

WORK PROGRAMME

2021

Work Programme of the European Labour Authority 2021

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If you have questions or comments in relation to this document please send them (quoting the reference) to EMPL-ELA-INFO@ec.europa.eu.

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Introduction

2021 will be a year of transition for the European Labour Authority (the Authority; ELA), on all fronts. On the administrative side, the Authority will see the new Executive Director taking office, the move to Bratislava, and financial autonomy. On the operational side, the European Coordination Office (ECO) of the EURES network and the European Platform tackling undeclared work (the Platform) will be integrated into the Authority.

2021 will however also be a year marked by the COVID-19 crisis – if not actively, then at least by its aftermath. The extent and length of its impact on cross-border labour mobility is not yet foreseeable. What nevertheless already transcends is that the COVID-19 pandemic confirmed the need for better provision of information to individuals and employers, better cooperation and exchange of information between competent national authorities, and a more effective enforcement of EU rules. In this, there is a clear role for ELA. Within the remit of its current capacity, the Authority will develop COVID-19 adaptation and response measures that will span across ELA's tasks. Most importantly, the Authority will work in close cooperation with national administrations, the Commission and relevant Union bodies to continue ensuring and strengthening fair labour mobility.

The above-described context of transition and crisis response requires ELA to be, more than ever, ambitious but realistic. Ambitious, because the Authority is now ready to go beyond its 'two-priority strategy' (i.e. 'facilitating access to information on labour mobility' and 'coordination and support of concerted and joint inspections'), kick-starting activities in all the areas where the Authority has carried out preparatory actions so far. Realistic, because it knows that by the end of 2021, it will still operate with only 60 % of its total staff, 60 % of its budget and the gradual arrival of its middle management.

This Work Programme sets a line of continuity with its predecessor in that it expands and articulates activities started in the two priority areas of information and inspections while it initiates activities in all the areas where the Authority has carried out preparatory actions. Building on the positive experience made in the Working Groups on Information and Inspections, this Work Programme proposes to extend the good practice of gathering experts to think and design the Authority's other tasks – on a regular or ad hoc basis. This approach will prove useful when eventually developing a shared methodology for risk assessment, a procedure for following up on unresolved issues between Member States or ELA's mediation procedure.

In terms of communication, 2020 has seen a steady development in the digital presence of ELA, with an increasing social media following and a more comprehensive website. ELA has also joined in a communication campaign for the first time in 2020, the #EU4FairWork campaign. There will be a boost in ELA's communication in 2021 with a new website, more investment in social media and new communication campaigns.

In 2021, ELA will also start developing its Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which will accompany the drafting of ELA's next programming documents and consolidated annual activity reports. KPIs are a set of performance-related indicators that will allow for an effective assessment of results achieved against ELA's objectives, for both the operational side and the management of human and financial resources.

Last but not least, ELA will work towards defining a Gender and Diversity Strategy in 2021, with a view to further consolidating the gender dimension and equality mainstreaming of its work, throughout its core task but also within its administrative structure, to ensure equal opportunities for all. This is also in line with the ambitions set by and at the EU level. A first set of activities targeting sectors where a vast majority of employees are women (e.g. cross-border care and private household services) will be carried out in 2021. The integration of a Gender and Diversity Strategy will be strengthened over the coming years, also in consultation and cooperation with all relevant actors at EU and national level.

This Work Programme paves the way for the preparation of an ambitious and forward-looking Single Programming Document 2022-2024, which is being drafted in line with the activities outlined in this document. Indeed, 2021 will mark the transition of the Authority into its first multiannual programming cycle.

List of abbreviations

ABAC:	ABAC: Accrual Based Accounting System
CdT:	CdT: Translation Centre of the Bodies of the European Union
ECO:	ECO: European Coordination Office (EURES)
ECG:	ECG: European Coordination Group (EURES)
EEA:	EEA: European Economic Area
EFTA:	EFTA: European Free Trade Agreement
ELA:	ELA: European Labour Authority
EURES:	EURES: European Network of Employment Services
IMI:	IMI: Internal Market Information System
NCO:	NCO: National Coordination Office (EURES)
NLO:	NLO: National Liaison Officer
SLIC:	SLIC: Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee

Mission Statement

The European Labour Authority is an EU body established by Regulation (EU) 2019/1149 of the European Parliament and of the Council, which entered into force on 31 July 2019.

The objective of the Authority¹ shall be to contribute to ensuring fair labour mobility across the Union and assist Member States and the European Commission in the coordination of social security systems within the Union.

The Authority will improve cooperation and the effective application and enforcement of EU rules in the labour market, by carrying out its tasks in full cooperation with the Union institutions and bodies and the Member States' public institutions and bodies as well as citizens, individuals and employers, social partners and civil society, while avoiding any duplication of work and promoting synergy and complementarity.



The Authority will deliver the following essential tasks for a well-functioning European labour market:

1. Facilitate access to information to individuals and employers, and coordinate EURES;
2. Facilitate cooperation and the exchange of information between Member States with a view to the consistent, efficient and effective application and enforcement of relevant Union law;
3. Coordinate and support concerted and joint inspections;
4. Carry out analyses and risk assessment of issues of cross-border labour mobility;
5. Support Member States with capacity building regarding the effective application and enforcement of relevant Union law;
6. Support Member States in tackling undeclared work;
7. Mediate disputes between Member States on the application of relevant Union law.

This is consistent with the aim to further implement and develop the social dimension of the Union, and to promote social progress and a renewed upward social convergence through efforts at all levels aligning with the European Pillar of Social Rights jointly proclaimed by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission in November 2017.

Ensuring fair labour mobility in Europe is central to delivering on the principles and rights of the European Pillar of Social Rights. Within its mandate, the Authority will do so by ensuring that workers' and individuals' rights to equal treatment and opportunities in the areas of labour mobility and social security coordination are enforced in cross-border situations. At the same time ELA is committed to implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals² in all its policies, especially referring to the 8th Goal aiming at ensuring inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

¹See Article 2 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1149

²The EU is fully committed to being a frontrunner in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, together with its Member States. The EU has committed to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in both its internal and external policies. The Sustainable Development Goals feature in all of the European Commission's 10 priorities.

The institutional legal set-up of the Authority is positioned within the broader framework of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), Article 3 and the fundamental principles of the internal market of the Union as reflected in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), in particular Articles 9, 46 and 48. In accordance with Article 1(4) of the ELA Regulation, the scope of activities of the Authority covers the following Union acts:

- ▶ Free movement of workers (Regulation (EU) No 492/2011; Directive 2014/54/EU);
- ▶ EURES (Regulation (EU) 2016/589³) and Regulation (EU) 492/2011;
- ▶ Carrying out concerted and joint inspections in accordance with Article 10 of Directive 2014/67/EU;
- ▶ Support of risk assessment referred to in Article 10 of Directive 2014/67/EU;
- ▶ Posting of workers (Directive 96/71/EC (as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/957) and Directive 2014/67/EU);
- ▶ Social security coordination (Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009, Regulation (EU) 1231/2010) and insofar as they are still applicable, Council Regulations (EEC) No 1408/71 and (EEC) No 547/72, and (EC) No 859/2003;
- ▶ Social aspects of international road transport (Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 as amended by Regulation (EU) 2020/1054; Directive 2006/22/EU as revised by Directive (EU) 2020/1057; Directive (EU) 2020/1057; Regulation (EC) No 1071/2009 as revised by Regulation (EU) 2020/1055).
- ▶ Set-up of a single Union website in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1724 in compliance with the principles set out in the Directive (EU) 2016/2102; in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Directive (EU) 2014/54;
- ▶ Cooperation with other Union information services, taking full advantage and ensuring consistency with the Your Europe portal, which is to form the backbone of the single digital gateway established by Regulation (EU) 2018/1724;
- ▶ Ensuring openness as regards the operations of the Authority via public access to documents, based on Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

³Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1255 of 11 July 2017 on a template for the description of national systems and procedures to admit organisations to become EURES Members and Partners.

