

# Job Posting across Continental Europe

In this article, Tim Suggitt of Aktor Interactive looks at the European job markets and examines how you can successfully post vacancies on the Continent.



Tim Suggitt, Aktor Interactive

**There are many situations where job vacancies will need posting abroad. However, to make sure that your investment pays off, it is essential to identify the right market(s), to find out which sites work best there (for the type of profile that you are looking for) and, if you can, gain a basic understanding of the local culture.**

The following ideas will provide a base for you to start from and although we focus on Continental Europe here, the message extends to posting worldwide.

## Choosing your markets

### Narrowing the choice to your needs

Bar some cultural differences, the EU enjoys a good level of labour mobility. However, choosing the right market(s) will depend upon the profile(s) that you are seeking. Your main considerations will be the language(s) required, the location(s), the salary and the skill sets needed.

Taking these in order, we are lucky in that English is spoken widely. So a vacancy in the UK could well be filled by advertising in any number of markets where the skill sets match. However for a vacancy in Germany you could also consider posting in other German-speaking markets such as Switzerland and Austria and even in markets where

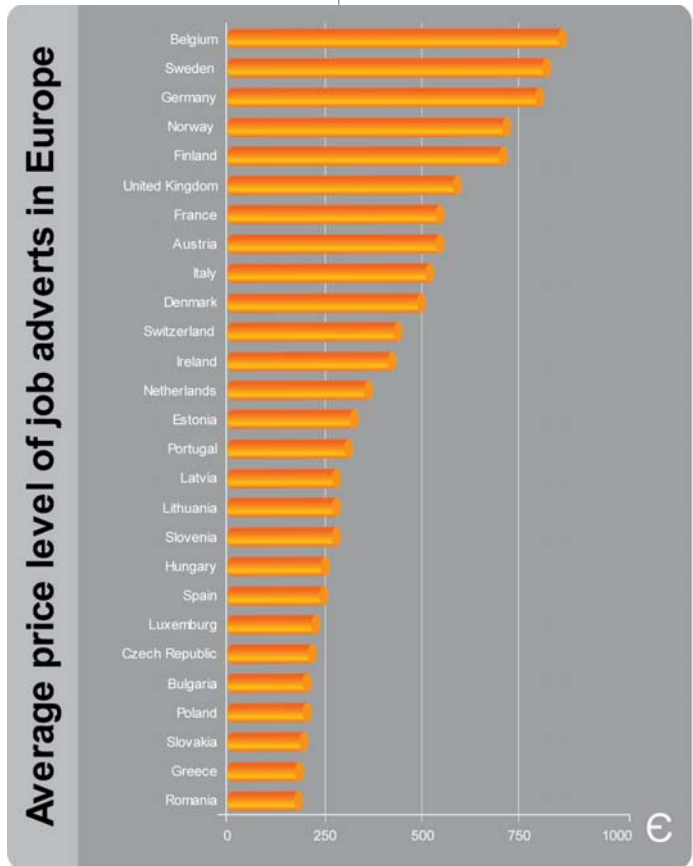
a good level of German is found such as the Netherlands, Czech Republic and Poland.

Locations close to borders often open up the possibility of advertising in neighbouring markets. For example, posting in France or Germany for a vacancy just over the border in Switzerland is likely to bring in a very good number of candidates, all motivated by salary.

Salaries have to be well thought through. For example with the current employment and social advan-

tages in Scandinavia, attracting a worker out from this market will generally mean aiming high.

Finally, and perhaps the main driver, are the skills required. The UK has a long list of skill shortages. Other markets have similar lists. The key is identifying where surpluses exist and only research or experience will provide you specific answers. One example is the potential pools of IT labour developing in markets such as Bulgaria and Romania that could meet shortages in Western Europe.



The calculation of the average single advert rate above, is based on the most common format of advert used in the relevant country (standard listing; display advert; etc.).



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## Narrowing the choice – market drivers

Having narrowed the markets based upon your needs, the next consideration is how to advertise. Across continental Europe, the on-line recruitment market varies enormously and is equally very different to that of the UK's. Many factors come into play; the most flagrant (and measurable) is perhaps internet usage. To provide a point of reference, the UK has a 66.4% internet access to population penetration rate\*. Currently across the channel, the highest rate is found in the Netherlands (87.8%) and the lowest in Poland (29.6%). However a closer look at the full EU data identifies a general East/West divide. Generally the latter has higher penetration rates and in similar fashion, a North/South divide can be identified too, with the Scandinavian markets enjoying generally higher rates than their southern counterparts.

\* [www.internetworldstats.com](http://www.internetworldstats.com)

Another major factor is the dynamism of the national job board markets. The UK leads the field with estimates ranging from 1k to 2k job boards. With 13 million more internet users, Germany has far fewer job boards (with estimates ranging from 100 to 1000) and the Netherlands, which enjoys a very high internet/population rate, has even fewer job boards (with estimates quoting less than 50). East Europe, the Baltic states and, to an extent, the Latin markets have notably fewer job boards than their western/northern neighbours.

However before opting for the major international generalist job board networks such as Monster,

Stepstone, Careerbuilder and CVOnline, it is worth knowing that many markets have national job boards that perform extremely well such as Jobware in Germany and, in several cases, lead in their respective markets, such as Profesia.sk in Slovakia.

## Choosing your job sites & formats

There are many different on-line recruitment channels today: - International, Generalist, niche and regional job boards; social networking sites; special interest/content sites; etc.

Within each of these, you are confronted with different ways of presenting your recruitment advertising: - standard text listing; listings with logo; display adverts; home page presence, banners; e-mail blast advertising; etc. Choosing the right format will demand some market and cultural knowledge. For example a standard listing in Germany will simply be drowned out by the mass of display adverts that this market demands.

A good basic test is to compare how many similar roles appear on each site and in which format. Also, where do your competitors advertise? However, in view of the time and linguistic barriers these tests throw up, this task is often best passed over to a specialist agency that knows this market or who can offer you such research in preparing a media plan for your international on-line recruitment advertising.

Rik Hülser, who heads up the international department at Aktor Interactive explains how this resource issue can rapidly multi-

ply. "The time needed to research can be substantial and the cultural and linguistic barriers can come into play at this stage or when negotiating. Then when posting, the ads need loading in the correct format, keywords should be added (in the right language) to boost searchability and the right categories need selecting. The upside? If all of this is done correctly, the ROI and the Cost per hire rates speak absolute volumes."

## Knowing the target culture

It's the proverbial 'extra mile', but knowing a little about the market and the culture of who you are targeting can pay dividends. "Should the salary be mentioned?" - In the UK yes, in Germany it's not really necessary; "Why am I getting so many applications from Spain that don't quite match what we're looking for?" - This is par for the course for Latin markets; "Why does it cost so much to advertise in Belgium?" - Belgium currently leads the table when comparing average job listing prices, (see graph page 10).

So to summarise, when posting overseas it's worth investing in research or getting external help via a reputable agency, who through preparing you a media plan, can identify the best markets/sites to use, negotiate rates for you and then go on to help copy-polish texts for each market and publish/track your ads.

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