


# 2022 INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

## The EU Scenario





“If fostered by accurate, active policies at a national level, **International Mobility can surely become a continuous upskilling engine**, allowing people to become truly employable and to fulfill sustainable work and life conditions, and ultimately generate value in society.”

**Barbara Bruno,**  
Global Temp & Perm Practice Senior Director

# Introduction

In setting the scene for current mover data and trends, we are **beginning to emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic** and whilst we have an abundance of information of the state of play prior to 2020, **the effect of the pandemic on movers across the EU has yet to be reliably ascertained.**

The Annual Report on Intra-EU Labour Mobility 2020 provides us with an insight on the data gathered from 2019.

This data tells us what EU movers were doing up until lockdowns came into force, and gives us a “normal” scenario, whilst we **yet have to discover** if we will move back towards those kinds of trends or if things have substantially changed.

Furthermore, **the current Ukrainian crisis brings uncertainty** with regards to future life scenarios and forecasts, the conflict continues to impact economies across Europe, and will **obviously have a profound effect on movers to and from the affected countries**, over months and years, and probably also around Europe in general.

One of the things to emerge from that pre-pandemic data was the clear **advantage gained by B2B businesses**, in by permitting them to identify specific themes in targeting and sourcing countries.

Destination countries for labour mobility suffering relevantly-skilled workforce scarcity, and whilst cost-optimisation makes incoming movers attractive, there are also **the risks of a lack of integration and therefore mover isolation**, as there is indeed of **creating tensions between movers and local workforces.**

The WEC Global Labour Shortage Statistical Briefing using data supplied by World Employment Confederation Report on OECD (“Better Life” index) tells us that **vacancies are at their highest for over a decade** and in some instances, even exceed pre-pandemic figures.

If we consider January 2020 as “100”, then (rounded) figures show us

- **Austria at 140**
- **Finland, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK at 140 - 160**
- **Germany and Poland at 100 - 120**
- **Portugal at 120 - 140**

This evident labour shortage affects all sectors, but in particular accommodation and food services whose activities have risen by + >3.5% as have activities in the construction industry. Manufacturing has seen a +2% increase.

(Source: World Employment Confederation Report on Eurostat Data). A real risk in the **short-term is the danger of draining geographical areas of sought-after skills**, and yet the pay back is those **movers returning in the future with a wider skill set**, able to add to the value of their homelands' economies.

Thus, it is critical to understand the key drivers for movers: **what specifically makes them want to move in the first place?** In understanding their motives better we are all in a much stronger position to create the kind of support services that will be required for such a move. In addition we really ought to know in which countries and industries the mobility phenomena is particularly relevant and why.

Let's dig deeper.