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1256 of 11 July 2017 on templates and procedures for the exchange of information on the EURES network national work programmes at Union level.

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1257 of 11 July 2017 on the technical standards and formats required for a uniform system to enable matching of job vacancies with job applications and CVs on the EURES Portal.

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/170 of 2 February 2018 on uniform detailed specifications for data collection and analysis to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the EURES network.

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/1020 of 18 July 2018 on the adoption and updating of the list of skills, competences and occupations of the European classification for the purpose of automated matching through the EURES common IT platform

Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/1021 of 18 July 2018 on the adoption of technical standards and formats necessary for the operation of the automated matching through the common IT platform using the European classification and the interoperability between national systems and the European classification.

1.

GENERAL CONTEXT

This section presents (policy) factors that are expected to influence the Authority's work in 2021.

COVID-19 pandemic

EU labour mobility has shown an upward trend throughout the last decade, almost doubling in numbers compared to a decade ago. Whether such an increase is still foreseen for the period beyond 2020, the year of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic is as yet unpredictable. Due to this, there are many possible developments: labour mobility might change in its frequency (short or long term), direction (return mobility or increase of mobility from high-unemployment to low-unemployment countries), target groups and target sectors. Whatever the short and mid-term development, the need for swift information exchange and effective cooperation between national authorities and for concerted administrative action, including organisation of targeted cross-border inspections, is more important than ever. The pandemic has also raised new challenges related to undeclared work, whilst highlighting the importance of encouraging the transition to declared work. It has also given more visibility to the vulnerability of certain workers, such as seasonal workers to precarious working and living conditions, and in some cases exacerbated these conditions. The European Parliament⁴, Council⁵ and Commission⁶ have called for appropriate actions to be taken at EU and national level, also in cooperation with ELA, to address these challenges and issues. Lastly, the pandemic has had a differentiated impact on women and men as well as other societal groups in the world of work.

Mobility Package

In the road transport sector, the Mobility Package was adopted on 9 July 2020. The co-legislators have agreed on important amendments to legislation that are covered by the scope of activities of ELA, such as rest and driving times and the *lex specialis* on posting in the international road transport sector, and in some cases explicitly assigned a role to the Authority. The Authority will support the Member States and the Commission to ensure timely and extensive application of the new rules within the scope of its competences.

Social Security Coordination

Free movement of persons would not be possible in practice without European rules on the coordination of social security. Those rules guarantee that persons moving from one Member State to another do not lose their social security rights acquired in another Member State. The 2016 Commission proposal⁷ modernises the current rules to ensure that they are fair, simpler to apply and easier to enforce. The negotiations on this file are still ongoing.

Single digital gateway

The Single digital gateway⁸ will enable access to the information, administrative procedures and assistance services that individuals and businesses need to make the most of the single market. By the end of 2020, individuals and companies active across EU borders will easily be able to find out what rules and assistance services apply in their new residency.

The Single digital gateway constitutes the overarching governance framework for the provision of information on single market issues. The Authority will contribute to the overall endeavour with a specific focus on labour mobility issues, in close coordination with the Commission. For example, information on living and working conditions provided by the EURES portal falls under the information provisions covered by the Single Digital Gateway Regulation.

⁴ European Parliament Resolution of 19 June 2020 on European protection of cross-border and seasonal workers in the context of the COVID-19 crisis

⁵ Council Conclusions of 9 October 2020 on improving the working and living conditions of seasonal and other mobile workers

⁶ Guidelines on seasonal workers in the EU in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak, adopted by the European Commission on 16 July 2020

⁷ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16784&langId=en>

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2018/1724

Moreover, EURES is one of the seven assistance services that are 'automatically' part of the gateway⁹. Therefore, the provisions on assistance services including data collection and user feedback apply to it. The EURES portal falls within the information strand of the single digital gateway (Annex I).

EURES

The Commission is currently preparing the second biannual EURES activity report covering the period from July 2018 until June 2020, which should be presented in early 2021. By May 2021, the Commission will also publish an ex post evaluation report on the operation and effects of the EURES Regulation. Both the report and the ex post evaluation will accompany the transfer of EURES to ELA and feed into the development of EURES under the Authority.

Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights

The European Pillar of Social Rights is the EU social strategy to make sure that the transitions of climate-neutrality, digitalisation and demographic change, as well as the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, are socially fair and just. To this end, the European Pillar of Social Rights provides a compass to tackle the social and economic challenges of our time. To support the implementation of the Pillar, the Commission will launch the Pillar's Action Plan¹⁰ (to be presented in early 2021) to roll-out further initiatives to deliver on the rights and principles enshrined in the Pillar with a view to reconciling the social and the market in today's modern economy.

Gender and Diversity Strategy

In recent years, the EU has put a more pronounced focus on fairness aiming at inclusiveness¹¹. Gender and diversity mainstreaming requires long-term development and change programmes, and the inclusion of a gender and diversity perspective in all decision-making processes at all levels¹². Subject to the Gender and Diversity strategy that is to be developed over the course of 2021, ELA will further consolidate gender, diversity and equality mainstreaming of its work, throughout its core tasks but also within its administrative structure. For example, during the planning phase of cross border inspections ELA will focus also on sectors (e.g. cross-border care-taking and private household services) where a vast majority of the staff are women, thus contributing to ensure equal and fair working conditions. An information campaign may be launched targeting these sectors with the aim of informing workers of their rights in the hosting country and to protect them from abuse by their employers. The European Platform tackling undeclared work will also give a focus on the HORECA and care and personal household services sectors, as outlined in its Work Programme 2021-2022. These are only examples of how ELA will integrate a gender and diversity dimension into its work, eventually cutting across all the ELA's pillars.

⁹ Annex III of Regulation (EU) 2018/1724

¹⁰ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1226>

¹¹ The latest example is the announcement on 18 September 2020 by President von der Leyen of an EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025.

¹² The ultimate aim is to build a diverse equal society, with government agencies providing equal conditions and services for everyone. It is a matter of justice, but also of quality and efficacy of publicly financed activities. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means to achieve the goal of diversity and equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender and diversity perspectives and attention to the goal of diversity equality are central to all internal and external activities: policy development, strategy, labour inspection, dialogue, research, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes, projects and sectoral strategies. Also staff training need to be strengthened in order to increase sensitivity to the whole range of gender and diversity issues, and appreciation of how diversity enhances the effectiveness of work.

2.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

This section defines the actions to be carried out by the Authority during the year 2021.

