carry out the required tasks (see section 13, check-list, point 12);
- In the case of proposals from partnerships: written confirmation from each partner that they are willing to participate in the project with a brief description of their role and financial contribution (see section 13, check-list point 13);

Proposals which do not comply with the above selection criteria will be rejected.

7. Award criteria

The proposals which fulfil the eligibility and selection criteria will be assessed according to the following award criteria:

► Relevance of the proposal to the call objectives (max 10 points)

Particular attention will be paid to:

- The degree to which the proposal effectively meets the objectives and priorities of the preparatory action including the degree to which the problem of bottleneck vacancies is addressed (see 3.2. *Objectives*)
- The European dimension of the applicant organisations' network or partnership, notably the partners involved (if any) as well as the nature and geographical scope of their service provision.
- The outreach strategy and customer-oriented activities to address the needs of the target groups

► Quality of the proposal (max 10 points)

Particular attention will be paid to:

- Clarity, consistency, coherence of the proposed activities (methodology and tools)
- The extent to which the work plan is adequate to ensure minimum quality and innovative services to the target groups
- Detailed description of the tasks, responsibilities, resources and management tools of the applicant organisations and partners (if any)
- Quality of the mechanism for on-going monitoring and final evaluation

► **Impact of the proposal (max 10 points)**

Particular attention will be paid to:

- The extent to which the proposal is likely to have a tangible impact on the target groups and is likely to support the expected number of job placements
- The potential of the proposal to boost intra-EU geographical labour mobility and enhance youth employment in Europe
- The European added value, i.e. evidence that the project activities would not be feasible without EU support

► **Visibility of the action (max 10 points)**

Particular attention will be paid to:

- The information and communication activities
- Quality and efficiency of the information dissemination
- Publicity to the Union involvement and responsibility for the action

► **The cost / efficiency of the operation (max 10 points)**

Particular attention will be paid to:

- Clarity and consistency of the estimated budget description
- The degree to which the level of output and impact of the project is proportional to the amount of the requested grant
- Coherence between the proposed expenditure and the action implementation needs

With due consideration to the budget available for this call for proposals, the proposals with the highest evaluation scores will be selected for the award of a grant

8. Financial conditions

The total available budget for this call is **EUR 4.000.000**. The European Union's financial contribution will not exceed **95% of the total eligible costs** of the proposed activities, of which: a minimum of 80% will be aimed at granting third parties (young people and SMEs)³² and a maximum of 20% at co-funding the eligible costs borne by the selected applicant organisations for the implementation of the action.

The Commission expects to finance a maximum of four projects for which the EU grant would be limited to EUR 1 Mio per beneficiary. Sources of co-financing can be public or private.

Applicant organisations should specify the requested amount for granting young people and SMEs respectively under the heading "Costs of services", item "Other services" of their budget proposal in SWIM (add two sub-items: *Financial support to young people* and *Financial support to SMEs*). They should also explain the criteria

³² See attached Implementing Guide

for the breakdown of credits per target group (see also section 5.1 of the "Implementing Guide").

9. Starting date and duration of projects

The projects should start after signature of grant agreements. Duration of projects will be maximum 18 months.

10. Date for submission

The proposals must be submitted to the Commission electronically online **and** sent by post in 3 hard copies (1 original and 2 copies) **no later than 20/10/2011**.

11. Publicity and Information

In order to increase the visibility of the preparatory action "Your first EURES job", the Commission intends to publish the names and contact details of the selected organisations on the Internet, together with the reference of the call for proposals and the brief description of the proposed activities. The applicant organisations are therefore requested to authorise the Commission (and if applicable, seek the partners' agreement) to publish this data. This written agreement should be included in the letters of commitment sent to the Commission (see section 13, checklist, point 13).

12. Practical details

Information related to this call for proposals are accessible from the following website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&langId=en>

Applicants are invited to fill in the application form and submit their project proposals preferably in **English, French or German**, in order to facilitate handling and complete the evaluation process as quickly as possible. It should be noted, however, that proposals in other EU Community languages will still be accepted.

Questions can also be sent by e-mail to empl-vp-2011-006@ec.europa.eu

SWIM enables you to introduce, edit and submit a grant application. **The Internet Web application SWIM must be used for this purpose.** SWIM will provide you with an electronic application form which must be filled in online and will request you to upload compulsory documents and annexes.

You can access SWIM at the following web site
<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/displayWelcome.do>

Before starting, please read carefully the SWIM "User's guide", which you will find at the top of the page when you enter the SWIM application ("Help on SWIM").

As mentioned in section 10 above, applications must be submitted electronically with the SWIM facility and by post in 3 hard copies (1 original and 2 copies). The overall application file should be complete and include all requested annexes and supporting documents as indicated in the checklist hereunder (see Section 13)

Please note that the electronic submission via SWIM must be executed before printing the final version of the application and no further changes to the application will be possible.

The hard copies must be sent to the addresses cited below **by 20/10/2011** (their submission date will be taken as the date of dispatch, as per the postmark or the express courier receipt date).

Proposals submitted after the date above will not be eligible.

a) by post : postal address:

European Commission Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG Unit C.4-Employment Services, EURES – Call for proposals VP/2011/006 Archives-Courier service J27 0/115 B-1049 Brussels (Belgium)

b) or by personal delivery (direct or through any authorised representative of the applicant, including private messenger service etc.) against a signed receipt from the Commission's central mail service by **16.00 hours on 20/10/2011** at the latest to the following address:

European Commission Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG Unit C.4- Employment Services, EURES – Call for proposalsVP/2011/006 Central Courier Service Avenue du Bourget, 1 1140 Evere (Belgium)

Failure to submit the application by post **and** online by **20/10/2011** will render request for subsidy ineligible. Supplementary documents sent by post, by fax or by electronic mail after the deadlines mentioned above will not be considered for evaluation. Please make sure that the **full set of the application form and all accompanying original documents, dated and signed** as listed in section 13 below, are included in your surface mail posted by the closing date.