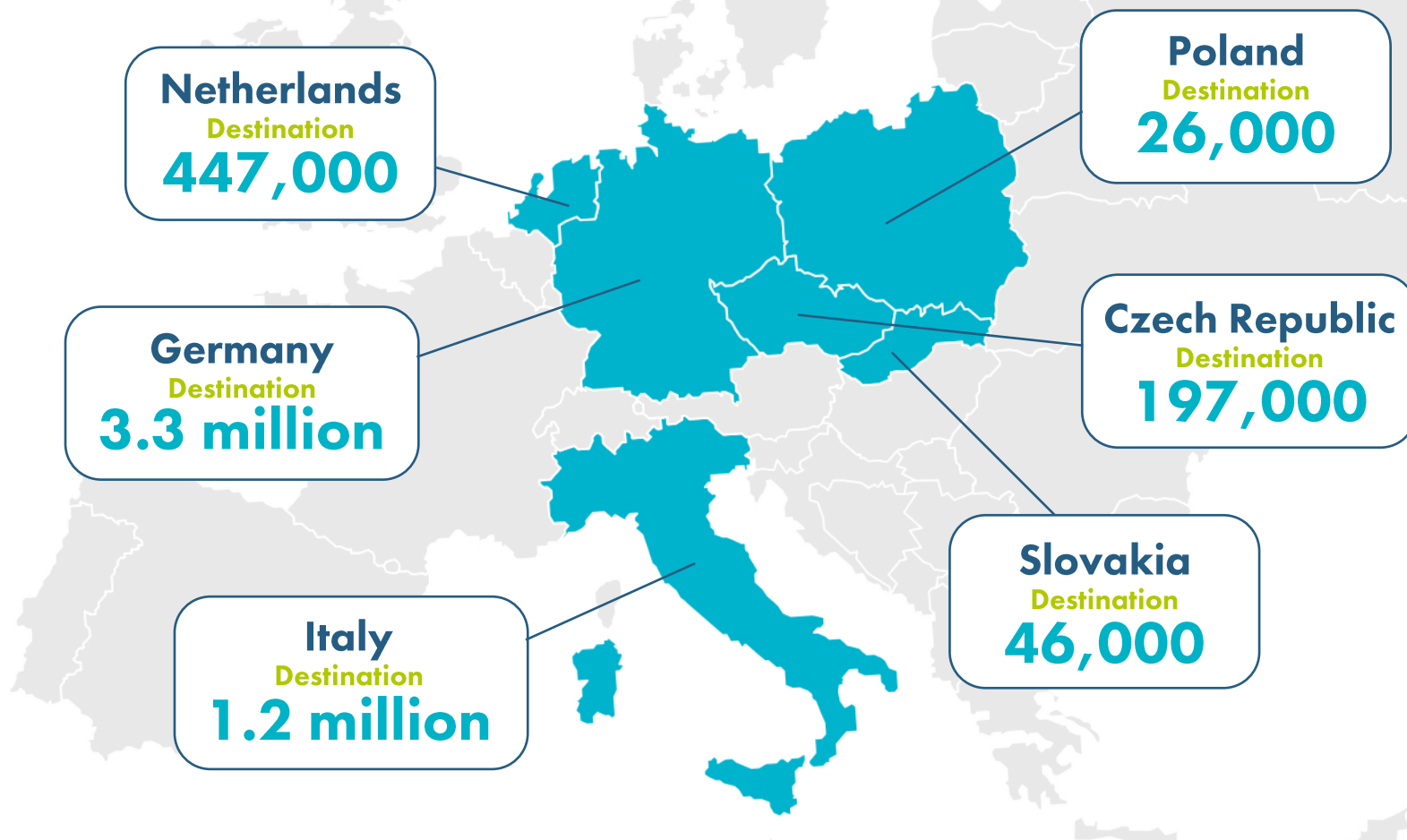
# +1.2%

Intra-EU mobility continued to grow between 2018-2019.  
Will this trend continue post pandemic?

# Almost 50%

of EU movers came from Romania, Poland, Italy, Portugal, and Bulgaria.

## Countries with most EU Resident movers



# The economic benefits of international mobility

**Free circulation of people** is one of the 4 main fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the EU (the other 3 are free movement of goods, capital and establishment/providing services).

At Gi Group, from an institutional point of view, we clearly support greater openness towards the possibility of international mobility of people across Europe for work opportunities, but **we also reinforce the**

**need for awareness in activating policies to encourage the return of workers to their homeland, assess their increased employability, and define paths to enhance the value of skills and experience developed.**

This is, in essence, a circular economy model which helps generate **value for all stakeholders involved in the ecosystem.**



Job mobility across European countries brings with it **sizable positive economic effects.**

First and foremost workers are able to substantially improve their living conditions, directly contribute to the GDP of their elected countries and bring added value to their adoptive country by undertaking jobs that are **rejected by local workers or for which the relevant skills are inexistent locally.** In the instances of reverse mobility, newly acquired skill sets are then returned to the homeland **further enriching the pool of available resources.**

David Zorn and Josef Zweimuller (Migration and Labor Market Integration in Europe – University of Zurich, 2021) found that the **complete removal of mobility barriers is a crucial factor to create wage convergences across Europe,** especially true between

2008 and 2018. Over that period of time a gap reduction in wages between eastern EEA members and western European countries was evident. With the exceptions of Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia, all countries reduced their gap compared with the benchmark country, Germany.

Moreover, the paper also demonstrated that **job mobility around Europe contributed to creating higher earning gains for movers.**

Zorn and Zweimuller estimate that 12.7 million movers obtained an average PPP earnings gain of about 6,500 euros per year. These numbers mean 83.2 billion euros from the total of movers in EU (0.5% of EU GDP) while the movers from EU Eastern countries received earning gains equal to 67.9 billion Euros (2.8% of the whole GDP of EU Eastern countries).