2.1. Facilitating access to information and relevant services on labour mobility

The Authority will pursue the objective of contributing to ensuring fair labour mobility in Europe by facilitating access to information on rights and obligations, providing job-matching services across borders through the EURES network and working with other relevant EU assistance services, such as SOLVIT and Your Europe Advice.

This task remains a work priority for the Authority. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the activities will also be geared to foster conditions for labour mobility and facilitate the free provision of cross-border services to support the recovery as well as future growth and competitiveness. The Authority will increment efforts and further articulate the initiatives started in 2020, most notably through the activities of the Working Group on Information.

Moreover, during 2021 the Authority will progressively integrate all the responsibilities of the ECO managing the EURES network and portal (see box under 2.1.5), thus completing the transfer of competences from the Commission. The new framework will not affect the governance of the network, as stipulated by the EURES Regulation.

The Authority will pursue business continuity for EURES as a first priority. In the same time period, the Commission is due to present the biannual report on EURES activities and the ex post evaluation report on the operation and effects of the EURES Regulation. The Authority will ensure the follow-up to the operational conclusions of those reports.

Further challenges to the activities of EURES may stem from the consequences of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Following up on the Commission's Guidelines on Seasonal Workers¹³, information and services to cross-border seasonal workers will constitute an essential part of the activities of ELA in this field.

Key objective

The Authority will further articulate and step up the ambition of the activities supporting the provision of online and offline information to individuals and employers, with particular attention to the needs arising from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and an increasing sectoral focus, starting with the road transport sector. While gradually integrating the management of the EURES ECO, the Authority will also promote the full integration of the EURES network and activities into its own strategy and initiatives.

Main actions and outputs

2.1.1. Activities of the Working Group

The Working Group on Information will continue its activities in 2021, aiming to meet about four times during the year in physical and/or videoconference format.

The activities of the Group will build on the methods developed and topics covered throughout 2020, including close monitoring of the communication policy to individuals and employers concerning the Union and national policy measures affecting labour mobility related to COVID-19. A particular focus will be placed on information to cross-border seasonal workers.

¹³ Communication from the Commission: Guidelines on seasonal workers in the EU in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak. C(2020) 4812, 16 July 2020

The Group will take stock of the results of the study on improving EU websites providing information on labour mobility, and advise the Authority and the Commission to enact targeted improvements to the EU websites. Particular attention will be given to the collection and sharing of relevant information for individuals and companies with regard to rights and conditions of cross-border operations on the Your Europe and EURES websites.

The Group will continue with the permanent review process of national websites in distinct labour mobility areas. It will discuss national practices, map relevant institutional and non-institutional websites and develop a shared approach for the layout and content of information for individuals and employers. Particular attention will be dedicated to information provided by single national websites on the posting of workers, following the entry into force of Directive (EU) 2018/957, whereby ELA will carry on with peer review activities initiated by the Committee of Experts on Posting of Workers. From 2021, the Group will count on the support of an external service providing specific, technical advice based on expertise on institutional web-based communication, named the ELA Information Support Service. Under the control of the Authority, the ELA Information Support Service may also provide individualised support to requesting Member States looking to carry out modifications to their institutional websites on labour mobility.

2.1.2. Boosting the ELA Translation Facility

In continuity with the service offered in 2020, ELA will provide further resources to the ELA Translation Facility to support the translation of official national websites on labour mobility into other languages. The Facility will complement the service offered through the single digital gateway with a specific focus on labour mobility areas.

This action will continue to be implemented through the Translation Centre (Centre du Traduction, CdT). The Authority will carry out this action in line with its operational rules set in 2020¹⁴ and review them, if necessary.

2.1.3. Undertaking support actions for information to employers and workers in specific sectors, including road transport

The Authority will organise specific support to favour the improvement of EU and national-level information to individuals, workers and employers in particular sectors, including through targeted information and communication campaigns, also in coordination with the social partners and relevant EU bodies, such as the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC). Priority will be given to target groups or sectors most in need in the context of the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as cross-border and seasonal workers. Cooperation with EURES and the Platform tackling undeclared work will be ensured to organise an information campaign targeting cross-border seasonal workers.

Information activities will also concern the road transport sector. The Authority will assist the Commission and the Member States in the application and effective enforcement of the legislative provisions of the Mobility Package, especially in the areas of driving and rest times, in the context of the Single Digital Gateway.

This action will be delivered also with the support of an external service provider in the framework of the ELA Information Support Service, mentioned under 2.1.1.

To prepare campaigns and/or other information support actions in particular sectors, the Authority will organise prior meetings with the relevant stakeholders, including the Commission and the relevant social partners.

2.1.4. Review and cooperation with other EU information and assistance services

The Authority will explore possible common actions with other Union agencies, services or networks providing information and advice services to mobile workers and their families, as well as to employers. Also, in the context of the Working Group on Information, the Authority will review existing EU information and advice services and develop a work plan of possible actions to ensure synergy and complementarity, including building

¹⁴ Decision No 2/2020 of the Executive Director on the establishment and operational modalities of the ELA Translation Facility

cooperation with the existing SOLVIT, Your Europe Advice and Europe Direct services.

In this context, the Authority will organise targeted workshops, including with the bodies for free movement set up under Directive 2014/54/EU.

2.1.5. EURES

During 2021, the Authority will progressively integrate all the responsibilities of the ECO managing the EURES network, thus completing the transfer of EURES tasks from the Commission.

The Authority will pursue business continuity for EURES as a first priority. In the same time period, the Commission is due to present the biannual report on EURES activities and the ex post evaluation report on the operation and effects of the EURES Regulation. The Authority will ensure the follow-up to the operational conclusions of those reports.

EURES will operate in a different environment in which the COVID-19 crisis will have had – and most likely will continue to have – a severe impact on the labour market, with unemployment set to increase¹⁵. Therefore, further challenges to the activities of EURES may stem from the consequences of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and following up the Commission activities to restart EURES in 2020, which may require some strategic re-adaptation of the work programme to be agreed in the context of the EURES European Coordination Group (ECG).

Responsibilities of the ECO

Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 2016/589 specifies that the ECO develops and conducts, in cooperation with the National Coordination Offices (NCOs), the following activities:

- ▶ the formulation of a coherent framework and the provision of horizontal support activities for the EURES network, including:
 - ▷ the operation and development of the EURES portal and related IT services;
 - ▷ information and communication activities regarding the EURES network;
 - ▷ a common training programme and continuous professional development for staff of the EURES Members and Partners and NCOs;
 - ▷ a helpdesk function supporting staff of the EURES Members and Partners and NCOs;
 - ▷ the facilitation of networking, exchange of best practices and mutual learning within the network;
- ▶ the analysis of geographic and occupational mobility;
- ▶ the development of an appropriate cooperation and clearance structure for apprenticeships and traineeships.

The ECO shall establish a regular dialogue with the representatives of the social partners at Union level. It shall draw up its multiannual work programmes, in consultation with the ECG.

The ECG is composed of representatives of the EURES NCOs. It supports the implementation of the EURES Regulation, coordinates and develops the activities of the network and serves as a platform for the exchange of information and best practices.

¹⁵ European Commission, Spring 2020 Economic Forecast: A deep and uneven recession, an uncertain recovery

2.1.5.1. ECG

ELA will take on the responsibility of preparing and chairing the ECG meetings starting from Q2 2021, including setting the agenda, preparing the necessary documents and liaising with the National Coordinators.

