

Transatlantic Employment Issues

Migration Issues

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June 23, 2006

The Basics – Transitional Measures

- Free movement of persons - one of the fundamental freedoms (Article 39 of the EC Treaty)
- The Accession Treaty – “transitional measures”
- The transition period - 2+3+2-year arrangement
 - Declaration in May 2006, again in May 2009 and May 2011
- The Commission’s February 2006 report - Very few citizens from the new member states were actually moving to the EU-15 countries

Policies

3 Major Categories:

- Keeping the restrictions in place for at least three more years (i.e. until 2009): Austria, Germany and Italy;
- Lifting the restrictions gradually, within the next three years (i.e. by 2009): Belgium, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands;
- Keeping labor markets open / removing restrictions: Finland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta.

Individual Countries

- Germany and Austria justify restrictions by pointing to poor employment situation and geographic proximity to new members
- The Brussels Region asked for privileged treatment for nurses, plumbers, electricians, car mechanics, builders, architects, accountants, engineers and IT workers
- The French labor market is beginning to open partially, with sectors in which labor is in short supply (e.g. social and healthcare, hotels and catering, transport and construction)
- The Netherlands is slowly phasing out the restrictions; fast – track work permits
- Italy is keeping the restrictions at least until 2009, but increasing the annual quota to 170,000 people

Individual Countries

Next Enlargement Wave – Focus on Turkey

- Turkey - home to 70 million people
- Bulgaria
- Romania
 - Possible restrictions against their workers

Positions

- European Citizen Action Service (ECAS) -
Former Competition Commissioner Mario Monti, now chairman of ECAS, has said that transitional restrictions should be “phased out as soon as possible”. “There has been no influx to justify them, and the unexpected proliferation of complex national quotas and qualitative restrictions undermines the Lisbon strategy for flexible markets and a skilled, mobile labor force.”
- International Organization for Migration (IOM) – Less dramatic migratory impact than projected.
- 2011 - All restrictions will be lifted.

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