**+ 6,500€**

**Average PPP earnings gain for EU movers, according to 2021 University of Zurich study.**

The positive effects of job mobility across the EU are tangible. A number of studies conducted over the last decade strongly indicate that **mobility directly contributes to growth and social cohesion**. In 'Social Working and Labor Mobility' (Leibniz Information Centre for Economics, 2018), Klaus Zimmermann (Professor Emeritus at Bonn University and president of Global Labour Organization) noted that 'migration creates potentials for the economy and social development... not only supporting the optimal allocations of resources but **also leading to balanced adjustments across regions and countries in response to asymmetric shocks**'. This observation is supported by the work of other research papers too, such as Constant and Zimmermann, 'International Handbook on the Economics of Migration – Edward Elgar, 2013, Zimmermann, Migration,

Jobs and Integration in Europe, Migration Policy Practice, Vol. IV. Oct-Nov. 2014). Positive effects were experienced by those countries that received the workers, **including economic stimulation and even to the extent of reducing native unemployment when the jobs occupied were complementary to native roles**. Akai, Constant, Giulietti and Guzi, 'The Impact of Immigration on the Well-Being of Natives', Journal of Economic Behaviour & Organization, 2014 established that the **wellbeing of natives is higher with more migrants and more different ethnicities**. A case in point is Germany, where the positive effects of ethnic diversity on the well-being of German natives is demonstrated involving, in particular, **immigrant groups that are able to create strong cultural, social and economic bridges with Germany**.

# 2 out of 3

For every three people who leave their country, eventually two return.

# What workers are seeking Gi Group benefits

In making the move to seek work outside their homeland, **people need to have considerable motivation.**

Whilst on the one side there are a whole series of positive gains, there are also **considerable obstacles to overcome too.**

On the plus side there are better working conditions, better pay and more favourable contracts, increased health coverage, additional training and upskilling opportunities, language skill stimulation and many other factors found within the workplace.

Even outside the work environment there can be

motivating opportunities connected with lifestyle and social scenarios among other factors.

But there are a number of obstacles that need to be overcome in order to gain access to those positives: physical distance from family members, or the complexities of family upheaval and relocation, social and cultural integration barriers, language difficulties, climatic conditions and others.

**Workers' objectives are to maximise their access to all the opportunities, whilst minimising the discomfort of moving away from home.**



Moving a workforce from one country to another helps clients in the destination country respond to candidate and/or skill shortage. At a first glance, a company's priority might appear to be exclusively aimed at optimising labour costs, benefitting from more advantageous hiring conditions. However, **potential economic savings are a lesser accomplishment** when compared to a much broader achievement:

**overcoming candidate scarcity and skill mismatch issues which can put the business' long-term stability at risk.**

**The MoveUp solution** includes the entire process of recruitment and selection of a potential workforce in the country of origin, as well as the management of all relevant administrative processes (visas, travel arrangements, housing, contracts and others) and the management of the workforce in the destination country. This **innovative all-in-one solution** permits our clients to use our expertise to move workers to areas where certain skills are hard to come by, and permits ethical and reliable management of both

routine and sensitive issues. The **focus is very much on the worker** and ensuring to ease their transition in every way possible.

Gi Group, via its MoveUp solution, **literally accompanies workers to their new countries**, supporting them with relocation services (sourcing accommodation, opening bank accounts, accessing medical services, paperwork, language courses and so much more). This enables **the workers to be included and accepted within their migrant community whilst also easing their entry into local communities.**

The Gi Group community manager plays a vital role in this context. They are a point of reference for the movers, and help them get acquainted with their new life, whilst reducing the impact of change which could potentially be negative. The greater the speed of transition into the social fabric of the adopted country, higher levels of tranquility, well-being, optimism are gained, **thus leading to better performance and productivity.**

At Gi Group more than

# 70

**specialised staff members are focused each and every day** on providing solid support for workers, staff located at Gi Group's T&P key European countries.

# A map of Gi Group countries

As **one of the few players in the arena**, Gi Group is able to easily map trends of mover flows across Europe. **Mobility flows are contingent in nature**, linked

to regulatory and economic opportunities. In 2022, we can expect an increasing shift from the current mobility routes, indeed **even beyond the European Union**.

## Key Sourcing Countries

Where foreign workers come from:

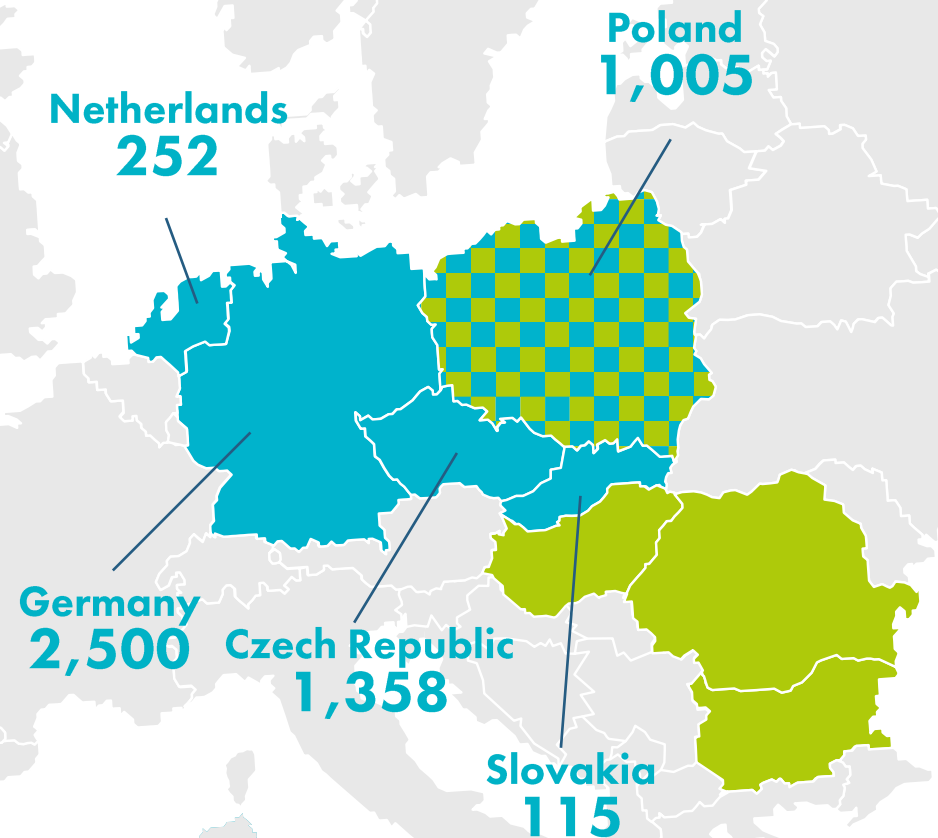
**Ukraine\***, **Poland**, **Bulgaria**, **Hungary**, **Romania**



## Key Destination Countries & number of candidates employed by Gi Group in 2021

Where foreign workers migrate to the most:

**Czech Republic** (1,358), **Germany** (2,500), **Netherlands** (252), **Poland** (1,005), **Slovakia** (115)



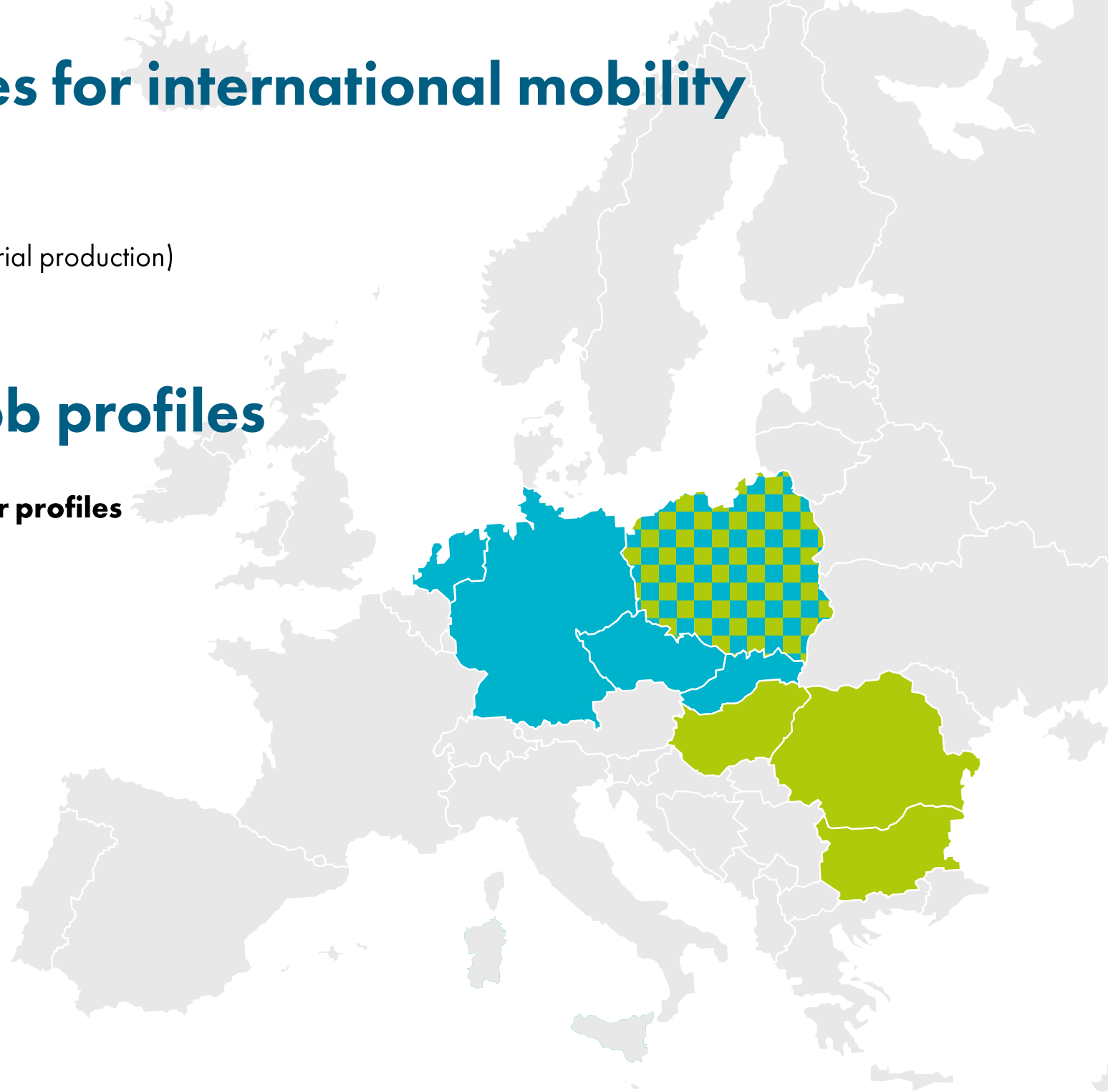
\*Non EU country, data pre-Ukrainian crisis