The Authority expects to organise at least three ECG meetings and about four smaller-scale meetings, such as mutual learning events and a programming workshop.

ELA will rely on external contractors providing logistical assistance to the preparation of these meetings, including the reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs.

2.1.5.2. Annual programming cycle

ELA will cooperate with the Commission in the organisation and management of the workshop initiating the annual programming cycle for 2021. ELA will progressively take ownership in managing the following phases of the cycle, which includes the joint review of annual work programmes and the drafting of the public summary of the work programmes by the end of the 2021 programming cycle.

ELA will inherit the specific part of the framework contract providing services to the programming cycle. Accordingly, it will launch the specific annual contract.

2.1.5.3. Performance management system

ELA will assist the Commission in the delivery of the annual consolidated report related to the year 2020, to be presented in Q2 2021, which includes both national analyses and EU-wide assessment.

In 2021, ELA will be responsible for the delivery of the Semester I report.

ELA will launch the specific annual contract providing services to this task in the context of the dedicated framework contract.

2.1.5.4. Training

ELA will coordinate around 70 training sessions of varying length for EURES staff scheduled during 2021, both in 'classroom' format in different European locations and online. This includes the implementation of the training programme for EURES (the EURES Academy), which encompasses all training activities under the EURES Regulation with the goal of providing EURES staff with the necessary tools, competences and skills for developing placement and recruitment activities.

ELA will tender the external service framework contract related to the provision of training sessions upon its expiration and launch the specific annual contract.

2.1.5.5. Communication activities

ELA will propose for discussion and adoption in the ECG the new EURES Communication Strategy for 2021-2025, including the strategic planning of the different deliverables, including monthly articles for the EURES portal and Extranet, non-verbal communication outputs, newsletters, and social media and community management.

ELA will finalise the award of the new communication framework contract dedicated to the EURES communication activities, which will enter into force upon the expiration of the current one.

It will thus launch the first annual specific contract for EURES communication activities.

2.1.5.6. European (Online) Job Days

ELA will ensure the continuity of EURES activities in the planning of and support to the European (Online) Job Days.

ELA will finalise the award of the dedicated service contract, which is set to enter into force upon the expiration of the current one.

It will thus launch the first annual specific contract.

2.1.5.7. Report on labour shortages and labour surpluses

ELA will assist the Commission in the production of an analysis of labour market shortages and surpluses and their causes in the EURES member countries. This will be based on data collection and analyses of gender-disaggregated information on labour shortages and labour surpluses in national and sectoral labour markets.

ELA will have access to the contract providing services to this task and will launch the specific request for services.

2.1.5.8. EURES portal

Business consultancy

ELA will continue managing consultancy resources with a view to ensuring continuity of high-quality EURES portal services during 2021.

ELA will contract out the consultancy resources through the dedicated framework contract.

Interoperability Working Group

ELA will organise at least two meetings of the Working Group of the national interoperability contact points starting from Q3 2021, in line with the current practice.

ELA will cover the costs of the meetings.

Helpdesk

ELA will ensure the continuity of the helpdesk service for all users of the EURES portal and its services (i.e. jobseekers, employers, staff of the EURES Members and Partners, NCOs and guest visitors).

It will also launch the specific annual contract upon the expiration of the present one.

Translations for the EURES portal

ELA will ensure the necessary translation of the content of the EURES portal. This includes the exercise of updating national information included in the 'Living and working conditions' section of the EURES website, with a view to ensuring translation in Q4 2021.

It will thus issue the annual request to the CdT in line with the usual procedure.

Hosting fees and licences

The delivery of the services on the EURES portal requires the purchase of IT infrastructure and related services (such as server operation and maintenance, operating system upgrades) used for hosting all IT components and services of the EURES portal.

It also requires the acquisition and maintenance of licences for proprietary software used in the EURES portal (including some of the EURES portal's IT components, features and services, including training/webinars, chat solutions and matching engine).

ELA will ensure the continuity of such services by taking over the contribution to the related framework contract, managed by the Commission.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate (in euro)
Working Group (2.1.1)	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of travel costs	Continuous	120 000
Information Support Service (2.1.1)	Service contract	Q4	300 000
Translation Facility (2.1.2)	CdT	Continuous	500 000
Support actions in specific sectors (2.1.3)	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of travel costs	Continuous	50 000
Workshop on other EU information and services relevant for labour mobility (2.1.4)	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of travel costs	Q3	50 000
EURES			
European Coordination Group (2.1.5.1)	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of travel costs	Q1, Q2 and Q4	200 000
Annual programming cycle (2.1.5.2) Performance management system (2.1.5.3)	Service contracts	Q3	600 000
Training (2.1.5.4)	Service contract	Q4	2 300 000
Communication activities (2.1.5.5) European (Online) Job Days (2.1.5.6)	Service contract	Q2	1 530 400

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate (in euro)
Report on labour shortages (2.1.5.7)	Service contract	Q2	50
EURES portal (2.1.5.8): - Consultancy - Interoperability Working Group - Helpdesk - Translations - Hosting fee - Licences	Contracts for services, organisation of meetings, reimbursement of travel costs	Q1 – Q4	3 280 000, of which: - 700 000 - 50 000 - 400 000 - 1 230 000 - 400 000 - 500 00
Total			8 980 400 (of which 1 020 000 for information)
Human Resources (FTE)			22

2.2. Facilitating cooperation and exchange of information between the Member States in the enforcement of relevant Union law

A key task for the Authority involves enhancing the cooperation and exchange of information between Member States across the wide range of labour mobility legislation, with a view to the consistent, efficient and effective application and enforcement of relevant Union law. The role of National Liaison Officers (NLOs) will be essential in this respect, because they will provide a physical contact point between the EU level, the home country administration and the authorities of other Member States, working shoulder to shoulder with their peers from other countries.

Key objective

In 2021, ELA will take steps towards strengthening cooperation between the Member States. During workshops and other capacity building activities, ELA will start developing a new framework for cooperation, establish working methods for NLOs, and explore ways to enhance the exchange of information between the relevant national actors, be it via the Internal Market Information System (IMI) or other modern information exchange systems.

Main actions and outputs

For the activities listed below, seminars and other related capacity building activities will be organised to a) gather input and expertise, b) carry out analyses, and c) exchange good practices and further train relevant staff and stakeholders.

2.2.1. Develop a framework for cooperation and exchange of information between ELA and national authorities

ELA will start working on developing a framework for cooperation and exchange of information between ELA and the Member States, including the role of the NLOs. It will also provide guidance on how the NLOs and the Member States should handle requests of a sensitive nature (e.g. in the field of inspections and mediation) and the deadlines to be respected in this regard.

2.2.2. Analyse issues related to personal data protection arising from the provisions of Regulations (EU) 2018/1725 and 2016/679

The Authority will assess, with the help of NLOs and an external consultant, different data protection legislation and map existing electronic tools and databases across the Member States with a view to establishing potential and limitations of sharing individual data in the context of the Authority, in particular as regards the coordination and carrying out of concerted and joint inspections.

2.2.3. Promoting the use of the IMI and exploring information exchange systems for ELA

ELA will start working on increasing the speed and seamlessness of information exchange between Member States, ELA and the Commission.

