

# WORKMATCH

Building sustainable employment ecosystems for migrants and refugees

January 2026





# WORKMATCH:

## BUILDING SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

### SYSTEMIC PROBLEM

Structural barriers across industries and employment practices lead to **newcomers' social isolation and economic exclusion**.

Stakeholders operate in **silos**, **lacking shared data, coordinated strategies**, and durable partnership frameworks.

This leads to duplication, short-term interventions, and **missed opportunities** for both newcomers and local economies.

### SOLUTION

Building a **scalable, transferable ecosystem model** for migrant and refugee inclusion co-created by expert NGOs and adaptable by any city/territory or organization across Europe.

This shared infrastructure contains:

1. shared **operational toolkit**,
2. **digital journey tracking**,
3. **collaborative Employment Hubs**  
(digital centers of coordinated operations).

### PILOT

The short-term pilot will bring together three NGOs from different contexts to **form a consortium**.

They will be leveraging the experience and **data from their own operations** facilitating employment for newcomers.

They will **co-design the toolkit, set up the digital system** (in-kind) and **deploy the Employment Hub** (other funding) in one location with employers, public services, newcomers in their network.

# WORKMATCH: PROPOSED PILOT

## TEAM

**Consortium:** Hosted by Refugee Employment Network (REN) as implementation lead, Jobful as technology provider, Startup Refugees and Jobs4ukr as learning and data providers.

**Governance:** Representatives of these organizations and working group members form a steering committee.

**Geography:** UK is the testing site (focus in Wales but UK-wide impact), building on experience from partners in Romania and Finland.

## ACTIVITY TIMELINE

**Timeline:** 12 months (March 2026 –February 2027)

1. Consortium Setup, Learning Design & Local Partner Engagement
2. Pilot Implementation & Peer Exchange
3. Sense-Making, Co-Design & Toolkit Development
4. Consolidation, Dissemination & Scaling Readiness

## RESOURCES

### Existing resources:

- Human capital (NGOs teams)
- Social capital (networks)
- Digital and organizational capital (established NGO infrastructure, technology & disseminations channels)

### To be acquired:

- Time and capacity within teams
- Expertise in design, UX/UI
- Financial resources\*
- Comms and scaling support

\*Previously secured funding from international orgs (UNHCR, EBRD) or local authorities (IOM, Welsh Gov).



# WORKMATCH:

## LEADERS BEHIND THIS PILOT

**Jenny Walton (REN)** - Lead Implementation  
Partner & Project Manager

**Mihai Cepoi** - Collaborations & Project  
Management (WorkMatch legacy team)

**Melinda Corret** - Advisory & Knowledge Transfer  
(WorkMatch legacy team)

**Nelson Olanipekun** - Advisory & Knowledge  
Transfer (WorkMatch legacy team)

**[To be confirmed] (Startup Refugees)** - Learning  
Partner

**Ana Secrieru (Jobs4ukr)** - Learning Partner

**Daniel Amariei (Jobful)** - Technical Lead

### Teams structure:

- Pilot execution team - Consortium partners getting funded (REN, Startup Refugees, Jobs4ukr)
- Advisory team - WorkMatch legacy team & Jobful



**Jenny Walton**  
CEO of REN  
UK



**Melinda Corret**  
IKEA  
France



**Mihai Cepoi**  
Founder & CEO of Jobful  
Romania



**Nelson Olanipekun**  
Founder of Citizen Gavel  
Nigeria/ UK

# WORKMATCH: PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS ONBOARD

The Working Group has engaged 3 NGOs as testing partners in different roles, all three leveraging a technological solution by Jobful. REN becomes the hosting organization for the pilot and the implementation lead.



## REN

[refugeeemploymentnetwork.org](https://refugeeemploymentnetwork.org)

Led by Jenny Walton (CEO) and Anais Fahd (Network Coordinator). In order to implement the Action Hub, REN is supported by the Welsh Government and a dedicated Advisory Board. The network convenes 400 members across UK (55% of them are employers).



## Startup Refugees

[startuprefugees.com](https://startuprefugees.com)

Led by Aicha Manai (CEO) and Mustafa Aal-sahek (Community Coordinator). The organization is part of the UNHCR portfolio and developed a network of more than 5,000 members including companies, private and public sector organisations, and individuals.

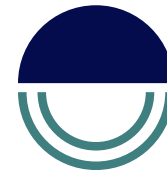


## Jobs4ukr

<https://jobs4ukr.com>

Led by Ioana Buzzi (Exec Director) and Ana Secrieru (Operations Coordinator). The organization is part of the UNHCR and EBRD portfolios. Over the past 3,5 years, the team grew to 12 professionals, 16.500+ newcomers onboarded, 3.000+ employers and 500+ facilitated hirings per year.

# CONTACT



**Refugee Employment Network**

*CEO*

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**Jobful**

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