

## Opening up EU labour markets to Bulgarian and Romanian citizens

**All EU Member States should allow Bulgarians and Romanians onto their labour markets by the end of 2011, says a resolution passed on Tuesday.**

No negative effects have been reported in those Member States that have allowed workers from Member States that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007 onto their labour markets, notes the resolution, which was drafted by Traian Ungureanu (EPP, RO) and passed by a show of hands.

"Official figures, including figures from the Commission, proved that workers from Eastern Europe did not generate unemployment and did not put pressure on the social welfare systems. On the contrary, the influx brought economic growth in the destination countries evaluated at around 1% of the GDP", said the rapporteur in Monday's debate.

MEPs call on Member States to review their rules on transitional periods and urge those Member States that still impose restrictions on Bulgarian and Romanian citizens to remove them by the end of 2011, before the final deadline of 2013 laid down in the EU accession treaty.

In the long run, these restrictions can have a detrimental impact on fundamental values and rights enshrined in the EU treaties, such as free movement, non-discrimination, solidarity and equal rights, they say.

MEPs also deplore recent legislative proposals in some Member States to reimpose labour market access restrictions on citizens from some other Member States and call on the Commission to investigate whether such policies infringe EU law.

### **Workers have the right to free movement**

MEPs expressed concern about EU Member States' poor transposition into national law and enforcement of EU legislation on the free movement of workers and especially Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens and their family members to move and reside freely in the EU. If necessary, the Commission should exercise its right to initiate infringements against non-compliant Member States, they said.

### **Recognising professional qualifications**

Current procedures for recognising professional qualifications are another big obstacle to workers' mobility in the EU, notes the resolution, which calls on the Commission to reform current EU rules in this area.

*Procedure: Non-legislative resolution*

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