One strand of work will focus on the use of the IMI. Potential actions could include the analysis of the national use of IMI systems to identify possible shortcomings, the exchange of good practices, and other related capacity building activities. In this context, ELA will also consider further steps in assessing the development of an IMI module on tackling undeclared work, as proposed by the European Platform tackling undeclared work plenary. ELA may also include specific support to national authorities in the road transport field in view of

the implementation of new legislation on rest and driving times.

In parallel to this, and building on an analysis of the extent to which IMI can be used by ELA, the Authority will also map existing methods and platforms to exchange information between Member States, ELA and the Commission, with a view to finding the most appropriate tool to support the efficient and effective carrying out of activities under ELA's realm.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate
Workshops and trainings	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of travel costs	Q2 – Q4	100 000
External consultant	Service contract	Q3 – Q4	75 000
Total			175 000
Human Resources (FTE)			4

2.3. Coordination and support of concerted and joint inspections

ELA is tasked with coordinating and supporting concerted and joint inspections. Subject to the prior agreement of the participating Member States, the Authority will facilitate the creation of an inspection agreement specifying the terms and conditions of the inspection as well as other relevant arrangements, and will provide support to carrying out such inspections.

In 2021, the inspections work will build on the progress made within the Working Group on Inspections in 2020 and on the results of the first ELA pilot joint inspections in the field. This may include developing and implementing adaptation measures linked to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on cross-border activities. The Working Group on Inspections has started a reflection on this issue in the course of 2020.

Key objective

In 2021, ELA will coordinate and support concerted and joint inspections; expand its support to the Member States with the aim to improve cooperation, including through capacity building; and develop and operationalise strategic partnerships.

Main actions and outputs

2.3.1. Supporting Member States in organising concerted and joint inspections

The Authority will continue to support the organisation of concerted and joint inspections by providing conceptual, logistical and technical support and legal expertise. It will assess cases based on criteria developed by the Working Group on Inspections and approved by the Management Board and taking into account the available human and budgetary resources.

The Authority will build on the work carried out by the Working Group on Inspections and on the results of the pilot inspections supported in 2020 to scale up its activities. The tools and procedures for concerted and joint inspections developed in 2020 will be used to coordinate and support a larger number of concerted and joint inspections in the course of 2021.

The objective is that each Member State requesting or agreeing to do so should participate in at least one concerted or joint inspection in order to get acquainted with the procedures and tools available. The results of these inspections, carried out on a voluntary basis, will be assessed in the Working Group and will provide material to further improve the procedures and tools in place.

After basing its initial work on well-established bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms, the Authority will aim to bridge the gap in the level of engagement and the existing capacity of different Member States in bilateral and multilateral cross-border cooperation.

ELA will draft a proposal for the most appropriate way of providing financial support to the concerted and joint inspections carried out by the Member States.

Complementarities will be established with the work of ELA on risk assessment, to identify economic sectors at risk, and with the work on capacity building, to intervene in relation to weaknesses highlighted by the pilot inspections.

2.3.2. Working Group

The Authority will continue the work of the Working Group on Inspections in 2021.

In particular, the experts of the Working Group will continue to provide expertise on matters related to the legal and practical aspects of organising and conducting concerted and joint inspections, discuss the results

of inspections and identify further needs. If needed, the Working Group will further improve the relevant documents and procedures, taking into account the experience acquired during inspections. The Working Group will also discuss coordination and cooperation arrangements with other relevant and strategic partners, including EU agencies or other bodies.

The Working Group will report to the Management Board on the results of its activities and may receive from the Management Board the mandate to work on specific issues on an ad hoc basis.

2.3.3. Mutual learning and training activities

The Authority will continue to organise mutual learning and training activities, including staff visits, aimed at national inspectors, practitioners and other stakeholders. These activities will aim to promote the exchange of good practices, knowledge of the applicable EU and national legislations, and understanding of inspection practices and bilateral agreements in place, in order to foster a culture of cooperation on cross-border inspections.

These activities will be coordinated with and/or build on relevant activities carried out by the European Platform tackling undeclared work, SLIC and EU-funded projects such as Eurodétachement. Where appropriate, NLOs may participate in these activities.

The Authority will focus on the capacity building needs arising from the practical experience of concerted and joint inspections and from the discussions in the Working Group to launch a tender for training activities in 2021.

2.3.4. Support and analytical services

The Authority will develop further necessary tools to facilitate the cooperation and carrying out of inspections, such as the mapping of national legislation and practices relevant for inspections and the use of directories of national contact points, databases, secure information exchanges, etc., with close involvement of the NLOs. It may also include undertaking research and analyses in relevant areas. For these purposes, as well as to receive support in the implementation of this task through the work of the Working Group on Inspections, the Authority will launch a tender in 2021.

2.3.5. Information campaigns

The Authority may launch targeted information campaigns to tackle specific issues identified during its work on coordinating and supporting concerted and joint inspections, as well as based on input received from Member States or other stakeholders, including within the Working Group on Inspections.

2.3.6. Strategic partnerships

During 2020 the Authority has initiated working relations with EU agencies and services. In 2021, ELA will continue building on these relations and further operationalise them with working arrangements. With regard to inspections and in particular cases involving criminal affairs, human trafficking, falsifications of documents, or organised social (benefit) fraud, collaboration with Europol and Eurojust will be crucial. ELA will communicate information and experiences to SLIC and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) on aspects linked to occupational safety and health that have come up during its activities.

The founding Regulation also emphasises the need for good cooperation with social partners at EU and national level. The Authority will deepen its working relations with social partner organisations to address, in particular, issues of undeclared work in specific economic sectors.

2.3.7. Support with translations

The Authority will translate the relevant materials, such as case-specific documentation, templates and training material for inspections, where appropriate and within budget. In specific cases, the Authority may also translate communication material produced by Member States and other stakeholders in order to facilitate their dissemination during campaigns or inspections.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate
Inspections	Service contracts or grants for expertise, logistics and interpretation	Continuous	600 000
Working Group	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of travel costs	Continuous	100 000
Learning and training	Service contract	Q3 – Q4	350 000
Support and analytical services	Service contract	Q3 – Q4	100 000
Information campaigns	Service contract	Q3 – Q4	50 000
Strategic partnerships	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of travel costs	Q3	25 000
Translations	CdT	Continuous	200 000
Total			1 425 000
Human Resources (FTE)			11

2.4. Labour mobility analyses and risk assessment

The activities of the Authority, most notably provision of information and inspection activities, should be based on a solid analytical understanding of the socio-economic, legal and policy challenges of labour mobility. Therefore, in order to keep track of emerging trends and challenges in the areas of EU labour mobility, the Authority is tasked with developing an analytical and risk assessment capacity. It will do this in cooperation with Member States and, where appropriate, the social partners as well as other EU agencies, services and networks. To this end, the overarching objective of carrying out labour mobility analyses and risk assessment is to support other activities and tasks of the Authority, most notably the provision of information and services, concerted and joint inspections, and capacity building.

Article 10 of the Regulation specifies that the Authority shall, in cooperation with Member States and, where appropriate, the social partners, assess risks and carry out analyses regarding labour mobility and social security coordination, on topics such as labour market imbalances, sector-specific challenges and recurring problems. The Authority can also carry out focused in-depth analyses and studies to investigate specific issues.

