

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004166/25
to the Commission
Marieke Ehlers (P/E), Rachel Blom (P/E)
(22 October 2025)**

Subject: Low employment rates in rural and peripheral European regions and inadequate labour market data from NUTS 2 regions

According to recent figures from the Commission, more than half of European NUTS 2 regions have not met the 78% employment rate target. Furthermore, data appears to be unavailable for 130 regions, which account for over 46% of the total ⁽¹⁾.

1. How can the high number of unemployed people in the EU, particularly in rural and peripheral regions, be reconciled with the Commission's assertion that Europe needs more labour migration from outside the EU?
2. Does the Commission have data showing what percentage of the working population is employed in the public, private or subsidised sectors?
3. How will the Commission ensure that Member States improve their reporting on employment rates in NUTS 2 regions?

Submitted: 22.10.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(3 December 2025)**

The EU unemployment rate is at a record low with 6.0% (September 2025), with regional disparities: over 16.5% in some Spanish and overseas regions and under 2% in some Czechia regions in 2024.

Addressing labour and skills shortages demands action in several policy areas: supporting underrepresented groups' labour market activation; skills, training and education; improving working conditions in certain sectors and occupations; enhancing fair intra-EU mobility; and attracting talent from outside the EU ⁽¹⁾.

Cohesion policy and the Talent Booster Mechanism ⁽²⁾ provide support to skills, education and labour market to address demographic challenges, labour shortages and ensure social and territorial cohesion.

The legislative proposal for an EU Talent Pool establishes the first online EU-wide platform facilitating international recruitment by matching job vacancies of EU employers with the profiles of jobseekers from third countries residing outside of the EU across all skills levels needed in EU-wide shortage occupations.

Employment rates are available from the EU Labour Force Survey for 243 out of 244 Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS2) regions ⁽³⁾. The available data is not divided by public, private or subsidised sectors.

The quoted item refers to the fact that 113 out of the 243 NUTS2 regions for which data is available achieved an employment rate of 78% or higher (EU 2030 employment target).

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20251013-3>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-euro-indicators/w/3-30102025-bp>.

⁽²⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information-sources/publications/communications/2023/harnessing-talent-in-europe-s-regions_en.

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/lfst_r_lfe2emprtn__custom_18270107/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=2c23a807-50ae-4b8f-b080-6bbdc08450c4&c=1759498385000.