



**SOCIAL PARTNERS HEARING ON THE FAIR LABOUR MOBILITY PACKAGE
6 NOVEMBER 2025
BACKGROUND NOTE**

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE HEARING

With the emphasis on the strengthening of the single market, simplification of rules and procedures, and boosting competitiveness comes a strong need to ensure free and fair labour mobility.

The [mission letter](#) of Executive Vice-President Mînzatu emphasized the need to facilitate labour mobility with the support of a strong and empowered European Labour Authority and to modernise, simplify and digitalise social security coordination.

The [Letta](#) and [Draghi](#) reports underline that movement of workers within the EU is still limited and that labour mobility can help alleviate existing shortages by improving the allocation of skills and labour capacity within and across Member States.

To further enhance fair mobility, the Letta report suggests improving the coordination of social security, completing the Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI), pursuing the European Social Security Pass (ESSPASS) pilot activities, strengthening the ELA, clarifying the legal framework for the posting of third country nationals, strengthening support mechanisms for EU citizens returning to their home countries after working abroad, initiatives for cross-border workers, digital nomads and intra-EU seasonal workers and improving access to information for social security rights.

All stakeholders have identified fair labour mobility as a key priority, as shown during the [implementation dialogue on fair labour mobility](#) organised by EVP Mînzatu (16 September 2025). During the consultations on the Quality Jobs Roadmap topics relevant to labour mobility were also raised.

The right to free movement and the freedom to provide services are cornerstones of the single market. Since the 1950s, the EU has developed comprehensive legislation to support these freedoms, ensuring that insured persons do not lose their social security rights when moving across borders, facilitating free movement, and maintaining fair competition. These rules have evolved and keep evolving to meet changing needs and challenges. The [revision of the social security coordination rules](#), the [e-Declaration proposal in the area of posting of workers](#) and the [Talent Pool proposal](#) are among the latest initiatives taken.

Following the announcement in the Single Market Strategy of May 2025, the Fair labour mobility package is part of the [Commission Work Programme 2026](#). The package will complement the current social acquis in order to maintain, in a context of changing labour markets, modern, simplified rules and procedures while fully making use of the opportunities digitalisation offers.

The Fair labour mobility package will contain the following legislative initiatives for 2026:

- A proposal for a European Social Security Pass (ESSPASS);
- A proposal to strengthen the European Labour Authority (ELA);
- A Skills Portability Initiative.

Other challenges related to digitalisation and social security coordination ⁽¹⁾, posting of third country nationals and cross-border subcontracting ⁽²⁾ are also examined as part of the preparatory work and may be the subject of additional initiatives to be announced in the package.

The purpose of the hearing is to inform the social partners on the forthcoming Fair Labour Mobility Package and obtain their views on two proposals announced in the Commission Work Programme: the ESSPASS proposal and the strengthening of ELA.

The Skills Portability Initiative will be subject to a separate dedicated hearing.

Social partners are invited in the first part of the meeting to express their views on the general approach taken on labour mobility and any further challenges that may need to be addressed as part of the Fair labour mobility package.

Question for discussion:

- In your view, what is necessary at EU level to respond effectively to the current challenges in labour mobility?

⁽¹⁾ Depending on the ongoing revision of the social security coordination Regulations

⁽²⁾ Enforcement challenges related to subcontracting in general are in first instance planned to be addressed as part of the Job Quality Roadmap

PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN SOCIAL SECURITY PASS

The European Social Security Pass (ESSPASS) builds upon the results of its pilot phase ⁽³⁾, which was announced in the [European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan](#) and the recent piloting carried out with support of the Digital Europe Programme. The initiative follows up on the [2023 Commission's Communication on digitalisation in social security coordination](#), the [November 2023 Council conclusions](#), and is part of the efforts to further modernise, simplify and digitalise cross-border social security coordination.

While digital initiatives such as the [Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information](#) and the [Single Digital Gateway Regulation](#) have facilitated procedures in social security coordination, proving and verifying social security rights in cross border situations still involves time-consuming processes that may require the use of [physical documents](#). This reliance on paperwork creates administrative obstacles for citizens, but also for companies when sending their employees to work temporarily abroad.