To this end, the Authority can use relevant and current statistical data available from existing surveys. It can also ensure complementarity with and draw on the expertise of Union agencies or services and national authorities, agencies or services, including in the areas of fraud, exploitation, discrimination, skills forecasting and health and safety at work.

The task includes:

- ▶ organising peer reviews on topics concerning: the implementation, practical application and enforcement in practice of Union law; the strengthening of consistency in the provision of services to individuals and businesses; mutual understanding of different systems and practices;
- ▶ reporting on findings from risk assessment or analytical work;
- ▶ collecting statistical data and streamlining current data collection activities.

Key objective

In 2021, the Authority will begin working on the mapping of Member States' tools and approaches on risk assessment, with a view to developing its analytical and risk assessment capacity. In the longer term, this will aim to complement and inform its other activities, including in the information, inspection and capacity building domains. In addition, the Authority will continue developing the cooperation model with other EU agencies, services and networks for joint activities and gathering, sharing and processing the data to avoid overlap, promote synergies and ensure complementarity of actions.

Main actions and outputs

2.4.1. Workshops on labour mobility analyses and risk assessment

Building on the work carried out by the European Platform tackling undeclared work, the Authority will organise a series of workshops on labour mobility analysis and risk assessment, which will include experts from the Member States, the social partners and, where necessary, relevant EU agencies, services and networks.

2.4.2. Mapping of Member States' tools and approaches to risk assessment

The Authority will prepare for the mapping exercise of Member States' tools and approaches to risk assessment with a view to developing further strategies in that field. The mapping of Member States' tools and approaches will also support the Authority in carrying out its tasks, mostly related to the provision of information and services, the planning and organisation of concerted and joint inspections, and support to capacity building. The mapping exercise will be covered by an external consultant by way of a framework contract launched in Q3/Q4. Based on the mapping exercise, the creation of a separate working group on labour mobility analyses and risk assessment will be considered as a forum for further discussions on ELA's activities in that domain.

2.4.3. Peer reviews

Subject to the conclusion of working agreements with the two EU networks active in the field of EU labour mobility – SOLVIT and Your Europe Advice – the Authority will organise at least one peer review on a selected topic of interest for cross-border labour mobility policy, following up on a case (or cases) identified by SOLVIT and/or Your Europe Advice. Based on the outcome of the peer review, the Authority will then strive to produce a draft report outlining, where necessary, possible measures to address identified weaknesses with a view to improving mutual knowledge and enhancing the enforcement of relevant Union law.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate
Workshops on labour mobility analysis and risk assessment	Service contract	Continuous	100 000
Support and analytical services for risk assessment	Service contract	Q3 – Q4	300 000
Peer reviews	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of costs	Q3/Q4	50 000
Total			450 000
Human Resources (FTE)			8

2.5. Support to capacity building

The Authority is tasked with supporting Member States to build the necessary capacities at national level to enforce labour mobility legislation consistently and effectively. The founding Regulation lists a number of possible actions that the Authority could undertake to this end (see box below).

Article 11 of the Regulation lists the following actions that the Authority is expected to undertake to support capacity building:

- ▶ develop non-binding guidelines;
- ▶ promote mutual assistance, staff exchanges;
- ▶ support exchange of good practices;
- ▶ develop sectoral and cross-sectoral training programmes and training material;
- ▶ promote awareness-raising campaigns.

Key objective

In 2021, the Authority will start developing the vision, content and format of its multiannual capacity building strategy.

Building on some initial experiences, most notably in the area of inspections, a range of capacity building activities will be developed and implemented across the Authority's core tasks.

Main actions and outputs

2.5.1. Launch of the ELA Capacity Building Centre

The Authority will develop a centre for the delivery of capacity building services, fully covering all ELA tasks in a horizontal way.

Capacity building services, notably including training and workshops, should target the staff of national authorities and the social partners, including a specific focus on labour and social security inspectorates, as well as enforcing authorities in the road transport sector. Capacity building also covers the development of a staff exchange scheme for staff of national authorities in the area of inspections.

In the first instance, the Authority will develop a capacity building strategy, which will include the definition of needs across different tasks and stakeholders, as well as different delivery methods. In this context, the Authority will explore and create the possibility of hosting capacity building activities virtually, including the streaming of trainings and interactive webinars. With a view to ultimately fostering networks of experts in its core areas of activity, stakeholder engagement will play an important role for ELA capacity building efforts and options for effective stakeholder engagement will be explored.

The design of the trainings will be developed and implemented with the help of an external contractor. A framework contract will be launched to this end and the Authority will conclude the first service level agreements in 2021. The scope of the framework contract will include consultancy on strategy, followed by the design of appropriate capacity building activities and their delivery (including any cost such as for external trainers, travel and accommodation, etc.). The framework contract equally covers the continuation of the EURES Academy as well as provisions for ELA staff training in its operational areas.

2.5.2. Workshop with other EU Agencies, services and networks

Building on a first workshop with other EU agencies, services and networks carried out in the area of labour mobility analyses and risk assessment in 2020, a second workshop on the topic of capacity building shall be organised to advance cooperation as well as to explore potential synergies in future activities.

2.5.3. Workshop with national training centres in the field of inspections

Another workshop shall be organised, involving the national training centres for labour inspectorates, with a view to introducing ELA to relevant stakeholders, presenting its envisaged capacity building efforts and carrying out an initial mapping of their activities. This will assist ELA in exploring any future possibilities for cooperation.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate
ELA Capacity Building Centre (2.5.1)	Service contract, reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs	Q3 – Q4	750 000
Workshop with other EU agencies, services and networks (2.5.2)	Online meeting	Q1	N/A ¹⁶
Workshop with national training centres in the field of inspections (2.5.3)	Organisation of meeting, reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs (if applicable ¹⁷)	Q2 – Q4	15 000
Total			765 000
Human Resources (FTE)			4

¹⁶ Due to COVID-19, the meeting will take place online. Therefore, there are no meeting expenses for this activity.

¹⁷ In the event that a face-to-face meeting is not possible, for example due to a persisting COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting shall take place online, in which case meeting costs will be substantially reduced.

2.6. Enhancing cooperation in tackling undeclared work

From the date of the Authority's financial autonomy¹⁸, the European Platform tackling undeclared work will be fully integrated in the Authority as a permanent Working Group, supporting the activities of ELA in tackling undeclared work. The Authority will ensure a seamless integration and business continuity of its activities.

Already in 2020, the Authority started working on a smooth transition by participating in the activities of the European Platform tackling undeclared work in a systematic manner. It has actively participated in the drafting of the Work Programme 2021-2022 and in other key activities. The Authority played an active part in the campaign #EU4FairWork, co-organised with the Platform.

The ELA Management Board will formally establish the Platform Working Group and the Members and Observers of the Platform will be asked to appoint their representatives in the Working Group, respecting the current composition of the Platform, as set out in Article 12 of the ELA founding Regulation.

The Work Programme 2021-2022 of the Platform is endorsed by the ELA Management Board.

Key objective

Ensure the smooth integration of the Platform tackling undeclared work into the Authority.

Main actions and outputs

2.6.1. Implement the Platform's Work Programme 2021-2022

The Platform's Work Programme, adopted on 6 October 2020 by the plenary of the Platform, has been submitted to ELA.