# Priority industries for international mobility

- **Logistics**
- **FMCG**
- **Manufacturing** (primarily industrial production)
- **Automotive**

## Most required job profiles

- **General/unskilled blue collar profiles**
  - Warehouse operators
  - Production workers
  - Factory workers
- **Skilled blue collar profiles**
  - Specialised technicians
  - Maintenance operators
  - CNC operators
  - Welders
  - Forklift drivers



# The future of EU mobility

“In line with EU values and ambitions, Gi Group – through its **MoveUp solution** – is committed to partnering with companies to **tackle global competition and workforce shortage**. We also **help people at high risk of unemployment achieve important life projects**, enabling moves to where opportunities can be fulfilled.”

**Antonio Bonardo,**  
Gi Group Global Public Affairs Director

Let's take a look then at how the EU commission and national governments can help improve job mobility across Europe whilst generating value.

The European Labour Authority founded in 2019 should be a key institution in facilitating movement across borders.

According to Jan Cremers, senior researcher at Tilburg Law School ('The European Labour Authority and Rights-based Labour Mobility', Academy of European Law Forum 2020) the scope of ELA is to **“help individuals and business to get most out of the opportunities offered by free movement and to ensure fair labour mobility.”**

According to the Commission, it will **serve a double**

**purpose of helping national authorities to fight fraud and abuse and making mobility easier for citizens.**

An additional piece of legislation, the Directive 2009/50/EC which pertains to the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment, has led to the creation of the so-called **“EU Blue Card”**.

The provides a fast-track procedure for issuing a special residence and work permit, enabling card holders to take up highly qualified employment in Member States.

In short, the ELA mandate is to **slim-down the number of bodies controlling cross-border mobility, in order to guarantee transparency.**

The main thrust of activity will be directed towards enhancing job mobility across EU countries, by fostering collaboration between key institutions, EU authorities and **private employment agencies such as Gi Group.**

In August 2021 **Germany** generated a new political agreement to facilitate the entry of migrants and asylum seekers to fill the gap of 400,000 new workers which are required.

In **Poland** they have begun to address the issue of professional qualifications and diploma validation

needed to fill roles for the highly-skilled.

In **Czech Republic** a legislative amendment in 2019 allows for simplified and expanded government programmes aimed at encouraging economic migration. Finally, in the **Netherlands**, there are at least two sectors which largely depend on migrants, and over recent decades the country has moved from being at the forefront of multiculturalism to witnessing a backlash from the far-right.

Recent moves to counteract resentment and intolerance of the incoming migrants are **Dutch language courses, plus other courses focused on general knowledge about the host country, its labour market and its society.**



# A circular socioeconomic model

We are privileged here at Gi Group to have an **overall vision regarding international mobility**.

Much attention is focused on **destination countries**, yet we must remember the benefits to potentially be gained by sourcing countries which over the medium and long term will reap great benefits if they are able to attract the outgoing workforce back home.

Sourcing countries may **improve the skills and qualifications of its human capital** as those who return **enhance the**

**skill pool** due to their experiences abroad.

Consequently, this is a key element in the **economic development of the sourcing country**, and **active policies** at a national level play a key role ensuring that **international mobility can become a true upskilling engine**, generating value in the society of their country of origin.

**To explore International Mobility opportunities for your organisation, contact us [here](#) or visit our website.**





**Group**  
YOUR JOB, OUR WORK