These challenges can discourage citizens from exercising their right to free movement and deter companies from conducting business abroad, limiting benefits from the single market.

[ESSPASS](#) aims to address these issues by establishing a standardised digital solution for the issuance and cross-border verification of social security attestations (i.e. portable documents and the European Health Insurance Card). The initiative is expected to take the form of a Regulation ensuring that Member States and relevant institutions fully utilise and accept the ESSPASS solution and to issue the portable documents in the appropriate digital format. Its objectives include:

- Facilitating the application of social security coordination rules by simplifying procedures and reducing administrative hurdles for citizens, businesses and public bodies.
- Enhancing citizens' and workers' access to social security rights across Europe.
- Facilitating the process for employers to comply with their obligations (in particular as regards the portable document A1)
- Simplifying the work of national authorities and health care providers by enabling them to instantly verify the authenticity, integrity and validity of social security attestations, while reducing the risk of error and fraud.

⁽³⁾ Over the past two years, financed under the Digital Europe Programme, two consortia (DC4EU and EBSI-Vector) of Member State institutions have piloted the ESSPASS solution for the portable document A1 and the European Health Insurance Card.

ESSPASS intends to build on other EU initiatives, notably the [Single Digital Gateway Regulation](#), the [EU digital identity \(EUDI\) framework](#) and wallets, and the [Interoperable Europe Act](#).

Questions for discussion:

1. What are the concrete challenges employers and workers are confronted with in the context of the application of social security coordination rules, focusing on those that could be remedied through digitalisation?
2. What contribution a European Social Security Pass would make to a better functioning system of social security coordination to the benefit of both workers and employers, as well as to the fight against fraud?
3. What is your view on the inclusion of other labour mobility relevant documents ⁽⁴⁾ in the EUDI-wallet, beyond those foreseen under social security coordination?

⁽⁴⁾ Note that the question of including in the EUDI Wallet documents related to qualifications and skills will be discussed in the separate dedicated hearing on the Skills Portability Initiative.

STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN LABOUR AUTHORITY

On 26 May 2025, the Commission adopted a [report evaluating ELA's performance](#) under Article 40 of its Founding Regulation ⁽⁵⁾. The evaluation identified areas to be addressed under the current mandate to improve ELA's effectiveness and called upon ELA to develop an action plan to this effect.

At the same time, the evaluation notes certain limitations in the mandate that could affect ELA's potential. Targeted modifications of the mandate could strengthen ELA, including its efficiency and effectiveness, such as enhanced data handling competencies, improved cooperation with Member States, including in terms of information provision, ELA's role vis-à-vis third-country nationals and companies (especially SMEs) recruiting and employing third-country nationals, ELA's responsibilities with regard to the development of EURES, and the conversion of a number of seconded national experts into statutory staff.

Strengthening ELA's mandate could aim to tackle barriers to labour mobility in the EU and contribute to improving the situation of mobile EU and migrant workers, by streamlining processes, providing thorough analyses, and fostering cooperation, creating a fairer system that enhances economic resilience and boosts competitiveness. It could also aim to better protect non-EU workers' rights notably through increased support to inspections at national level and expanding the mandate of the authority. It could furthermore better involve social partners who provide information to workers and employers.

The revision of the ELA's mandate could also generate positive social and economic impacts by improving the enforcement of EU labour mobility rules, helping to protect mobile and posted workers, including non-EU nationals, and supporting fair competition among employers.

National labour inspectorates, public employment services and social partners would benefit from more coordinated inspections, streamlined information exchange, and better analytical tools. Simplified governance of the EURES portal and improved platform usability may boost cross-border recruitment, including in shortage sectors. These impacts are likely to be strongest in border regions and Member States with high mobility flows.

Questions for discussion:

1. What are the main challenges as regards fair labour mobility and effective social security coordination in the EU that should be addressed by ELA already under its current mandate?
2. What should be the areas in which ELA's mandate could be strengthened, considering also your experience of working and interacting with ELA?

⁽⁵⁾ [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1149 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019](#)