The Authority will finance the activities listed in the Work Programme for 2021, starting from the date of its financial autonomy.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate
Activities from the Platform's Work Programme for 2021	As defined in the Platform's Work Programme 2021-2022	Q1 – Q4	1 450 000
Meeting expenses	Organisation of meetings, reimbursement of costs	Continuous	1 500 000
Total			1 500 000
Human Resources (FTE)			5

¹⁸ Date of financial autonomy is still TBD.

2.7. Mediate and facilitate a solution in cases of cross-border disputes between Member States on the application of relevant Union law

In 2021, the Authority will start its work on setting up its mediation function. The mediation procedure will aim to facilitate solutions in cases of cross-border disputes between the Member States regarding individual cases of application of Union law in areas covered by the Regulation, with the aim to reconcile divergent points of view between the Member States that are party to the dispute.

Once the mediation function is established, Member States will be able to refer disputes to the Authority regarding individual cases that they fail to resolve on a bilateral or multilateral level, through direct contact and dialogue. The agreement of all Member States that are party to the dispute is necessary for mediation to take place.

In order to establish the mediation procedure, the first steps in 2021 will be the drafting and adoption of the rules of procedure and the working arrangements. This will be done with the assistance of a working group on mediation. In 2021, the Authority will also engage in discussions with the Administrative Commission for the coordination of social security systems with the aim of concluding a cooperation agreement in relation to disputes concerning social security matters.

Article 13 of the Regulation defines the mediation task. A two-stage mediation procedure is established:

- ▶ First stage: mediation is conducted between the Member States that are party to the dispute and a mediator;
- ▶ Second stage: mediation is carried out by a Mediation Board to be established by the Authority.

According to Article 13(6) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1149, the Management Board will adopt the rules of procedures for mediation, including working arrangements and the appointment of mediators, the applicable deadlines, the involvement of experts, and the possibility of the Management Board to sit in panels composed of several members.

For matters relating to social security, the Administrative Commission will be informed. The Authority and the Administrative Commission will establish a cooperation agreement.

Key objective

The Authority will undertake the necessary preparatory work to set up and have the mediation function up and running by the end of 2021, with a view to appointing mediators and members of the Mediation Board.

Main actions and outputs

2.7.1. Setting up a working group on mediation

The Authority will set up a working group on mediation, composed of experts appointed by the members of the Management Board. This group will discuss and agree on the relevant issues to set up the mediation procedure, including the process flow, applicable deadlines, different mediation panels, etc. with the aim to present draft rules of procedure and working arrangements for adoption by the Management Board. Other relevant experts may be invited to participate during the course of the discussions in the working group.

The deliverables of this working group will serve as a basis for mediation in ELA and will thus be translated into all the official languages of the EU.

Furthermore, an external consultant will facilitate the work of the working group and assist with legal expertise on the deliverables.

2.7.2. Start discussions with the Administrative Commission and conclude a cooperation agreement

In 2021, the Authority will start discussions with the Administrative Commission on the interaction between the Authority's mediation procedure and the Administrative Commission's dialogue and conciliation procedure. The aim will be to establish suitable working arrangements and conclude a cooperation agreement as stipulated in Article 13 of the Regulation, which will be presented for adoption to the Management Board at the end of 2021.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate
Working Group (2.7.1)	Meeting organisation and reimbursement of costs	Continuous	125 000
External consultant	Service contract	Continuous	50 000
Translations	CdT	Continuous	50 000
Total			225 000
Human Resources (FTE)			12

2.8. Integration of the tasks of existing bodies

ELA aims to streamline the current institutional set-up in the field labour mobility and social security coordination by pooling operational tasks that are currently dispersed across different EU bodies into a permanent structure that provides a strengthened forum for cooperation and joint investigative activities.

By doing so, the Authority will incorporate and carry out tasks of two existing EU bodies as of 2021, insofar as these fall under the remit of the Authority's competences:

- ▶ the Technical Committee on the Free Movement of Workers;
- ▶ the Committee of Experts on Posting of Workers¹⁹.

In 2021, a discussion will be held on how to best preserve the expertise of these two bodies, ensure synergies with other activities of the Authority, involve NLOs, and where appropriate, continue their work. In accordance with the founding Regulation, ELA will consider setting up dedicated working groups or expert panels.

Such a decision may, if necessary, constitute an amendment to this Work Programme.

In the process of making such a decision, the Authority will closely cooperate with the Commission services currently supervising the work of these bodies.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate
Tasks of the committees	Meeting organisation and reimbursement of costs	Q2 – Q4	100 000
Total			100 000
Human Resources (FTE)			1

¹⁹ In accordance with Recital 43 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1149 and Article 46(2), which concerns the Technical Committee, both committees will cease to exist once the Authority reaches its financial autonomy (1 August 2021 latest).

2.9. Communication and dissemination activities

2020 has seen a solid development in ELA's communication activities, with an increasing number of social media followers (some 3 000 followers on Twitter and LinkedIn), a more comprehensive website and the first communication campaign the Authority has ever joined in, the #EU4FairWork campaign.

2021 will be a year of new communication endeavours for ELA. A new website, more investment in social media and digital activities and new communication campaigns will be key to making ELA more widely known and making sure ELA's main messages are reaching their target audiences.

As mentioned above, in 2021 ELA will launch one new communication and information campaign focusing on a specific area, such as seasonal work. ELA will develop cooperation and synergies with the EURES communication activities.

Activities	Method	Time 2021	2021 Estimate
Conferences	Meeting organisation and reimbursement of costs	Q1 – Q4	150 000
Media and social media campaigns	Multichannel external communication campaigns	Q1 – Q4	386 100
Total			536 100
Human Resources (FTE)			1.5

2.10. Cooperation with EU bodies

Following a first workshop with other EU agencies, services and networks organised in Q4 2020, the Authority will organise, on a needs basis, further similar workshops to cover the various working areas of the Authority.

As an outcome, it will start operationalising the working relations by agreeing on a multiannual cooperation programme and, subject to these agreements, it will start to undertake joint deliverables with the relevant EU agencies, services and networks.

2.11. Forthcoming framework contract

Framework contract legal services

In Q1 2021, ELA will launch a call for tenders for a framework contract on provision of legal services to the Authority. The purpose of the contract is to ensure that ELA receives legal advice, assistance and representation in a timely manner whenever a future need arises, both for its in-house corporate affairs and its operational activities in the field of EU labour mobility.

3.

**GOVERNANCE
AND SUPPORT
ACTIVITIES**

3.1. Governance bodies (Management Board and Stakeholder Group)

The Authority's administrative and management structure includes a Management Board, an Executive Director and a Stakeholder Group. Following their set-up in 2019 and consolidation in 2020, the essential administrative structures (i.e. Management Board and Stakeholder Group) are now well established and can carry out their mandate.

3.2. Services for performance management development

During 2021 the Authority will develop a structured performance management system that will support the development of coherent KPIs. For this purpose, services will be procured, and the aim is to use the first results for the revision of the KPIs in the Single Programming Document 2022-2024.

3.3. Relation to third countries and/or international organisations

EEA/EFTA countries continue to participate in Management Board meetings.

The EEA (via the Joint Committee) and EFTA countries are assessing their full participation in ELA. Once the Joint Committee reaches a decision²⁰, which can take up to two years, the ELA Management Board would need to agree on the practical arrangements for their full participation.

