

Bringing Innovative Talent Mobility Solutions To Frankfurt

With major multinationals like Volkswagen, Allianz, Siemens, Deutsche Bank, Daimler AG, BMW, Munich Re, and Bosch calling Germany home – and Frankfurt’s position as a central European business and professional consultancy hub – it is an ideal location to explore unique workforce challenges and solutions.

Frankfurt is also one of the world’s most important monetary policy-setting and financial services centres, hosting both the European and the German Central Banks (ECB and Bundesbank), and more than 200 other financial institutions.

But, as in other regions around the globe, Frankfurt’s ability to fully capitalise on business opportunities is challenged by talent shortages and skills gaps – challenges that demand a new workforce approach. Increasingly, cross-border workers are stepping in to fill that gap.

One Solution: Cross-Border Workers

What exactly are cross-border workers? “Put simply, cross-border workers are people who live in one Member State and work in another”, notes a 2019 study commissioned for the European Parliament on employment barriers in border regions. “Cross-border work differs from migration in that workers’ place of residence does not change if they take up employment in a neighbouring country. Instead, workers maintain their primary residence by commuting on a regular basis to work on a different side of their national border”.

While cross-border commuters in Europe still represent less than 10 percent of the workforce, their numbers are rising, particularly in border regions around Germany and neighbouring middle-European countries. What’s driving the interest in cross-border work opportunities? The desire for something better.

“Whilst there are many motivations to work in a neighbouring border region, one of the most important is the opportunity for individuals to balance well-paid job opportunities with a good quality of life and affordable accommodation in the country of residence,” notes EuroStat.

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Challenges to Attracting Cross-Border Workers

Recruiting cross-border labour is not without its hurdles, however. Addressing those can help a business more effectively compete for top talent, and ensure that top workers secure the best jobs. Among the challenges are:

- **Tax and immigration.** Countries are developing an increasing amount of regulations around cross-border labour to ensure they collect taxes and social security contributions, causing tax and immigration authorities to more regularly exchange data. Companies must consider tax-effective compensation packages and ensure compliance for cross-border employees. These policies can be extremely costly from both a financial and administrative perspective.
- **Language barriers.** The potential cross-border commuter must be able to sufficiently speak the country’s language to do the job and navigate the country. “The inability to speak the language of a Member State across the border not only hinders the chances of an individual to find work in another country, but also limits the extent to which different national administrations can really work together,” noted the EU researchers.
- **Access to the workplace.** How will the cross-border workforce travel back and forth to work? Long wait lines at border crossings and non-harmonised ticket pricing systems are deterrents to moving workers across borders. And once in country, workers must navigate by car or public transportation through their work week. A savvy employer might help ease that challenge by assisting with car or public transportation access and costs.
- **Benefits.** Generally, cross-border workers are subject to the social security law of the country in which they work. In Germany, your cross-border workers also can qualify for benefits for children up to age 18.
- **Information gap.** To attract top cross-border talent, employers must do a better job of communicating job opportunities, country requirements, and benefits of cross-border work with their company. Social and digital media can help attract, develop and retain talent and foster greater cross-border collaboration.

- **Socio-cultural differences.** As many as 20 percent of respondents in a 2019 survey said perceived cultural differences made them less likely to seek cross-border work opportunities. Without accurate information about culture, work conditions and pay, prospective mobile workers may think twice about seeking work across the border.
- **Education and Qualifications.** One of the biggest barriers to working across borders is inconsistency in recognising education and qualifications. In some regions, simply recognising university diplomas can be a lengthy undertaking, and translating those documents costly for prospective employees. Coordination and cooperation between governments and business groups is important to streamline the process for faster, easier vetting of applicants.

Innovative Approaches to Workforce Mobility

As companies seek innovative ways to source and develop the talent and skills they need, approaches such as cross-border commuting, short-term or rotational assignments, and remote and project-based work are on the rise. Successful navigation of business transformation while developing a workforce with the right blend of skills calls for an integrated approach between companies, government and institutions of higher learning.

Learn more about these, and other innovative EU workforce mobility solutions, at the Worldwide ERC® Frankfurt Mobility Summit on 12 February 2020. Our content-filled day event in Frankfurt will bring together a blend of skills and perspectives to foster collaboration on current challenges and opportunities. Join 200-plus expected delegates from more than 120 organisations worldwide as we explore the innovative mobility approaches to attract new global talent, build skills and foster business growth.

The event will take place on 12th February, 2020 at the Intercontinental Frankfurt, Wilhelm-Leuschner-Straße 43, 60329, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. For further information: www.worldwideerc.org/events-directory/frankfurt-summit/home.



NOURAN ZARROUG

Nouran Zarroug heads up the EMEA Region for Worldwide ERC and is based in London. Nouran's career spans working and living across 2 continents and having been a 3rd culture kid herself is deeply passionate about the Mobility industry and truly understands the challenges that come with it. Nouran has over 10 years' experience working across both the Talent Mobility and Business Travel sectors where she has supported many multinational organisations on their cross-border talent strategies. For more information on Worldwide ERC and their learning and event platforms, please contact Nouran via: NZarroug@worldwideerc.org

What's driving the interest in cross-border work opportunities?



Mobility **Stability.**

Fifty years. One owner. One global commitment to creating futures where people thrive. In an industry constantly changing, we're the partner you can trust for unmatched reliability, extraordinary agility and everything you need to propel your workforce mobility programme to new heights.

Are you ready?

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