Incomplete, unsigned application forms, hand-written forms and those sent by fax will not be taken into consideration.

The **Financial Guidelines for Applicants** annexed to the present call for proposals provide more detailed information for the applicants, especially as regards guidelines for presenting the proposal's provisional budget along with the rules governing which categories of expenditure are eligible and which are not.

The information contained herein together with the **"Your first EURES job" Implementing Guide** and the **Financial Guidelines for Applicants** provides all information required to submit an application. Please read them carefully before doing so, paying particular attention to the priorities that have been set for the call.

Please note that the Commission will organise an Information Session in Brussels for applicant organisations interested in this call for proposals. The date and venue as well as registration procedures for participants are posted on the Europa portal, DG EMPL website, section "*Current calls for proposals*", ref. VP/2011/006
URL: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=630&langId=en>

13. Checklist of required application documents

After submission of the application and its annexes **electronically in SWIM**, please send the documents listed hereinafter **in triplicate** (one original + two copies) before the deadline set out in section 10 above.

NOTE: the electronic form must be submitted on-line via SWIM before you can print the final version. After electronic submission, no further changes can be made to the application.

Regarding presentation of the application file, it is recommended to:

- follow the order of documents as listed in the checklist below;
- print documents double-sided, where possible;
- use only 2-hole folders (please do not bind or glue).

	<i>Document</i>	<i>Check</i>
1	Free format: letter of application , <u>original</u> , duly signed and dated by the legal representative of the applicant organisation. The letter should be with the letterhead of the organisation, quote the reference of the proposal number to the call VP/2011/006/xxx and give details on the following: a) main mission of the applicant organisation and of the partners, if any, to ensure the provision of "general employment services", b) European dimension of the project, i.e. countries where the applicant organisation can provide customer-oriented information and services c) possibility by the applicant organisation to provide information and support to young people and businesses in other EU Member States having no "Your first EURES job" services, branches or partners involved in the preparatory action so as to demonstrate eligibility of the proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Print-out of the online SWIM Application form (https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim) duly completed, <u>original</u> dated and <u>signed by the legal representative</u> of the applicant organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Print-out of SWIM Annex: Declaration on honour/declaration by the applicant attesting compliance with Articles 93(1), 94 and 96(2)a of the Financial Regulation and financial and operational capacity, etc. duly filled in, <u>original</u> dated and <u>signed by the legal representative</u> of the applicant organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Print-out of SWIM Annex: Legal entity form : <u>original</u> duly filled in and <u>signed by the legal representative</u> of the applicant organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Copy of the official registration certificate or any other official document attesting to the legal establishment of the organisation (<i>not necessary for public bodies</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Copy of articles of association/statutes or equivalent , proving the eligibility of the applicant organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Document</i>	<i>Check</i>
7	Copy of a document confirming the applicant's tax or VAT number, if available	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Print-out of SWIM Annex: Financial identification form duly filled in, <u>original</u> dated and <u>signed by the applicant organisation account holder</u> and either bearing the bank stamp and signature of the bank representative or with a copy of a recent bank statement attached	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Free-format: a list of the main projects carried out in the last three years relating to the objective of the call and proving the necessary operational capacity. In the case of work done for the Commission, applicants must also indicate the reference number of the contract and the department for which the contract has been performed	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Free format: declaration of no double financing proving the eligibility of the applicant organisation, i.e. that the proposed activities are not being financed twice from two different sources within the EU budget (particularly in cases where applicants are already participating in preparatory actions or other EU programmes or networks). <u>The declaration (original) must be dated and signed</u> by the legal representative of the applicant organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Free format: CVs (educational and professional qualifications) and job specification of the proposed project coordinator/manager and of persons who will perform the main tasks, with a brief description of their outputs related to the subject of the proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Free format: declaration of the project coordinator/manager certifying the competence of the team to carry out the required tasks and demonstrating operational capacity. <u>The declaration (original) must be dated and signed</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Print-out of SWIM Annex(es) (one per organisation): letters of commitment from the applicant and from each partner in the project : <u>original(s) signed</u> by the legal representative(s) of the organisation(s), specifying the amount of the cash contribution and the specific tasks to be undertaken by the organisation(s) as well as the agreement "that the Commission publishes the name and address of the selected organisations, the reference of the call for proposals and the title and description of the project" (see Section 11 of the text of the call)	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Free format: proof of turnover such as a letter <u>original, dated and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation</u> mentioning the amount of the turnover in the last financial year and stating that it is at least equivalent to 100% of the grant requested (<i>not necessary for public bodies</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Copy of annual balance sheet and profit and loss accounts for the last financial year, duly dated and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation (<i>not necessary for public bodies</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	For grant requests over € 500.000,00 or for organisations subject to statutory audit of their annual accounts, an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the last accounting exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Free format SWIM annex : description of the action	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Free format SWIM annex: detailed Work Programme of the project	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Print-out of SWIM annex: contract for implementing the action in case of subcontracting where the value of the external contract exceeds EUR 5000	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Free format: any additional/optional annexes which you may wish to add	<input type="checkbox"/>