ELA has not yet received notification on possible financial contributions from third countries participating in the Management Board.

²⁰ For Switzerland, the Agreement on Free Movement of Persons (AFMP) should be amended.

4.

RESOURCES

4.1. Financial resources

In 2021, ELA will have the following objectives in the areas of finance and procurement:

- 1) acquire its financial autonomy;
- 2) develop its business processes;
- 3) establish its annual Procurement Plan;
- 4) explore the use of IT tools developed by different EU bodies for the planning, monitoring and reporting of its budget;
- 5) explore the use of e-Procurement modules developed by the European Commission;
- 6) subject to its operational needs, ELA might explore the use of e-Grants modules developed by the European Commission;
- 7) participate in interinstitutional framework contracts for resourcing purposes.

Financial autonomy

The preparatory actions for financial autonomy have been initiated in Q3 2020 with a view to the adoption of ELA's financial rules and financial circuits. During Q4 2020 the configuration of financial IT tools (Accrual Based Accounting System (ABAC) workflow and assets, SAP), the training of the financial actors, the transfer of ELA's budget from the European Commission's ABAC to ELA's, and the testing of the financial IT tools will take place, while in Q1 of 2021 all remaining steps will be finalised so as to achieve financial autonomy by the end of March 2021.

Business processes

ELA will develop its paperless business processes in line with its financial rules, its financial circuits, its internal control framework and the IT tools incorporated for all financial transactions. These processes would ensure both sound financial management of the resources (effectiveness, efficiency and economy) and legality and regularity.

Procurement Plan

ELA will establish its Procurement Plan in line with the operational actions described in this document and any other need stemming from its resourcing needs.

Budget IT tool

ELA will explore the use of budget IT tools already developed by other EU bodies to efficiently plan, monitor and report on its budget by limiting manual interventions. The fees and modality payments on the use of such an IT tool will be defined by a service level agreement with the corresponding EU body.

e-Procurement modules

ELA has already signed a service level agreement with the European Commission – DG DIGIT for the incorporation of these modules in its business processes after acquiring its financial autonomy.

e-Grants modules

Depending on the form of implementing certain operational actions by means of awarding grants, ELA will explore the possibility of using the e-Grants module in line with its paperless business processes and, if needed, sign a service level agreement with the European Commission – DG DIGIT.

Interinstitutional framework contracts

ELA will continue analysing possible associations with interinstitutional framework contracts through the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding for its resourcing needs.

4.2. Human resources

In 2021 ELA should see an important growth of its workforce after intensive recruitment efforts. The main objectives of the human resources activities of the Authority will be:

- ▶ Recruitment: to meet the target of almost 100 staff members by the end of the year, as per the legislative financial statement attached to the Regulation establishing ELA.
- ▶ Working conditions: ELA will continue to formalise the necessary human resources rules and processes to the needs of the organisation. Specific challenges for 2021 include the contribution to the financial autonomy of the Authority, the integration of newcomers to the organisation, and the relocation of staff and their families to the new headquarters in Bratislava.
- ▶ Appraisal and development: to establish an appraisal system for staff and adopt a framework on learning and development.

Recruitment

The capacity of the Authority will grow significantly. By the end of 2021, ELA should count on a total of 98 staff members, all categories of staff combined. This will be broken down as 38 Temporary Agents, 15 Contract Agents, and 45 Seconded National Experts, among which are the 27 NLOs. This requires ELA to continue with a strong effort in the area of recruitment, as well as the onboarding of newcomers. To reach this objective, ELA will be launching several recruitment procedures during the year and also using available valid reserve lists, if suitable.

Among the colleagues joining ELA during 2021 will be the middle management, on the basis of recruitment procedures carried out during 2020. In support to the Executive Director, they will play an instrumental role in coordinating the execution of ELA's tasks.

For all recruitment, ELA will aim to reach a suitable geographical and gender balance, in accordance with the relevant provisions in the Staff Regulations of the EU. The recruitment policy of ELA will continue to be based on the principles of equal treatment and open and transparent recruitment procedures, to be published and communicated actively to all interested parties.

Working conditions

As ELA continues to grow, its human resources activities and services will continue to be developed. The Authority will continue working on the effective implementation of human resources rules and regulations and the gradual development of templates, processes and procedures, in line with the Agency's mission and objectives and the Staff Regulations (Article 110).

In 2021, the Authority will place a strong focus on the successful integration of newcomers, in order to be able to count on a reliable and steady workforce. This will be combined with the successful adaptation of the Authority to its new headquarters in Bratislava. To this end, ELA will adapt its learning and development offer to its staff, as well as develop its services to continue providing support to staff members and their families. Measures in support of integration will continue being developed to ensure the smooth integration of new colleagues, for example including the possibility to follow Slovak language courses and support with the registration of staff and family members with the Slovak authorities. Schooling is a key factor in fostering multilingualism and enabling ELA to attract and retain qualified staff members. A decision by the Management Board offering children of ELA staff members the possibility of following their education in international schools at the Authority's seat in Bratislava is already in place. Other initiatives with a similar objective to support the integration of staff in Slovakia may then follow once the Authority is established in Bratislava.

Appraisal and learning and development offer

ELA's organisational development will focus, among other aspects, on the effective development of its staff.

In 2021, the first members of staff may reach two years of seniority in their positions, making them eligible for a first reclassification. Many staff members will be still serving their initial probationary periods. For 2021, ELA

will therefore make sure to implement an appraisal system that can effectively support an ongoing dialogue and feedback to staff on their performance.

A learning and development framework will be developed to meet the needs of the Authority. While it may be early to mention staff mobility in 2021, the Authority will also have to consider the career and development path of its staff to define its learning and development offer and adapt it if necessary.

4.3. ICT infrastructure

Following an assessment of various strategies for ELA's ICT infrastructure, the Authority has opted for a strategy of cloud services, combined with the adoption of Office 365, to deliver laptop operating systems and associated office software. This offered the best choice of extensive services across many disciplines, all of which are already in service with several agencies that already procure services under the Cloud Broker framework contract. Moreover, with Office 365 ELA can deploy this technology immediately, thus enabling the deployment of the new ela.europa.eu email accounts and shared drives and providing a seamless migration of staff from Brussels to Bratislava.

The services within the Cloud Broker framework contract will be fully developed in advance of the migration to Bratislava, and the infrastructure required both in the new offices and the Cloud Brokers Data Centre will be established (with assurances that servers and data will only be hosted inside the EU) and tested to ensure it is fully operational prior to occupancy of the new offices.

The activities for 2021 will focus on:

- a)** the operational services, ensuring they are fit for purpose;
- b)** establishing the applicable management processes to monitor and manage the contract appropriately;
- c)** developing improvements to the services as applicable and necessary;
- d)** fully implementing the conference suite and interpretation booths, by installing all appropriate infrastructure, such as screens, projectors, microphones and speakers, and bringing these into operational service as soon as the construction has been completed and the commissioning activities are concluded;
- e)** supporting new staff by providing them with laptops available on the first day of commencing their employment, regardless of whether the staff members will start working at the office or from a remote location; and
- f)** testing the teleworking capability to ensure that the Authority is able to operate efficiently and effectively when 100 % of staff are teleworking.

